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IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECLARATION ON  
THE GRANTING OF INDEPENDENCE TO  
COLONIAL COUNTRIES AND PEOPLES

SECURITY COUNCIL  
Thirty-first year

Letter dated 24 June 1976 from the Permanent Representative of Mauritania to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Further to the letter dated 23 June 1976 (A/31/112-S/12108) addressed to you by the Permanent Representative of Algeria, I have the honour, on instructions from my Government, to inform you that, at his press conference in Nouakchott on 28 March 1976, the Head of State of Mauritania replied to a question put by a journalist concerning the participation of Algerian military elements in the fighting against Mauritanian forces. In his reply, the Mauritanian Head of State declared: "We do not want to do what we criticize others for doing. So, despite all the 'civilities' addressed to us by the Algerian information media, we do not want to accuse Algeria of anything it has not done or anything we are not sure of."

That reply proves, if proof were needed, that Mauritania does not make gratuitous or untruthful assertions, although such practices have elsewhere become systematic policy.

The false reports concerning where the so-called "Democratic Saharan Arab Republic" was proclaimed, the "incredible" press releases, as Jeune Afrique termed them, and so on, are particularly significant in this connexion. There must be some confusion in the mind of the representative of Algeria when he describes as "contrary to the truth" the Mauritanian statements concerning the incidents which occurred in Mauritania and which the international community had ample opportunity to witness.

The flagrant act of aggression against the Islamic Republic of Mauritania on 8 June 1976, which was planned and organized by the leaders of Algeria and was headed by Algerian officers, is a grave violation of international law and an inadmissible attack on the territorial integrity, sovereignty and independence of

\* A/31/50.

a country which is a Member of the United Nations. It is nothing more nor less than aggression of a kind which, when it occurred at other times and in other places in Africa, was strongly condemned by the international community, and in particular by the Security Council.

Diplomats accredited to Mauritania, and the world press (AFP, Le Soleil of 18 June 1976, Le Monde of 22 June 1976, Jeune Afrique of the same date), were able to see for themselves the involvement of the Algerian leaders in that military operation against Mauritania and the resources they committed to ensuring its success. In the planning, the organization, the leadership and the carrying out of the operation, nothing was spared to strike down a country whose only fault was that it had rejected the hegemony of the Algerian leaders and unmasked their megalomania. The most sophisticated Algerian military equipment was used (120-calibre mortars, 110-calibre recoil-less guns, anti-aircraft launchers, a dozen Berliet-Algérie vehicles loaded with ammunition, 100 or so Land Rovers, some of them equipped with individual automatic weapons, etc.); among the documents captured was a proclamation drafted in Algiers, to be read over the Mauritanian radio once the authorities had been overthrown; the highest Algerian officials were there in person, following, from Tindouf, the progress of that act of aggression. Among the Algerians now being held by the Mauritanian army is Lieutenant Bechir Mohamed Rachid, regimental number 3747, of the El Beder Group, Algerian Army Unit No. 169.

Here, then, is proof of the deceitfulness of the Algerian leaders' position when they keep repeating that "the solution is the exercise by the Saharan people of their right to self-determination". Moreover, the inconsistency of that very position of the Algerian leaders may usefully be pointed out; having created their so-called Republic of Sahara, having granted it their de jure recognition, they are in the worst possible situation to demand a right which they themselves have arrogated to themselves and have applied unilaterally, in disregard of all the resolutions of the General Assembly concerning the Sahara.

In any event, this policy of intimidation and aggression against Mauritania and Morocco, two fraternal and neighbouring countries, cannot halt the now irreversible process of their respective national reunification, much less advance the hopes of hegemony over them cherished by the Algerian leaders; that, in fact, is the true cause of tension throughout the region.

I should be grateful if you would circulate this letter as an official document of the General Assembly and the Security Council.

(Signed) Moulaye EL HASSEN  
Ambassador

Permanent Representative of Mauritania  
to the United Nations