

**Security Council**Distr.  
GENERALS/1997/475  
19 June 1997

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

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LETTER DATED 19 JUNE 1997 FROM THE EXECUTIVE CHAIRMAN OF THE  
SPECIAL COMMISSION ESTABLISHED BY THE SECRETARY-GENERAL  
PURSUANT TO PARAGRAPH 9 (b) (i) OF SECURITY COUNCIL  
RESOLUTION 687 (1991) ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE  
SECURITY COUNCIL

My attention has been drawn to a letter of 18 June 1997 (S/1997/473), addressed to you by the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Iraq, concerning the activities on that day of a team composed of personnel from the monitoring groups of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and the Special Commission stationed in Baghdad. Given the various allegations made by the Minister for Foreign Affairs, I believe it is necessary for me to provide an account of what, in fact, took place so far as the Commission's participation was concerned.

On 18 June 1997, an inspection was planned to take place in the Za'faraniya district in Baghdad. The Chief Inspector was provided by IAEA, while the Commission's inspectors came from the export/import and chemical groups. The mission was to undertake an inspection of an area designated by the Executive Chairman of the Special Commission. It will be recalled that, under the relevant resolutions of the Security Council, the right to make such designations is vested solely in the Commission, which makes such designations on its own behalf and on behalf of IAEA when requested. These designations (notice of inspection sites), which are provided to the Iraqi counterparts, do not identify specific structures, instead providing the geographic coordinates of the area to be inspected. Such designations are made only in respect of areas which have not previously been inspected. In this case the area is part of a neighbourhood which comprises a number of buildings and facilities of a very diverse nature which were previously designated and are currently under monitoring.

The team inspected certain structures within the geographic coordinates provided in the designation. However, the Commission's sub-teams did not participate in the visit to the religious buildings referred to in the Foreign Minister's letter, instead inspecting other structures and buildings in the designated area. I understand that IAEA will be writing to you to explain more fully the nature of the participation of its personnel in the events referred to by the Foreign Minister.

In the light of the foregoing, the Commission rejects the unwarranted allegations made by the Foreign Minister regarding the designation made by the Executive Chairman and the conduct of the Commission's personnel.

(Signed) Rolf EKÉUS  
Executive Chairman

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