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Letter dated 5 May 1982 from the Permanent Representative of Egypt
to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Upon instructions from my Government, and with reference to document A/37/213-S/15015, dated 29 April 1982, circulated upon the request of the Permanent Representative of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics to the United Nations, containing a statement by the Soviet news agency TASS, I have the honour to inform you that we received with deep regret the above-mentioned statement. The source of our deep regret stems from the unusually unbecoming language which the statement uses when speaking of deceased heads of State or even when referring critically to the policies of other countries. This language has regrettably deviated from the established norms of decorum. We shall refrain from reciprocating in the same vein.

We are aware of the existence of long-standing differences in foreign policy approaches and attitudes with the Soviet Union, but we find it highly incomprehensible that this should be in any way an excuse to resort to such language which does not befit a super-Power with special responsibilities in world affairs.

It is relevant here to remind the Soviet Union that Egypt, a genuinely non-aligned country, has rejected since the late forties, and still rejects, bloc policies, military alliances and bases of aggression, has challenged all and any attempt to drag it into alignment with spheres of influence and will continue to do so.

Egypt has always been in favour of the presence of peace-keeping forces in accordance with the letter and spirit of Security Council resolution 242 (1967). Egypt did sincerely seek the participation of the United Nations in the

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peace-keeping operations in Sinai to facilitate the withdrawal of Israeli armed forces and help restore Egyptian sovereignty over its national territories.

To this end, a message was sent from the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs of Egypt to the President of the Security Council on 22 April 1981. Unfortunately, and following intensive consultations with the members of the Security Council on 18 May 1981, only a negative reply was the outcome.

This inability of the Security Council to respond positively was mainly due to threats by the Soviet Union to obstruct any attempt to seek the participation of the United Nations in Sinai peace-keeping operations if and when the issue came before the Security Council.

We believe that the multinational forces, acting in accordance with the established norms of international peace-keeping operations, were the only sound alternative open to us as a result of the procrastinating tactics of the Soviet Union.

However, it seems to us that the withdrawal by Israeli forces from Sinai, the liberation of a part of Egyptian and Arab territories and the restoration of Egyptian sovereignty over every inch of the occupied territories were not to the liking of certain countries.

It is undoubtedly a sad fact that the Soviet Union, as a super-Power and a permanent member of the Security Council which presumably undertakes special responsibilities in maintaining peace and security, should so vehemently over-react to the sight of the successful achievement of an important stage towards a just, lasting and comprehensive peace in the Middle East. It is all the more so because while this historical achievement is being positively assessed and highly valued by many heads of State, Arab and non-Arab alike, irrespective of differences or discrepancies in approaches to the Middle East question, and by the Secretary-General of the United Nations, who described this historic event as "constructive and significant", the Soviet Union cannot suppress its negative position vis-à-vis this historic achievement.

Furthermore, we would underline the fact that the Soviet Union and the Soviet people, who have known the magnitude of human and material sacrifices that an invaded country sustains in liberating and restoring its territories, should have been more aware, sensitive and understanding of the real significance of the Israeli withdrawal from Sinai, which was brought about primarily by the sacrifices of the Egyptian people, the heroism of the Egyptian armed forces and eventually fulfilled by the peace treaty between Egypt and Israel in March 1979.

It is worth noting that the completion of the Israeli withdrawal from Egyptian national territories was the first direct implementation of the principle of the inadmissibility of the acquisition of territory by war, as embodied in Security Council resolution 242 (1967) of 22 November 1967, to which the Soviet Union subscribed. It is indeed illogical and incomprehensible that, by attempting to

discredit the value of this achievement, the Soviet Union is actually discrediting the value and principles of resolution 242 (1967) instead of objectively evaluating this development as a significant and practical expression of an applicable precedent of that resolution to other occupied Arab territories.

In the same context, it is likewise important to underline that this Soviet endeavour to cast doubts on the real significance and magnitude of the liberation of Egyptian territories is already doomed as it comes in the wake of a similarly futile endeavour attempted at the latest Extraordinary Ministerial Meeting of the Co-ordinating Bureau of the Non-Aligned Countries on the Question of Palestine, held in Kuwait, from 5 to 8 April 1982. Nevertheless, the Soviet Union is following again the same course, challenging the unanimous will of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries. Such sustained attempts will in no way diminish or minimize the far-reaching significance and implications of the historical achievement brought about by the peace process.

Egypt had hoped that a new chapter in the history of the Middle East would be started with the completion of the Israeli withdrawal from Sinai, and was looking forward in all optimism to the future prospects of an early comprehensive and just settlement of the Middle East question, regardless of the actual difficulties and complexities inherent in the issue of the Middle East.

This statement of the Soviet Union, its language, timing and motives, reflects a persistent attempt to intensify polarization, heighten tension, escalate inter-Arab conflicts and to pre-empt all sincere endeavours to close ranks among Arabs and bring this turbulent area closer to stability and security.

Finally, Egypt, a part of the Arab world linked historically, politically, culturally and strategically to its past, present and future, reaffirms its dedication to the just cause of the Palestinian people in their legitimate struggle to restore their inalienable national rights, its commitment to open a new chapter in the Middle East and to conduct its foreign relations with all external Powers on an equal footing, based on the principles of mutual respect for the sovereignty, national independence, territorial integrity and non-interference in the internal affairs of other countries, and its adherence to the established norms of international behaviour.

It will be highly appreciated if you would have this text circulated as an official document of the General Assembly, under item 34 of the preliminary list, and of the Security Council.

(Signed) A. Esmat ABDEL MEGUID
Ambassador
Permanent Representative
