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PEACEFUL SETTLEMENT OF DISPUTES BETWEEN STATES

Letter dated 1 July 1982 from the Permanent Representative of Iraq
to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to inform you that on 10 June 1982, the Iraqi Revolutionary Command Council declared a unilateral cease-fire in the armed conflict with Iran. On 20 June, Mr. Saddam Hussein, the President of the Republic of Iraq, announced a further decision of the Council in which it was decided to commence and complete the withdrawal of Iraqi forces from the Iranian occupied territories within a maximum period of 10 days. The operation of withdrawal to the internationally recognized boundaries has now been completed.

In this connexion, I should like to refer to Press Release No. 144, issued by the Permanent Mission of the Islamic Republic of Iran to the United Nations on 24 June, in which the Mission quoted part of the statement made on 21 June by Khomeini and went on to indicate in a summary form the rest of that statement. The document read as follows:

"On 21 June, Imam Khomeini in a statement replied to Iraq's announcement of intention to withdraw from occupied Iranian territory, in relation to the zionist invasion of southern Lebanon. The Imam said:

'The zionist invasion of southern Lebanon was a plot by the United States for deviating world attention from the Iraq-Iran war and also to entrap the Islamic Republic in a situation where it could not repel Iraq's attacks. While the Iranian people were concerned about bloodshed in southern Lebanon, the plight of Muslims in that country should not preoccupy Iranians to a degree that renders them incapable of repelling the attacks from their immediate neighbor. Iran's struggle against the

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Baathist regime in Iraq was the opening chapter of its campaign against the Zionist; a campaign which cannot be abandoned for any reason. The Zionist invasion of southern Lebanon had been made upon the order of the United States, and upon the assumption that once the invasion was made, the Islamic Republic would send troops to Lebanon, and that meanwhile, the Baathist regime of Iraq would have much wider elbow-room to do whatever it wanted to do here. While at the outset of the war, Saddam Hussein made many audacious claims against the Islamic Republic, he has now chosen to retreat, while professing that his troops have in fact triumphed in the war against Iran.'

"In his statement, the Imam made frequent reference to Saddam Hussein's claims in Baghdad that the Baathist regime of Iraq had come out victorious in the war, and that he had already attained his original objectives and therefore he would pull his troops out of the occupied lands within ten days.

"The Imam ridiculed Saddam Hussein's claims and said that not only had his communique been dictated to him by others, but that he had totally lost all common sense and was unable to perceive even as much as a young school boy.

"The Imam said that Saddam had frequently boasted to the international media that he had killed or wounded thousands of Iranians and had inflicted tremendous damage on Iranian property and was holding many thousands of Iranian prisoners, which only proves the enormity of his crimes. But if his claims regarding the thousands of POWs is valid, then he has to repatriate precisely the same number of Iranian POWs to Iran when the war ends."

While I shall not attempt to deal with the fantastic, if not senile, views of Khomeini, it is only pertinent to point out that what is more significant is what the Iranian Mission saw fit to omit from the Khomeini statement, hence fully conforming with the long-standing tradition of Iranian deception.

Khomeini, in fact, also said that "if Iran achieved victory in this war and defeated Iraq, then Iraq would join Iran, and when it joins Iran, then all the existing small States in the region would join them". He also stated that Iraq's declaration to withdraw its forces from Iran "is nothing but a plot", and that "we should not leave Iraq to stand on its feet to redeploy its forces with the assistance of others, reinforce its borders, and launch again another surprising attack upon us". As regards the Iraqi withdrawal, Khomeini went on to say "Well, this is one of our conditions, but we have other conditions which should be implemented, otherwise we shall continue to fight Iraq".

While I leave it to your Excellency to draw the grave conclusions which emanate from the above-mentioned views, I should like to indicate that the Iraqi Ministry of Foreign Affairs has already conveyed to the heads of diplomatic missions accredited in Baghdad that, despite these views, Iraq would not be deterred with its continuous search for a just and honourable settlement.

Instead of letting the matter rest at this point, the Iranian Foreign Ministry had the audacity to allege in a statement on 29 June that the Iraqi forces were not abiding by the cease-fire and that they were still occupying some strategic positions in Iran.

In this regard, I should like to inform Your Excellency that, on 30 June, a spokesman of the Iraqi Foreign Ministry stressed that the Iraqi forces had been withdrawn completely and categorically denied the Iranian allegations. Moreover, the spokesman reiterated Iraq's demand to set up a fact-finding commission, whether from the United Nations, the Movement of Non-aligned Countries or the Organization of the Islamic Conference, to determine the question of which side started the aggression and bears the responsibility therefor. The spokesman further referred to the fact that Iraq had already called for the verification of the Iraqi withdrawal and the guarantee of the cease-fire through the setting-up of an appropriate force drawn from the United Nations, the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, the Organization of the Islamic Conference or from the three organizations just mentioned. The spokesman indicated that, were the Iranian Government honest in its claims, it should respond favourably to this proposal, as it was the surest means for the verification of the real situation. Otherwise, the Iranian allegations to the contrary amounted to no more than a persistent policy of prolonging the war.

I request Your Excellency to circulate this letter as an official document of the General Assembly, under item 122 of the preliminary list.

(Signed) Salah Omar AL-ALI
Permanent Representative
