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LETTER DATED 7 DECEMBER 1975 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE  
OF PORTUGAL TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT  
OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

On behalf of my Government, I have the honour to inform you that early today, 7 December, naval, air and land forces of the Republic of Indonesia launched an offensive action against the Territory of Portuguese Timor and particularly against the town of Dili, where naval bombardments occurred and troops were landed.

As the administering Power responsible for Timor, the Portuguese Government has kept the United Nations informed of the most salient events which occurred during the process of decolonization of this non-self-governing Territory.

The military intervention by the armed forces of Indonesia against Timor, however, constitutes an act of aggression which affects peace and the exercise of the right to self-determination, freedom and independence by the people of that Territory.

In the present circumstances, Portugal is unable to restore peace in Timor or to ensure that the decolonization process is accomplished through peaceful and negotiated means, in accordance with the Charter and the resolutions of the United Nations.

I should therefore be grateful if you would convene an urgent meeting of the Security Council so that the military aggression by Indonesia may be terminated and conditions may be established to enable the decolonization process to continue, under the auspices of the United Nations and in accordance with the provisions of the Charter, with resolution 1514 (XV) and with the other relevant resolutions of the United Nations.

I also request that Portugal be allowed to participate in the deliberations of the Council on this question.

The text of the communiqué issued today by the Council of Ministers of Portugal on the subject of these events is annexed to this letter.

I should be grateful, lastly, if you would arrange for the text of this letter and its annex to be circulated as an official document of the Security Council.

(Signed) José Manuel GALVAO TELES  
Permanent Representative of Portugal  
to the United Nations /...

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ANNEX

Communiqué dated 7 December 1975 of the  
Council of Ministers of Portugal

1. The Council of Ministers has taken note of the fact that early on 7 December naval, air and land forces of the Republic of Indonesia launched offensive actions against the Territory of Portuguese Timor and particularly against the town of Dili, where naval bombardments occurred and troops were landed.
2. This military aggression, which Portugal vehemently condemns, has abruptly altered the course of the decolonization process, which despite all the recent vicissitudes should and could have concluded peacefully.
3. The Council of Ministers:

Considering that, in accordance with the Charter and the resolutions of the United Nations, the fundamental principle of Portuguese decolonization has always been to guarantee respect for the means chosen by the people for the exercise of their right to self-determination, taking into account the particular circumstances of each Territory;

Recalling that the situation resulting from the armed uprising by the União Democrática de Timor on 11 August 1975 disrupted the peaceful course of the process of decolonization of the Territory and plunged it into a situation of civil war;

Considering further that at their meeting in Rome the Ministers for Foreign Affairs of Portugal and Indonesia had agreed: that they would make joint efforts to organize talks between Portugal and the three political parties in Timor; that Portugal condemned any outside aggression; and that Indonesia recognized the sovereignty of Portugal as the administering Power;

Considering that following the Rome meeting the attitude of the Government of Indonesia has revealed ambiguous intentions, so that it has not been possible to hold the planned talks at Darwin, to which FRETILIN had given its full agreement, and that this attitude is reflected in actual military support given to the pro-Indonesian political parties;

Considering finally the gravity of the aggression committed today;

The Council of Ministers decides:

- (a) To sever diplomatic relations with the Republic of Indonesia;
- (b) To support the decision of the National Decolonization Commission recommending that Portugal should appeal to the United Nations, and particularly to the Security Council, to obtain an immediate cessation of the military intervention by Indonesia in the Territory of Timor and a peaceful and negotiated

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settlement of the conflict and of the decolonization process under the auspices of the United Nations;

(c) To request United Nations intervention to obtain the immediate release of the 23 Portuguese soldiers who are being detained.

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