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LETTER FROM THE REPRESENTATIVE OF GREECE TO THE UNITED NATIONS
ADDRESSED TO THE SECRETARY-GENERAL DATED 31 MAY 1947

Mr. Secretary-General,

With reference to your communication of 26 May 1947 transmitting to me a copy of telegram No. 523/1 of 22 May 1947 addressed to you by the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Albania (S/359), I have the honour to inform you that the allegations contained therein do not accord with the facts as reported to the Greek authorities.

My Government has therefore instructed me to submit to you the following report on the incidents which occurred on 21 May 1947 in the vicinity of the Greek-Albanian frontier:

At 6 a.m. on that date a strongly armed bandit force attacked the Greek frontier-post close to VOURPIANI, subsequently entering the village itself of that name and attacking the headquarters of a platoon guarding the frontier-post. After a fierce struggle, both the frontier-post and the headquarters building (distant respectively 2 1/2 and 5 kilometres from the Albanian boundary line) fell into the hands of the bandits, who plundered the village and massacred many of the inhabitants. Of the 30 members of the platoon 22 are reported missing.

The bandit force next attacked the headquarters of a company of the Greek Army situated at PYRSOYANNI, 3 kilometres to the south-east of Vourpiani.

The axis of the attack, which followed a line from north-west to south-east, clearly demonstrates that the offensive emanated from Albanian territory.

/The Greek company

The Greek company was reinforced with another detachment, and supporting action was taken by units of the Greek Air Force. After an engagement lasting ten hours the Greek forces succeeded in throwing back the bandits toward the north-west and re-occupying Vourplani. The pursuit was halted when the Greek units drew near to the boundary-line.

In this connection, it may be noted that the Greek Air Force launched its attack against the bandits along a line of flight parallel to the boundary-line, and that in so doing it was prompted by two considerations: 1) the need to prevent the arrival of reinforcements for the bandits, and 2) the need to cut off the retreat of the bandit force by means of a curtain of fire. To this end the Greek aircraft employed a barrage of machine-gun fire, the most effective form of attack in the circumstances.

The line of flight excluded the possibility that any section of territory on the Albanian side of the frontier could have been violated, and no protest, such as is required under the relevant convention between the two countries, was entered by the Albanian frontier authorities against the violation now alleged.

In the course of their flight over Greek territory, in the region of MOLYVDOSKEPASTO, the Greek aircraft were fired upon by the Albanians. They counter-attacked a height to the north-west of Molyvoskepasto where the Greek frontier-post No. 16, which was also hit by the aircraft, is situated.

I should be grateful if, subject to your approval, the above report could be communicated to the members of the Security Council.

I avail myself of the opportunity to renew to you, Mr. Secretary General, the assurance of my highest consideration.

The Permanent Representative of Greece

/s/

V. DENERAMIS
Ambassador.

His Excellency
Mr. Trygve Lie
Secretary General
United Nations
Lake Success, L.I., N.Y.

