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CABLEGRAM DATED 12 JANUARY 1949 FROM THE ACTING MEDIATOR TO THE SECRETARY-GENERAL TRANSMITTING A REPORT TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL CONCERNING THE OPENING OF NEGOTIATIONS BETWEEN EGYPT AND THE PROVISIONAL GOVERNMENT OF ISRAEL

For transmission to President of Security Council:

I have the honour to inform you, pursuant to my Report of 6 January on the agreement of Egypt and Israel, to order a cease fire in the Negev and to undertake negotiations on the 4 and 15 November resolutions, that the first stage in the negotiations between representatives of the two Governments on the implementation of these resolutions was reached today, 12 January, with the arrival in Rhodes of both the Egyptian and Israeli delegations. The Egyptian delegation, headed by Colonel Mchamed Ibrahim Seif el Dine, arrived at Rhodes early in the afternoon and the Israeli delegation, headed by Dr. Weytan arrived later in the afternoon. Both delegations are empowered to negotiate, conclude and initial an armistice agreement, subject to its final ratification by their respective Governments.

I have today met each delegation separately and discussed with them questions of procedure and agenda for subsequent joint discussions. I shall hold further meetings with each delegation tomorrow morning, 13 January, and the first joint meeting under United Nations chairmanship is fixed for 3.30 p.m. on the same day. These preliminary meetings have been encouraging in that both delegations have evinced a sincere desire for a successful outcome of the discussions and a readiness to reach with as little delay as possible discussion of substantive matters.

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