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LETTER DATED 10 MARCH 1972 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF PAKISTAN
TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

I have the honour, under instructions of my Government, to invite Your Excellency's attention to an incident that took place in an unidentified prisoners-of-war camp in India in which Indian guards opened fire on, and brutally attacked, Pakistani prisoners of war causing a number of deaths and injuries. This has been admitted by the Indian authorities and confirmed by government-owned All India Radio. The incident has caused deep shock and profound sorrow to the Government and the people of Pakistan.

This inhuman attack on helpless prisoners, in violation of the Geneva Conventions and of all norms of civilized behaviour, is an outcome of the continued illegal detention of the prisoners in a blatant attempt to coerce the Government of Pakistan into acceptance of arrangements injurious to Pakistan's interests. If the Security Council resolution 307 (71) of 21 December, and the Geneva Convention about repatriation of prisoners of war on cessation of active hostilities, had been implemented by India, this tragedy would not have occurred.

In this connexion, I have been instructed to inform Your Excellency that the Government of India have repeatedly changed their stand and introduced new conditions with regard to the repatriation of sick and wounded prisoners of war. It will be recalled that although the Indian wounded and sick prisoners of war were flown out to India on the agreed date in an ICRC plane, the repatriation of the first batch of wounded and disabled Pakistani prisoners was put off by India several times on various pretexts. India has now gone back on the undertaking, given through the ICRC, to repatriate the remaining seriously sick and wounded Pakistani prisoners of war. It will be recalled that this undertaking called for the repatriation of these soldiers to commence on 5 March and then to continue on the 12th and subsequent dates in March. To justify its non-compliance, India now claims that the repatriation of Pakistani prisoners has been held up pending concurrence of the Dacca authorities. Having secured from Pakistan the release of its prisoners of war, India is now prevaricating and using the unfortunate Pakistani prisoners for political ends. India's stand is a clear violation of article 188 of the Third Geneva Convention which unequivocally and without preconditions obligates the Detaining Power to release and repatriate prisoners of war immediately on cessation of hostilities.

The latest incident involving the killing of Pakistani prisoners of war is the culmination of a long series of harassments and denial of human rights to the Pakistani prisoners. The Government of Pakistan hold the Government of India wholly responsible for the safety of the prisoners of war in their custody.

The Government of Pakistan has also taken up the matter with the ICRC and with the Swiss Government, which acts as the protecting power on Pakistan's behalf in India.

My Government has desired that the above situation be brought to Your Excellency's notice in terms of your responsibilities with regard to humanitarian problems under Security Council resolution No. 307 (71) dated 21 December 1971.

This letter may please be circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) A. SHAHI
Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary
Permanent Representative of Pakistan to the
United Nations
