

UNITED NATIONS
SECURITY
COUNCIL



Distr.
GENERAL

S/9738
6 April 1970

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

LETTER DATED 6 APRIL 1970 FROM THE SECRETARY-GENERAL
TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

I have the honour to request the circulation as an official Security Council document of my reply to the note of 2 April 1970 addressed to me by the Permanent Mission of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics to the United Nations, which was circulated to the Council as document S/9737 of 4 April 1970. The text of my note is attached.

Accept, etc.

(Signed) U THANT

The Secretary-General of the United Nations presents his compliments to the Permanent Mission of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics to the United Nations and has the honour to acknowledge receipt of its note dated 2 April 1970.

The views set forth in this note have been carefully noted by the Secretary-General, who wishes the Mission to know that he fully understands those views. However, as the Mission is aware, the Secretary-General has found himself at variance with some aspects of the views expressed by the Mission on the subject of the exercise of good offices by the Secretary-General. In this regard, the position of the Secretary-General, to which he adheres, has been clearly set forth in his letter dated 7 March 1969 to the President of the Security Council (S/9055). The Secretary-General believes that it is not necessary to restate that position at this time.

The Secretary-General feels, none the less, that it may be useful to call attention to one aspect of this question. From time to time, as in the present case affecting Bahrain, Member States of the United Nations approach the Secretary-General directly asking for the exercise of his good offices on a delicate matter. They explain that they do so because they feel that a difference between them may be capable of an amicable solution if dealt with at an early stage quietly and diplomatically and, therefore, it would be inadvisable to take the particular matter before the Security Council or to consult its members individually on it. They express the wish to have the matter worked out through the good offices of the Secretary-General on a completely confidential basis. In all such cases the Secretary-General, naturally, examines the proposals carefully. If those proposals are fully consistent with the principles and purposes of the United Nations Charter, and if they in no way impinge upon the authority of the Security Council or any other organ of the United Nations, he unavoidably feels obligated to afford the Member States the assistance in the manner requested. To do otherwise, would be to thwart a commendable effort by these Member States to abide by a cardinal principle of the Organization, namely, the peaceful settlement of disputes.

In the case in question, the good offices mission to Bahrain is engaged only in a fact-finding exercise. The facts found will, in due course, be presented to the Security Council in the form of a report from the Secretary-General. Any substantive action would be taken at that time and only by the Security Council.

The Secretary-General assures the Mission of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics that it is his wish and full intention always to ensure that his actions will be entirely consistent with the provisions of the United Nations Charter.

4 April 1970
