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LETTER DATED 4 FEBRUARY 1969 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE  
OF ZAMBIA ADDRESSED TO THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

I have the honour to draw your attention to a skirmish which took place near Chingi, Zambia police camp, in Balovale District of Zambia on 24 January 1969, in which a patrol of armed Portuguese soldiers crossed into Zambia and were engaged by Zambian soldiers.

For some years now Portuguese armed forces have been violating Zambia's territorial integrity and air space. In many cases, Zambian lives have been lost as a result of aerial bombing and the attacks launched by these Portuguese forces on innocent, peace-loving civilians. The Government of the Republic of Zambia consequently decided to station its military contingents of the Zambia army along the border to protect Zambian nationals. Zambian troops have strict instructions not to cross the border into any foreign land. Their sole duty is to protect Zambian lives, soil, air space and property.

At 1630 hours on 24 January 1969, Zambian soldiers observed a Portuguese patrol of four armed troops approaching the Zambia/Angola border from the Portuguese garrison of Kalipande. On reaching the border track, the Portuguese patrol turned east and continued moving along it. On seeing this, Zambian soldiers took up positions on the Zambian side about 250 yards from the border track.

After a short period one Portuguese soldier was seen approaching on the border track. Immediately afterwards, the remainder of the Portuguese soldiers appeared through the bush about twenty-five yards inside Zambia and about fifteen yards from the position held by the Zambian troops. The Portuguese troops were in patrol-formation and with rifles in the "on guard" position. Zambian troops fired a warning shot and the Portuguese soldiers immediately opened fire. A fire fight then developed which resulted in the death of three Portuguese soldiers.

The Zambian soldiers withdrew to better cover since they were running short of ammunition but they kept the area under observation.

I wish to emphasize that the incident occurred on Zambian soil and was further proof of Portuguese unwarranted provocations against Zambia. I have the honour to request that this letter be circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Vernon J. MWAANGA  
Permanent Representative of the Republic of  
Zambia to the United Nations

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