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LETTER DATED 17 JULY 1969 FROM THE CHARGE D'AFFAIRES, a.i. OF THE UNITED ARAB REPUBLIC ADDRESSED TO THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

Pursuant to my letter dated 11 July 1969 (document S/9325), I have the honour upon instructions from my Government to submit the following:

The United Arab Republic military authorities have been informed by the United Nations Military Observers of the readiness of the Israeli occupying authorities to repatriate the three remaining bodies of the United Arab Republic soldiers.

12.00 local time Thursday, 17 July had been arranged for the completion of the operation.

On the appointed time and at the agreed location our military representatives, as well as the representative of the International Committee of the Red Cross, were ready to take possession of the bodies. However, Israeli occupying authorities procrastinated for over three hours at the end of which they stated that the operation would not take place.

It is to be noted that the Israeli occupying forces made use of those three hours to reinforce their positions on the opposite side of the agreed location assigned for the completion of the operation, thus benefiting from the restraint of our forces in compliance with the agreement concluded with the United Nations Military Observers. In the face of such provocation and of the flagrant breach of faith on the part of the Israeli occupying forces, our armed forces could have been provoked to open fire but refrained from doing so at the urgent request of the United Nations Military Observers.

In bringing this matter to your attention, I would like to reiterate my request for your assistance in facilitating the prompt repatriation of the bodies of the three United Arab Republic soldiers.

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I have the honour to request the circulation of this letter as an official document of the Security Council.

Please accept, etc.

(Signed) Abdullah EL-ERIAN  
Chargé d'Affaires, a.i.

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