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LETTER DATED 17 FEBRUARY 1967 FROM THE SECRETARY-GENERAL ADDRESSED  
TO THE MINISTER FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF PORTUGAL

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your two letters of 3 February 1967, which have been circulated by me to the Security Council in document S/7735/Rev.1.

In paragraph 5 of the first of the foregoing letters, you have referred to certain issues previously raised by the Government of Portugal in your communications of 27 April and 29 July 1966, the former being addressed to me, and the latter to the President of the Security Council. You will recall that, in my reply to you of 21 June 1966, I indicated that I did not consider that it was appropriate for the Secretariat, without a request from the organ concerned, to establish the practice of responding in substance to an inquiry from a Member State for advice regarding the validity and interpretation of decisions of principal organs of the United Nations. On that occasion I also pointed out that only the Security Council is in a position to give an authoritative interpretation of its decisions, of the Charter Articles on which they are based, and of the procedures followed in adopting them. As I remain of this view, I regret that I can add nothing further to the observations I made in my letter of 21 June 1966.

In response to the request contained in your second letter of 3 February 1967, and as indicated at the outset of the present reply, I have placed the full text of that letter before the Security Council in document S/7735/Rev.1

Accept, etc.

(Signed) U THANT  
Secretary-General

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