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LETTER DATED 15 DECEMBER 1988 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE
OF THE ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED
TO THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

I have the honour to enclose herewith the text of the letter of His Excellency Dr. Ali Akbar Velayati, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Islamic Republic of Iran, addressed to His Excellency Mr. Cornelio Sommaruga, President of the International Committee of the Red Cross, concerning prisoners of war.

It would be highly appreciated if this letter and its annex were circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Mohammad Ja'afar MAHALLATI
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

Annex

Letter dated 10 December 1988 from the Minister for Foreign Affairs
of the Islamic Republic of Iran addressed to the President of the
International Committee of the Red Cross

As Your Excellency was informed in detail in my letter of November 1988, Iraq, by refusing to repatriate some sick and wounded Iranian prisoners of war, has violated the Memorandum of Understanding dated 11 November 1988. It was agreed in the Memorandum of Understanding that both countries would submit to the International Committee of the Red Cross by 5 December 1988 the list of sick and wounded prisoners of war who have not yet been registered, in order to enable the International Committee of the Red Cross to organize the plan for the repatriation of these prisoners and to complete the repatriation by 31 December 1988. Your Excellency is aware that the list of unregistered sick and wounded Iraqi prisoners of war was presented at the suggested time to the representative of the International Committee of the Red Cross in Teheran. Unfortunately, Iraq, without presenting any logical reason, refrained to present the list of unregistered sick and wounded Iranian prisoners of war, and thus violated the Memorandum of Understanding for a second time.

We now wonder what official response Iraq could have provided to the International Committee of the Red Cross for failing to repatriate a number of Iranian sick and wounded prisoners of war and also in refusing to submit the list of the unregistered ones. Furthermore and more important, while Iraq has unambiguously violated the provisions of the Memorandum of Understanding on more than one occasion, what guarantees exist to assure further exchange of these prisoners between the two countries.

Under such circumstances, the International Committee of the Red Cross should be in a position to make Iraq abide by the provisions of the Memorandum of Understanding for the exchange of the sick and wounded prisoners of war. The Islamic Republic of Iran continues to underline the importance of this humanitarian endeavour.

Ali Akbar VELAYATI
Minister for Foreign Affairs
The Islamic Republic of Iran
