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NOTE

Symbols of United Nations documents are composed of capital letters combined with figures. Mention of such a symbol indicates a reference to a United Nations document.

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2172nd MEETING

Held in New York on Tuesday, 27 November 1979, at 3 p.m.

President: Mr. Sergio PALACIOS de VIZZIO (Bolivia).

Present: The representatives of the following States: Bangladesh, Bolivia, China, Czechoslovakia, France, Gabon, Jamaica, Kuwait, Nigeria, Norway, Portugal, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America, Zambia.

Provisional agenda (S/Agenda/2172)

1. Adoption of the agenda
2. Letter dated 25 November 1979 from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/13646)

The meeting was called to order at 3.55 p.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

Letter dated 25 November 1979 from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/13646)

1. The PRESIDENT (*interpretation from Spanish*): I wish to inform members of the Council that I have received letters from the representatives of Iran and Sri Lanka in which they request to be invited to participate in the discussion of the item on its agenda. In accordance with the usual practice I propose, with the consent of the Council, to invite those representatives to participate in the discussion without the right to vote, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the provisional rules of procedure.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Salamatian (Iran) took a place at the Council table; Mr. Fernando (Sri Lanka) took the place reserved for him at the side of the Council chamber.

2. The PRESIDENT (*interpretation from Spanish*): The Security Council is meeting today in response to a request by the Secretary-General contained in a letter dated 25 November addressed to the President of the Council in document S/13646.

3. I wish to draw the attention of members of the Council to document S/13650, which contains the text of a letter dated 27 November from the Chargé d'affaires of the Per-

manent Mission of Iran to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Council.

4. I now call on the Secretary-General.

5. The SECRETARY-GENERAL: Mr. President, may I first of all express my appreciation to you and to the members of the Security Council for having convened this highest organ of the United Nations for international peace and security in response to my letter of 25 November. This demonstrates clearly the overriding concern of the Council to find a peaceful solution of the crisis which has arisen between the United States and Iran.

6. As members of the Council are aware, within the past three weeks I have been continuously involved in efforts to find means of resolving this very serious problem. Similar efforts have been made by you, Mr. President, as well as by many Governments. I take this opportunity to express my sincere appreciation for these efforts.

7. We all know the basic elements of the problem before us. The Government of the United States is deeply concerned at the seizure of its embassy at Teheran and the detention of its diplomatic personnel, in violation of the relevant international conventions. The Government of Iran seeks redress for injustices and abuse of human rights which, in its view, were committed by the previous régime.

8. A major concern, of course, must be for the fate of the individuals involved. But apart from the humanitarian, legal and psychological aspects of the problem there can be no question that the international community has become increasingly disturbed at the dangerous level of tension arising from this situation. This threatens the peace and stability of the region and could well have very grave consequences for the entire world. In the prevailing circumstances it became clear to me that the efforts I have mentioned, which were conducted with good faith and determination, could not for the time being overcome the very difficult obstacles with which we were faced. Although at times in the past few days agreement seemed close, in the end the gap appeared to be too wide to be bridged at this stage.

9. It was in the light of these developments and of the escalation of tension that I concluded that the present crisis poses a serious threat to international peace and security. Accordingly, in the exercise of my responsibility under the Charter, I asked for the urgent convening of the Security Council. I may mention here that this move was supported and welcomed by the Governments of Iran and the United

States. As you are aware, Mr. President, it was also unanimously supported by the members of the Council in the consultations which took place yesterday. I earnestly hope that the Council can be of assistance in helping the parties to find ways and means to reconcile their differences. In this connexion, I was pleased to have confirmation today that the Foreign Minister of Iran will come to New York to participate in our deliberations.

10. Although in the past weeks we have discussed various formulae which might prove useful in resolving this very serious crisis, I do not think it would be appropriate for me to make any detailed proposals at this time. I am sure that the parties concerned are as anxious as anyone to see an end to the present deplorable situation and I would urge them to make every effort to avail themselves of the opportunities offered by the machinery of the United Nations. In the meantime I appeal to them to exercise the maximum restraint and to avoid any actions which could further inflame the situation.

11. I believe that the Security Council can be of great assistance in these difficult days and that it has a right and a duty to assist in resolving a situation which poses grave dangers to the structure of international peace. I am confident that the Council will make every effort to do this, guided by the principles of justice and international law.

12. Before concluding, Mr. President, I wish to pay a tribute to you personally and to the members of the Council for your very helpful and responsible handling of the preparatory consultations. We all realize the very delicate and unusual nature of this situation. I wish to say how grateful I am for your constructive response.

13. The PRESIDENT: I would like to thank the Secretary-General for his statement.

14. I wish to refer to the letter of the Secretary-General dated 25 November [S/13646], on the basis of which the Council is meeting.

15. I also wish to refer to the letter dated 27 November from the Chargé d'affaires of the Permanent Mission of Iran to the United Nations addressed to me [S/13650], by

which he requested that formal deliberations of the Security Council be postponed out of respect for the most holy days of Tassua and Ashura, days highly revered and commemorated for centuries in many Islamic countries, particularly Iran, and in order to enable His Excellency Mr. Abolhassan Bani-Sadr, the Foreign Minister of Iran, to arrive in New York, so as to be able to participate in full debate of the Council as of Saturday evening, 1 December. After consultations, the Council has therefore agreed to adjourn its meeting until 1 December at 9 p.m., subject to the understanding that it will reconvene before then if the situation demands it.

16. I also wish to draw the attention of the Council to the fact that on 9 November, following consultations among members of the Council, I issued the following statement on their behalf [S/13616], urgently asking for the release and protection of American diplomatic personnel who have been detained in Iran since 4 November:

"Following consultations among the members of the Security Council, I am authorized, as President of the Council, to express the profound concern of the Council at the prolonged detention of American diplomatic personnel in Iran. Speaking as President of the Council on behalf of the Council, and while not wishing to interfere in the internal affairs of any country, I must emphasize that the principle of the inviolability of diplomatic personnel and establishments must be respected in all cases in accordance with internationally accepted norms. Therefore I urge in the strongest terms that the diplomatic personnel being held in Iran should be released without delay and provided protection. I further urge the Secretary-General to continue to use his good offices to assist towards this objective."

On behalf of the Security Council, I strongly reiterate this appeal.

17. In view of the serious threat to international peace and security, the Security Council will not relent in its urgent efforts to seek a peaceful solution of the problem in conformity with the principles of justice and international law.

The meeting rose at 4.15 p.m.