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LETTER DATED 17 MARCH 1989 FROM THE CHARGE D'AFFAIRES A.I.
OF THE PERMANENT MISSION OF THE ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN
TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

Upon instructions from my Government, I have the honour to enclose herewith the text of the letter of H.E. Dr. Ali Akbar Velayati, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

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

(Signed) Mahmoud Sadat MADARSHAHI
Ambassador
Chargé d'affaires a.i.

Annex

Letter from the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Islamic
Republic of Iran addressed to the Secretary-General

In the course of the peace talks held under your auspices, the Islamic Republic of Iran demonstrated its sincerity and honesty for the immediate and full implementation of Security Council resolution 598 (1987). Unfortunately, the Iraqi régime, by putting forward pre-conditions and problems extraneous to the resolution, has practically deadlocked the implementation of the resolution. Besides, it has always rejected plans held out by you at various junctures.

The exchange of prisoners of war (POWs) constitutes one of the important paragraphs of the resolution. For humanitarian reasons, the Islamic Republic of Iran has, since the beginning of the peace talks emphatically called for the rapid implementation of the resolution, including its paragraph 3. The Islamic Republic of Iran believes that, if the Iraqi régime had not obstructed the peace talks and had, without delay following the cease-fire, withdrawn its forces to internationally recognized borders, as stipulated in paragraph 1 of the resolution, all POWs would, by now, have been returned to the bosom of their families.

In connection with the letter contained in document S/20506 dated 6 March 1989 from the Foreign Minister of the Iraqi régime, I wish to inform you that the proposal for the exchange of POWs, disregarding the final outcome of the two countries' negotiations, is aimed at changing the order of priorities in the resolution based on international law and at impairing the whole resolution. By such a proposal, Iraq is trying to deviate the negotiations from their determined framework. The Foreign Minister of the Iraqi régime, in his letter, refers to that régime's commitment not to use the freed POWs in the Iraqi armed forces. The Iraqi régime's repeated commitment at various junctures to implement Security Council resolution 598 (1987) and its lack of good will to fulfil its commitments are now very well known to the international community. Therefore, as long as the Iraqi régime refuses to take practical measures for the implementation of the most important element of the resolution, that is, the withdrawal to internationally recognized borders, no new commitment by this régime can be acceptable.

The Islamic Republic of Iran stands ready to embark on the exchange of all POWs within the framework of Security Council resolution 598 (1987) at the earliest and following the withdrawal of all forces to the internationally recognized borders.

(Signed) Ali Akbar VELAYATI
Minister for Foreign Affairs of
the Islamic Republic of Iran

