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LETTER DATED 2 MARCH 1963 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF
THE UNION OF SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLICS TO THE UNITED NATIONS
ADDRESSED TO THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

With reference to the report of 4 February 1963 submitted by the United Nations Secretary-General to the Security Council concerning the implementation of the Security Council resolutions of 14 July 1960, 21 February and 24 November 1961, the USSR Mission, leaving aside for the moment the opinion expressed in that document concerning the origin and the course of the developments in the Congo, considers it necessary to make the following statement in accordance with the instructions of the Soviet Government.

As we all know, the United Nations forces were sent to the Congo by virtue of the decision of the Security Council of 14 July 1960 in response to a request for military assistance from the Government of the Republic of the Congo in connexion with an act of military aggression on the part of Belgium. It may be well to recall that in the telegram dated 13 July 1960 from President Kasavubu and Prime Minister Lumumba to the Secretary-General of the United Nations, it was stressed that "the purpose of the aid requested is not to restore the internal situation in Congo but rather to protect the national territory against acts of aggression committed by Belgian metropolitan troops". Under the subsequent resolutions of the Security Council, the United Nations Command in the Congo was authorized to take action for the immediate apprehension and deportation of all foreign mercenaries and to prevent foreign interference in the country's internal affairs.

The task confronting the United Nations and the Congo was thus the clear and precise one of protecting the Republic of the Congo from outside aggression and ensuring its political independence, unity and territorial integrity. It was

the need for fulfilling this task in conformity with the request of the Congolese Government that impelled the Soviet Government to lend its support to the above-mentioned decisions of the Security Council which were designed to meet this objective.

The report by the Secretary-General indicates that the tasks with which the United Nations was faced in the Congo have to a considerable extent been carried out. It is known to everyone, of course, that you in your capacity as Secretary-General have recently taken definite action to give effect to the Security Council's decisions that were intended to eliminate the separatist activities in Katanga.

In this connexion it cannot fail to be obvious that although the military operations of the United Nations in the Congo have come to an end, the Katanga problem continues in fact to be unresolved both politically and economically. The Western Powers do not desist from their interference in the internal affairs of the Republic of the Congo and are putting every obstacle in its way to prevent its free development as a nation. There is considerable evidence to show that, in direct violation of the Security Council resolutions, a large number of Belgian and other foreign mercenaries are returning to Katanga together with various kinds of advisers and experts from the colonial Powers.

Some Powers are continuing to put pressure on the Government of the Republic of the Congo to settle the question of the reunification of Katanga and the Congo in a manner that would mean the virtual enslavement of the Republic of the Congo by the foreign monopolies that hold sway in Katanga.

The position of the Soviet Union on this question was explained in the Soviet Government's reply to your appeal to the States Members of the United Nations, dated 31 July 1962.

It was stated in that reply that "there has thus come about a situation that is completely intolerable and incompatible with the principles of international law and the purposes of the United Nations by the fact that the Western Powers are imposing their will on an independent and sovereign State, the Republic of the Congo, and are dictating to it conditions that are favourable to the colonialists. No State or group of States, however, has the right to make itself the master of the fate of another sovereign State. The Congolese problem can and must be solved solely by the Congolese people and by the Government of the Republic of the Congo."

The Western Powers are already trying to exploit the present situation in the Congo by bringing Katangese separatists into the Central Government and in that way to preserve the position of their monopolies in the country. The genuine friends of the Congo obviously could not and cannot support such a plan, which is clearly contrary to the true interests of the Congolese people.

The Soviet Union's basic policy has been and continues to be that the people, the Parliament and the Government of the Republic of the Congo must be given the opportunity of settling their own affairs. The Congolese Government is entitled to function in Katanga as well as in any other province of its country in accordance with the national interests of the Republic of the Congo. Above all else, its national interests demand that there should be established in Katanga conditions that will exclude all possibility of separatist activities in that province being continued by any persons whatever or in any manner whatever.

The colonialists are attempting to keep their protégé Tshombe in power despite the obvious fact that for two and a half years the Congolese people suffered much anguish because of Tshombe's anti-national activities. The world community has not forgotten that he, above anyone else, was responsible for the murder of the national hero and first Prime Minister of the Republic of the Congo, Mr. Patrice Lumumba, and of Mr. Lumumba's comrades.

The report by the Secretary-General speaks of the "continuing need of the Congolese Government for United Nations military assistance in the maintenance of law and order" and says that "some United Nations armed troops will be required and will still be in the Congo a year from now."

As noted above, the United Nations forces were sent to the Congo in order to protect the territory of the Republic of the Congo from aggressors. This action was undertaken in conformity with the Charter of the United Nations which, as we all know, gives authorization "to take effective collective measures for the prevention and removal of threats to the peace, and for the suppression of acts of aggression". The Charter does not, however, authorize the United Nations to act in such cases as concern the maintenance of law and order in a particular country, since that is the prerogative of the Government of that country. It is accordingly clear that to keep the United Nations forces in the Congo solely for the purpose of performing police functions is an action that cannot be justified from the point of view of the principles and requirements of the United Nations Charter.

It is also to be noted that the report deals with other questions concerning the prospects for further United Nations activity in the Congo. It is perfectly obvious, however, that all such questions must be decided by the Security Council.

The USSR Mission to the United Nations considers it necessary to stress that, in the opinion of the Soviet Government, no one has the right to hinder the Government of the Republic of the Congo from exercising its sovereign rights with respect to the entire territory of the country, including Katanga.

If, moreover, the Government of the Republic of the Congo considers it necessary in this connexion to dispatch units of the Congolese National Army to Katanga Province, then it is lawfully entitled to do this. The incorporation of Congolese military elements into the armed forces of the United Nations, which are subject to the orders of the United Nations Command, is incompatible with the sovereignty of the Congo and contrary to the principles of the United Nations Charter. To dispatch units of the Congolese National Army to Katanga would, of course, make it pointless for the "United Nations forces" to remain in that province or in the remainder of the territory of the Republic of the Congo. The removal of the "United Nations forces" from the Congo without delay will enable the Congolese Government to extend its authority throughout the territory of the country, and this will be in full conformity with the national interests of the Congolese people and in accord with the resolutions of the United Nations concerning the restoration of the unity and territorial integrity of the Republic of the Congo.

The Soviet Government believes that all States which are kindly disposed towards the people of the Congo will render the Congolese Government every kind of assistance in strengthening the sovereignty of the Republic of the Congo and in improving the economic well-being of its people. In this letter to you, Sir, the Soviet Government has felt it necessary to reiterate its views concerning the situation in the Republic of the Congo, particularly as regards the latest actions of the colonial Powers. The Soviet Government has appreciated and continues to appreciate the efforts which you have personally made in your

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capacity as Secretary-General to protect the sovereignty of the Republic of the Congo and to thwart the unceasing efforts to destroy its territorial integrity and independence.

I ask you, Sir, to arrange for this text to be circulated as an official document of the Security Council.

(Signed) N. FEDORENKO

