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LETTER DATED 29 AUGUST 1963 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE
OF IRAQ ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

On instructions from my Government, I have the honour to bring the following to the attention of the Security Council in connexion with the question it is presently discussing.

The Government of the Republic of Iraq is gravely concerned at the threats to the peace and security of the region, arising from the continuous violation by the Israeli authorities of the Armistice Agreements, and the recent bellicose declarations of Israeli Government Spokesmen, threatening military action against Syria. These declarations which are aimed at exerting pressure on the Security Council, to adopt a resolution favourable to Israel, constitute a crude attempt on the part of the Israeli authorities to influence the judgement of the Council. Such open threats to peace, and brazen attempts to intimidate the Security Council must be viewed with utmost repugnance by the international community.

The Palestine Question has been before the Security Council since 1948, when contrary to the basic principles of the Charter the people of Palestine were deprived of their inalienable right to freedom and self-determination. No discussion of any aspect of the Palestine Question can ever have any meaning or validity unless it is projected against the basic historic fact, that a country which was inhabited by an overwhelming Arab majority was conquered by armed force, and its rightful inhabitants forcibly expelled from their homeland. During a period of thirty years, a minority not exceeding 7 per cent of the population was enabled through foreign protection, illegal immigration and finally outright military conquest to usurp a whole country and liquidate an entire people in its homeland. This is a tragedy that has no parallel in modern times, and it should never be lost sight of in dealing with any aspect of the Palestine problem.

The Armistice Agreements were concluded between the Arab States bordering on Palestine and the Israeli authorities to end the fighting which broke out in May 1948 as a result of the Israeli military campaign to conquer the whole of Palestine and obliterate its Arab population.

The Agreements imposed upon the signatories certain obligations, and established demilitarized zones on which no military forces may be stationed, and in respect of which the question of sovereignty was held in abeyance. Moreover, Mixed Armistice Commissions were established to deal with any complaints or infringements of the provisions of the Armistice Agreements. The Israeli authorities from the very beginning systematically tried to absorb the demilitarized zones. So-called agricultural settlements which are in fact military outposts manned and commanded by officers and soldiers of the Israeli armed forces, have been established in the demilitarized zones, in clear violation of the Armistice Agreements. Fortifications and military installations were constructed and Israeli military and para-military units have frequently entered these areas contrary to the provisions of Para. 5 (a) of article V of the Syrian-Israeli Armistice Agreement. Agricultural activities in the demilitarized zone which have often been the source of friction were regulated by the so-called Status Quo Agreement in 1961, but Israel has consistently refused to co-operate with the United Nations to implement this agreement and obstructed all efforts to set limits for areas of permissible agricultural activity. Moreover, since 1951 the Syrian-Israeli Mixed Armistice Commission was boycotted by the Israeli authorities and the local machinery established to deal with violations of the Armistice Agreement was thus paralyzed.

It is against this background of continuous Israeli violations of the Armistice Agreement, and Israel's adamant refusal to co-operate with the United Nations in the Mixed Armistice Commission that the recent incidents should be viewed. The incident which allegedly took place on 19 August should normally have been brought before the Mixed Armistice Commission which is fully equipped to deal with incidents of this kind. Instead, Israel has come before the Security Council demanding the condemnation of Syria and threatening the Council

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with dire consequences if it should fail to accede to its wishes. The so-called evidence brought forward to substantiate the Israeli claim is far from conclusive, and it is based mainly upon highly partisan testimony. There is also reason to believe that some of the "evidence" produced was fabricated by the Israeli authorities to support their claim. Syria, on the other hand, has filed a complaint of a much more serious nature. The report of the Chief of Staff of the United Nations Truce Supervision Organization (S/5401) goes a long way to support the Syrian contention regarding the presence of Israeli armed forces and equipment in the area in violation of the Armistice Agreement, as can be seen from paragraph 22 of the report which reads as follows: "At 1105Z (on 21 August) OP-4 CMR 2782) reported the presence of an armoured Personnel carrier in the Israel defensive area at MRs 2107-2806 to 2105-2744 in violation of the General Armistice Agreement."

The Security Council is now called upon to take a decision or reach some consensus after the conclusion of the present debate. In the view of the Iraqi Government, the Security Council should reaffirm once more the Armistice Agreements and call upon the two parties to abide fully by its provisions, particularly those relating to the demilitarized zone and the Mixed Armistice Commission. The Security Council should reject Israel's claim to sovereignty over the demilitarized zone and deplore its attempts to annex it. The Council should also remind Israel of its obligation to participate in the Mixed Armistice Commission and call upon it to cease forthwith all its obstructionist activities which have paralysed the Armistice machinery since 1951. Such action to revitalize the Armistice Agreement and its machinery would be most conducive to the maintenance of peace and the reduction of tensions.

Accept, etc.

(Signed) Adnan Pachachi
Permanent Representative of Iraq
to the United Nations

