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LETTER DATED 10 APRIL 1963 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE  
OF PORTUGAL ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE  
SECURITY COUNCIL

With reference to the letter dated 10 April 1963 from the Acting Chargé d'Affaires of the Permanent Mission of Senegal addressed to the President of the Security Council and circulated as Document No. S/5279 of 10 April 1963, requesting a meeting of the Security Council, and alleging "repeated violations of Senegalese air space and territory", I have the honour to communicate to Your Excellency the following, under instructions of my Government:

1. Concerning the alleged incident of 9 April 1963, in the village of BOUGNIACK, detailed in paragraph 2 of the letter under reference, the Permanent Mission of Portugal to the United Nations has already issued a statement today, which I am taking the liberty of transcribing:

"Following a most careful investigation which was ordered, the Portuguese Government can state categorically that the report is without the slightest foundation. On the day in question, no Portuguese military aircraft over-flew that area or any other area along the border with Senegal. In fact, it has been verified that on that day no Portuguese military aircraft had taken to the air, so that any violation of the Senegalese air space by Portugal would have been impossible. If a violation did in fact take place the conclusion must be drawn that only aircraft of some nationality other than Portuguese could have been responsible for it.

"The Consul of Senegal at Bissau (capital city of Portuguese Guinea) having learned over the Senegalese Radio of the reports published in Dakar, and not having any local information which could support it, sought and obtained an interview with the Governor from whom he heard the most formal and immediate denial.

"All Portuguese forces have the strictest orders to scrupulously respect the sovereignty, and the territorial integrity, and the air space of the Republic of Senegal."

2. As regards paragraph 3 of the letter, which revives complaints presented by the Government of Senegal in 1961, I have the honour to recall that the matter was fully analysed and dealt with in my letter to the President of the Security Council and circulated as Document S/5055 of 10 January 1962. Those complaints were either totally unfounded or originated from a misconstruction of events without any real significance, and the report on them given by the Portuguese Government in a spirit of complete fairness was not the subject of any comment by the Government of Senegal at that time or thereafter.

3. It is a matter of regret that these old complaints should have been joined to a new entirely unfounded allegation, in order to create an atmosphere of hostility against Portugal, in the furtherance of certain political objectives - and this, despite the best endeavours of the Portuguese Government to adhere to a firm policy of international co-operation and good neighbourliness.

4. In the light of these circumstances, the request of the Government of Senegal becomes completely unrealistic and certainly inconsistent with the basic aims of the United Nations for good will and understanding; and the convening of the Security Council would be entirely unwarranted.

I would greatly appreciate it if Your Excellency would be good enough to have this letter circulated among the Members of the Security Council.

(Signed) Vasco Vieira GARIN

