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LETTER DATED 29 MAY 1958 FROM THE REPRESENTATIVE OF
TUNISIA TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

Upon instructions from my Government, I have the honour to request you to convene the Security Council for the purpose of considering the following question:

"Complaint by Tunisia in respect of acts of armed aggression committed against it since 19 May 1958 by the French military forces stationed in its Territory and in Algeria."

An explanatory memorandum on this question is attached.

Under Article 31 of the Charter, I have the honour to request you to permit me to participate in the discussion of this question and, accordingly, to inform me of the date on which the Security Council will meet for that purpose.

I have the honour to be etc.

(Signed) Mongi Slim
Ambassador of Tunisia
Permanent Representative of Tunisia
to the United Nations

EXPLANATORY MEMORANDUM

On 18 February 1958, the Security Council decided to adjourn its examination of the complaint submitted by Tunisia on 13 February 1958 "in respect of an act of aggression committed against it by France on 8 February 1958 at Sakiet-Sidi-Youssef". The adjournment was decided upon as a result of the offer by the Governments of the United States of America and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland of their good offices, which was accepted by both parties.

In a letter of 13 February 1958 to the President of the Security Council, the representative of Tunisia informed the Council of the measures taken by the Tunisian Government in the exercise of its right of self-defence, in accordance with Article 51 of the Charter, following the aggression of Sakiet-Sidi-Youssef.

The Tunisian Government has prohibited the French armed forces occupying positions in Tunisia against its wishes from engaging in any troop movements, sending French naval units into Tunisian ports, landing or parachuting reinforcements and flying French military aircraft over Tunisian territory.

At the Secretary-General's instance and following the assurances given by him, the Tunisian Government accorded very liberal facilities to ensure food supplies to the immobilized troops.

The preventive security measures were maintained throughout the good offices' action undertaken by the Governments of the United States of America and of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland to bring the views of the French and Tunisian Governments closer together. On 15 March 1958, these good offices resulted in a compromise laying down, inter alia, the procedure for the evacuation of the French troops from Tunisia. This compromise was accepted by both the French and Tunisian Governments, but its provisions were not applied, inasmuch as the French Government was unable to ratify it.

In its desire to settle the dispute with France amicably, the Tunisian Government, while noting the suspension of the good offices mission owing to its partner's failure, did not wish to turn to the Security Council again immediately, because it preferred to leave all possibilities open for an amicable settlement. It was of course understood - and the Tunisian Government received assurances to that effect under the good offices' action - that the measures taken by Tunisia against the French troops would remain in force.

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On 24 May 1958, however, the French troops stationed at Remada made a sortie from their barracks and tried to force a barrier at Bir Kanbout, seven kilometres to the south-west of Remada, opening fire on the Tunisian elements guarding the barrier. Those units having returned the fire, other French units fired at other Tunisian posts in the vicinity.

On 25 May, at 7.30 a.m., B-26 bombers and fighters coming from Algeria, presumably from the base at Tebessa, attacked the Remada area, bombing and machine-gunning all groups on the tracks and in the region over a radius of several dozen kilometres.

The Government of the Republic of Tunisia would draw the Security Council's attention to the extreme gravity of the situation resulting from these repeated acts of what is indisputably armed aggression against its territorial integrity by the French forces stationed in its territory against its wishes and by those operating in Algeria.

The Government of the Tunisian Republic, finding that its efforts at conciliation have failed and that its sovereignty is gravely threatened, requests the Security Council to take such measures as it may deem necessary - in accordance with Article 40 and subsequent Articles of the United Nations Charter - in order to put an end to this situation, which threatens not only the security of Tunisia, but also international peace and security in that part of the world.
