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CABLE DATED 14 FEBRUARY 1961 FROM THE SECRETARY OF STATE  
FOR THE PRESIDENCY AND NATIONAL DEFENCE OF THE TUNISIAN  
GOVERNMENT ADDRESSED TO THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

I AM INSTRUCTED BY MR. HABIB BOURGUIBA, PRESIDENT OF THE TUNISIAN REPUBLIC,  
TO TRANSMIT THE FOLLOWING MESSAGE TO YOU.

ACCORDING TO NEWS BROADCAST IN ELIZABETHVILLE ON THE AFTERNOON OF  
13 FEBRUARY 1961 MR. PATRICE LUMUMBA, MR. MAURICE MPOLO AND MR. JOSEPH OKITO WERE  
KILLED THE PREVIOUS DAY IN A VILLAGE IN KATANGA. THIS NEWS HAS AROUSED MY DEEP  
INDIGNATION AND IS LIKELY TO HAVE SERIOUS REPERCUSSIONS IN THE CONGO AND  
ELSEWHERE. THE STORY OF THE ESCAPE OF MR. LUMUMBA AND HIS FELLOW PRISONERS REALLY  
COVERS AN ODIOS CRIME PERPETRATED BY THE KATANGAN AUTHORITIES IN ORDER TO RID  
THEMSELVES OF THEIR POLITICAL ADVERSARIES. I RECENTLY HAD OCCASION TO BRING TO  
YOUR ATTENTION THE BRUTALITIES INFLICTED ON MR. LUMUMBA DURING HIS TRANSFER TO  
KATANGA AND THE BEHAVIOUR, SUPRISING TO SAY THE LEAST, OF THE CENTRAL CONGOLESE  
GOVERNMENT IN AGREEING TO HAND OVER MR. LUMUMBA TO MOISHE TSHOMBE, HIS AVOWED  
ENEMY. THE PHYSICAL ELIMINATION OF MR. LUMUMBA AND HIS COMPANIONS POINTS UP THE  
CONTEMPT PROFESSED BY CERTAIN CONGOLESE LEADERS FOR THE SACRED AND FUNDAMENTAL  
PRINCIPLES OF ALL STATES WORTHY OF THE NAME. IT REVEALS A DANGEROUS PERSISTENCE  
IN UNDERMINING THE CHANCES OF A PEACEFUL SOLUTION OF THE CONGO PROBLEM AND IN  
DEFYING THE EFFORTS UNDERTAKEN TO THAT END BY NATIONS OF GOOD WILL. I AM SURE  
THAT THE UNITED NATIONS WILL STRONGLY CONDEMN SUCE EXCESSES. I WISH TO ASSURE YOU  
THAT MY GOVERNMENT IS PREPARED AT ALL TIMES TO SUPPORT THE UNITED NATIONS IN ITS  
EFFORTS TO CALM PASSIONS AND RESTORE PEACE AND LEGALITY.

I HAVE THE HONOUR TO BE ETC.

(Signed) BANI LADGHAM  
SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE PRESIDENCY  
AND NATIONAL DEFENCE

61-04165

