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REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL ON CERTAIN STEPS TAKEN
III REGARD TO THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL
RESOLUTION ADOPTED ON 21 FEBRUARY 1961

Letter dated 6 March 1961 from the President of the Republic
of the Congo addressed to the Secretary-General

In pursuance of the resolutions adopted by the Security Council on 21 February, you sent me two letters, dated 28 February and 3 March, to which I have given my fullest attention.

It will not be possible for me to reply to all the points which you make in these letters. The main object of our concern at the present time is the conference of Congolese leaders at Tananarive, which represents an extremely important effort to find a solution to the problems which are dividing the country. This conference, the idea of which was suggested by the United Nations Conciliation Commission, will cause me to be absent from Leopoldville for several days, since I shall spare no effort to restore peace in the Congo by means of conciliation.

In this letter, I wish to deal only with the problem of reorganizing the Army and, with a view to putting an end to the present difficult situation, to propose a few principles which, after discussion with your representatives, might provide a basis for agreement on reorganization of the units of the Congolese National Army.

In the present circumstances, such a reorganization constitutes the most important problem after that of maintaining the country's unity, and it is a problem whose solution calls for exceptional care and skill. Indeed, the talk by responsible United Nations officials of "disarming" the Army was enough to induce in the latter, whose discipline was still very weak, such animosity that there have been increasing acts of hostility towards units of the United Nations Force, civilians and everything connected in any way with United Nations services. These

have taken place despite the explicit orders of the Congolese authorities and despite all the efforts made to calm prevailing passions. To complete the picture I may add that the arrival of a strong force of Lumumbist soldiers at Luluabourg, at a time when the United Nations leaders were intensifying their efforts to persuade the heads of the National Army to refrain from any offensive action, outraged Congolese public opinion and that we are at present passing through a period of such tension and nervousness that any incident whatever can have the gravest consequences. Yesterday it was Moanda, Matadi and Boma; tomorrow, it may be anywhere in Equateur Province. A serious outbreak may occur at any time.

This is the situation that prevails as you request me to take urgent measures to implement the Security Council resolutions. It is impossible to consider such measures in the oversimplified and completely Utopian form of simply ejecting the Belgian military personnel. As far as the troops under General Mobutu's command are concerned, they have a total of fourteen Belgian officers.

I am well aware that your representative at Leopoldville speaks of a hundred or so officers, but that is yet another case in which he is giving you incorrect information. Our figures can be verified and we shall be very glad to provide the United Nations Command with all the necessary information to substantiate them. Thus, the departure of these fourteen officers will solve absolutely nothing, as any sensible person will concede. On the contrary, if their departure is not accompanied by measures to bring the Army once more under control and discipline, it is likely to be a further source of disturbance and apprehension in the Army, as Supreme Commander, I cannot expose the country to that risk.

What, then, are the reorganization measures that should be considered and what action should be taken to ensure that they are applied smoothly and without misunderstandings which might end in tragedy?

The Government considers that such measures should be based on those proposed by the Conciliation Commission in its provisional report. In that connexion it puts forward the following five proposals, which, in its opinion, can provide the basis for a sound solution of the problem:

1. The National Army shall remain under the command of the President of the Republic, who, by virtue of his office, is the person best able to insulate it from all politics and to give it the assurance that reorganization

will not have the effect of depriving the country of the Army which is vital to its sovereignty. This is a basic condition; it alone can ensure that the announcement of a reorganization of the Army will not result in flights into the bush and the prospect of prolonged guerrilla warfare.

2. The reorganization must embrace the entire country, including Orientale Province, Kivu, South Kasai and Katanga. The Government is prepared to initiate the operation at once in the units under General Mobutu's command, without necessarily waiting for it to be launched simultaneously in the other units. However, this is subject to the condition that a satisfactory agreement is reached on the matter with the military leaders at Stanleyville, Bakwanga and Elisabethville and, furthermore, that it is well understood that, should it prove impossible to reorganize these dissident troops, the operation may be suspended forthwith in the loyal units.

3. A National Defence Council shall be set up by the President of the Republic and shall be under his authority. It shall include Congolese military leaders and representatives of the United Nations Force, and its President could be a high-ranking neutral officer responsible solely to the President of the Republic. The Council shall be instructed to draw up a detailed programme for the training and reorganization of the Congolese National Army. It shall make any proposals necessary for the successful accomplishment of its mission and it shall be supported both by the Congolese authorities and by the United Nations Force in putting its programme into effect.

4. A timing of work may be proposed, but it is likely to be based on such inadequately studied data that it would not be practicable. In any event, the Government would have no objection to the operation being initiated as soon as agreement can be reached on the above proposals.

5. It is understood that the Congolese Government retains the right to accept or to refuse the technicians who will be proposed by the National Council of Defence and recruited through United Nations channels. The Congolese Government intends strictly to safeguard the neutrality of the Army and it will be unable to allow officers or N.C.O's who are responsible for the control and training of the Army to take advantage of their position in order to bring subversive influences or influences that run counter to the national interest to bear upon it.

The Congolese Government is convinced that only an operation conducted under the above-mentioned conditions can have any chance of success. It fervently hopes that the Security Council will understand the full need to act according to the directives proposed in this letter, which have one sole objective: to restore peace in the Congo, in respect for the constitutional authorities of the country and without derogating from the national sovereignty.

I venture to believe, Sir, that you will use all your influence to ensure that an agreement may be reached shortly which will put an end to this difficult period we are experiencing and which will eliminate all the painful incidents which we, like you, find reprehensible and whose repetition we wish at all costs to prevent.

I have the honour to be etc.

(Signed) Joseph KASA-VUEU
President of the Republic

(Signed) Justin BOMBOKO
Minister for Foreign Affairs
and for External Trade
