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: FRENCH

LETTER DATED 23 JULY 1961 FROM THE REPRESENTATIVE OF TUNISIA ADDRESSED
TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

On instructions from my Government, and following my telegram of today's date, I have the honour to draw your attention to the very serious situation which continues to prevail in Bizerta as a result of the attitude of the French troops, despite the decision calling for a cease-fire which the Security Council adopted on 22 July 1961.

As far as the actual implementation of the Council's decision is concerned, the Tunisian Government is encountering evasions and delaying tactics which denote signal bad faith if not a deliberate intention to frustrate the operation of the Security Council resolution calling for the immediate cessation of military action and the withdrawal of the opposing forces to their original positions. Up to now the cease-fire has not been strictly observed on the French side, since the French forces are still engaging in abductions, summary executions and all kinds of extortions, all under the threat of arms.

Moreover, it has not been possible to establish any contact in Bizerta in order to solve such urgent problems as the supply of water, the restoration of electric current and the freedom of movement essential for the supply of a town threatened with famine.

The authority of the Governor, administrative action and the operation of justice are paralysed.

Excessive and intolerable measures are being taken by the French forces, who have set up a veritable occupation regime. Thus the curfew enables the French troops to carry out raids on the population in the town. These activities are a source of provocation which might lead to a rupture of the cease-fire.

The Tunisian Government deplores the fact that it has not been possible to establish any contact between the Tunisian authorities and the representatives of the French armed forces owing to the unacceptable conditions laid down by the

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French Admiral. Thus, while in the Sahara the French Command has demanded the withdrawal of the Tunisians to their original position, in Bizerta the Admiral in command of the French forces refuses to consider the withdrawal of his own forces.

Consequently, the Tunisian Government, anxious to comply faithfully with the Security Council's decision, wishes to affirm that it remains willing for the representatives of the two Governments to meet in Tunis for the purpose of discussing methods for implementing the Security Council's decision.

I should be grateful if you would kindly arrange to have this letter circulated as a Security Council document.

In again drawing your attention and that of the members of the Council to the serious threat which this situation, created by the action of the French troops, represents for international peace and security, I have the honour to be, etc.

(Signed) MONGI SLEM
Representative of Tunisia
to the Security Council

