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LETTER DATED 15 OCTOBER 1956 FROM THE FOREIGN MINISTER OF EGYPT
ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

I have the honour to bring to your attention the following:

During the debate in the Security Council on the question of the Suez Canal, and particularly in the course of the Council's meeting on 13 October 1956, several representatives, including myself stressed the importance of providing the proper atmosphere for future negotiations and of avoiding anything which would be of a nature to affect negatively their progress and the chances of their success.

As a contribution by the Government of Egypt to this end, I accepted on its behalf, the six principles which were later confirmed by the Security Council in its resolution on 13 October 1956; and I did not press for the immediate consideration of the item which figured on the Council's agenda as paragraph 3 and which reads as follows, "Actions against Egypt by some powers, particularly France and the United Kingdom, which constitute a danger to international peace and security and are serious violations of the Charter of the United Nations".

It is, therefore, a matter of deep regret and of real concern to all those who believe that a peaceful negotiated settlement of the Suez Canal question is the only way in which it can be resolved, to be faced with such statements by such highly placed and highly responsible statesmen as the one given only the day before yesterday by the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom, Sir Anthony Eden.

You will recall, Mr. President, that in this statement, the British Prime Minister announced that Britain would continue its military measures in the Eastern Mediterranean; and added, "We have always said that with us force is the last resort, but it cannot be excluded". The Prime Minister continued that Britain has refused to say that "in no circumstances would we ever use force".

This extremely unfortunate statement evokes the memory of other statements to the same effect made recently on the same subject by Sir Anthony Eden himself and by several other British responsible statesmen.

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The timing of the statement of the British Prime Minister is no less unfortunate than the statement itself; as it came at a moment when the Foreign Ministers of Egypt, France and the United Kingdom had their Governments' approval of the six principles which were later adopted by the Security Council on 13 October 1956.

I hardly need to point out the destructive nature of such statements, and their going counter to the recommendations made during the debate in the Security Council in behalf of providing the proper atmosphere for negotiating a peaceful settlement of the Suez Canal question and of avoiding anything which would be of a nature to affect negatively the progress and the chances of success of such negotiations.

This is the more so in view of the fact that the Governments of France and the United Kingdom are persevering in the military and economic measures which they initiated after the nationalization of the former Suez Canal Company.

No less serious than all this is the extremely damaging effect of such statements and such economic and military measures on the freedom of the proposed negotiations.

It is, furthermore, particularly to be noted that these statements and measures, instead of insulating the Suez Canal from politics as stipulated in the resolution of the Security Council, are of a nature to throw this question into the turmoil of politics.

I have the honour to request that the contents of this letter be brought to the attention of the members of the Security Council and circulated as an official document.

I avail myself of this opportunity etc.

(Signed) Mahmoud Fawzi
Minister for Foreign Affairs
of Egypt

