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REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL ON THE UNITED NATIONS IRAN-IRAQ
MILITARY OBSERVER GROUP

(for the period 3 February-22 September 1989)

Introduction

1. The United Nations Iran-Iraq Military Observer Group (UNIIMOG) was established for an initial period of six months by the Security Council under the terms of its resolution 619 (1988) of 9 August 1988. By the same resolution, the Security Council requested the Secretary-General to keep the Council fully informed of further developments. A preliminary account of the activities of UNIIMOG during the Group's first 10 weeks was submitted to the Council in my interim report of 25 October 1988 (S/20242). A subsequent report dated 2 February 1989 (S/20442) covered the period 9 August 1988 to 2 February 1989. On 8 February 1989, the Council adopted resolution 631 (1989) in which it decided to renew the mandate of UNIIMOG until 30 September 1989 and requested the Secretary-General to submit, by that date, a report on the developments in the situation and the measures taken to implement Security Council resolution 598 (1987).

2. Accordingly, the present report covers the period from 3 February to 22 September 1989 and is intended to provide the Council with a comprehensive account of the manner in which UNIIMOG has carried out the mandate entrusted to it during that period and of my efforts to bring about implementation in full of resolution 598 (1987).

Mandate and terms of reference

3. The mandate of UNIIMOG was defined in paragraph 3 of my report of 7 August 1988 (S/20093), which was approved by the Security Council in paragraph 1 of its resolution 619 (1988) of 9 August 1988, in the following terms:

(a) To establish with the parties agreed cease-fire lines on the basis of the forward defended localities occupied by the two sides on D-day but adjusting these, as may be agreed, when the positions of the two sides are judged to be dangerously close to each other;

(b) To monitor compliance with the cease-fire;

(c) To investigate any alleged violations of the cease-fire and restore the situation if a violation has taken place;

(d) To prevent, through negotiation, any other change in the status quo, pending withdrawal of all forces to the internationally recognized boundaries;

(e) To supervise, verify and confirm the withdrawal of all forces to the internationally recognized boundaries;

(f) Thereafter, to monitor the cease-fire on the internationally recognized boundaries, investigate alleged violations and prevent, through negotiation, any other change in the status quo, pending negotiation of a comprehensive settlement;

(g) To obtain the agreement of the parties to other arrangements which, pending negotiation of a comprehensive settlement, could help to reduce tension and build confidence between them, such as the establishment of areas of separation of forces on either side of the international border, limitations on the number and calibre of weapons to be deployed in areas close to the international border and patrolling by United Nations naval personnel of certain sensitive areas in or near the Shatt al-Arab.

4. In accordance with its mandate, UNIIMOG monitors the cease-fire lines of 20 August 1988. In those areas where it has been unable to gain access to the cease-fire lines either because of restrictions imposed on its freedom of movement by the parties (see para. 13 below) or because of the inaccessibility of the terrain, UNIIMOG has conducted its observations from a flank or from the air.

5. As reflected in the present report, UNIIMOG continues successfully to monitor compliance with the cease-fire. It has investigated all alleged violations and in most cases has been able, through negotiations at the team site, sector and headquarters levels, to restore the situation if a violation has taken place. There have nevertheless been some changes in the status quo but, with the exception of those mentioned in this and previous reports, they have been minor in nature. As the withdrawal of forces to the internationally recognized boundaries has not yet taken place, part of UNIIMOG's mandate remains unimplemented.

6. As reported in paragraph 26 below, preliminary agreements have been concluded with the Governments of the Islamic Republic of Iran and of Iraq in connection with the status of UNIIMOG. They embody the principles of the Charter of the United Nations and of the Convention on the Privileges and Immunities of the United Nations, as well as the experience of previous United Nations peace-keeping operations, so as to ensure UNIIMOG's ability to function independently and, in particular, the freedom of movement and communications and other facilities that are necessary for the performance of its tasks.

Composition, command and deployment

7. The command of UNIIMOG continues to be exercised by the Chief Military Observer (CMO), Major-General Slavko Jovic (Yugoslavia). The Assistant Chief

Military Observer (ACMO) on the Iranian side was Brigadier-General J. Kelly (Ireland) until 9 September 1989. The current ACMO in Iran is Brigadier-General T. Källstrom (Sweden), who took up his appointment on the same date. On the Iraqi side the ACMO continues to be Brigadier V. M. Patil (India).

8. As of September 1989, the strength of UNIIMOG, including headquarters staff in Baghdad and Tehran, was as follows:

United Nations Military Observers:

Argentina	10
Australia	15
Austria	6
Bangladesh	15
Canada	15
Denmark	15
Finland	15
Ghana	15
Hungary	15
India (including the ACMO)	15
Indonesia	15
Ireland	14
Italy	15
Kenya	15
Malaysia	15
New Zealand	10
Nigeria	16
Norway	15
Peru	7
Poland	15
Senegal	15
Sweden (including the ACMO)	16
Turkey	15
Uruguay	12
Yugoslavia	11
Zambia	<u>9</u>
	<u>351</u>

Air Unit

New Zealand 17

Military Police Unit

Ireland 36

Medical Section

Austria 4

TOTAL 408

9. There may be further additions to the military strength of UNIIMOG when deployment of its air unit is completed. It is still my intention, in accordance with subparagraph (g) of UNIIMOG's mandate, to add a small naval unit when agreement has been reached with the parties on the patrolling by UNIIMOG of the Shatt al-Arab and/or adjacent waters in the Gulf.

10. One hundred and five international staff and 93 local civilian staff members are in the mission area at present. This is appreciably less than the number of posts authorized. Difficulties persisted in the recruitment of certain specialist international staff whose skills were also required by other newly established United Nations peace-keeping missions. Recruitment of local staff was handicapped by procedural difficulties in Iran. Some supporting staff have not been recruited pending the successful outcome of negotiations on the deployment of UNIIMOG-operated helicopters and the establishment of a naval unit. In general, UNIIMOG continues to pursue a very cautious recruitment policy in order to ensure that only those positions for which an immediate need has been established will be occupied.

11. The deployment of UNIIMOG as of September 1989 is shown on the map annexed to the present report. It should be noted that minor errors on the previous map have been corrected and that new sector boundaries in Iraq are shown.

12. As I reported in February 1989, the activities of UNIIMOG in Iraq and Iran are directed by the Chief Military Observer and his senior staff (the "Command Group") who spend alternate weeks at the Baghdad and Tehran headquarters. The United Nations Military Observers in the field continue to be deployed in four sectors on the Iranian side, with headquarters at Saqqez, Bakhtaran, Dezful and Ahwaz, and three on the Iraqi side, with headquarters at Sulaimaniyah, Ba'quba and Basra. Each sector headquarters controls a number of team sites which provide the patrols on the cease-fire line. The length of the cease-fire line monitored by a team site varies from 70 kilometres in the southern part of the operational area to 250 km in the mountainous north. The locations of team sites and sector headquarters on both sides are generally satisfactory, but negotiations and preparations are under way in both Iran and Iraq to adjust the location of some sector headquarters and team sites in order to improve UNIIMOG's operational effectiveness.

Operations

13. The operations of the UNIIMOG military observers continue to be as described in my reports of 2 February 1989 (S/20442, para. 12) and 25 October 1988 (S/20242, para. 9). UNIIMOG deploys each day an average of 64 patrols which operate around the clock by vehicle, by boat, by air or on foot. Patrolling is co-ordinated among sectors to ensure effective coverage of the entire cease-fire line, the fundamental principle being to position patrols at the right place at the right time to prevent cease-fire violations or to contain and resolve such violations when they occur. Quick reactions by patrols to serious incidents, such as firing, have succeeded in defusing potentially explosive situations. As noted in paragraph 4 above, the United Nations Military Observers continue on occasion to be denied access to certain operational areas by both parties. Whenever necessary, such interference

with their freedom of movement is protested to those concerned. On the Iranian side, lack of liaison officers, interpreters, escort officers and/or vehicles has frequently made it necessary to cancel planned patrols. The Iranian authorities have recently promised to train additional liaison officers. The problem will be further eased when agreement is reached on the use of UNIIMOG vehicles in all sectors in Iran (see para. 23 below).

14. In February 1989 I reported (see S/20442, para. 12) that the two sides had agreed to the opening of three crossing points to enable United Nations personnel and vehicles to cross from one side to the other. However, I must now report that the Iranian authorities have not so far found it possible in practice to agree to open any of these points.

15. In order to improve UNIIMOG's operational effectiveness, periodic reviews are made of its organization. As a result of the latest review, the headquarters staff in Baghdad and Tehran was reduced to 20 in each capital, thus freeing six officers at each location for United Nations Military Observer duties in the field.

16. Throughout the mandate period there was a general calm along the cease-fire line except for six firing incidents, one in February, three in March, one in June and one in July 1989. It is noteworthy that, despite their seriousness, these incidents remained localized and did not spread to adjacent areas. It is also encouraging that both parties responded positively and promptly to UNIIMOG's efforts to bring the incidents to an end. In addition to firing incidents, both parties reported large numbers of alleged violations to UNIIMOG. Many of these could not be confirmed after investigation either because concrete evidence was lacking or because of the time that had elapsed since the alleged violation had taken place. UNIIMOG investigated all alleged violations and by 31 August 1989 had recorded 1,435 violations as confirmed. Approximately 80 per cent of the violations involve minor improvements to defences and other routine activities of troops in defence. In all cases UNIIMOG endeavours to persuade the party concerned to stop or to remove the violation and to restore the status quo. This approach is quite often successful. When it is not, protests are lodged with the offending party and efforts continue to remove the violation.

17. At some points on the cease-fire line the parties continue to remain dangerously close. Efforts by UNIIMOG to persuade them to move their forces back from these areas of possible confrontation have been only partially successful. In addition, some of the violations referred to in the previous paragraph result from attempts by both parties to move troops forward or to establish outposts or other positions ahead of their forward defended localities, often provoking a matching manoeuvre by the other party. In these sensitive areas UNIIMOG tries to restore the status quo by obtaining the pulling back of all forces deployed in no-man's land.

18. The flooding of no-man's land by the Islamic Republic of Iran which began on 13 September 1988 and was described in paragraph 14 of my report of 2 February 1989 (S/20442) was extended southwards and reached the banks of the Shatt al-Arab by May 1989. During the dry summer months the water level fell and the flooded area was somewhat reduced. However, it is important that this situation be rapidly rectified.

19. Each side has complained that it is exposed in the north to cross-border insurgent activities launched from the other side. UNIIMOG has not directly observed any such activities, which it believes to take place at night and in area where its freedom of movement is most restricted on both sides. It has investigated a number of alleged incidents of this kind in no-man's land or in the immediate proximity of the cease-fire lines but has not been able to reach definitive conclusions about what had happened. It is important that neither side should permit activities on its territory which could jeopardize the maintenance of the cease-fire.

20. Efforts by UNIIMOG to persuade the Iraqi authorities to allow the fires in the three oil and gas wells which are burning in no-man's land on Iranian territory in the Dehloran area (see S/20442, para. 15) to be extinguished continued to be unsuccessful.

21. In my previous report I indicated that agreement had been reached with both sides to start the work of the mixed military working group which I had proposed to the parties. Unfortunately it has proved impossible to obtain agreement on the meeting place or terms of reference and the group has not been convened thus far. Despite this, the CMO has continued to pursue a number of measures which have helped, or could help, to ease tension between the parties:

(a) Repatriation of war dead. A total of 955 Iranian and 973 Iraqi war dead were repatriated during the period. This activity is worth while both for humanitarian reasons and because it fosters goodwill towards UNIIMOG.

(b) Prisoners taken since the cease-fire. UNIIMOG continued to make representations to Iraq for the release of several hundred Iranian soldiers who were taken prisoner in a serious incident near Ein Kosh shortly after the cease-fire on 23-24 August 1988, together with the exchange of other prisoners captured since 20 August 1988, but it has not yet proved possible to obtain the Iraqi authorities' agreement to this.

(c) Economic reconstruction. Both parties have expressed their strong desire to proceed with economic reconstruction and UNIIMOG has on several occasions been able to assist this process by providing United Nations Military Observers to monitor reconstruction activities close to the cease-fire line and to assure the other side that no work is being done for military purposes.

Logistics

22. Both host Governments have provided very suitable accommodation for UNIIMOG headquarters in their respective capitals. Accommodation, both office and residential, which has been provided by the two Governments in locations normally occupied by their own forces at sector headquarters and team sites is at a generally satisfactory level. In the light of experience and some changed circumstances, some minor adjustments are being made or contemplated to locate team sites nearer to the cease-fire lines and some improvements in existing accommodations are being carried out. In addition to restrictions on the movement

of UNIIMOG in the operational areas which have been referred to elsewhere in this report, the lack of freedom of movement allowed to UNIIMOG personnel for recreational purposes in some locations on both sides continued to be a problem. UNIIMOG will continue its efforts to improve the situation without infringing on the security concerns of the two Governments.

23. It will be recalled that at the outset of the mission the two Governments provided land and air transport to UNIIMOG on a provisional basis, pending deployment of UNIIMOG's own means of transportation. UNIIMOG is now entirely self-sufficient in land transport in Iraq. However, it has not yet been able to deploy in Iran most of its vehicles which arrived there between December 1988 and February 1989. UNIIMOG personnel have been permitted to drive UNIIMOG vehicles in Tehran since June and in the Ahwaz (southern) sector since July 1989, but UNIIMOG vehicles still cannot be deployed in the three other sectors.

24. UNIIMOG continues to have at its disposal a Jetstream aircraft generously provided by the Government of Switzerland. This is principally used for communications between Baghdad and Tehran. An Andover aircraft of the Royal New Zealand Air Force stationed in the Iranian capital is used for supply flights between Tehran and sectors on the Iranian side and, when needed, between Iran and Iraq. The contracted Twin Otter aircraft is used for the same purpose on the Iraqi side. The approval of the Iranian authorities has not yet been granted for the deployment of an additional fixed-wing aircraft in Iran as originally foreseen. Likewise, negotiations for the deployment of UNIIMOG-operated helicopters, which the Group urgently needs to enhance its patrolling capability, have not led to a positive conclusion. In the mean time, both Governments provide helicopters for transport purposes. However, flights along the cease-fire line, which would increase UNIIMOG's ability to carry out its mandate to monitor compliance with the cease-fire, particularly in difficult terrain, cannot be undertaken in the current circumstances.

25. In addition to the use of land lines made available by both Governments, a communications network has been established in both countries and is maintained by United Nations civilian radio technicians. A number of problems have been encountered because of the difficult terrain; some of these are being resolved and systems are being improved. In Iran, the fact that many UNIIMOG vehicles equipped with radios cannot yet be deployed there prevents communication to and from mobile patrols. UNIIMOG also continues to suffer from the absence of satellite communications, particularly the lack of an easy and reliable link between the two headquarters. The installation of satellite equipment has been completed in Baghdad but the necessary equipment is still being held in customs in Iran, pending the Iranian authorities' permission to install it.

Relations with the parties

26. Discussions with the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran in connection with the status of UNIIMOG continued and resulted in the conclusion of a preliminary agreement on 28 March 1989. Modalities for the full and effective implementation of the agreement have been the subject of further discussions

between the Government and the United Nations. Some of the difficulties which have arisen have been resolved to mutual satisfaction, including visas and the import of official consignments for UNIIMOG. However, as indicated elsewhere in this report, some important questions relating to UNIIMOG's status and operations still remain unresolved. Negotiations continue with a view to ensuring that UNIIMOG will be fully operational and able to fulfil the mandate entrusted to it by the Security Council. As mentioned in my previous report (S/20442, para. 20), a preliminary agreement on the status of UNIIMOG was concluded with the Government of Iraq on 5 November 1988. During the period covered by this report, implementation of the agreement has continued without difficulties.

Financial aspects

27. By its resolution 43/230 of 21 December 1988, the General Assembly authorized the Secretary-General to enter into commitments for UNIIMOG at a rate not to exceed \$7,986,000 gross (\$7,889,000 net) per month, with prior concurrence of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (ACABQ), for the 12-month period beginning 9 February 1989, should the Security Council decide to continue the Force beyond the period of six months authorized under its resolution 619 (1988). By its resolution 631 (1989) of 8 February 1989, the Security Council extended the mandate of UNIIMOG to 30 September 1989. In the event that the Council decides to extend UNIIMOG beyond its current mandate period, the costs to the United Nations for its maintenance during the extension period would be within the commitment authorized by General Assembly resolution 43/230, assuming continuance of UNIIMOG's existing responsibilities.

28. Should the mandate be extended beyond 8 February 1990, the Secretary-General will report to ACABQ and to the General Assembly during its forty-fourth session the additional requirements needed for the maintenance of UNIIMOG.

29. At the beginning of September 1989, unpaid assessed contributions to the UNIIMOG Special Account for the mandate period ending 30 September 1989 amounted to \$33.5 million, while voluntary contributions received in cash amounted to \$11 million.

Implementation of Security Council resolution 598 (1987)

30. In pursuance of my efforts aimed at implementing Security Council resolution 598 (1987) and as envisaged in my letter of 8 August 1988, talks between the Foreign Ministers of the Islamic Republic of Iran and of Iraq have continued under my auspices. Four joint plenary meetings have been held with the Foreign Ministers since my previous report to the Security Council of 2 February 1989 (S/20442).

31. On 9 February 1989, I met in New York with the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs of Iraq and on 10 February 1989 with the Foreign Minister of the Islamic Republic of Iran. Those meetings were followed on 10 February by a joint plenary meeting. On that occasion I referred to the suggestions which had been brought to the attention of the Ministers in the latter

part of 1988. It was agreed that preparatory talks would be held between my Personal Representative and delegations from each of the two countries to lay the groundwork for a round of joint ministerial meetings later in the spring.

32. In March and April 1989, my Personal Representative Ambassador Eliasson, in separate meetings with delegations from Baghdad and Tehran, focused on the need to reach concurrence on the framework for talks at the ministerial level. Those meetings were followed by a fifth round of joint plenary meetings under my chairmanship which took place in Geneva from 20 to 23 April 1989 with the Foreign Minister of the Islamic Republic of Iran and the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs of Iraq.

33. In May and June 1989, extensive consultations continued with officials of the Islamic Republic of Iran and of Iraq, with a view to exploring the prospects for a more fruitful joint ministerial meeting than those previously held.

34. On 4 July 1989, I met in Geneva with the Foreign Minister of the Islamic Republic of Iran and on 6 July in Rome with the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs of Iraq. At both meetings I stressed my concern that almost a year after the cease-fire had taken effect only parts of paragraphs 1 and 2 of the resolution had been implemented.

35. In preparation for my proposed meetings with the leaders of the delegations of the Islamic Republic of Iran and of Iraq to the Non-Aligned Summit meeting in Belgrade, my Personal Representative met in Geneva from 20 to 23 August 1989 with representatives of both Governments. On 4 September 1989, I met in Belgrade with the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Islamic Republic of Iran and on 5 September 1989 with the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs of Iraq. Both sides agreed that another round of talks as previously held in Geneva and New York would not be fruitful at that stage. They instead gave favourable consideration to my suggestion that, at a mutually convenient time in the fall, my Personal Representative make an open-ended visit to the area in an effort to further the implementation of the resolution.

Observations

36. As will be clear from earlier sections of this report, the cease-fire has, to a very large extent, been maintained during the mandate period which is about to end. Since it came into effect on 20 August 1988 there have been a few serious violations and many minor ones, but in general the parties have honoured their commitment to respect the cease-fire and have extended a great deal of co-operation to UNIIMOG. However, I remain concerned both about the restrictions imposed on UNIIMOG's freedom of movement in various locations (although I recognize that in many cases these restrictions result from the parties' laudable concern for the security of United Nations personnel) and about UNIIMOG's inability, as indicated in this report, to obtain all the facilities and co-operation which it needs to carry out the mandate entrusted to it by the Security Council.

37. While on the whole the cease-fire has held during the period under review, it is a matter of widespread concern that one year has elapsed without any further progress beyond the partial implementation of paragraphs 1 and 2 of Security Council resolution 598 (1987). The present situation of no war-no peace contains elements of instability not only for the two countries concerned but also for the region. Both parties have repeatedly expressed their commitment to achieving the full implementation of resolution 598 (1987). Due largely to mutual mistrust, however, the divergence in their interpretations of how this is to be accomplished has prevented forward movement. The respective positions of the parties have been made known in documents circulated by the Security Council.

38. In essence Iraq stresses that resolution 598 (1987) should be fully implemented as a peace plan. It affirms that it bases its position on the resolution and my letter to the parties of 8 August 1988, of which the Council has been informed. Its main concern is the implementation of the other provisions of the resolution, once the withdrawal to the internationally recognized boundaries has been carried out. Iraq maintains that the direct talks it had envisaged to reach a common understanding of the provisions of the resolution as a whole have yet to take place.

39. Iran, on the other hand, maintains that the withdrawal to the internationally recognized boundaries is a mandatory provision of the resolution which should be carried out without delay or pre-conditions. It asserts that the withdrawal should be implemented as a first step, together with the cease-fire, in accordance with paragraph 1 of the resolution. However, Iran can accept a limited package within the framework of my 1 October 1988 presentation (see S/20442, para. 27).

40. In addition, the parties have taken different views of how and when to implement paragraph 3 concerning release and repatriation of prisoners of war. Iraq states that, on a basis of reciprocity and in the context of the Third Geneva Convention, it would be prepared to release and repatriate all prisoners of war immediately. Iran has made clear its readiness to repatriate the prisoners in the context of the implementation of the resolution, and thus not before the withdrawal is carried out. Throughout my discussions, I have continued to urge the parties, regardless of reciprocity, to allow the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) to proceed with visits to, as well as registration and notification of, all prisoners of war being held in their countries. I have also encouraged the immediate release and repatriation of all sick and wounded prisoners on both sides.

41. Over the past months, I and my Personal Representative have continued our efforts for the implementation of the resolution, in a manner consistent with my letter of 8 August 1988, my 1 October 1988 presentation and subsequent discussions. We have stressed the need to implement the resolution as an integrated whole, an approach which the Council has repeatedly supported, and have also underlined the urgency which the Council attributed to particular provisions of the resolution. Clearly the Council had in mind that some provisions are urgent, and some may take longer to implement. The resolution demands a withdrawal to the internationally recognized boundaries without delay. Further, it urges the release and repatriation of the prisoners of war without delay. There is, however, also a concurrent need to assure each side of the other's firm commitment to the

full implementation of the resolution, even though all the elements do not require the same amount of time to be implemented. Such assurances, which would be in conformity with relevant principles of international law, should be given in a manner that would lay the foundation for stability and peace in the region. In this context, the full resumption of the economic life of the two countries would be to the advantage of both.

42. As for the withdrawal of foreign troops, Iraq has repeatedly stated, as recently as the current month, that it holds no claim to any part of Iranian territory. The concern has been expressed by Iraq that if withdrawal were to take place in isolation, it would perpetuate the situation of no war-no peace and instability in the region. Iran has expressed the concern that Iraq is procrastinating on the withdrawal by questioning Iran's intentions as to their future relations. The anxieties and fears of both sides have to be allayed if stability in the region, another objective of resolution 598 (1987), is to be achieved.

43. I am confident that the leadership of both countries will make it possible for my Personal Representative to address the issues in a substantive and constructive way when he visits the area later in the fall. I am sure that the Security Council will continue to provide me with all necessary support, bearing in mind its responsibility for the full implementation of resolution 598 (1987).

44. For its part, UNIIMOG has played an indispensable role in ensuring the maintenance of the cease-fire and I am convinced that its continued presence is an essential condition for further progress towards the full implementation of resolution 598 (1987). Both the parties have assured me of their support for UNIIMOG and of their agreement that its mandate should be extended. I accordingly recommend to the Security Council that the mandate be renewed for a period of six months, that is until 31 March 1990.

45. Finally, I wish to recognize here the key role played by Brigadier-General J. Kelly, the former Assistant Chief Military Observer on the Iranian side, during the critical first year of UNIIMOG's existence and to commend him for his lasting contribution. I also take this opportunity to pay tribute to Major-General Slavko Jovic, the Chief Military Observer, and to all the men and women under his command, both military and civilian, for the skill and determination with which they continue to carry out their difficult assignment. Their performance and bearing have been of a high order, reflecting credit on themselves, on their countries and on the United Nations.
