



Security Council

Distr.
GENERAL

S/17137
1 May 1985

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

LETTER DATED 1 MAY 1985 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE
ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE
SECRETARY-GENERAL

Upon instructions from my Government, I have the honour to invite your attention to the following.

On 1 February 1985, the spokesman of the Iraqi Foreign Ministry announced: "Mr. Saddam Hussein ordered the release of Iranian prisoners who were captured by the second army yesterday. The said prisoners, who were captured in central fronts during the operation of 27/28 January 1985, will be handed over to the International Committee of the Red Cross. They are given the choice of staying in Iraq, of going to any country, or of returning to Iran".

Your Excellency is aware that on 7 April 1981 the Iraqi régime claimed that it had released a number of missing Iranians in an area called Chuman. Unfortunately, the efforts of the International Committee of the Red Cross as to the fate of these people had no result and the Iraqi régime, in violation of the Geneva Convention of 1949, declared the subject closed (ICRC report No. 985 of 13 April 1981).

It is feared again that Iraq might, under the same guise, refuse to assume responsibility for the fate of the new prisoners of war. Since the release of prisoners of war should be implemented according to articles 6 and 21 of the third Geneva Convention, the Islamic Republic of Iran has addressed the following questions to the International Committee of the Red Cross:

1. When were the prisoners of war allegedly freed by Iraq handed over to the ICRC?
2. When will the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran be informed of the date of their return to Iran and of the list of their names and identities?
3. What measures have been taken by the ICRC to save the lives of the new prisoners of war and to prevent the recurrence of the Iraqi crimes against the prisoners of war mentioned in ICRC report No. 985 of 13 April 1981?

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Owing to the sensitivity of the issue and in order to relieve the families of those prisoners of war whom Iraq claims to have freed, this matter is urgently brought to your attention, so Your Excellency could, as before, use your good offices and have the answers to the foregoing questions expedited by the competent authorities.

It would be highly appreciated if this letter were distributed as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Said RAJAIE-KHORASSANI
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

