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LETTER DATED 15 JANUARY 1990 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF
IRAQ TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

On instructions from my Government, I have the honour to transmit to you herewith the text of the statement made by the Spokesman of the Iraqi Ministry of Foreign Affairs on 11 January 1990 with regard to a report of the Tass news agency on the question of a meeting in Soviet territory of the Ministers for Foreign Affairs of Iraq, Iran and the Soviet Union.

I should be grateful if you would have this letter and its annex circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Abdul-Amir A. AL-ANBARI
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

Annex

Statement of 11 January 1990 by the Spokesman of the
Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Iraq

A spokesman for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs has commented on the report carried by the Soviet news agency Tass on the question of a meeting in Soviet territory of the Ministers for Foreign Affairs of Iraq, Iran and the Soviet Union in the following terms:

"The Soviet Union proposed such a meeting last year, and Iraq informed the Soviet Union of its approval of the idea last August. This was at a time when the Iranian attitude towards that idea was still vacillating and equivocal, in the context of an Iranian policy characterized by deviousness and a desire to avoid direct talks. Iraq would welcome any face-to-face meeting between the two parties, held anywhere, to achieve that common understanding of the provisions of Security Council resolution 598 (1987) stipulated in the agreement of August 1988 under which the cease-fire entered into force. In keeping with that position, Iraq welcomes the proposed meeting in the Soviet Union if it falls within that context, and particularly so because the Soviet Union is a friendly and impartial country and is anxious to bring about peace. It should nevertheless be emphasized that, for the desired goals to be achieved, any meeting must be of an all-inclusive nature and have the objective of achieving a comprehensive and lasting peace and that it should not restrict itself to piecemeal issues.

"If it is held, such a meeting would be no substitute for the initiative announced by President Saddam Hussein on 5 January. This is because meetings in Baghdad and Tehran under the auspices of the Secretary-General of the United Nations, as proposed by President Saddam Hussein, would not only achieve the goal of bringing about a face-to-face encounter between representatives of the two countries but would also provide the opportunity for contact and dialogue between such representatives and the leadership of each of the two countries at every level. They would create new conditions that would put the peoples of the two countries and their leaders in a better frame of mind for the achievement of a comprehensive and lasting peace. Moreover, the other elements of the Iraqi initiative, which relate to the release of all sick and wounded prisoners and those taken prisoner in 1980, 1981 and 1982 and who have spent a very long period of time in captivity, to the registration of those still unregistered, in accordance with the third Geneva Convention, and to the call for the citizens of each of the two countries to be allowed to visit the holy places and religious centres in the other, are basic to any progress towards peace. The war has left adverse impressions and harmful tensions, and it has created an atmosphere of hostility, numerous delusions and a disregard for facts. Meetings between leaders of the two countries and reciprocal visits by their citizens, as proposed in the initiative of President Saddam Hussein, would create favourable conditions for the elimination or minimization of the effects of the war and facilitate the task of bringing about peace and relations of

good-neighbourliness between the two countries, which is the basic objective of resolution 598. For that reason, President Saddam Hussein's initiative of 5 January has met with a warm reception and widespread acceptance from those regional and international circles which support peace.

"We hope that the agreement of the Iranian side to the holding of the proposed meeting in the Soviet Union will not prove to be an attempt to evade the powerful impact of President Saddam Hussein's initiative, to gain time and to revert to its former position."

