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QUESTION OF THE VIOLATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS AND FUNDAMENTAL FREEDOMS
IN ANY PART OF THE WORLD, WITH PARTICULAR REFERENCE TO COLONIAL
AND DEPENDENT COUNTRIES AND TERRITORIES

Letter dated 12 January 1990 from the Permanent Representative of
the People's Republic of China to the United Nations addressed to
the Secretary-General

1. The United Nations Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities adopted a resolution (1989/5) entitled "Situation in China" on 31 August 1989. The Chinese Government's position on the resolution has already been put forth in the statement issued by the spokesman of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China on 2 September 1989. I wish to reiterate here that the Chinese Government firmly rejects the resolution and any other possible action taken pursuant to it for the reasons set out below.
2. The Chinese Government showed the utmost tolerance and restraint in face of the illegal demonstrations.
3. In April and May 1989, illegal demonstrations took place in China's capital, Beijing, lasting for nearly 50 days, and even Tiananmen Square, centre of the nation's political activities, was illegally occupied for a long period of time. The demonstrations were illegal because their organizers, in total disregard of the laws of the State and the relevant regulations of the Beijing municipal government on demonstrations, refused to go through the procedures of application and approval. Those demonstrations had grave consequences, badly disrupting public order, communications and transportation

in Beijing and its residents' normal life, and seriously interfering with the normal activities of the Government and even the activities of the official visit of an important State guest. In the mean time, the Chinese Government always exercised great restraint in an effort to solve the problem through persuasion and guidance. In mid-May, when some students staged a hunger strike at Tiananmen Square, the Chinese Government did its best to mobilize various departments to provide them with medical care, medicine, food and other materials, thus having protected their health and the safety of their life.

4. The imposition of martial law in Beijing was entirely necessary and in line with the provisions of the Constitution of the People's Republic of China.

5. The tolerance and restraint shown by the Chinese Government towards the above-mentioned illegal demonstrations failed to obtain a due response; the turmoil went from bad to worse, and ever more violent were the various activities hostile to the Chinese Government and aimed at subverting the Government of the People's Republic of China and the socialist system of China, activities supported and instigated by foreign forces. At such a critical moment, the Chinese Government could not but adopt the necessary measures. The State Council of the People's Republic of China decided, in accordance with clause 16, article 89, of the Constitution, to impose martial law in parts of Beijing, starting from 20 May. This decision, which was taken for the purpose of maintaining public order, protecting citizens' life and securing State property against any encroachment, was entirely necessary and legitimate.

6. The facts of the past period of over seven months have shown that the imposition of martial law in parts of Beijing was entirely justified. It quickly and effectively checked the turmoil and quelled the anti-Government rebellion in Beijing. It has not only maintained tranquillity in the capital, but has also safeguarded the security of the People's Republic of China. Now the situation in Beijing and the whole country has become stable, social order has returned to normal, production and life are in good order and the task of imposing martial law has been successfully fulfilled. Under such circumstances, the State Council of the People's Republic of China, in accordance with the provisions of clause 16, under article 89 of the Constitution, issued an order on 10 January 1990 lifting the martial law imposed in parts of Beijing as of 11 January 1990. This shows once again the determination of the Chinese Government to adopt timely measures to restore the normal life of society in accordance with the development of the situation.

7. The Chinese Government's actions to put an end to the turmoil and quell the rebellion were justified and legitimate.

8. After the declaration of martial law, the Chinese Government continued to use persuasion through various channels, expressing the hope that the trouble-makers would adopt a rational attitude, stop the turmoil and let public order be restored. However, far from diminishing, the anti-Government turmoil, instigated, incited and manipulated by hostile forces both at home and abroad, became all the more flagrant. On 3 June, the nearly two-month-long turmoil escalated abruptly into a rebellion designed to overthrow the Government by resorting to violence and terrorist means. Driven beyond forbearance, the Chinese Government could not but take decisive measures to

quell the rebellion in order to maintain law and order and protect the life and property of the general public. This was absolutely necessary, justified and legitimate.

9. However, some people have gone so far as to describe the above-mentioned actions by the Chinese Government as armed suppression of a peaceful, pro-democracy movement. This is a slander which ignores facts, confounds right and wrong and involves ulterior motives. The fact is that, during the anti-Government rebellion on 3 and 4 June 1989, a handful of political conspirators gathered a group of hooligans to savagely use violence against the army and the public security personnel who were enforcing martial law under orders. Using sticks, daggers, Molotov cocktails, guns and other lethal weapons, they beat military personnel and burned military vehicles, thus causing serious casualties on the army and the destruction of many military vehicles. Moreover, the ruffians, in disregard of laws and regulations, attacked the headquarters of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China, the State Council and some other important government institutions. This was by no means a "pro-democracy movement" or a "peaceful demonstration". Rather, it was a rebellion aimed at subverting the legal Government of China and the socialist system stipulated in the Chinese Constitution. It is an obligation of any responsible Government to quell rebellion, maintain public order and social stability and safeguard the sanctity of the Constitution. This is an indispensable and just action aimed at protecting the legal rights of citizens.

10. What needs to be pointed out is that, in the whole process of quelling the rebellion, a total of nearly 300 people died, including military personnel of the martial law enforcement troops. Besides ruffians, a small number of onlookers were shot accidentally, which is regrettable, and the Government has dealt appropriately with this matter.

11. The so-called "Tiananmen bloodbath" is sheer fabrication. After the quelling of the rebellion, such rumours as "Tiananmen bloodbath" or "Tiananmen massacre" were produced by some Western mass media. But these rumours have long been punctured by facts. Hou Dejian, a composer from China's Taiwan Province who was among the last to leave Tiananmen Square when troops began their clearing operation in the early morning of 4 June, later confirmed that, during the whole process of departure from the Square, he did not see any student, citizen or PLA soldier being killed or any tank or armoured vehicle rolling over crowds of people. Liu Xiaobo, Zhou Duo, Gao Xin and some students who were with Hou Dejian at the time also confirmed this fact to journalists. All this has forcefully shown that the so-called "Tiananmen bloodbath" was fabricated by people with ulterior motives.

12. It is entirely defensible to punish criminals who have violated the criminal law in accordance with the law.

13. Following the quelling of the rebellion, the Chinese Government has repeatedly stated that it will not inquire into the responsibilities of those students and citizens who were ordinary participants in marches, demonstrations and hunger strikes. However, during the turmoil and rebellion, a handfull of people were engaged in organizing and plotting conspiracies or in such violent acts as beating, smashing, looting, burning and killing, thus violating the Chinese criminal law. Naturally, these criminals should be

brought to justice, which is unobjectionable. Punishment of criminals in accordance with the law is a matter within the realm of a country's sovereignty, and no foreign country or international organization has the right to interfere in it.

14. The use of the United Nations forum by a small number of Western countries to interfere in China's internal affairs constitutes a complete violation of the purposes of the United Nations Charter and the norms governing international relations.

15. After the quelling of the rebellion by the Chinese Government, some Western countries, ignoring facts and relying on nothing but distorted reports and misinformation, made arbitrary accusations against and applied pressures on the Chinese Government. They even went so far as to give open permission and support to criminals wanted by the Chinese public security organs in carrying out activities against the Chinese Government, and thereby interfered in China's internal affairs. To find a pretext for their unjust acts, they slandered China on the so-called human rights issue. This is the background against which members of some Western countries on the Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities plotted the adoption of the resolution on "Situation on China". They even altered the normal voting procedure of the Sub-Commission, thereby imposing their own will on the Sub-Commission to serve their political aims. This is a serious violation of the purposes and principles of the United Nations Charter. Such erroneous acts, if allowed to continue, will certainly cause even greater damage to the reputation of the United Nations and its human rights institution.

16. I am hereby instructed to request Your Excellency to distribute this letter as an official document of the United Nations Commission on Human Rights.

(Signed) Li Luye
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

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