



Sixteenth session

LETTER DATED 20 NOVEMBER 1961 FROM THE MINISTER FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS
OF ITALY ADDRESSED TO THE ACTING SECRETARY-GENERAL

The expressions of grief and sympathy for the massacre of thirteen Italian airmen in the Congo which you have addressed to me have indeed been appreciated by the Government and the people of Italy. In this very sad episode, which has profoundly shocked the public opinion of my country, we have found comfort in the words of solidarity from Your Excellency, as well as from members of the Security Council and other Member States.

Whilst the Security Council is continuing in its efforts to adopt the adequate measures which the present situation in the Congo requires, the Italian Government has welcomed with satisfaction the initiative to create a commission of inquiry which should throw full light on the tragic events of Kindu, in a manner as complete as possible. In this respect, I take occasion to thank Your Excellency for the inclusion of an Italian member in the commission.

In the present phase, and without ignoring the other important duties falling on the United Nations in the complex crisis in the Congo, we feel that one of the most essential and urgent tasks should be to re-establish the authority of the United Nations organs in the Congo, adopting urgently measures intended to ensure in the best manner the safety of the United Nations personnel in the performance of the duties entrusted to it.

This is an essential prerequisite for any action the United Nations may decide upon in the present crisis in the Congo. For this reason it appears most important that the commission of inquiry for the tragic events which occurred in Kindu should act speedily and effectively, with full co-operation between the Congolese Government and the United Nations.

For its direct responsibilities, as a member of the Security Council at that time, the Italian delegation has actively taken part since the very beginning of the events in the Congo in the action of the United Nations. Both within the Security Council and the General Assembly, the Italian Government has made known its point of view and has co-operated with the United Nations efforts in the Congo in the way we considered best. For our part, we shall continue to follow with utmost attention the developments of the Congolese situation in order to offer our contribution to the United Nations decisions.

It is obviously of primary importance that the current session of the Security Council, in its reappraisal, should reach positive results. In effect, world public opinion is most concerned lest the situation in the Congo may again come to moments of great crisis through a continued loss of authority by the Central Government. Its authority should be appropriately upheld and sustained by the United Nations in order to reconstitute the necessary unity of the country. This is, in effect, an indispensable element for the young Republic to proceed on the way of an orderly human and social development.

I should be grateful if you would bring this communication to the attention of the Members of the General Assembly.

(Signed) A. SEGNI
Minister for Foreign Affairs
