



Security Council

Distr.
GENERAL

S/20280
21 November 1988
ENGLISH
ORIGINAL: ARABIC

LETTER DATED 19 NOVEMBER 1988 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF
IRAQ TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

On instructions from my Government, I am transmitting herewith a letter dated 19 November 1988 from Mr. Tariq Aziz, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Iraq, concerning the Iranian side's opening of a sluice to flood the no man's land in the area of Kishk al-Basri and southward in the III Army Corps sector over the whole area from the Zayd forward post southward in the direction of the Shalamchech forward post. The Iranian side is still continuing the flooding operation up to the present time.

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

(Signed) Ismat KITTANI
Permanent Representative

Annex

Letter dated 19 November 1988 from the Deputy Prime Minister
and Minister for Foreign Affairs of Iraq addressed to the
Secretary-General

I have the honour to communicate the following:

1. At 0530 hours on 23 September 1988, the Iranian side opened a sluice to flood the no man's land in the area of Kishk al-Basri and southward in the III Army Corps sector, covering the area from the Zayd forward post southward in the direction of the Shalamchech forward post. The Iranian side is still continuing the flooding operation up to the present time.
2. The international observers at Basra were informed on 23 September 1988, and a patrol was dispatched to witness the breach and intervene promptly to halt the flooding operation opposite our forward positions in the above-mentioned sector.
3. At 1100 hours on 24 September 1988, a meeting was held between the members of the International Observer Group from both sides, and the international observers on the Iranian side undertook at that meeting to halt the flow of water opposite our forward defence positions and to assign a standing patrol to observe the flooding sluice.
4. The observer patrol for the southern sector proceeded to the flooding sluice, and the commanding officer of the patrol promised the commanding officer of the III Army Corps that he and a group of the observers in that sector would meet with his counterpart on the Iranian side on 27 September 1988 to discuss the elimination of the breaches. However, the observers on the Iranian side did not attend at the appointed time, and the Observer Group headquarters in Baghdad was informed of the matter.
5. The competent Iraqi authorities have stated to the international Observer Group a number of times in official memoranda their request for intervention and the exertion of pressure on the Iranian side in order to have the breaches dealt with and serious and intensive measures taken to halt the release of water and close the sluices speedily and have informed it that the measures taken by the Group are not effective in halting the floods and that its previous measures have not produced any results.
6. Mr. Goulding was informed of the situation during his meeting with the Chief of General Staff on 10 October 1988.
7. On 24 October 1988, a meeting was held with the chief of the Observer Group in Iraq, Brigadier Patil, to discuss the latest measures taken with regard to the flooding. Brigadier Patil explained that he had not succeeded with the Iranian side in arriving at the halting of the flooding operation and that he had little hope of the possibility of the Iranian side's keeping its promise to halt the flooding operation, in spite of the many promises which it had given.

8. On 8 November 1988, a meeting was held with the chief of the Observer Group in Iraq, Brigadier Patil, to stress intervention to halt the flooding operation because it had spread to larger areas than before. Emphasis was placed a second time on the failure of the United Nations Observer Group to have the Iranian side halt the flooding operation.

The persistence of the Iranian side on flooding the area constitutes a deliberate and grave violation of the cease-fire and a deliberate attempt to damage our defence positions.

We request you to exert your efforts to have the Iranian side desist from this dangerous behaviour, which impedes steps towards the achievement of a comprehensive and lasting peace.

(Signed) Tariq AZIZ
Deputy Prime Minister and
Minister for Foreign Affairs
of the Republic of Iraq

