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NOTE VERBALE DATED 24 AUGUST 1990 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE
OF TUNISIA TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

The Permanent Representative of Tunisia to the United Nations presents his compliments to the Secretary-General and has the honour to transmit to him herewith the text of a letter dated 24 August 1990 from His Excellency Mr. Ismail Khelil, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Tunisia, concerning the implementation by Tunisia of Security Council resolution 661 (1990).

Annex

Letter dated 24 August 1990 from the Minister for Foreign
Affairs of Tunisia addressed to the Secretary-General

Pursuant to Security Council resolution 661 (1990) of 6 August 1990, I have the honour to inform you as follows:

1. The Republic of Tunisia, as a State Member of the United Nations which constantly adheres to international legitimacy, considers itself bound by the decisions of the Security Council, including those relating to the economic embargo set forth in the aforementioned resolution. The Government has adopted practical measures in that regard.
2. The mechanical application of the embargo measures would have grave repercussions for Tunisia in view of its extensive relations with both Iraq and Kuwait and given the volume of its dealings with them.

Relations with Iraq

The total annual volume of trade is in the order of 225 million dollars, which represents 4 per cent of Tunisia's external trade.

(a) Imports amount to 100 million dollars a year and are exemplified, in particular, by quantities of petroleum and sulphur.

(b) Exports amount to 125 million dollars a year, organically linked with Tunisian imports of Iraqi petroleum.

Major exports are exemplified by:

Triple superphosphate;

Paper and paper products;

Textiles and ready-made clothing;

Spare parts for automobiles and trucks.

These items account for between 30 and 60 per cent of the output of the Tunisian factories concerned, that is to say that the embargo imposed on Iraq would automatically give rise to grave difficulties for many factories, together with the concomitant repercussions for employment.

It should be noted that most of these items are manufactured in accordance with Iraqi specifications and standards. Moreover, there are currently in Tunisian factories and ports 30 million dollars' worth of goods ready for export to Iraq that cannot be redirected to other markets in view of the standards and specifications employed in their manufacture.

(c) Receipts: payment facilities accorded to Iraq amount to some 75 million dollars, including an amount in the order of 10 million dollars which is past due.

(d) Current financial transfers: 100 million dollars a year under the item of financial remittances by Tunisian workers in Iraq.

Relations with Kuwait

(a) Project funding: co-operation with Kuwait is largely confined to the financial field, and Kuwait participates in the funding of a significant number of vital development projects in Tunisia by means of concessional loans.

A total number of 18 projects are currently being implemented with Kuwaiti funding, and this participation is in the order of 550 million dollars. As of 2 August 1990, only 200 million dollars of this amount had been drawn upon, thus leaving a balance of 350 million dollars. As a result, the implementation of these projects has been suspended, causing damage to hundreds of Tunisian sub-contractors engaged in implementation and the loss of thousands of jobs.

(b) Current financial transfers: 3 million dollars a year under the item of financial remittances of Tunisian workers in Kuwait.

(c) Social repercussions: the embargo has also given rise to the mass return of Tunisians working in Kuwait, who, in the framework of technical co-operation agreements or under the terms of private work contracts numbered some 2,000. This has caused them to lose jobs which must now be provided for them in Tunisia, and they have lost their property, income and savings.

In view of the foregoing, the implementation of the structural reform programme for the Tunisian economy will be damaged and confronted with difficulties that may impede the achievement of its objectives in the foreseeable future.

Therefore, in accordance with Chapter VII, Article 50, of the Charter of the United Nations, which states that

"If preventive or enforcement measures against any state are taken by the Security Council, any other state, whether a member of the United Nations or not, which finds itself confronted with special economic problems arising from the carrying out of those measures shall have the right to consult the Security Council with regard to a solution of those problems",

the Government of Tunisia deems it necessary to consult the Security Council on this matter with a view to devising appropriate solutions in order to safeguard Tunisia's economic and social interests.

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With regard to the sanctions stipulated in Security Council resolution 661 (1990), the Tunisian Government would like to emphasize the exceptions made in that resolution for humanitarian reasons and relating to foodstuffs and medical supplies and services.

(Signed) Ismail KHELIL
Minister for Foreign Affairs

