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LETTER DATED 8 AUGUST 1990 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF
CUBA TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

I have the honour to enclose the text of the letter which
His Excellency Mr. Fidel Castro Ruz, President of the Council of State and of the
Government of the Republic of Cuba, addressed to the Heads of State of the Arab
countries concerning the events which are taking place in connection with the
conflict between Kuwait and Iraq.

I request that this letter be circulated to all the Members of the United
Nations as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Ricardo ALARCON de QUESADA
Ambassador
Permanent Representative of Cuba
to the United Nations

Annex

Letter addressed to the Heads of State of the Arab countries by
the President of the Council of State and of the Government of
the Republic of Cuba

I am writing to you to express my profound concern about the events which are threatening the Arab world and mankind in general.

I firmly believe that the possibility still exists for the leaders of the Arab nation, at this crucial juncture, to prevent the conflict between Iraq and Kuwait from impinging adversely on the independence of many Arab States and turning into an economic catastrophe and also a holocaust that affects a substantial portion of their peoples. Such is the threat we perceive in the increasing and accelerated preparations for direct military intervention by the United States and its allies. No less alarming is the evidence of steps taken to establish, for similar interventionist purposes, a multinational force whose composition reflects a new alignment of forces world wide which would tip the balance against the interests of the Arab peoples.

In its current capacity as a non-permanent member of the Security Council, Cuba did not hesitate to vote in favour of Council resolution 660 (1990) on 2 August. We took this necessary and just step, not without sorrow and grief, on the basis of a principled policy regarding the inadmissibility of the use of force and military superiority to settle conflicts between countries, especially when it is a matter of a fratricidal confrontation between peoples of the third world. We are joined to both Iraq and Kuwait by bonds of esteem and friendship which draw strength from Cuba's solidarity with the Arab nation and the Palestinian people in the face of Israeli aggression and colonial expansion. Our historic ties of co-operation with numerous Arab countries in various sectors are, moreover, well known.

These same principles, which as you will doubtless understand are very dear to a Cuba permanently threatened with aggression, and the conviction that if there is something which we must avoid at all costs in a situation such as this it is adding fuel to the fire of war, prompted our abstention a few hours ago with respect to a further draft resolution of the Security Council, sponsored and feverishly negotiated by the United States, which, among other measures, imposes a total economic blockade of Iraq, a step that in our opinion is precipitate and diminishes the opportunities for a peaceful solution. In addition, this new resolution, at which the United States, together with its closest allies, has good reason to rejoice, creates ideal conditions for an escalation of the situation and for the probable use of the most powerful war machine in the world with the undoubted aim of strengthening its hegemony in the region.

Punishing Iraq for its deplorable and unacceptable action in Kuwait is merely a pretext for the United States, which is even seeking an opportunity of invoking Article 42 of the Charter of the United Nations to legitimize its armed intervention and carry it out on behalf of the international community. This is

the disaster we are exposed to. The leaders of the Arab nation, more than anyone, must find offensive the fact that this Security Council, which was unanimous with the sole exceptions of Yemen and Cuba, is the very same body which, because of the veto imposed by the United States, has been unable even to condemn Israel, far less to impose sanctions against it, because of over 40 years' occupation of the territory of Palestine and other Arab States. Moreover, thanks to this anachronistic, unjust and anti-democratic privilege of the veto and its immoral use by the United States, it has not been possible for the Security Council to condemn the Israeli genocide against the heroic intifadah and the actions of the Zionist army which have brought about the deaths of members of the United Nations forces in Lebanon.

It would be vain, and above all extremely dangerous, to grant even minimum credibility to the motivations which the United States is pretending to for its leading role in the crisis. With their proverbial experience of manipulation, their diverse and considerable means of pressure, their capability for rapid military deployment, their demonstrated gift for political opportunism and their mass information media, United States diplomacy and the Pentagon are working with their Western counterparts to capitalize on the rightful indignation which Iraq's action against Kuwait aroused in the international community, and they question, find fault with and obstruct any attempt at a negotiated political solution which is not subordinate to their geopolitical interests, and hasten to derive maximum benefit from the situation created.

Of what will the United States not be capable in a region as vital as this one if it is not checked in time, when it showed not the least scruple in giving the international community a slap in the face by transforming a tiny State like Grenada and a country it had already practically occupied, like Panama, into a testing ground for its most sophisticated weapons?

How can the danger of the United States launching itself into a venture of this scope be doubted, when it was capable of planning and conducting an air raid on the family residence of the President of Libya, thus taking upon itself, and without the backing it now enjoys, the role of international executioner? Can other conclusions be drawn from the landing, just a few hours ago, of Yankee marines in Liberia?

I am addressing myself to you and to other Arab Heads of State at this time in the name of our shared responsibility as members of the Non-Aligned Movement and of the third world. In Cuba, we have experienced mortal dangers, including the threat of nuclear extermination, as in October 1962, and we are well schooled in seeing, foreseeing and taking a calm view of the most dramatic circumstances. This is thus not a matter of either of fear or of alarmism.

It happens, in the present case, that the threat reaches, for all peoples of the third world, with no possible exception, into the most sensitive aspects relating to our economies, our security and our independence.

The forces of regression and plunder will not shrink from the consequences of a military intervention in which Arabs and Muslims, so the United States hopes, would be divided and would shed each other's blood, causing wounds so deep that they would take decades to heal, and through their war would wreak incalculable havoc on the infrastructure and economies of the Arab countries that become the theatre of this war, which would take place not in Europe or the United States, but in the Arab-Persian Gulf. This in turn would lead to economic disaster throughout the third world, whose interests it is fitting to consider at this time. It is difficult to imagine the penury and depletion that might be brought upon the already battered economies of the underdeveloped countries by an outcome like the one whose outline is emerging, in which oil prices would be beyond the reach of most of them, lacking as they do fuel reserves and resources with which to buy them. It is impossible to overlook, Sir, the tragic irony that the United States and the allies marching alongside them on this inglorious crusade might achieve their ends - among them the consolidation of Zionist domination - with a minimum of human losses to the West. Their plans, hatched and rehearsed over an extended period, envisage a technical war, based on supremacy in weapons and technology. The casualties would be sustained above all by the Arab armies and population involved in the operation.

Lastly, let me share with you, Sir, the certainty which inspires me of the wisdom and courage of the leaders of the Arab nation and the vitality of its institutions.

Nothing and no one can replace this force, this authority and this morale in the immediate search for a negotiated solution to a conflict between two Arab peoples, one which entails, of course, the withdrawal of the Iraqi troops and the total restoration of Kuwait's sovereignty, without catastrophic wars, immolation of peoples and vast material destruction. Likewise, I believe that the Non-Aligned Movement and the United Nations system, for all their imperfections and limitations, can lend their backing to the united will of the Arab nation against intervention and aggression, and make it prevail.

The seriousness and dangers of the situation that has been created call for speedy and effective action by the most prestigious and renowned leaders in the Arab world. The experience of history affords abundant evidence that hegemonistic Powers like the United States are in the habit of imposing faits accomplis and unleashing processes that are very difficult to reverse.

With all the respect and consideration due to you, I urge you to promote within the shortest possible time, rising above differences that must now necessarily take second place, and with the urgency that the risks demand, that unity of views and action that I deem essential.

I beg you not to doubt, even for an instant, that in this just and noble undertaking you can count on the support of the vast majority of the countries in the international community and, as might be expected, on the modest co-operation of Cuba.

Fraternally,

(Signed) Fidel CASTRO RUZ
President of the Council of State
and of the Government of the
Republic of Cuba

