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LETTER DATED 8 JUNE 1967 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF INDIA
ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

I have the honour to refer to the protest addressed by the Secretary-General to the Government of Israel, in connexion with the wanton killing of Indian troops serving with the UNEF (document S/7930 of 5 June 1967). In this connexion I have the honour to transmit the text of a protest addressed by my Government to the Government of Israel, which is reproduced below:

Begins: "The Secretary-General of the United Nations has already conveyed to the Government of Israel his strong protest against repeated attacks by the Israeli Armed Forces on the Indian Contingent of the UNEF. On 5 June, two camps occupied by the Indian Contingent of the UNEF came under Israeli Artillery fire causing casualties. As a result of this, the Commander of the UNEF sent an urgent message, through the Chief of Staff of UNTSO, to the Chief of the Staff of Israeli Defence Forces to give instructions that a strict ceasefire should be observed in the vicinity of the well known UNEF installations and camps. This appeal was acceded to and General Rikhye was notified that instructions had been given to the Israeli Forces to observe strictly the ceasefire in the vicinity of all UNEF installations and camps.

Despite this assurance, the same day, Israeli aircraft strafed a UNEF convoy south of Khan Younis, killing three Indian soldiers and an unknown number wounded. It is noteworthy that all vehicles in the convoy were painted white, as indeed are all UNEF vehicles, and were thus easily identifiable. Following these wanton attacks on UNEF camps and the UNEF convoy, the UNEF Commander again urged, through the Chief of Staff of UNTSO, the Chief of the Staff of Israeli Defence Forces, to order the Israeli Forces, and specially Israeli aircraft, to adhere to the undertaking to refrain from firing on UNEF personnel and UNEF camps, buildings and vehicles. Disregarding these appeals, and in violation of the undertaking given by the Israeli Defence Forces, the main camp of the UNEF Indian Contingent came under Israeli artillery fire which killed one officer and one soldier and wounded one officer and nine soldiers. It is further understood that these attacks continued, bringing the total losses to 8 killed, 14 wounded and 18 missing so far.

It is clear that the action of the Israeli Armed Forces can only be considered callous, deliberate and unprovoked. Such action against personnel who were in the area on behalf of the United Nations, whose duty and functions were the preservation of peace, who were non-combatants and not in a position

to defend themselves, heighten the enormity of this action. Government of India consider these attacks as an open affront to the United Nations and a flagrant violation by the Israeli authorities of International Law and accepted norms of civilized behaviour.

Intervening in the Security Council Emergency Session on 5 June 1967, the Indian Representative expressed the Government of India's profound shock and grief over the dastardly action of the Israeli Military authorities and pointed out that our soldiers had gone to the area 10 years ago as sentinels of peace and in the service of the international community. That Israeli forces should have attacked treacherously and brutally these soldiers of ours makes them martyrs of peace. We condemn the Israeli action and protest most vigorously against it.

The Prime Minister of India, in her statement to the Parliament on 6 June 1967, has said that 'there can be no justification for Israeli Armed Forces to have attacked our forces, whose whereabouts, identification markings and intention to withdraw were clearly known to the Israeli Authorities'. The grief and indignation expressed by the Prime Minister against the deliberate and unprovoked attack has been shared by Parliament of India and indeed the whole Indian nation.

The Government of India would also like to refer to the earlier incident on 18 May 1967, involving Major General Rikhye, Commander of the UNEF. As the UN Secretary-General has reported to the General Assembly (document A/6669) a UNEF aircraft carrying Major General Rikhye on 18 May 1967 was intercepted by two Israeli military aircraft which tried to make it land in Israeli territory and went so far as to fire warning shots. The UN Secretary-General protested to the Government of Israel against the Israeli action. The Foreign Minister of India, in a statement to the Indian Parliament on 25 May 1967, has described the incident as a highly provocative one. But when this incident is seen in the context of the more recent killings of innocent Indian personnel of the Indian Contingent with UNEF, it takes on an even graver aspect. It is apparent that the Israeli military authorities have systematically ignored the immunity of personnel functioning under the aegis of the United Nations and wilfully repeatedly attacked Indian personnel of the UNEF.

The Government of India protests most vigorously against these attacks on the Indian personnel employed under the auspices of the UNEF, and strongly condemns the utter disregard by the Israeli authorities of the immunity which UN personnel engaged in peace-keeping operations enjoy. The Government of India demands that while the United Nations is making necessary arrangements for their evacuation, these barbarous attacks on the Indian personnel of the UNEF cease forthwith. The Government of India further demands that the Israeli Government pay adequate compensation to the families of the deceased and to the injured personnel of the Indian Contingent of the UNEF. The Government of India reserves the right to take such further action in the matter as it may deem necessary according to International Law and practice." ends.

2. I should be grateful if this letter could be circulated as a Security Council document.

Accept, etc.

(Signed) G. PARTHASARATHI
Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary
Permanent Representative of India to the
United Nations
