

# Middle East - Suez story No 35b-36: Middle East - Suez story No 35b-36 - 37

*HS L 179:115b*



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Dag Hammarskjölds samling

Middle East / Suez story - Nr 35c

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and kept in his safe in his office, UN HQ)

April 1957 - October 1957

L 179: 115b

Dag Hammar skjölds samling

Middle East / Suez story

13 - 19 Sept. 1957

Letter to Mahmoud Fawzi from DTH

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L 179: 1156

13 September 1957

Dear Mahmoud,

Following Wheeler's return on Monday, I can now revert to the question of Canal dredging problems with which, as you know, I was anxious to help as far as my mandate allowed me.

Wheeler has been fully understanding of Younis' clear desire to avoid contractual dredging programmes except as these might ultimately be found to be absolutely essential. I, of course, appreciate in present circumstances that my earlier suggestions for the rendering of assistance are not, in the form proposed, of further interest. I fully share Wheeler's sympathy with Younis' standpoint as I do also his admiration for the energy and efficiency with which Younis has pursued his exploration of means for conducting an internally operated programme.

As Wheeler reports matters, Younis feels that even with the additional operational equipment which he has acquired and hopes to acquire, he might still want some help from us for a short term and has suggested that if this need should arise, we should contribute towards the cost of hire of a dredger chartered on a bare-boat basis for operation by Canal Authority technicians and crews.

The passage of time, as you know, makes it increasingly difficult for me to justify under my early mandate further incursions into U.N. costs on this operation. But there would seem to me, on the basis of Wheeler's visit and recommendations, to exist grounds within our General Assembly mandate upon which - in the interest which dictated the decision of the Assembly - we might still justify a contribution towards a Canal Authority bare-boat charter contract as Younis requests. Wheeler believes that with the effective steps already taken and planned, such a charter would not be required for many months and in any event not beyond six months at a cost which would not exceed \$250,000. On this basis, provided that no further long delays are foreseen, I think I could obtain support for this amended proposal. Wheeler has conveyed to me Younis' wish that there should however be no publicity of his proposed plan before October 15th, a wish which I have noted.

./.

His Excellency,  
Dr. Mahmoud Fawzi,  
Minister for Foreign Affairs,  
Ministry of Foreign Affairs,  
Cairo, Egypt.

While the form of detailed procedure to be employed would be a matter for our respective technicians to work out, I shall, from my standpoint, be within my terms of reference if any charter party entered into by the Canal Authority has formal U.N. approval from a technical standpoint and if the Canal Authority will take steps similar to those taken by our own salvage contractors whereby the U.N. would be held harmless by suitable insurance protection and otherwise against any possibility of financial liability arising from loss or damage to the dredger or from third party claims arising out of its use. It would be necessary to formalize also the position that no part of any United Nations contribution to its hire cost could act in reduction of its purchase price in the event that the Canal Authority ultimately decided to purchase the dredger outright. Likewise, a contribution to the internal operating costs would represent a development to be strictly avoided.

Wheeler has advised me that he has already alerted Younis to the desirability that he initiate the preparation of tender specifications so that they could be forwarded to us immediately upon my confirmation to you of my willingness to explore this suggestion with you. It would certainly help to avoid an embarrassing gap in point of time between the formal U.N. technical approval of such specifications and the placing of the contracts and completion of the work by Younis, if these could reach us quickly in the event that you decide finally to avail yourself of this assistance. I will be grateful if in apprising Younis of what I have written, you would extend to him my thanks for his frank exchange of views with Wheeler and my congratulations on what he has achieved in the maintenance of transit through the waterway, particularly in the face of the difficulties which confronted him.

I am looking forward with great pleasure to seeing you here again.  
With kindest personal regards,

Yours sincerely,

Dag Hammarskjöld

D R A F T

11 September 1957

Dear Mahmoud,

Following Wheeler's return on Monday, I can now revert to the question of Canal dredging problems with which, as you know, I was anxious to help as far as my mandate allowed me.

Wheeler has been fully understanding of Younis' clear desire to avoid contractual dredging programmes except ~~only~~ as these might ultimately be found to be absolutely essential. I, of course, appreciate in present circumstances that my earlier suggestions for the rendering of assistance are not, in the form proposed, of further interest. I fully share Wheeler's sympathy with Younis' standpoint as I do also his admiration for the energy and efficiency with which Younis has pursued his exploration of means for conducting an internally operated programme.

As Wheeler reports matters, Younis feels that even with the additional operational equipment which he has acquired and hopes to acquire, he might still want some help from us for a short term and has suggested that if this need should arise, we should contribute towards the cost of hire of a dredger chartered on a bare-boat basis for operation by Canal Authority technicians and crews.

The passage of time, as you know, makes it increasingly difficult for me to justify under my early mandate further incursions into U.N. costs on this operation. But there would seem to me, on the basis of

*- in the instrument which detailed the decision of the Assembly - ~~to justify a contribution~~*

*WITHIN OUR GENERAL ASSEMBLY MANDATE*

Wheeler's visit and recommendations, to exist grounds upon which we might ~~still be able to assist Younis' self-help programme by contributing towards a Canal Authority bare-boat charter contract as Younis requests.~~ Wheeler believes that with the ~~most~~ effective steps already taken and planned, such a charter would not be required for many months and in any event not beyond six months at a cost which would not exceed \$250,000. On this basis, provided that no further long delays are foreseen, I think I could obtain support for this amended proposal. Wheeler has conveyed to me Younis' wish that there should however be no ~~announcement~~ <sup>PUBLICITY</sup> of his proposed plan <sup>*a wish which I have noted.*</sup> before October 15th and this wish I shall, of course, honour.

While the form of detailed procedure to be employed would be a matter for our respective technicians to work out, I shall, from my standpoint, be within my terms of reference if any charter party entered into by the Canal Authority has formal U.N. approval from a technical standpoint and if the Canal Authority will take steps similar to those taken by our own salvage contractors whereby the U.N. would be held harmless by suitable insurance protection and otherwise against any possibility of financial liability arising from loss or damage to the dredger or from third party claims arising out of its use. It would be necessary to formalize also the position that no part of any United Nations contribution to its hire cost could act in reduction of its purchase price in the event that the Canal Authority ultimately decided to purchase the dredger outright. *Likewise, a contribution to the inter-*

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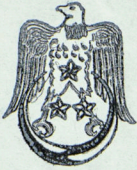
of my willingness to explore this ~~new~~ suggestion with you. It would certainly help to avoid an embarrassing gap in point of time between the formal U.N. technical approval of such specifications and the placing of the contracts and completion of the work by Younis, if these could reach us ~~rapidly~~ <sup>QUICKLY</sup> in the event that you decide finally to avail yourself of this assistance. I will be grateful if in apprising Younis of what I have written, you would extend to him my thanks for his frank exchange of views with Wheeler and my congratulations on what he has achieved in the maintenance of transit through the waterway, particularly in the face of the difficulties which confronted him.

With kindest personal regards,

Yours sincerely,

Dag Hammarskjöld

I am looking forward with great pleasure to seeing you here again.



PERMANENT MISSION OF EGYPT  
TO THE UNITED NATIONS

NEW YORK, September 17, 1957.

Personal and Confidential

Dear Dag,

I am most grateful to you for your message of the 13th instant and we all appreciate the continued interest you show in relation to the follow up of the Canal Clearance matter.

Younis wishes to point out :

a) that the chartered dredger should be operated by its own crew as the Canal Authority , after careful study of the matter, is unable to provide the necessary crew.

b) That the part of the message which says " not beyond six months" should be altered to say " not beyond six working months."

c) That no mention should be made of the two hundred and fifty thousand dollars and that the cost be left within the one million dollar contribution previously promised.

I hope you will, as I do, find these views expressed by Yuonis reasonable.

Hoping to be able to come to New York near the end of this month and as usual shall be happy to see you again and resume our conversation.

Please accept my sincere regards,

Mahmoud

19 September 1957

PERSONAL

Dear Mahmoud,

The other day I received your letter of September 17 concerning Younis' reaction to the proposals in my recent letter. I thank you for the quick reaction and I appreciate hearing from you personally again. However, to my regret, the stand taken by Younis does present me with some difficulties.

a) This would seem to me to be appropriate in so far as it constitutes a reversion to the principle I originally proposed that we should share in a limited way towards the cost of any broad dredging maintenance programmes let out under contract by the Canal Authority through international bids;

b) I would consider it, in any event, to be necessary to stick to the notion of a calendar month, as "working months" would introduce an element of great uncertainty and might bring us far beyond time limits which I would hope to get approved by the General Assembly; But, in view of the additional over-all dredging potential now available to the Canal Authority as reported by General Wheeler, reversion to the original formula of a contribution towards over-all maintenance dredging might necessitate a limitation of any U.N. liability to cover the cost of a specific cubic footage of siltage calculated within a formula having reasonable relation to the condition of silting at the time of the re-opening of the waterway;

c) In the report to the General Assembly on the costs for the Canal clearance I have to use a fixed figure. The sum of \$250,000 was calculated on the basis of 6 months bare-boat charter, without crew. With the same time limitation, but including the crew, we would perhaps have to revise the figure upwards. However, I cannot justify anything like the figure of one million dollars in our calculation.

As, to our great satisfaction, we will soon have the pleasure of seeing you here, it may be better to follow through this discussion immediately upon your arrival when, at all events, I would like you to have a look at our presentation of the Canal clearance problem in the draft report.

Looking forward to seeing you here again - and with a lot of things to discuss in my pocket - I remain, with kindest regards,

His Excellency,  
Dr. Mahmoud Fawzi,  
Minister for Foreign Affairs,  
Cairo, Egypt.

Dag Hammarskjöld

19 September 1957

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His Excellency,  
Dr. Mahmoud Fawzi,  
Minister for Foreign Affairs,  
Cairo, Egypt.

Dag Hammarskjöld

PERMANENT MISSION OF EGYPT  
TO THE UNITED NATIONS

900 PARK AVENUE  
NEW YORK 21, N. Y.

H.E. Mr. Dag Hammarskjöld  
Secretary-General of the United Nations  
United Nations