

Middle East. Suez Canal clearing, Canal users, Canal financing: Middle East...

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Dag Hammarskjöld's samt.

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Suez Canal Users

1957

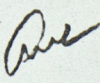
PO/230 EGY (1)

18 July 1957

Sir,

In the absence of the Secretary-General, I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter dated 16 July 1957, transmitting a communication of the New Zealand Government concerning the Suez Canal, and to inform you that its contents will be brought to the attention of the Secretary-General.

Accept, Sir, the renewed assurances of my highest consideration.


Andrew W. Cordier
Executive Assistant to
the Secretary-General

His Excellency
Sir Leslie Munro, K.C.M.G.
Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary
Permanent Representative of New Zealand to
the United Nations
Permanent Mission of New Zealand to the
United Nations
Rockefeller Center
630 Fifth Avenue, Suite 530
New York 20, New York



NEW ZEALAND MISSION
TO THE UNITED NATIONS
67 FIFTH AVENUE, SUITE 530
NEW YORK 20, N. Y.

TELEPHONE
JUDSON 6-0060

16 July 1957

*Seen by Mr. Gordon
and ack. by him
JN*

Sir,

On instructions from my Government, I have the honour to transmit to you the following communication:-

"In the New Zealand Government's view, freedom of navigation in the Suez Canal demands that the international character of the Canal be fully observed and that it be operated under a system which, while of benefit to Egypt, is financially stable, efficient, free from the workings of personal caprice and national ambition and is not discriminatory against the shipping of any single country. The New Zealand Government, which is a member of the Suez Canal Users' Association, reserves the right to work, along with other countries, for a settlement with Egypt which will satisfy these conditions.

"The New Zealand Government is accordingly interested in any clarification which may be obtained concerning those aspects of the Egyptian Declaration of 24 April 1957 to which special reference was made by the President of the Security Council in expressing the consensus of opinion registered at the Council's meeting of 20 and 21 May."

The New Zealand Government does not, at least for the present, request that the communication set out above be circulated for the information of other members of the United Nations.

Accept, Sir, the assurances of my highest consideration.

Permanent Representative of
New Zealand,

The Secretary-General,
United Nations,
NEW YORK.

14 March 1957

Sir,

I have just received your further letter concerning the situation in the Strait of Tiran and Gulf of Aqaba which is dated 13 March 1957. This letter, I believe, must have been written before you received my reply to your first letter which I also dispatched on 13 March. I am sure that you will understand that I have nothing to add to what I have already stated.

Accept, Sir, the renewed assurances of my highest consideration.

Dag Hammarskjold
Secretary-General

His Excellency
Mr. Karl I. Eskelund
Permanent Representative of Denmark
to the United Nations
Hotel Beaux Arts, Room 1708N
307 East 44th Street
New York 17, N.Y.

Mission
Permanent Delegation of Denmark
to the United Nations

File No: D.4.a.

New York, March 13, 1957.

Sir,

Further to my letter of March 11 concerning the situation in the Strait of Tiran and the Gulf of Aqaba I have the honour under instruction from the Danish government to advise that according to information received in Copenhagen have 3 minor ships during the last 3 months been able without hindrance to pass to and from Elath: the Italian boat "Katrina Madra", the Dutch boat "Fedele" and the Costa Rican boat "Pandora". The information presumably was given to the Ministry for Foreign Affairs on March 11 or 12.

With reference to the question raised in my abovementioned letter I have further been requested to urge the importance of an answer from you as soon as ever possible. Taking the whole situation into consideration the Danish shipping company "Jutlandia" which is the owner of "Birgitte Toft" considers the possibility of refusing to pass through the strait up to Elath. The taking of this step out of concern of the safety of the crew of course presupposes that an actual danger must be envisaged, as this would be the legal basis for the refusal. The Danish government as you may know considers that there should be free passage for all ships through the strait and the gulf. Considering both the question of principle involved and the necessity to decide on the actual problem at

The Honourable
Dag Hammarskjöld ,

Secretary-General of the United Nations.

hand, that of "Birgitte Toft" which will arrive in the area about March 20, the Danish government urgently requires at least an interim answer to my abovementioned letter, not later than March 19. It would be highly appreciated if the answer could be at hand slightly before, considering that the time difference from here to Copenhagen and from Copenhagen to the Red Sea area would make it difficult to communicate the content to the shipowner and to have the consequential decision from their part forwarded to the master of the ship in time, if information cannot be despatched by us at least in the morning of March 19.

Specifically the Danish Government would appreciate information concerning the possibility of mining in and near the route "Birgitte Toft" has to take, and also if possible advice as to whether UNEF can be expected to stay at the Strait of Tiran and in the Aqaba Gulf area until about April 15. The latter information is wanted to make sure that "Birgitte Toft", having finished her stay in Elath, will also be able safely to leave the area.

I avail myself of this opportunity to renew to you, Sir, the assurances of my highest consideration.

Karl I. Eskelund.

12 March 1957

Sir,

I wish to acknowledge your letter of 11 March 1957 by which you informed me that the Danish boat "Birgitte Toft" owned by the shipping company "Jutlandia" with a Danish crew, having been chartered by an American company and subchartered to an Israeli company, is due at the Strait of Tiran at the entrance to the Gulf of Aqaba about 20 March on its way to Durban from Elath. In your letter you state that your Foreign Ministry has instructed you to ascertain if the freedom of passage into the Gulf of Aqaba can be taken as recognized, that is, if the Egyptian Government does actually recognize the freedom of passage through the Strait of Tiran and the Gulf of Aqaba so that the passage of "Birgitte Toft", either by such recognition on the part of the Egyptian Government or by such protection as the UNEP can give, may be held to be in no danger of either direct attacks or mining.

Concerning the first part of your inquiry, I have no official information on the position of Egypt with respect to passage in the Gulf of Aqaba, beyond Egyptian regulations concerning navigation in the Gulf of Aqaba, issued on 5 September 1955 by the Director-General of the Ports and Lighthouses Administration.

/ . . .

His Excellency
Mr. Karl I. Eidebrand
Permanent Representative of Denmark
to the United Nations
Hotel Beauv Arts, Room 1706H
307 East 44th Street
New York 17, N.Y.

With respect to the second part of your inquiry, UNEF will perform the functions which are within its terms of reference as defined by the General Assembly. In this connexion, I should like to refer you to Part IV of my Report to the General Assembly of 24 January 1957, and particularly to paragraph 29 of that Report (A/3512). As you know the General Assembly by its resolution II of 2 February 1957 (A/RES/461) noted this Report with appreciation and considered that "after full withdrawal of Israel from the Sharm el-Sheikh and Gaza areas, the scrupulous maintenance of the Armistice Agreement requires the placing of the United Nations Emergency Force on the Egyptian-Israel armistice demarcation line and the implementation of other measures as proposed in the Secretary-General's report, with due regard to the considerations set out therein with a view to assist in achieving situations conducive to the maintenance of peaceful conditions in the area".

I would also like to add that, as you are of course aware, UNEF does not have naval contingents or other special means for detecting mines or other dangers of this kind. We have no information to the effect that the straits are mined.

Accept, Sir, the renewed assurances of my highest consideration.

Dag Hammarskjöld
Secretary-General

Mission

*Permanent Delegation of Denmark
to the United Nations*

File No.: V.D.4.a.

New York, March 11, 1957.

Sir,

Under the instruction from my government I wish to inform you that the Danish boat "Birgitte Toft" owned by the shipping company "Jutlandia" with a Danish crew of 26, having been chartered by an American company has by this company been subchartered to an Israeli company. The latter has ordered the ship to go from Durban to Elath in the Gulf of Aqaba. "Birgitte Toft" has left Durban and is due at the Strait of Tiran about March 20.

Having in mind the safety of the crew the Foreign Ministry has on the request of the Danish shipping company instructed me to ascertain if the freedom of passage into and in the Gulf of Aqaba can be taken as recognised, that is, if the Egyptian government does actually recognise the freedom of passage through the Strait of Tiran and the Gulf of Aqaba so that the passage of "Birgitte Toft", either by such recognition on the part of the Egyptian government or by such protection as the UNEF can give, may be held to be in no danger of either direct attacks or mining.

I shall appreciate very much an answer at your earliest convenience.

I avail myself of this opportunity to renew to you, Sir, the assurances of my highest consideration.

Karl I. Eskelund.

The Honourable
Dag Hammarskjöld,

Secretary-General of the United Nations.

COPY

AIDE - MEMOIRE

The Governments of France, Norway, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the United States of America have consulted together with a view to presenting to the Secretary-General of the United Nations, as requested, an agreed position regarding interim arrangements which they consider should govern the operation of the Suez Canal pending a final settlement in accordance with the six requirements set forth in the resolution of the Security Council of October 13, 1956 and in light of the letters of the Secretary-General and the Foreign Minister of Egypt of October 24 and November 2, 1956. This position is set forth in the enclosure to this aide-memoire.

The four Governments desire, in addition, to inform the Secretary-General of their view that the question of repayment of advances for clearing the Canal should not be dealt with in the agreement for an interim arrangement, but should be considered in the negotiations for a final Canal settlement.

The four Governments would appreciate it if the Secretary-General would initiate discussions with the Government of Egypt looking toward the prompt conclusion of an interim arrangement on the basis set forth in the enclosure to the aide-memoire. In the event that in the course of these discussions the Egyptian Government should advance suggestions for material changes, it is the understanding of the four Governments that the Secretary-General would communicate such suggestions to them for consideration.

Enclosure:

Points to be Covered in Interim
Arrangement Governing Operation
of Suez Canal Pending Final
Settlement

Delegation of the United States of America

to the Eleventh General Assembly of the United Nations,

New York, February 19, 1957.

*copy given to Dr Fawzi
with covering letter, 19 Feb '57
(see file Com with Egypt)*

COPY

POINTS TO BE COVERED IN INTERIM ARRANGEMENT
GOVERNING OPERATION OF SUEZ CANAL PENDING FINAL SETTLEMENT

1. Egypt would designate the ICSID or the UN as agent to receive, hold, and dispose of all Canal tolls under an agreement, the purpose of which is to protect the interests of Egypt and the users and to facilitate the operation of the Canal, as described below. The identity of the agent would be specified in the agreement.
2. All tolls would be received by the agent and placed in a Suez Canal account on terms providing that the agent should pay over to Egypt immediately one half of these tolls for operating costs, and that the remainder would be held by the agent in the Suez Canal account, to be disbursed at a later date in conformity with the provisions of a final Suez Canal settlement in accordance with the six principles approved by the Security Council on October 13, 1956 and in light of the exchange of letters between the SYG and Foreign Minister Fawzi dated October 24 and November 2, 1956.
3. The agreement would provide that operation of the Canal, pending a final settlement, would be in accordance with the six principles approved by the SG on October 13, 1956 and the obligations of the Constantinople Convention of 1863.

14 February 1957

Dear Mr. Cordier,

During my visit to Oslo last week I had the occasion to discuss with the Ministry and with people representing the shipowners in Norway various aspects of the reopening of the Suez Canal. During these discussions I took some notes regarding a number of points upon which information and clarification would be very useful for the shipping business to receive in advance of the resumption of traffic in the Canal. I wonder if you have some information available on these points? They are:

1. Technical data with respect to the Canal during the opening phase, covering such points as draught, width, signalling system, location of wrecks etc.
2. Pilots, technicians and crafts including tugs and launches.
3. The situation with respect to servicing of ships and customs clearance etc. of the ships when they enter Port Said and Suez. The Agents played a vital role in these operations. Are competent Agents available now after many of the old ones have left?
4. Technical equipment. Detailed information would be appreciated. (Dredgers, pumpers, floating cranes, lighters, water boats etc.)

Any other information than the points here listed would also be appreciated.

Yours sincerely,

/s/ Hans Engen

Permanent Representative of
Norway to the United Nations

Mr. Andrew Cordier
Executive Assistant
to the Secretary-General
United Nations
New York 17, N. Y.