

**Middle East conflict -  
Lebanon. Correspondence,  
statements, resolutions:  
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Notes on Sec. Gen's visit in Jordan, U.A.R., Lebanon

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SECRET

PART I

30 August 1958

Amman

1. The talks in Amman occupied 27-29 August inclusive. The main lines of discussion began to emerge at the meeting in the Foreign Ministry on the morning of 28 August and by the time of a further meeting that day in the Palace there had been mutual understanding on the presentation of the Jordan case which the Secretary-General would carry with him to Cairo. This was contained in a memorandum of 29 August, covered by an informal exchange of letters of that date, and also reflected in a joint communiqué issued at 1630 hours on the same day.

Section I of Resolution A/RES/1237 (ES-III) of 22 August 1958

2. Although the opening Jordan position (see "notes" of 27 August) appeared sharply negative on a number of points, including UN Force and observers, it became clear as the talks progressed that what the Jordan Government was really interested in having was solid assurance that the pledge implied in Section I would be fulfilled. Their main concern, moreover, was about the press campaign and radio broadcasts against the regime, and especially the latter. They spoke about a system of "monitoring" provocative broadcasts but in the end it emerged that they did not envisage any "monitoring" at all in the ordinary sense of the word. What they did have in mind was that, if a network of UN representation could be established, one of its principal functions would be to follow the course of radio campaigns and, if desirable, to draw to the attention of the Secretary-General broadcasts which clearly went beyond the normal standard of comment on political affairs in neighbouring countries. For its part Jordan was prepared to continue to refrain from radio propaganda against the U.A.R.

Section II - UN Presence

3. To these ends the Jordanians pressed for the establishment of UN representatives not only in Amman but in other Arab capitals, especially in Cairo, and in Damascus, which the Jordanians regarded as a serious source of trouble. They agreed, however, that these representatives need not be at the same level in all cases. They were not disturbed by the idea that the representative in Amman should have a number of assistants and, indeed, the Prime Minister suggested that 60 might not be too many. There was recognition that the establishment in Amman would require a channel

of communication and supply through Damascus and Beirut. The Prime Minister accepted fully that the network of UN representation would not only symbolize international concern about the continuance of good neighbour policy among the Arab states but would in fact contribute to the maintenance of tranquillity in the area. He did not regard the measures proposed as a substitute for UK troops, whose presence was required at a psychological moment (which had passed) but whose continued stationing in Jordan might come to be regarded as a serious liability to the regime.

4. Withdrawal

In these circumstances withdrawal was not made conditional on the implementation of "practical arrangements". The Prime Minister made clear that from Jordan's point of view the timetable for withdrawal was independent of the Secretary-General's current efforts but at the same time he urged that the widely shared desire within the area for the withdrawal of foreign troops should be placed in the balance in any bargaining as regards "practical arrangements". The Prime Minister recognized further that the withdrawal of UK troops from Jordan would be closely related in point of time to the withdrawal of US troops from Lebanon. In the latter regard the timetable would be set presumably by the course of political events already put in motion by the election of Chehab. There was even a suggestion that the Jordan Government might wish to capitalize on the question of withdrawal by taking an initiative in advance of all other developments.

5. Economic Side

The Prime Minister had little to say about the possibility of productive co-operation in the field of economic development. He seemed sceptical about this side of the Resolution, as about others, but he plainly hoped that there might be some chance for solid improvement in inter-Arab relations in all directions. He maintained that Jordan as such was economically viable, but that the burden of military and other commitments on the West Bank, which Jordan had assumed on behalf of all the Arab States, was the decisive cause of Jordan's economic weakness. It was really up to the other Arab States to recognize their responsibility in this regard and to co-operate and assist Jordan in maintaining that essentially Arab position in the area. In the meantime Jordan had to rely on assistance from UK-USA (and mainly the latter) to fill the gap.

6. Prospects for negotiation

Since the main aim of the Jordan Government was to achieve solid improvement in their relations with their Arab neighbours, in short to give practical expression to Section I of the Resolution, the Jordan position, as it emerged, appeared not unduly rigid. The Jordanians seemed willing to accept the approach which the Secretary-General suggested, although this approach was firmly based on UN considerations in relation to the Resolution. The Prime Minister made clear (on 29 August) that he would not regard the establishment of UN representatives in other capitals as an absolute condition to the establishment of UN machinery in Jordan. He seemed prepared to consider that step afresh when the reactions of the other Arab Governments, particularly U.A.R., were known.

PART II

Cairo

1. The talks in Cairo occupied 3-6 September inclusive. The Secretary-General met with Dr. Fawzi five times (including Saturday morning) and with the President twice. With Dr. Fawzi the conversations touched upon almost the whole range of UN involvement in the Middle East. The subject matter can best be summarized, however, under headings related to the Resolution of 22 August 1958, particularly since this was the basis for the Mission. The main conclusions in this regard are contained in the Secretary-General's letter of 5 September 1958 to the Prime Minister of Jordan. Another relevant paper (drafted 5 September and handed to Dr. Fawzi) was a summary of the Secretary-General's views on how practical arrangements could be made for dealing with the question of Jordan.

Section I

2. Dr. Fawzi firmly maintained that the declaration of non-interference was bona fide and represented a new point of departure in inter-Arab relations. He said that the other Arabs, and of course the Jordanians in particular, should recognize this, just as the outside world must acknowledge the new development. In a comparatively short time the intention not to interfere would begin to show itself, but especially in

press and radio campaigns, and in even shorter time as regards such matters as the restriction on air traffic out of Jordan (24 September was the probable date for ending that restriction which was related to Chehab's take-over and to a significant exodus from Jordan and Lebanon). Fawzi said that renewed diplomatic relations with Jordan were not far off, although the President cast some doubt on this possibility at an early date. Notwithstanding the foregoing, the Secretary-General's proposal for UN representation in Arab capitals, but especially in Cairo, drew a negative reaction. Although Fawzi obviously saw the logic of the proposal, he rightly concluded that it would not be acceptable to the President. U.A.R. protestations about domestic reaction were not very persuasive, however, in view of the very solid international advantages which would have flowed from having a UN network, advantages which were not related solely to the current crisis. Fawzi seemed to suggest that the roving representation, which emerged as the Secretary-General's second choice, might not be entirely welcome in Cairo. This attitude, however, would be difficult to sustain in view of U.A.R. insistence that Section I of the Resolution was a genuine article which should be sufficient to calm the nerves of the Jordanians and others. Moreover, there was offered in the unanimous adoption of the Resolution an obvious opportunity to make real headway in the Middle East.

#### Section II

3. The U.A.R. objection was, of course, that any reciprocal representation would be interpreted not as a symbol of Section I but as a counter-part of Section II representation in Jordan. Fawzi saw, however, that something should emerge as a result of the Secretary-General's efforts in this regard. He was clearly anxious not to appear unco-operative. U.A.R. did not wish to be the cause of an unaccomplished mission. This anxiety might be given due weight when considering what the traffic will bear in Cairo. What has been said under Sections I and II, of course, relates squarely to the practical arrangements which are the core of Section II.

#### Section III - Economic Development

4. Considerable time was devoted to this subject in the talks with Fawzi (there was a brief but parallel exchange with Hassouna). Fawzi suggested that the Arab initiative might be taken rather sooner than had heretofore

been expected. He said that, parallel with the activity of the League, the U.A.R. would be urging the other Arab governments to give practical expression to the long-standing League Resolution on economic development. The impression left was that the position of Iraq remained the key but that any difficulties in that direction had been reduced by the change of regime. The Secretary-General's suggestion (in which Fawzi concurred fully) was that he might inform the Arab governments what assistance could be rendered by the UN and the Bank at roughly the time of approaches which the League and the U.A.R. would make. This might happen within the next month. Fawzi received a copy of the March 1958 version of the Secretary-General's economic plan and was encouraged by the fact that its date was significantly far enough in advance of President Eisenhower's speech in the General Assembly at the opening of the Third Emergency Special Session. It was very important to obliterate any "Made in USA" stamp.

#### Section IV

5. The main point which might be made here is that Fawzi earnestly hoped that the USA in particular would see the solid advantage of letting the Arabs work out the underlying pledge of co-operation and non-interference. This could be the basis for the withdrawal, but it must be reasonably soon and graceful. Also involved was the question of USA relations with U.A.R. As an illustration of U.A.R. desire in this regard, Fawzi mentioned that a USA company had the main contract for Suez Canal improvement. The U.A.R. was making important head-way in Western Europe with West Germany, Italy and Greece. The UK and France seemed to be coming around nicely. The USA friendship was, however, decisive in this trend. The USSR could be expected to continue its course in the Middle East but in the face of continued Arab co-operation, having the blessing and understanding of the West, Soviet influence could more effectively be resisted.

#### U.A.R. - Israel

6. The only significant reference was to recent infiltration near El Quseima. Fawzi mentioned also UNEF "fraternization" with Israelis and rough treatment of Gaza locals. He had the impression that UNEF might be growing lax. He emphasized the importance of keeping the UNEF flag flying high and in a clear-cut manner. He did not seem too worried that this would not be the case and was comforted by the Secretary-General's assurance that the relevant standing orders would be reaffirmed to the UNEF troops.

Prospects

7. As regards the negotiation, U.A.R. willingness to make Section I a "living reality" was expressed emphatically by the President and Fawzi. The grudging acceptance of a liaison officer in Damascus was a significant move of a more concrete nature for it was predicated on U.A.R. willingness to have a watch-dog in Jordan and to demonstrate this willingness by providing facilities. A status agreement would be involved, for example. Moreover, the U.A.R. was not flatly negative toward the suggestion for a special representative, the counterpart of the one in Amman, as long as he would not be located in Cairo. (Fawzi suggested Geneva as his base of operations.) This produced the possibility that the Secretary-General might appoint a representative who would be specially charged with the implementation of the Resolution and who would work out of New York.

PART III

Amman

1. At the conclusion of the talks in Cairo, the Secretary-General sent a letter, dated 5 September 1958, to the Prime Minister of Jordan. This contained six points which summed up the Secretary-General's interpretation of how the U.A.R. Government viewed the implementation of Resolution A/RES/1237 (ES-III) of 22 August 1958.
2. The letter pointed out that, while the Secretary-General continued to believe that arrangements should be made for placing special Personal Representatives in the Arab capitals to meet the need for intensified high-level contact, practical and political weaknesses in the system had become apparent. This did not detract from the desirability, however, of having a Special Representative in Amman, nor from the need for intensified contacts. In the circumstances, the Secretary-General was considering other means for the same ends.
3. This letter was delivered to the Prime Minister at noon on 6 September. Orally the Prime Minister was informed that:
  - (a) the letter reflected the carefully considered views of the Secretary-General concerning his consultations in Cairo, which had been intensive;
  - (b) the Secretary-General expected to proceed with the proposal

for "practical arrangements" in Amman, as discussed with the Government of Jordan between 27-29 August, since it had been understood that these arrangements were in no sense conditional upon specific attitudes in Cairo;

(c) the Secretary-General intended to discuss the various points more fully with the Government of Jordan on his return to Amman on 8 September.

4. The Prime Minister showed disappointment about the reaction in Cairo, but it was clearly not unexpected by him. He pointed out that the expressions of good intention contained in the six points represented no real advance from the position expressed in Section I of the Resolution. He showed interest, however, in point 3 as regards the establishment of a Liaison Officer in Damascus, and in point 4, as regards the elimination of restrictions on air traffic. He recognized that point 6 was the sum total of all the others, but he saw little prospect that the expressed intentions, whether in the Resolution or during the consultations, would become "living reality". The Prime Minister nonetheless appreciated the opportunity given to him to review Jordan's position in the light of the Secretary-General's letter and expressed interest in discussing the various matters, including any new formula for UN representation, when the Secretary-General returned to Amman.

#### PART IV

##### Baghdad

1. The visit to Baghdad lasted just over 24 hours (7 to 8 September). The Government leaders seemed very pleased to receive the Secretary-General but not as well prepared as those in other capitals to discuss the various implications of the Resolution. There was on the whole, however, a useful exchange of views and certainly from the psychological standpoint a most desirable establishment of direct relations between the Secretary-General and the new regime. It emerged clearly that the Iraqi Foreign Minister had previously discussed with his Cairo counterpart the aims and purposes of the Secretary-General's visit to the Middle East.

##### Section I - Good Neighbour Policy

2. The Iraqi spokesmen were solidly in favour of the principles of

inter-Arab co-operation as contained in the Resolution. They seemed most determined that there should be no interference from any quarter in the internal affairs of the various Arab States but particularly of Iraq. They themselves proposed to follow a firm policy of non-interference and expected others to reciprocate. The emphasis on independence was most marked. This attitude was clearly reflected in Iraqi comments on proposed UN representation in the area. While they saw the value of close high-level contact with the Secretary-General, they showed wariness of the establishment of any system which could be interpreted as a form of UN mandate or "imperialism". This was not to suggest however that the new regime was not fully prepared to co-operate with the UN. They recognized moreover that some sort of watch-dog in the vicinity of Amman would give useful support to the good neighbour policy implied in the Resolution. Iraq, for its part, did not wish to become involved with Jordan in any way.

#### Section II - Withdrawal

3. The main emphasis in Baghdad was on withdrawal. The presence of substantial foreign forces in Lebanon, Jordan and the Persian Gulf from Baghdad looked like a threat to Iraq and this was producing widespread anxiety in the country. This result was disquieting at a time when the new regime was striving to maintain tranquillity and to set a new course for peaceful development in the political and economic fields. Besides, the presence of foreign troops placed obstacles in the path of good relations with the West which the new regime earnestly desired. The Iraqis (especially Kassem) wished therefore to be reassured that the foreign forces would be withdrawn quickly. They agreed that an early implementation, possibly with the assistance of the UN, of the Arab good neighbour policy could create conditions favourable to withdrawal.

#### Section III - Economic Development

4. The Iraqis expressed interest in inter-Arab co-operation for the purposes of economic development and in the relevant studies by the Secretary-General and the Bank. The Ministers (Hadid and Joumard) let it be known however that their first task in the economic field lay in restoring order to the national finances which had been left in a chaotic state by the previous regime. They believed also that political

stability should precede economic measures in the area. It appeared therefore that Iraq would not be in a position to make any financial contribution to inter-Arab economic development for at least a year but this might not preclude Iraqi participation in a preliminary study of the problems involved. There seemed to be a pronounced disposition to resuscitate the Arab League, but rather as an Arab partnership than as a Cairo-led hegemony. The Iraqi Foreign Minister was pleased that his recent efforts in North Africa had helped to persuade Morocco and Tunisia to join the League.

#### PART V

##### Amman

1. The Secretary-General returned to Amman on the evening of 8 September. At an immediate meeting in the Palace he reported on his visit to other Arab capitals. In elaboration of the letter of 5 September to Mr. Rifa'i, the Secretary-General explained the attitudes which he had found in Cairo and also why he had shifted his own position somewhat as regards the establishment of a UN network of representatives in the Middle East. He indicated the possible alternatives.
2. The most promising alternative was to establish a UN watch-dog in Amman with a line of communications through Damascus and Beirut. Outside the area a second UN representative of similar rank, under the direction of the Secretary-General, would act to provide a remedy for any developments which the representative in Amman might judge to be a departure from the inter-Arab good neighbour policy. The second man would not be located but would probably spend his time either at Headquarters in New York or in visits to various Arab capitals, except Amman. The representative in Amman would deal only with the Government of Jordan in the area and with the Secretary-General outside.
3. This alternative was fully explored with the Jordan Prime Minister in the morning of 9 September. It was found to be acceptable after a shift of emphasis in its presentation. Instead of being regarded as a kind of UN presence in Jordan, <sup>which</sup> it would be for its protection and to that extent a sort of substitute for UK troops, The UN representative in Amman and his staff would be located there as a matter of practical

desirability and the Jordan Government would be their hosts. This formula was clearly preferred by the Jordanians because it removed any suggestion that in permitting UN representation in Amman the Government of Jordan would be accepting a special status for Jordan which would be something less than sovereign independence. With this nuance in presentation, the Prime Minister and the Secretary-General quickly reached agreement and the King concurred.

4. Perhaps the most significant feature of this "practical arrangement" for Jordan is that it will be solidly based on agreements concerning inter alia diplomatic privileges and immunities and involving three Arab Governments, Jordan, U.A.R. and Lebanon, two of whom have recently complained against the third. The arrangement therefore will be a striking example of the implementation of the principles of Section I of the Resolution. The very fact that the U.A.R. Government has been prepared to facilitate the establishment of a UN watch-dog in Amman, whose main function will be to watch U.A.R. activities, augurs well for the future development of good neighbour policy among the Arab States.

## PART VI

### Beirut

1. Because the practical arrangements for Jordan would have some bearing on those in Lebanon, the Secretary-General planned to wind up his Middle East visit with three days in Beirut. During the first stop in Beirut on 26 August, however, the Secretary-General consulted with members of UNOGIL to hear their reports on the current situation in Lebanon and to encourage them to think in terms of a further increase in the number of military observers.

2. The actual consultations in Beirut took place during 9-12 September. The Secretary-General conferred twice each with President Chamoun, General Chehab and the Acting Foreign Minister. The views of Chamoun and Chehab were noticeably close together with only slight variation in emphasis. Those of the Acting Foreign Minister, certainly during the first conversation, were wide of the general trend, particularly as regards his arguments about a UN force for Lebanon.

3. The discussion with Chamoun revealed that with the change of government

the US troops could be expected to step up their withdrawal from Lebanon, although some phasing out would be desirable in order not to excite the more extreme Christian elements. For the same reason it would be desirable to maintain and perhaps strengthen UNOGIL. When the Secretary-General explained the arrangements he had in mind for Jordan, Chamoun seemed disposed to co-operate as regards the liaison office in Beirut. The arrangements envisaged for Lebanon, that is the strengthening of UNOGIL, seemed to be accepted by Chamoun as sufficient in current circumstances. He made no specific mention of any UN force or of giving arms to the observers. He remarked, however, that much would depend on the way in which the situation developed in Lebanon after the change of government. He made a perfunctory reference to the press and radio campaign. He insisted, however, that the earlier threat to the independence of Lebanon had made necessary the landing of US forces.

4. Chehab was perhaps more positive than Chamoun concerning the withdrawal of US forces and certainly about the build-up of UNOGIL which he obviously desired for psychological reasons related to his own efforts to form a government and to pacify the country. He paid warm tribute to the activities of the military observers. He hoped that they could continue their functions without having to carry arms. He was decidedly in favour of enlarging UNOGIL and indeed expressed the hope that a press announcement concerning this enlargement could be made during the week before 24 September. Chehab was "prudently optimistic" that his efforts to form a government and to restore tranquillity in Lebanon would succeed.

5. The Secretary-General prepared a draft press release which was shown to Chehab on 11 September. If he so desired the press release would be issued about 16 September. Also drafted was a section concerning Lebanon for the Secretary-General's report to the Assembly. This draft was handed both to Chehab and to Chamoun, neither of whom offered any objection. As in the case of Jordan, the essence of the "practical arrangements" was that they would be in support of the Arab good neighbour policy. As regards Lebanon, it seemed clear in current circumstances that an enlargement of UNOGIL would be sufficient for the purposes of the resolution.