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Kasavubu, Joseph (President of the Congo)

- 1 draft letter from D.H.

Draft

25 February 1961

(Letter to Mr. Kasavubu)

In a letter to you of 22 February 1961, drawing attention to the strong position taken by the Members of the Security Council on certain acts of political lawlessness and violence, I mentioned that I would revert to observations on the resolution adopted. You will have received it at once and, therefore, are well acquainted with its content, as appears also from statements through Mr. Ileo and through Mr. Bahezi. I shall later revert to questions of substance, but wish first to make some general observations, the weight and seriousness of which I am sure that you will fully appreciate.

The United Nations undertook last summer, at ~~your~~ <sup>and that of L,</sup> request, a very heavy task. It did so in the interest of the Congolese people as a whole, without distinction, and indirectly in order to safeguard international peace and security. We, who have been working in the United Nations for the Congo, have done all we could in our power and within the limits set by the Charter and the mandate to provide for its people a chance to develop its life in peace, harmony and full independence. We have also done all we could, in all directions, in order to safeguard the Congo against outside interference, irrespective of its source, and to protect its territorial integrity. In these various respects the Organization has had to strain its resources to the utmost [fighting against resistance from members of the Congolese community itself and unable to count on loyal co-operation also from important outside elements.] The result is that the work of the United Nations has been kept down to a difficult holding operation while, with loyalty and co-operation, it could long ago have been a full success in the best and widest interest of the people of the Congo, and of the world. The deterioration and the complications have succeeded up to and beyond the point of the assassination of various political leaders; I need not repeat to you here the feelings to which this has given rise, and the serious jeopardy in which the

-2-

United Nations has been put by the failure of those with whom we have had to deal to heed our demands and warnings. May I, in this context, remind you of the many approaches I made to you at the time of the arrest of Mr. Lumumba and later of his transfer - approaches which echoed strong convictions and deep concern which you have found expressed also in repeated communications from the Special Representative.

This is the background against which one has to judge the resolution of the Security Council of last Monday. This is what gives it its utter seriousness, representing, as it does, a unanimous decision to cut through all that so far has hampered the UN effort. The resolution is in this respect the strongest and most decisive expression of the concern of the Security Council to maintain standards without which sound and harmonious political development is impossible, and to put an end to conditions which threaten the world community and the UN, even as they represent a mortal danger to the Congo itself.

It is my evaluation of the stage reached that the world is no longer willing nor in a position to accept the consequences of the continued splits, abetted by outside interests, which divide the country. Reconciliation on a nation-wide scale is, therefore, imperative, and anyone in a responsible position refusing to make his full and selfless contribution to such a reconciliation, shoulders a heavy responsibility. But further, we are now at a point where even the sincere wish of the representatives of the Organization to take fully into account views and wishes of the leaders of the Congo and to respect fully what follows from the stand of the United Nations troops as a foreign group invited to the country can not be permitted to hamper effective efforts to prevent developments toward civil war and to counter-act all forces which upset law and order. The Organization, in taking this attitude, is not acting out of any wish to exercise power to establish itself; it is shocking to see the repeated allegations of a desire in the UN to infringe upon the sovereignty of the Congo, or even to establish some kind of "trusteeship," when the aim of the Organisation is the very opposite one,

that is to give to the sovereignty and independence of the country its full meaning, and to eliminate any reason for others to try to exercise their influence over the country.

In order to render effective the operation in its present phase, I have appealed for re-inforcements of the UN Force, and I have reason to believe in a quick response. Back of the words and the will of the Security Council, therefore, stands not only the firm determination of the representatives of the Organization, but also the strength needed. I hope that no one permits himself the illusion that things can continue as they have been. Either the will manifested by the world community will be respected, or chaos will come about.

With these words, which I hope convey to you the full weight that has to be given to the position of the Security Council, to our determination to carry through and to our means to do so, I turn to some comments on the various points of the resolution.

In the words of the resolution itself, the solution of the problem of the Congo lies in the hands of the Congolese themselves without any interference from the outside, and there can be no solution without conciliation. Action by the United Nations—and this is a point which I wish to emphasize—is precisely intended to create the conditions in which such a solution can be achieved.

No solution can be expected in a situation of developing civil war with armed groups engaged in partisan clashes and seeking a military solution to political goals. Preventing the further deterioration of the situation in this respect must clearly be the task of the United Nations command, especially in view of the fact that armed groups have frequently tended to escape from the control of any authorities and to engage in private warfare. The question is one of preventive and pacifying measures, not coercion, but those engaged in these measures on behalf of the U.N. cannot allow themselves to be forcibly deterred from carrying them out. Therefore, I must assume that the United Nations can count on the cooperation of all Congolese authorities concerned, military and civilian, in arranging cease-fires, halting all military operations, and preventing clashes. This must surely be a common goal of all those who feel that conciliation is the necessary approach to the country's political problems.

Special attention was devoted in the Security Council debate to the problem of the immediate withdrawal and evacuation of all Belgian and other foreign military and para-military personnel, political advisers and mercenaries. This is not an attempt to deprive the Congo of the technical assistance which it admittedly requires; nor could it be further removed from any attempt to impose an alleged "trusteeship" over a State member. It is rather the expression of the Council's determination to deal with foreign military and political elements which have repeatedly tended not only to frustrate the goals of the United Nations, but also to foster secessionist tendencies in the Congo and create grave international political complications for the country. You may rest assured that the United Nations will continue to place its facilities at the disposal of the Republic to assist in the recruitment of the necessary technical and other trained personnel.

The problem dealt with in operative paragraph A of the resolution will be tackled immediately, and the active cooperation of all states concerned, especially Belgium, is being urgently sought. The Security Council will be kept fully informed of steps taken by all those concerned to ensure in this manner that the Congo's problems shall be solved by the Congolese themselves, without foreign interference. In this connexion you will, I am sure, have noted the peremptory terms in which both this paragraph and the related paragraph A-3 are couched. It is my firm hope that I shall in the very near future learn of urgent and comprehensive steps being taken by you in regard to paragraph A-2.

Paragraph A-4 of the resolution has acquired additional significance in view of the fact that political deportations and assassinations have continued after Mr. Lumumba's death. It is my duty to draw to your attention that the Council's decision in this respect sprang from a unanimous feeling of international concern and revulsion, and that the Council is entitled to expect that full cooperation will be forthcoming from all Congolese authorities. This should include all necessary facilities and assistance, such as the making available of material evidence and of witnesses, so that those responsible shall be duly punished.

I am of course aware that you continue to declare your readiness to abide by the provisions of, and U.N. action under, the resolutions adopted by the Security Council on 13 and 22 July and 9 August and by the General Assembly on 21 September. All these resolutions have been reaffirmed in the Security Council's resolution of 21 February, even while the scope of United Nations action as delineated in them has been extended. But the goal of the United Nations remains the achievement of an independent and united Congo, free from foreign interference, and whose sovereignty, unity and territorial integrity will be secure.

In regard to paragraph B-1 urging the convening of Parliament and the taking of necessary protective measures in that connexion, it is, I believe, understood that the convening of Parliament will be undertaken in accordance with the provisions of the Loi fondamentale. But I wish to impress upon you that in present circumstances it would be your obligation not only in regard to the people and leaders of the Republic of the Congo, but also in regard to the world at large, to take a speedy initiative in this direction. I may personally add that this is essential, if the Congo desires to emerge as a democratic nation. The United Nations command will, of course, undertake the protection of all parliamentarians, irrespective of political affiliation.

The provision of B-2 which urges that Congolese armed units and personnel should be re-organized and brought under discipline and control, and arrangements be made on impartial and equitable bases to that end and with a view to the elimination of any possibility of interference by such units and personnel in the political life of the Congo is, of course, a logical corollary to the provisions of paragraph A-1. It is in my opinion intolerable for the internal, as well as external, security of any State to have its security forces act as the chief agents in the political life of the country; even more intolerable is a situation in which armed units act on their own initiative, as has only too frequently occurred in the last six months or so. I am familiar with the argument that the units under the control of General Mobutu are legal units of the Republic of the Congo, whereas those owing allegiance to other authorities now functioning in the Congo are not. You are no doubt familiar with the statements which have been made which reverse the position and give legal status only to the authorities in Stanleyville. For the UN, the task is of course described by the resolution alone. I am personally convinced, as I have stated in the Security Council, that no political conciliation is possible without the elimination of <sup>ed</sup> army units from the political life. I may add that only those which would hope

for a military solution in the Congo -- in my view an indefensible stand -- and consequently wish to impress their own will on the people by force are likely to express themselves in opposition to this provision of the resolution. I trust that the UN can count on your support and thus lay the foundation for a Congo army which, like that of other democratic countries, serves the country and no political or geographical sections thereof.