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Africa General

Frontier Egypt-Sudan

1958



MURRAY HILL 4-7150

PERMANENT MISSION OF THE REPUBLIC OF THE SUDAN  
TO THE UNITED NATIONS

HOTEL BEAUX ARTS, SUITE 1711 N  
307 EAST 44TH STREET  
NEW YORK 17, N. Y.

17 November, 1958

PRESS RELEASE

The following communication has been received from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Khartoum regarding the developments which took place in the Sudan this morning.

"Following has today been announced dear Compatriots. Greetings. You are no doubt aware of the state of degeneration, chaos and instability of the country which threatened the interests of the individual, as well as the community and which extended to the machinery of the Government and public utilities, without exception. The suffering of the country is solely due to the bitter political strife between parties vying to secure personal gain by all ways and means irrespective of whether those means are legitimate or not, through the utilization of some newspapers and contact with foreign missions. The motives behind this have never been the interest of the Sudan and the safeguard of its independence and progress nor has it been the interest of the vital needs of the people, but mere competition for assuming power and utilizing the national resources for personal gain.

This stage of affairs has been going on for "quite a time". We have been patiently watching the successive partisan governments, hoping that the state of affairs will change for the better and that public stability will be maintained, and the envenomed atmosphere of distrust will clear up. Unfortunately the situation continued to deteriorate. It reached such a stage that all those who take the safety of the Sudan at heart became utterly impatient. This feeling pervaded the whole of the Sudanese community to such an extent that the country reached the verge of an abyss. As a natural reaction the Sudanese Army and the security Forces had no alternative but to take over in order to put an end to this chaos and restore peace and order for Sudanese and foreigners. Thanks to God your loyal Army has today, the 17th November 1958, carried out a peaceful move which is hoped to be a turning point towards stability and clean administration. I am confident that this move will be welcomed by all those who have the interest of the Sudan at heart.

Dear Compatriots, in changing the hitherto prevailing state of affairs, we are not after personal gain nor are we motivated by any hatred or malice towards anybody. Our aim

.../is the stability,

is the stability, prosperity and welfare of this country and its people. I therefore hereby call on all compatriots to preserve peace and order and carry out their work with efficiency and loyalty to the State each in his sphere of work - the official in his office, the worker in his workshop, the farmer on his farm and the merchant in his shop.

Now that the Security Forces have assumed power and in order to enable them to carry out their responsibility properly I hereby order the following which shall be carried out forthwith:

1. All political parties are dissolved.
2. All public gatherings, assemblies, processions and demonstrations are prohibited throughout the Sudan.
3. All newspapers are suspended until further notice from the Minister of the Interior.

The Army authorities call on all compatriots to carry out these orders in good spirit, meanwhile they warn all those who may wish to tamper with public security that they will be severely dealt with.

In conclusion I should like to assure Their Excellencies the Heads of Foreign Missions, Consuls and foreign communities of the safety of their persons and property. I also avail myself of this opportunity to affirm that the free and independent Sudan will maintain cordial relations with all countries in general and the Sister Arab countries in particular, on the basis of mutual respect, friendship and mutual interest. As for our Sister Arab country, the United Arab Republic, we will not spare any effort to improve our relation with her, to resolve all outstanding problems and put an end to the artificial strain which has hitherto subsisted between the two countries. May God grant success to us and stability, peace and prosperity to our people.

signed General Ibrahim Abboud"

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UNITED NATIONS  
SECURITY  
COUNCIL



GENERAL  
S/PV.812  
21 February 1958  
ENGLISH

VERBATIM RECORD OF THE EIGHT HUNDRED AND TWELFTH MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,  
on Friday, 21 February 1958, at 3 p.m.

<u>President:</u>	Mr. SOBOLEV	Union of Soviet Socialist Republics
<u>Members:</u>	Canada	Mr. RITCHIE
	China	Mr. TSIANG
	Colombia	Mr. ARAUJO
	France	Mr. GEORGES-PICOT
	Iraq	Mr. KHALAF
	Japan	Mr. MATSUDAIRA
	Panama	Mr. ILLUECA
	Sweden	Mr. CARBONNIER
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Sir Pierson DIXON
	United States of America	Mr. WADSWORTH

This record contains original speeches and interpretations. The final text, containing translations, will be distributed as soon as possible.

Corrections should be submitted to original speeches only. They should be sent in duplicate, within two working days, to the Chief, Meeting Services, Department of Conference Services, Room 1104, and also incorporated in mimeographed copies of the record.

AS THIS RECORD WAS DISTRIBUTED AT 0930 HOURS ON 22 FEBRUARY 1958,  
THE TIME-LIMIT FOR CORRECTIONS WILL BE 0930 HOURS ON 27 FEBRUARY 1958.

Publication of the final printed records being subject to a rigid schedule, the co-operation of delegations in strictly observing this time-limit would be greatly appreciated.

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

The agenda was adopted.

LETTER DATED 20 FEBRUARY 1958 FROM THE REPRESENTATIVE OF SUDAN ADDRESSED TO  
THE SECRETARY-GENERAL (S/3963)

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Russian): In accordance with the rules of procedure of the Security Council, and if there are no objections on the part of members of the Council, I shall invite the representatives of Egypt and the Sudan, as the parties directly concerned, to participate in the discussion of the question.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Loutfi, representative of Egypt and Mr. Osman, representative of Sudan, took places at the Security Council table.

Mr. OSMAN (Sudan): Mr. President, let me first express my gratitude to you for inviting me to take my seat at the Council table in order to participate in the present debate.

At the outset, I wish to express my profound regret that we have been compelled to bring this grave situation to the attention of the Security Council. We have always stretched the hand of friendship to our Egyptian brothers. We shall always remain grateful for whatever good deeds they have done for us. But let no one make a mistake. The Sudanese people have always fought for their freedom, for their rights, for their independence. It will not be out of place if I recall the noble role played by Egypt and by Great Britain, the two condominium Powers, and others in facilitating the last and important stages that led to the independence of the Sudan.

But what can the Sudanese Government do to avoid bringing the present complaint to the United Nations? We in the Sudan esteem the United Nations very highly. We know its shortcomings; we know its difficulties. But we also know that today it is the hope of the people everywhere in the world that the United Nations will eventually establish the rule of law and universal peace.

We have done everything in our power as a Government to avoid bringing this complaint to the United Nations. We have exhausted all our possibilities within the short time at our disposal to reach a peaceful and equitable solution of this question. It will be recalled that a series of notes and verbal messages were exchanged between the Egyptian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and my Government, the first one emanating from the Egyptian Government on 29 January 1958. This was received by the Sudan Government on 1 February. It referred to the Sudan Constituency Order for the parliamentary elections which are taking place now and requested that appropriate measures be taken by the Sudan Government to hand over the following areas of the Sudan to the Egyptian Government:

(a) The north-eastern area of the Sudan north of latitude 22 degrees comprising Halayib and the surrounding areas.

(b) An undefined area north of latitude 22, which apparently covers Sudanese territory extending north of the important town of Wadi Halfa and including the villages of Sarras, Bebeira and Faras.

(Mr. Osman, Sudan)

While the Egyptian memorandum requested the handing over of the above two areas, it indicated the willingness of the Egyptian Government to hand over to the Sudan a region near the north-eastern frontier which had previously been ceded to Egypt when the Sudan-Egyptian frontier was reconstructed shortly after the conquest.

Before a reply could be prepared, the Sudan Government received reports that a contingent of the Egyptian Army was on its way to the Halayib area and its neighbourhood.

The Acting Minister for Foreign Affairs in the Sudan summoned the Egyptian Ambassador and asked him if there was any truth in these reports. The Ambassador thought that the news was most unlikely and promised to try to obtain clarification from his Government. At the same time, the Acting Minister for Foreign Affairs asked the Egyptian Ambassador to convey to his Government the message that the Sudan Government hoped that the news regarding the movement of troops was untrue and that, if it was true, it would have a very serious effect on the friendly relations between the two countries. The Acting Minister added that it was impossible for the Government to cede territory which had constituted part of the Sudan for the last half-century merely on an exchange of notes. Equally, it was impracticable for the Egyptian Government to expect an urgent reply on a matter which needed careful study and consideration at a time when most of the Ministers were away because of impending general elections.

The reason why I say this is that I wish to make it quite clear that we have exhausted all means before coming here to the Security Council of the United Nations.

On 13 February, two days after the meeting referred to above, a note dated 9 February was delivered by the Egyptian Government simultaneously to the Prime Minister of the Sudan and the Sudan Ambassador in Cairo. In this note it was alleged that, on the occasion of the forthcoming plebiscite for the election of the President of the United Arab Republic, the Egyptian Government, in the exercise of its recognized rights and in pursuance of Egypt's sovereign powers, had decided to afford to electors in these regions the opportunity of participating in the plebiscite. The Egyptian Ambassador asked for a reply to his second note. He also reiterated that the news about the movement of troops was unfounded. The Sudan Prime Minister and the other Ministers present made

(Mr. Osman, Sudan)

the point that the present frontiers shown on the map were those accepted by all, including Egypt. Those same frontiers were the basis on which the geographical limits of the independent Sudan were defined. What is more important is the fact that the same boundaries have remained, on the whole, undisputed for nearly sixty years.

True, the Agreement of 19 January 1899 fixed the boundaries between the Sudan and Egypt at the 22nd Parallel of latitude. This was modified by an order from the Egyptian Ministry of the Interior dated 26 March 1899, to include the Island of Faras in the Sudan territory. This sanctioned an agreement made between the Commandant of Wadi-Halfa in the Sudan and the representative of the Egyptian Government. This order defines the actual administrative boundary in the Nile Valley. Again, a ministerial enactment dated 25 July 1902 defines the administrative boundary between Korosko and the Red Sea area. This modification was made for the administration of nomad tribes on both sides of the boundary for the purpose of simplifying their lives and facilitating their movements. A ministerial enactment dated 24 November 1902 made a slight modification of this. In October 1916 the Egyptian Ministry of the Interior informed the Sudan Government that the delimitation did not affect the administrative boundary already fixed.

From this it will be seen that, for practical purposes, the administrative boundary is the really important one. The 22nd Parallel North is taken as the general boundary, and such modifications as were made in this arbitrary line were made for the obvious reason of avoiding the placing of portions of the same tribe under different administrations. The present boundaries of the Sudan confirm this. With slight temporary modifications, they have remained the same for over fifty-five years.

Again, the present boundaries of the Sudan, which have been under uninterrupted administration by the Sudan Government, were confirmed by the Anglo-Egyptian Agreement concluded in Cairo between Egypt and the United Kingdom in February 1953, and also by the Transitional Constitution now in practice in the Sudan. Chapter 1, article 2 (2) of this Constitution reads as follows:

"The Territory of the Sudan shall comprise all those territories which were included in the Anglo-Egyptian Sudan immediately before the commencement of this Constitution."

(Mr. Osman, Sudan)

Furthermore, all Egyptian elections in the past, including the most recent plebiscite for the office of the President of the Egyptian Republic conducted in June 1956, have excluded those areas on the strength of their being part and parcel of the Sudan. Also, elections held in the Sudan, including those for self-government following the Anglo-Egyptian Agreement of February 1953, were conducted under the supervision of an International Commission. It will be remembered that Egypt was a member of that Commission. The Sudan elections were carried out on the basis that the areas in question were part and parcel of the Sudan and that the inhabitants thereof were Sudanese, participating in their normal elections for the House of Representatives. The Prime Minister also recalled that, on the day the Sudan became independent, it was made clear to the Condominium Governments that the Sudan reserved its rights not to be bound by any treaty or agreement concluded on its behalf prior to independence unless such treaties and agreements were confirmed by it. This was the subject of a statement made by the then Prime Minister on 1 January 1956. If the Egyptian Government had had any views on the matter, it could have put them forward either before independence or on receipt of the letter dated 3 January 1956 from the then Prime Minister of the Sudan to President Abdul Gamal Nasser.

(Mr. Osman, Sudan)

This is not a light subject; this is a grave subject, and it could not easily be settled in the given time -- namely, before 21 February. It is clear that there is not sufficient time and that the time is not appropriate for the consideration of such a large issue and for the reaching of a decision on it. The Egyptian Government's point of view cannot be accepted, for obvious reasons; for -- how can I put it? -- it is like an ultimatum, which no self-respecting Government could accept without question. Therefore, it is considered to be in the interest of good friendly relations between the two countries to defer consideration of this problem until after the Sudan elections, which will take place on 27 February and will probably continue for some ten days.

On 16 February -- three days after the meeting referred to above -- the Egyptian Minister of Foreign Affairs communicated to the Sudan Ambassador in Cairo that the Egyptian Government had, in order to conduct the plebiscite, already sent election committees and a contingent of the Frontier Guard to the area which it has claimed. It was also reported by the Egyptian Government that its emissaries would be in the appointed places on the appointed day to conduct the plebiscite. On Monday, 17 February, the Council of Ministers of Sudan met to consider the situation, and the following facts emerged:

First, the Republic of Egypt has not raised this matter since the re-conquest, but has chosen the present time to bring it up -- a time when the Government and the people of the Sudan are actively engaged in parliamentary elections and a time when it has been made known that there are mineral deposits in the area now becoming a subject of dispute. Again, the issue has been raised at a time when, as a result of the Nile Waters negotiations, it has become clear that the Sudan will claim compensation for the flooding of the areas north of Wadi Halfa because of the proposed erection of the Egyptian High Dam.

Secondly, the plebiscite, which the Egyptian Government has used as the reason for its second note, is not the first plebiscite to be held in Egypt since or before the Egyptian revolution, and in each case the inhabitants of the area in question have not been asked to vote.

Thirdly, whereas the first Egyptian note is based on an objection to the participation of the citizens of the area in the Sudanese elections, the second

(Mr. Osman, Sudan)

note is based on a demand that the Sudanese citizens of the area -- who the Egyptian Government claims are Egyptian citizens -- should vote in an Egyptian plebiscite.

Fourthly, the time allowed for the Sudan Government to decide such an important issue did not exceed sixteen days -- that is, from 1 February to 16 February.

Fifthly, the second note confronts the Sudan Government with a fait accompli, without giving that Government an opportunity for consultation or negotiation.

Sixthly, the verbal statement concerning the sending of electoral staff accompanied by frontier guards to the disputed area confirms the grave news that reached the Sudan Government earlier and which has been repeatedly denied by the Egyptian Ambassador, in an effort to provide the right atmosphere for such a fait accompli.

Seventhly, the Egyptian Government does not seem to appreciate the fact that the Sudan Ministers are engaged in duties connected with the elections -- sometimes away from the capital, Khartoum. It has also refused to accede to the Sudan Government's request to defer discussions on the subject until after the elections, which will take place, as I have already mentioned, on 27 February.

In view of the above-mentioned facts, the Sudan Council of Ministers has decided to take all the necessary measures to safeguard the sovereignty of the Sudan over its territory and to defend its independence. However, because of its earnest desire to leave the door open between the two friendly, neighbouring countries, it has taken the following mild decisions:

First, the Prime Minister should contact President Gamal Abdel Nasser by telephone and repeat to him the Sudanese request that Egypt should not proceed with the measures contemplated, at the same time emphasizing the Sudan's willingness to enter into negotiations with Egypt on the question at issue. The Sudan Prime Minister has, in fact, tried and failed to contact President Nasser by telephone. Instead, the Prime Minister was able to give the message in question to the Egyptian Minister of the Interior, who promised to convey it to President Nasser and obtain his reply.

(Mr. Osman, Sudan)

Secondly, the Government should contact the Opposition leaders -- this is an internal matter -- and explain the situation. This has been done.

Thirdly, the same information should be conveyed to the Arab League, and to Heads of Missions of Arab countries and others represented in the Sudan. This has also been done. Further information is to be conveyed whenever possible in order to tell the people what the situation is.

In conclusion, the Government of the Sudan, while doing its utmost to reach an amicable and reasonable solution, has great hopes that wise council will prevail so that the friendly relations existing between the two countries -- relations which the Sudan Government and people value very highly -- will not be impaired.

What else could any Government do under the exceptional circumstances and in the few days at its disposal? But the Sudan Government has done even more within this limit of a few days.

The Sudan Government sent its Foreign Minister to Cairo to convey to the President of the Republic the Sudan Government's request to defer discussion of Egypt's claim until after the Sudan elections, which, as I have already stated, will take place on 27 February. The Foreign Minister went to Cairo, accompanied by the Sudan Ambassador to Egypt, on the morning of 18 February. Immediately after their arrival, they held a meeting with the Egyptian Foreign Minister. Some Egyptian Ministers were also present. At this meeting, the Sudan Foreign Minister explained the Sudan Government's point of view and stressed its goodwill towards the Egyptian Government.

(Mr. Osman, Sudan)

At mid-day on the 18th, the Foreign Minister met with President Gamal Abdel Nasser and explained to him the circumstances prevailing in the Sudan at the present time. He emphasized his Government's preparedness to start discussions on the subject immediately after the Sudanese elections. Meanwhile, he suggested that the Sudan Government, as proof of its good intentions in the matter, would furnish the Egyptian Government with a written guarantee that the carrying out of the Sudanese elections in the disputed area would not be used as one of the arguments in the proposed discussions to prove the Sudan's right to these areas. However, the Egyptian Government rejected this proposal. In fact, it insisted that elections should not be held -- not only in the areas claimed by Egypt in its note of 13 February 1958, but in the constituency to which they adjoined, namely, the big town of Wadi Halfa in the Sudan. The Sudan Council of Ministers met on the same day in the afternoon and, after discussion, was satisfied that it would be impossible to accede to such a demand because it is an infringement of Sudanese sovereignty and Sudanese rights, represents interference in the Sudan's normal domestic affairs, which it has conducted for so long, and will prevent the Sudanese from exercising their full democratic rights. It will also interfere with the Constitution of the Sudan for the realization of its sovereignty and independence.

Two elections have already been held in the Sudan, and about neither one has the Egyptian Government made any reservation or lodged any complaint.

I sincerely hope that I have explained satisfactorily the point of view of my Government, and I sincerely hope that the Council will adopt a measure which will calm the situation that exists between Egypt and the Sudan and pave the way for a peaceful and friendly solution.

Lastly, I wish to reserve my delegation's right once again to participate in this debate should it be necessary.

Mr. LOUFI (Egypt) (interpretation from French): I confess that it is with deep regret that I take the floor in the Security Council today to set forth the position of my delegation on the complaint submitted yesterday by the delegation of the Sudan.

(Mr. Loutfi, Egypt )

The members of the Council are aware that Egypt and the Sudan, neighbouring countries, are bound by many ties of friendship and brotherhood. For a long time, Egypt exercised sovereignty over the Sudan and, in that capacity, participated in the Condominium which in the past administered the Sudan. Egypt complied strictly with the principle of the right of peoples to self-determination and, in fact, implemented that right in the agreement regarding the Sudan which was concluded between Egypt and the United Kingdom on 12 February 1953. Our purpose was to ensure that the Sudan would have the status it desired in the future and that is why we recognized the Sudan as an independent and sovereign State.

After that agreement and the proclamation of Sudanese independence, the Egyptian Government had occasion to settle certain pending questions with the Sudan. It did so at all times in a spirit of friendship and conciliation, in accordance with the principles and the provisions of the United Nations Charter. It was in this spirit that a monetary agreement with the Sudan was recently concluded.

For all these reasons, we cannot but deplore the fact that the Government of the Sudan should have so hastily decided to submit this question to the Security Council. It did so after having rejected several suggestions submitted by Egypt with a view to finding a solution to this dispute in accordance with the spirit of the United Nations Charter and in accordance with the friendly and good-neighbourly relations which have at all times prevailed between our two countries. It did so before having exhausted recourse to the other pacific means of settlement which are mentioned in the Charter, particularly in Article 33. I do not need to recall the tenor of this Article to you. It states, in particular:

"The parties to any dispute, the continuance of which is likely to endanger the maintenance of international peace and security, shall, first of all, seek a solution by negotiation, enquiry, mediation, conciliation, arbitration, judicial settlement, resort to regional agencies or arrangements, or other peaceful means of their own choice."

(Mr. Loutfi, Egypt)

It is quite clear that, when reference is made to "resort to regional agencies or arrangements", this, as far as our region is concerned, implies a resort to the Arab League. Since, however, the Sudan has chosen the procedure it is following here, I cannot but reply, however briefly, to the statement just made by the representative of the Sudan.

Before coming to the crux of the problem, I should like to bring up one or two questions relating to procedure and to the wording of the complaint submitted by the Government of the Sudan. First of all, I should like to point out that, in his letter the representative of the Sudan mentioned massive concentrations of Egyptian troops moving toward the Sudanese border. On this point I should like to declare that there are no Egyptian armed forces in that area. We have border guards, who are necessary for the maintenance of order and security in the region.

Quite to the contrary, our information is to the effect that there are Sudanese armed forces in the area involved in the dispute and that these armed forces have, as a matter of fact, seized an Egyptian river boat.

Moreover, the letter submitted by the Sudan unfortunately uses the term "aggression". Now, "aggression", in the meaning of the United Nations Charter, refers, unless I am mistaken, to an armed aggression -- and this is far from being the case here. The kind of "aggression" referred to here, which has been called "imminent", is difficult to conceive. I think that, where aggression is concerned, there either is or is not aggression.

Although Egypt is certain that right is on its side in this dispute and although we could bring arguments and documents to bear to prove that our rights over the disputed area are well founded, we have at all times preferred to adopt an attitude of tolerance and friendliness toward the Sudan and to do this in a spirit of conciliation because of our friendly and amicable relations. That is why I do not feel that it would serve a very useful purpose today, especially in the Security Council, to discuss the legal question which seems to be involved in the dispute between Egypt and the Sudan. It is superfluous here to mention the agreement regarding the administration of the Sudan concluded between Egypt and the United Kingdom in 1899, or the Ministerial decisions bearing on the same point which militate in favour of the Egyptian thesis.

(Mr. Loutfi, Egypt)

Yesterday, the Foreign Minister of Egypt, when he took cognizance of the memorandum submitted by the Foreign Minister of the Sudan to the Secretary-General of the Arab League, explained the position of the Egyptian Government along the lines which I have just set forth, and, in doing so, he emphasized the good-will which Egypt harbours for the Sudan.

Moreover, the distinguished Secretary-General of the United Nations, Mr. Hammarskjold, voiced his concern to me yesterday regarding the situation along the frontier and he expressed the hope that Egypt would commit no act which would lead to a deterioration of the situation. Upon instructions of my Government, I informed him today that the Egyptian Government will adopt a peaceful and neighbourly attitude toward the Sudan, an attitude dictated by the friendly relations which unite our two peoples, and that the Egyptian Government is determined to avoid any act or statement which might be of such a nature as to modify this attitude.

That is why I can only state, with great regret, that the complaint against Egypt which has been submitted to the Security Council cannot be taken seriously. Unfortunately, it is motivated by Sudanese domestic considerations, which may be linked to the elections which are shortly to take place in the Sudan, and these matters, to my mind, clearly do not fall within the competence of the Security Council. That is why I shall not dwell on this question.

Despite this complaint which has been submitted hastily against Egypt, and despite the propaganda which has surrounded this question, the Egyptian Government, in a spirit of conciliation, has adopted a friendly and benevolent attitude towards the Government of Sudan and, this very day, has published in Cairo the text of the communique which representatives have before them and which I shall now read out:

(continued in English)

"To preserve the ties that bind together the Egyptian and Sudanese peoples, the Egyptian Government decided to postpone the settling of the frontier question till after the Sudanese elections. Negotiations are to begin for the settling of all undecided questions after the new Sudanese Government is chosen.

"Egypt, which has demonstrated its solidarity with the Sudan for the sake of liberty and independence, takes this step primarily in order to frustrate the designs of evil-wishers who have exploited opportunities to deteriorate the eternal relations between the two sister countries. Also, Egypt has not responded to the provocations which have tried to create the impression of armed intervention or an invasion of Sudanese territory, at the time when there are no Egyptian forces on the southern border, apart from the normal frontier patrols.

"The Egyptian Government once again announces that the Egyptian armed forces have not been built up to invade the Sudan but to help it stand up to the common enemy."

(continued in French)

Having read out that communique, I do not feel that there is anything for me to add. I shall conclude by expressing my confidence that this dispute will be solved between Egypt and the Sudan within the framework of the traditions of friendship which have united these two sister peoples for centuries.

Mr. MATSUDAIRA (Japan) (interpretation from French): At this juncture I wish to propose that the meeting be suspended for an hour to enable members of the Council to have private conversations on this question.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Russian): Since I hear no objection to the proposal made by the representative of Japan, the meeting will be suspended for one hour.

The meeting was suspended at 3.55 p.m. and resumed at 5 p.m.

Mr. WADSWORTH (United States of America): I should like to make some very brief observations on the statements we have heard this afternoon, the statement of the Sudanese representative who has presented his Government's complaint concerning "the grave situation existing on the Sudan-Egyptian border", and the statement which the representative of Egypt has made in reply. My delegation feels that we should note one or two salient points here.

We wish to note in particular the statements of the representatives of Egypt and Sudan indicating their willingness to settle this matter after the elections of 27 February.

We note also that the Secretary-General's concern and interest has already been communicated to the Government of Egypt and that he ~~has~~ received a favourable reply from that Government.

We therefore wish to express the sincere hope that the parties to this dispute will refrain from any actions or statements which might aggravate conditions or prejudice prospects for an amicable solution until such time as they mutually agree to reconvene in negotiation.

My delegation would also like to remind the Council that by our action today in adopting the agenda, the Council is officially seized of this problem and that in the event, which we hope does not transpire, that the situation should deteriorate, the Council can always meet again on very short notice.

Finally, my delegation hopes that peace and tranquillity will prevail in this area, and that following the elections, which are to commence on 27 February, the parties will seek and achieve a peaceful solution of their differences.

Mr. MATSUDAIRA (Japan): My delegation has listened with great attention to the statements made by the representatives of the Sudan and Egypt. It is a matter of regret that the efforts to seek a peaceful settlement between the parties have failed and that the matter had to be brought to the attention of the Security Council at all. This is especially so since the dispute is one between Egypt and the Sudan, with both of whom Japan is bound by strong ties of friendly feelings.

My delegation has to confess that it lacks sufficient knowledge of the dispute and its background. It is not in a position to pass judgement on this matter. If the dispute is a matter concerning the interpretation of international agreements, my delegation naturally considers it appropriate that the case should be brought to the International Court of Justice. If it is not, a solution by negotiation or other peaceful means of their own choice would be in order.

My delegation welcomes the statements made by the representatives of both Egypt and the Sudan to seek the peaceful solution of this dispute after the Sudanese elections. My delegation wishes that neither party to this dispute will take any steps to aggravate the situation in the meantime, that the status quo should be maintained by both parties and that the dispute would be solved peacefully. I understand that the Council remains seized of the matter and that we could always discuss it if necessary.

Sir Pierson DIXON (United Kingdom): I should like to say a few words.

The Security Council has met at short notice in response to a request of the representative of the Sudan contained in document S/3963. The reason for this request, as we have heard from the representative of the Sudan, was the anxiety of his Government at certain actions of the Egyptian Government in regard to certain areas along the 22nd Parallel which have for many years been administered by the Sudan. I may say in parenthesis that, according to our information, these areas have been administered without interruption by the Sudan since the very early days of the condominium, in fact for more than half a century. So far as we know, these arrangements, over that long period of time have worked in an entirely satisfactory manner and without dispute or reservation hitherto from the Egyptian side. It is the timing and manner in which this question has been raised that, as I understand it, has led the Government of the Sudan to come to the Council.

(Sir Pierson Dixon, United Kingdom)

This certainly would not be the moment for us in the Council to embark on an assessment of the substance of the problem itself. So far as Her Majesty's Government is concerned, we hold that the dispute which has now arisen is one which should be settled by the parties through peaceful means of their own choice in the spirit of the Charter. In the meantime, it seems plain common sense that nothing should be done to disturb administrative arrangements which have existed for so long in the areas in question, which have existed for so long largely no doubt because they worked so well.

We have been glad to hear the representative of the Sudan say today that his Government is prepared in due course to seek appropriate ways of negotiating a settlement of the dispute. We have also noted the speech made today by the representative of Egypt. In particular, we have noted his assurance in the course of his statement that the Egyptian Government has now decided to postpone the settling of the frontier question until after the Sudanese elections. This seems to my delegation to meet the essential point in the Sudanese complaint to the Council. The Council will of course remain seized of the matter, but it does not seem to me that in these circumstances it is necessary for any more formal action to be taken at this time. The Council could, of course, meet again on short notice if, which I naturally hope will not be the case, the situation should deteriorate.

Mr. KHALAF (Iraq): It is unfortunate that two sister and neighbouring countries should have difficulties that could not be solved by sufficient mutual understanding and co-operation. My delegation would have preferred that the question be negotiated by the two parties with the two needed essentials for any successful negotiation: time and patience. It is essential also that no measures should be taken which may change the situation in the area in question, pending a peaceful and just solution. Any measures which may be taken by either party and which are foreign to the peaceful and friendly negotiations between the two parties would only tend to complicate the situation and endanger the peace and security in the region. It is indeed legitimate and right to expect that while this question is under consideration and negotiation, both parties will refrain from doing anything which may change the status quo or interfere with the present legal or political rights and responsibilities in the area.

In this respect we have listened to and noted the declaration of the Government of Egypt to the effect that the Government of Egypt had decided to postpone the settling of the frontier question until after the Sudanese elections.

We have also listened to and noted the statement of the Sudanese representative in which he declared his Government's intention and readiness to settle this question peacefully.

Mr. GEORGES-PICOT (France) (interpretation from French): After having listened to the statements made by the parties, we have the impression that the question of the frontiers is rather intricate. But this question is not before us at the present time, since the complaint made by the Government of the Sudan requesting that a discussion on the question of the frontiers be postponed until after the elections which are to take place on 27 February and which, according to what was told us by the delegate of the Sudan, should last until 10 March, has been accepted -- according to what was told us by the delegate of Egypt -- by the Egyptian Government which has decided to postpone the settlement of the frontier question until after the Sudanese elections, indicating that negotiations were to take place after the constitution of the Government that would result from the elections, which in our view is in keeping with the request made by the Sudan.

(Mr. Georges-Picot, France)

We, therefore, are in the framework of Article 33 of the Charter; and we go back to the procedure of negotiations. At this stage it would appear adequate for us for the Council to take note of the statements made in this connexion by both parties.

Mr. RITCHIE (Canada): As a matter of established policy the Canadian Government has always held the view that States should make every effort to settle their differences through the means outlined under Article 33 of the Charter. It is surely a responsibility and a duty incumbent on all the Members to seek solutions through the means suggested under that Article.

We have been informed today by the representative of the Sudan, and this information is also set forth in the letter which is the subject of our discussion, that the Sudan Government have had some discussions with the Government of Egypt but that up to the present time no satisfactory solution seemed possible. We have today heard the remarks of the representative of Egypt concerning the attitude of his Government toward the negotiation of the issues involved. In our view there seems to be a considerable basis for hope that the two Governments directly concerned, Egypt and the Sudan, would be able to pursue these questions further. If I understand the representative of Egypt correctly, it is the intention and desire of the Egyptian Government that negotiations should be resumed shortly after the forthcoming elections in the Sudan.

Of course, there is the problem of the interim period pending resumed negotiations. I am sure that members of the Council have been gratified and reassured by the assurances of peaceful intent which have been expressed in the Council today. It is our hope that, because the attention of the Council has been focused on the situation along the Egyptian-Sudanese border, this in itself will also have a reassuring effect and that calm and confidence will prevail on both sides of that border.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Russian): Do the other members of the Council wish to speak? If not, I should like to speak briefly in my capacity as representative of the Soviet Union.

The Soviet delegation has listened with great care to the statements of the representatives of the Sudan and Egypt. In our view, it is important to note that both representatives stated the desire and the readiness of their Governments to settle this border dispute which has arisen between them by the friendly method of negotiation. Thus, there is every possibility to settle the differences between the Sudan and Egypt by peaceful means through negotiation between the parties concerned. The procedure for settling disputed questions by means of negotiation is, as is known, in full keeping with the provisions of the Charter of the United Nations for the peaceful settlement of disputes.

We hope that the parties, following the statements made by them, will prevent an extension of the conflict and will settle their differences in keeping with the Charter of the United Nations. Such a settlement would be most in harmony with the interests of the Sudan and Egypt and would also serve to strengthen peace and security in that region. For this reason, in the view of the Soviet delegation there is no need at the present time for any intervention on the part of the Security Council. My delegation considers that, for a successful conclusion of the negotiations, it would be appropriate for the Council to interrupt its consideration of the matter after having taken note of the statements of the parties.

We also express the hope that all Member States of the United Nations will assist the early peaceful settlement of this matter and will prevent this small frontier incident from deteriorating the relations between the Sudan and Egypt or deteriorating the situation in this area of the world.

Mr. LOUTFI (Egypt) (interpretation from French): I must apologize for speaking a second time, but there are a few words I should like to add to my original statement.

I have already made it clear that I do not propose to discuss the legal issues involved in the dispute with regard to this area between Egypt and the Sudan. I must enter explicit reservations to that part of the statement made by

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42-45

(Mr. Loutfi, Egypt)

the representative of the United Kingdom regarding the legal status of the disputed area.

In conclusion, I should like to repeat once again that we are confident that this matter will be settled amicably between Egypt and the Sudan.

Mr. OSMAN (Sudan): My delegation is glad that the Security Council has been seized of this question and that it will meet on short notice if circumstances so demand, although we sincerely hope that that will not be necessary.

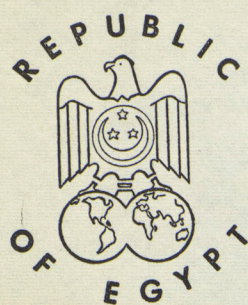
As I have already stated, we, on our part, have done everything possible to facilitate settlement of this issue, and we shall continue to do so.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Russian): If there are no more speakers, I think that, as President of the Security Council, I might briefly sum up the views of the members of the Council as follows.

The Council has heard the statements of representatives of the Sudan and Egypt and takes note of the assurances of the representative of Egypt to the effect that the Government of Egypt has decided to postpone settlement of the frontier question until completion of the elections in the Sudan. It goes without saying that the question submitted by the Sudan continues to stand on the agenda of the Council.

Thus, we may conclude our meeting, bearing in mind that the next meeting, if one proves necessary, will be called after consultation, as usual, among members of the Council and the parties concerned.

The meeting rose at 5.45 p.m.



# Press Release

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PRESS BUREAU OF THE EGYPTIAN MISSION  
TO THE UNITED NATIONS

Released by  
A. M. Hassan, Press Attaché  
27 February 1958

## STATEMENT ISSUED IN CAIRO TODAY

On February 25th, the Sudanese Delegation to the United Nations issued a statement to the effect that reports had been received of Egyptian troop concentrations inside the northeast borders of the Sudan. This statement was made at the same time that the Sudan Minister of Social Affairs, who is also official spokesman of the Sudan Government, had announced that there were no Egyptian troops whatsoever inside Sudanese borders. Again, on February 26th, the Sudanese Delegation to the United Nations announced that the withdrawal of Egyptian troops had not, as yet, been definitely confirmed. This was at a time when all reports, statements and news emanating from the Sudan repeatedly confirmed the absence of any Egyptian military formations within the borders of the Sudan.

That being the case, it is to be inferred that there is a clear discrepancy between the statements of the Sudanese Delegation and those of the Sudan Government.

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Omar Loutfi

Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary  
Permanent Representative of Egypt  
to the United Nations



# Press Release

PRESS BUREAU OF THE EGYPTIAN MISSION  
TO THE UNITED NATIONS

Released by  
A.M.Hassan, Press Attache  
February 25, 1958

STATEMENT BY INFORMATION DEPARTMENT  
OF THE UNITED ARAB REPUBLIC

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Commenting on the Sudan Government's statement broadcast over Omdorman radio at 10:00 pm on February 24, the Director of the Information Department said:

"The Egyptian Government made the statement on February 21 announcing that it had decided to postpone settlement of the border dispute until after the Sudanese elections and that negotiations to solve all undecided questions between the two countries were to start after the new Sudan Government had been chosen."

The Director reaffirmed the fact that Egypt has no troop concentrations in the area and repeated that Egypt will not respond to any provocations.

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PERMANENT MISSION OF THE REPUBLIC  
OF THE SUDAN TO THE UNITED NATIONS

25th February, 1958

PRESS RELEASE

It will be recalled that the Representative of the Egyptian Government solemnly declared in the Security Council on Friday 21st February, 1958 that "The Egyptian Government will adopt a peaceful and neighbourly attitude towards the Sudan and that the Egyptian Government is determined to avoid any act or statement which might be of such a nature as to modify this attitude." It will also be recalled that the President of Egypt declared that "The Egyptian army was not created to invade the Sudan."

Nevertheless, despite these official declarations, on the night of 24th February, 1958 we received news to the effect that Egyptian forces were already assembling in the area of Abu Ramadi, which lies more than 80 miles inside the north eastern frontier of the Sudan. Also that the Egyptian flag had been hoisted in this area and that the Commander of the Egyptian forces refused to withdraw or to haul down the flag when requested to do so by the Sudanese local District Commissioner.

The Sudanese people, as well as all firm minded people everywhere, are undoubtedly aware that the Sudan Government has exhausted every means to handle this delicate and grave situation with the utmost care, and with the aim of avoiding, as far as humanly possible, any results which may complicate and deteriorate the relationship between the two countries. But, once again, we wish to make it absolutely clear that the Sudanese people are determined to defend their territory and not be, in any way, intimidated by the extraordinary measures and tactics employed deliberately by the Egyptian forces inside Sudanese territory. It must also be made clear to the whole world that both the Sudanese people and the Sudan Government hold the Egyptian Government fully responsible for the consequences of such provocations employed and which may continue to be employed in the area.

Many observers who have been closely following the grave situation since it has unfolded itself, do not now rule out the fact that a parliamentary system with free elections, government and opposition, with free press and

..../Assembly, might

assembly, might have proved distasteful to the regime in Egypt. It must be emphasized that while official Egyptian declarations and news find their way into the Sudanese press, it was extremely difficult for the point of view of the Sudan Government to reach the Egyptian press and even to make corrections to distorted official Sudanese point of view presented in the Egyptian press and radio.

On our part, we still hope that Egypt will respond to Sudanese requests to withdraw its forces and thus avoid any grave results. The Sudan Council of Ministers, while continuing to inform the public of the developments of the situation, asks them to maintain restraint and not to lend themselves to the dangerous rumours and misleading statements circulated by all media of transmission inside Sudan territory to divide the unity of the people, to mislead the public and to create confusion at a time when the Sudanese people are actively engaged in preparations for the Parliamentary elections which will commence on the 27th of February, 1958.

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PRIME MINISTER

KHARTOUM (SUDAN)

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TWENTY-FIRST FEBRUARY 1958

DAG HAMMARSKJOLD SECRETARY GENERAL

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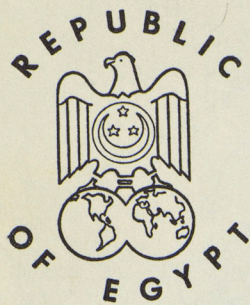
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UNITED NATIONS



# Press Release

PRESS BUREAU OF THE EGYPTIAN MISSION  
TO THE UNITED NATIONS

Released by  
A. M. Hassan, Press Attaché  
21 February 1958

## OFFICIAL STATEMENT BY THE GOVERNMENT OF EGYPT

To preserve the ties that bind together the Egyptian and Sudanese peoples, the Egyptian Government decided to postpone the settling of the frontier question till after the Sudanese elections. Negotiations are to begin for the settling of all undecided questions after the new Sudanese Government is chosen.

Egypt, which has demonstrated its solidarity with the Sudan for the sake of liberty and independence, takes this step primarily in order to frustrate the designs of evil-wishers who have exploited opportunities to deteriorate the eternal relations between the two sister countries. Also, Egypt has not responded to the provocations which have tried to create the impression of armed intervention or an invasion of Sudanese territory, at the time when there are no Egyptian forces on the southern border, apart from the normal frontier patrols.

The Egyptian Government once again announces that the Egyptian armed forces have not been built up to invade the Sudan but to help it stand up to the common enemy.

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UNITED NATIONS  
SECURITY  
COUNCIL



Distr.  
GENERAL

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20 February 1958

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LETTER DATED 20 FEBRUARY 1958 FROM THE REPRESENTATIVE OF SUDAN  
ADDRESSED TO THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

I have the honour, upon instructions from my Government, to request you to call an urgent meeting of the Security Council to discuss the grave situation existing on the Sudan-Egyptian border, resulting from the massed concentrations of Egyptian troops moving towards the Sudanese frontiers.

As a party to this dispute, I request that I be heard when the meeting is convened.

I attach herewith a communication received from His Excellency Prime Minister Abdulla Khalil of the Sudan.

Please accept, Excellency, etc.

(Signed) Yacoub Osman  
Permanent Representative of the Sudan  
to the United Nations

TEXT OF A LETTER DATED 20 FEBRUARY 1958 FROM  
H.E. PRIME MINISTER ABDULLA KHALIL TO THE  
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE SUDAN TO THE  
UNITED NATIONS

On the 1st of February, 1958, the Egyptian Government sent a note to the Sudan Government wherein she claimed sovereignty over the following Sudanese territories:

- (a) the North-eastern part of the Sudan, north of latitude 22 north and
- (b) that part of the Sudan which is situated north of the town of Wadi Halfa, comprising the Saras, Debeira and Faras region.

The Egyptian note demanded the handing over of these two territories to Egypt. Egypt alleges that the said two territories belong to Egypt under the 1899 Agreement concluded between Great Britain and Egypt. These two territories belong to the Sudan by virtue of agreements and treaties concluded between the Egyptian Government and the Sudan Government in 1902 and 1907. Since then the said territories have been under the exclusive administration and sovereignty of the Sudan. The inhabitants of these territories are of Sudanese nationality. At no time did they vote in any Egyptian parliamentary election or plebiscite. Moreover, they have voted as Sudanese nationals in the Sudanese Parliamentary elections in 1953 on the strength of the Self-Government Statute which had been enacted under the Agreement concluded between Great Britain and Egypt in February 1953.

On the 9th of February, reports were received by the Sudan Government that Egyptian troops were being sent to the north-eastern part of the Sudan north of latitude 22 north. The Sudan Government inquired from the Egyptian Government about the truth of these reports. Egypt denied them. On the 13th of February the Egyptian Government sent a note, dated 9th February, demanding that the Sudanese inhabitants of the said Sudanese territory should vote in the Egyptian Plebiscite which will be held on the 21st of February. Several representations were made to the Egyptian Government to allow sufficient time for the Government of the Sudan to study such an intricate matter - a matter which the Egyptian Government had chosen to raise at a time when the Sudan Government and the Sudanese people are busy with their parliamentary General Elections which will be held on the 27th of February.

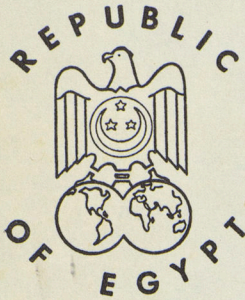
The Egyptian Government, on 16th of February, informed the Sudan Government that it had decided to send into the said territory Plebiscite officials accompanied by Frontier troops to conduct the Egyptian Plebiscite. The Sudanese Government asked twice for time to negotiate with the Egyptian Government.

On 18th of February the Egyptian Government sent a note to the Sudan Government insisting to include the said territory in the Egyptian Plebiscite and asking the Sudan Government to withdraw therefrom a platoon which the latter had stationed there, to maintain law and order during the Sudanese Parliamentary Election - as has been done in other parts of the country. The Sudanese Government refuse to accept this demand which constitutes an infringement of its sovereignty. The Sudan Government, being eager for an amicable settlement of this dispute, had sent its Minister of Foreign Affairs to Cairo on the 18th of February to discuss the matter with the Egyptian Government. Unfortunately no settlement was reached. Reports reveal huge infiltration of Egyptian troops on the border. The Egyptian Government insist on conducting a Plebiscite in this Sudan territory.

The Sudan Government, though restrained in its action, views with deep concern this unprovoked and illegal attitude of the Egyptian Government which constitutes a breach of Sudanese sovereignty. Since the Sudan is determined to defend its territory the situation would result in a breach of the peace and, if uncontrolled, may develop into armed conflict. As a peace-loving nation, the Sudan requests the Secretary-General of the United Nations to ask the Security Council to meet immediately and use its good offices to stop the impending Egyptian aggression. The Sudan Government will be submitting a note giving full evidence of its unquestionable right to the territories now claimed by Egypt.

Abdulla Khalil  
Prime Minister

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# Press Release

PRESS BUREAU OF THE EGYPTIAN MISSION  
TO THE UNITED NATIONS

Released by  
A. M. Hassan, Press Attaché  
February 20, 1958

## STATEMENT BY GOVERNMENT OF EGYPT

On February 1, 1958, the Government of the Republic of Egypt sent word to the Sudanese Government drawing its attention to the illegality of the resolution about specifying the Sudanese regional constituencies, as it included certain areas within the Egyptian regional frontiers in the zones north of latitude 22, which is the political boundary between Egypt and the Sudan in accordance with the 1899 Agreement.

No reply to the Egyptian memorandum having been received from the Sudanese Government, and the plebiscite day being at hand, the Egyptian Government sent a reminder dated February 13, particularly because the said plebiscite is closely connected with defining the political stand of the United Arab Republic, and the Constitution stipulates that all citizens should participate therein. Again the Sudanese Government gave no answer and again the Egyptian Government sent a memorandum on February 16 informing the Sudanese Government that it would dispatch to these areas the committees of the plebiscite to take place on February 21, guarded by a few of the frontier policemen who are responsible for security in the Egyptian deserts and frontiers.

On February 17, the Sudanese Prime Minister contacted the Egyptian Minister of Interior expressing his desire to put off the question of the frontiers between the two countries till after the coming Sudanese elections. At the same time, units from the Sudanese Defense Forces were moving on within the Egyptian area. It goes without saying that this act is not only a violation of the 1899 Agreement but also a breach of the provisional Sudanese Constitution issued in 1953 and valid ever since the proclamation of the independence of the Sudan, fixing the boundaries of the Sudan in Article II which stipulated that the Sudan covers all the territories comprised by the Anglo-Egyptian Sudan directly before the issuance of this Constitution, and as these areas have never formed part of the Sudanese territories but were in fact under Egyptian sovereignty administered at one time by bilateral administration in the Sudan, Egypt being a partner therein.

For these reasons the Egyptian Government instructed her Ambassador in Khartoum to advise the Sudanese Government to withdraw the Sudanese forces from the Egyptian territory to the south of the political boundary with a view to maintaining the close ties between the Egyptian and the Sudanese peoples. Still, the Sudanese Government would not listen and delegated its Foreign Minister to Cairo.

Following the meeting held in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs between the representatives of the Sudanese and Egyptian Governments, the following statement was issued:

"Several contacts were made between the Egyptian and the Sudanese Governments through the Sudanese Foreign Minister and the Sudan's Ambassador to Cairo concerning the border zones between the two countries. Anxious for all to avoid measures detrimental to the viewpoints of either Government or harmful to the chances of reaching an amicable solution through negotiations which were to start immediately the new Sudanese Government came to power, the Government of Egypt proposed to the Sudan Government that neither party was to conduct an election campaign or a plebiscite in those zones till the proposed negotiations took place. This proposal, the Egyptian Government is sorry to say, was turned down by the Government of the Sudan."

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EGYPTIAN REPLY TO  
SUDANESE STATEMENT

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nothing in this area except a manganese mine operated by an Egyptian company licensed by the Egyptian Government in the exercise of right of sovereignty. All this is known to the Sudanese Government.

The Egyptian Government is keen on maintenance of relations linking Egyptian and Sudanese peoples. It would like to see the matter settled between the two countries by amicable means."

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MESSAGE SENT BY PRESIDENT GAMAL ABDEL NASSER  
TO SAYED ABDEL RAHMAN EL-MAHDI, PATRON OF  
SUDANESE UMMA PARTY

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Umma Party papers appeared this morning with front-page headlines, "Abdel Nasser's Army Invaded the Sudan" which, as you are doubtless aware, is entirely unfounded.

Umma Party papers also published articles having no other objective than the worsening of the close relations binding together the Egyptian and Sudanese peoples. This campaign will serve nothing but the interests of imperialism which is exerting every effort to sow seeds of discord between the two peoples.

Kindly call the attention of the Umma Party newspapers to the gravity of this attitude.

I pray to the Almighty to direct you along the right path of wisdom.

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PERMANENT MISSION OF EGYPT  
TO THE UNITED NATIONS

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19 February 1958

The following is a release by the Egyptian Mission to the United Nations in reply to the Sudanese statement concerning the frontier incident in southern Egypt:

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Agreement on political boundaries between Egypt and the Sudan was reached in Article I of the 1899 Convention which stipulated that the Sudan covered all territory to the south of latitude 22 north.

Sudan's provisional constitution promulgated in 1953 stipulated in Article II that Sudanese territory comprises all regions covered by the Anglo-Egyptian Sudan prior to the coming into force of this Constitution.

To facilitate administrative services for tribes in the border areas the Egyptian Minister of the Interior issued in 1899 an order placing some Egyptian areas north of latitude 22 north under the administration of the Anglo-Egyptian condominium while maintaining Egyptian sovereignty over them. In 1902 the Egyptian Minister of the Interior issued an order placing some areas to the north of latitude 22 north under Sudanese administration and some areas to the south of latitude 22 north under Egyptian administration while keeping them under Sudanese sovereignty.

The Sudanese Government, however, announced the delimitation of electoral constituencies which included Egyptian territory to the north of latitude 22 north, a step which conflicted with the provisions of the 1899 Convention and constituted a violation of Egyptian sovereignty.

On February 1, 1958, the Egyptian Government sent a note to the Sudanese Government drawing its attention to the fact that areas in question were Egyptian territory and that the Sudanese Government had no right to include them in Sudanese electoral constituencies. The note cited the 1899 Convention and demanded abolition of the administrative measures taken in this connection and a return to the political boundaries.

As the Sudanese Government failed to reply to the Egyptian note after several reminders, the Egyptian Government sent a new note on February 16 informing the Sudanese Government that it intended to send electoral committees to the areas in question for the plebiscite to be held on Feb. 21 and that they would be accompanied by a frontiers police detachment.

On the morning of February 17, the Sudanese Prime Minister contacted the Egyptian Minister of the Interior and expressed his desire that the Egyptian-Sudanese border question be kept in abeyance until after the forthcoming Sudanese elections.

At the same time, Sudanese forces moved into the Egyptian area in a move which constituted a flagrant violation of the 1899 Convention and Egyptian sovereignty. The Egyptian Government instructed its Ambassador in Khartoum to ask the Sudanese Government to withdraw Sudanese forces from Egyptian territory and back behind the political boundaries, namely latitude 22 north, in the interests of preserving the bonds between the Egyptian and Sudanese people. But the Sudanese Government, which from the outset had urged that secrecy of talks be maintained and that leaks to the press be prevented, suddenly and without consulting with the Egyptian Government issued tonight (Monday) a statement entitled "Egyptian Government Interference With Sudanese Frontiers." In this statement Sudanese Government ignored international agreements and claimed that the discovery of minerals was behind this situation. All licenses for exploration in the area involved have always been issued by the Egyptian Government with the knowledge of the Sudanese Government. There is

.../...

PERMANENT MISSION OF THE REPUBLIC  
OF THE SUDAN TO THE UNITED NATIONS

19th February, 1958

PRESS RELEASE

The Sudan Council of Ministers issued the following communique on the evening of the 18th of February, 1958:

The Council of Ministers would like to inform the public of the events and the contents of the notes exchanged between the Governments of the Sudan and Egypt on the subject of the Egyptian-Sudanese Frontier.

1) On the 1st February, 1958 the Permanent Under-Secretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs received a note from the Egyptian Ministry of Foreign Affairs dated 29.1.58 referring to the Sudan Constituency Order for the election of the House of Representatives and requesting that appropriate measures be taken to hand over the following areas of the Sudan to the Egyptian Government, namely:

- (a) The North Eastern Area of the Sudan north of latitude 22 degrees comprising Halayib and the surrounding areas.
- (b) An undefined area north of latitude 22 which apparently covers Sudanese territory extending north of Wadhalfa town and including the villages of Sarras, Debeira and Faras.

While the Egyptian memorandum requested the handing over of the above two areas it indicated the willingness of the Egyptian Government to hand over to the Sudan a region near the north-eastern frontier which had previously been ceded to Egypt  
.../when

when the Sudan-Egyptian frontier was reconstructed shortly after the conquest.

2) Before a reply could be prepared the Sudan Government received reports that a contingent of the Egyptian Army was on its way to <sup>the</sup>/Halayib area and the neighbourhood.

The Acting Minister for Foreign Affairs summoned the Egyptian Ambassador and asked if there was any truth in these reports. The Ambassador thought the news was most unlikely and promised to try and obtain clarification from his government. At the same time the Acting Minister asked the Ambassador to convey to his Government that the Sudan Government hoped the news regarding the movement of troops was untrue and that if it was true it would have a very serious effect on the relations between the two countries. The Minister also added that it was impossible for the Government to cede territory which has constituted part of the Sudan for the last half century on the mere exchange of notes. Equally, it was impracticable to expect an urgent reply on a matter which needed careful study and consideration at a time when most of the Ministers were away because of Parliamentary elections on the 13th, two days after the meeting referred to above.

3) A note dated 9th February was simultaneously delivered by the Egyptian Government to the Prime Minister of the Sudan and the Sudan Ambassador in Cairo. In this note it was alleged that on the occasion of the forthcoming Plebiscite for the election of the President of the United Arab Republic the Egyptian Government, in exercise of its recognized rights, and in pursuance of Egypt's sovereign powers, had decided to  
.../afford to

afford to electors in these regions the opportunity of participating in the Plebiscite. The Egyptian Ambassador asked for a reply to his second note. He also reiterated that the news about the movement of troops was unfounded. The Prime Minister and the other Ministers present made the point that the present frontiers shown on the maps are those accepted by all. Those same frontiers were the basis on which the geographical limits of the independent Sudan were delineated. What is more important is the fact that the same boundaries have remained undisputed for nearly sixty years.

Furthermore, all Egyptian elections, including the last Plebiscite for the office of the President of the Egyptian Republic have excluded those areas on the strength of their being part of the Sudan. Also, elections held in the Sudan including those for self-government following the Anglo-Egyptian Agreement of February 1953 were conducted under the supervision of an international commission. It will be remembered that Egypt was a member of that Commission. The Sudan elections were carried on on the basis that the areas in question were part of the Sudan and the inhabitants therein were Sudanese participating in their normal elections for the House of Representatives. The Prime Minister also recalled that on the day the Sudan became independent it was made clear to the Condomini that the Sudan reserved its rights not to be bound by any treaty or agreement concluded on its behalf prior to independence unless such treaties and agreements were confirmed by it. This was the subject of a statement made by the then Prime Minister on January 1st, 1956. Had the Egyptian Government  
.../any views

any views on the matter it could have put them forward either before independence or on receipt of the letter, dated 3rd January, 1956, from the then Prime Minister to President Gamal Abdel Nasser.

This is a grave subject and it could not easily be settled in the given time, namely before the 21st February. It is clear that time is neither sufficient nor appropriate for the consideration of such a grave subject and reaching a decision thereupon. The Egyptian Government's point of view cannot be accepted. Therefore it is considered to be in the interest of good friendly relations between the two countries to defer consideration of this problem until after the Sudan Elections which take place on 27th February.

4) On the 16th February, three days after the meeting referred to above, the Egyptian Minister of Foreign Affairs communicated to the Sudan Ambassador in Cairo that the Egyptian Government had already sent election committees and a contingent from the Frontier Guard to the area which it has claimed, in order to conduct the Plebiscite. It was also reported by the Egyptian Government that their emissaries would be in the appointed places on the appointed day to conduct the Plebiscite. On Monday, 17th February, the Council of Ministers met to consider the situation and the following facts emerged. First, the Republic of Egypt has not raised this matter since the reconquest, but has chosen the present time to bring it up, when the Government of the Sudan and its people are actively engaged in preparations for the coming elections and at a time when it was made known  
.../that there are

that there are mineral deposits in the area now becoming a subject of dispute. Again, the issue has been raised at a time when, as a result of the Nile Waters negotiations, it has become clear that the Sudan will claim compensation for the flooding of the area north of Wadi-Halfa because of the erection of the High Dam. Secondly, the Plebiscite, which the Egyptian Government has used as a pretext for its second note, was not the first Plebiscite or election to take place after or before the Egyptian Revolution and in each case the inhabitants of the area under question have never been asked to vote. Thirdly, whereas the first Egyptian note is based on an objection against the participation of the citizens of the area in the Sudanese elections, the second note is based on a demand for the Sudanese citizens of the area (whom the Egyptian Government claim to be Egyptian citizens) to vote in an Egyptian Plebiscite. Fourthly, the time allowed for the Sudan Government to decide on such an important issue did not exceed sixteen days, i.e. from 1st to 16th February. Fifthly, the second note confronts the Sudan Government with a fait accompli without giving it a chance of consultation or negotiation. Sixthly, the verbal statement concerning the sending of Electoral Staff accompanied by frontier soldiers to the disputed area confirms the news that reached the Sudan Government earlier, which has been repeatedly denied by the Egyptian Ambassador in an effort to provide the right atmosphere for a fait accompli. Seventhly, the Egyptian Government does not seem to appreciate the fact that the Ministers are engaged

.... /on the elections

on the elections, sometimes away from Khartoum. It has also refused to accede to the Sudan Government's request to defer discussions on the subject until after the elections, which will take place on the 27th of February.

5) In view of the above, the Council of Ministers has decided to take all necessary measures to safeguard the sovereignty of the Sudan over its territory and to defend its independence, but because of its earnest desire to leave the door open between the two friendly Arab countries, it has taken the following decisions:

A) The Prime Minister will contact President Gamal Abdel Nasser by telephone and repeat to him the Sudanese request that Egypt should not proceed with the measures contemplated, at the same time emphasizing the Sudan's willingness to enter into negotiations with Egypt on the question at issue. The Sudan Prime Minister has, in fact, tried and failed to contact President Nasser by telephone. Instead, he was able to give the message in question to Sayed Zakaria Mohiedin, the Egyptian Minister of the Interior who promised to convey it to President Nasser and obtain his reply.

B) The Government was to contact the Opposition Leaders and explain the situation to them. This has been done.

C) The same information was to be conveyed to the Arab League, to the Heads of Missions from Arab countries represented in Khartoum, and to the Sudanese people. Any further information to be conveyed whenever any new developments occur so that the facts can be known.

...In conclusion

In conclusion, the Government of the Republic of the Sudan, while issuing the above statement, has great hopes that wise counsels will prevail so that the friendly relations existing between the two countries, which the Sudan Government values highly, will not be impaired.

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