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Algeria

31 Dec. 1960

U Thant (Perman. Represent. of Burina
to the U. N.)

- 1 letter from D. M.
- 1 memo to D. M. from Afro-Asian group.

COPY

To: The Secretary General of the United Nations

December 14, 1960.

We, who are the members of the Asian-African Group, have the honour to draw your attention to the extreme gravity of events which have been taking place in Algeria during the last few days.

News from Algeria itself is censored but from authentic sources it has become known that the French Army has opened fire on defenceless civilians in various parts of Algeria, resulting in the death of men, women and children in Algeria.

We are of the opinion that such killings perpetrated on unarmed civilians in Algeria constitute a flagrant violation of the United Nations Charter, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the Genocide Convention.

In view of the gravity of the situation, we have the honour to request you to take appropriate and effective measures and make an immediate representation to the Government of France, urging it to desist from these acts.

for the group

J.O.

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From Binet, 19.XII.60.

le 19 décembre 1960.

Certaines délégations aux Nations Unies ayant cru devoir faire état, sans avancer la moindre justification, de "massacres de plusieurs milliers de personnes" au cours des manifestations survenues ces derniers jours en Algérie, il est utile de ramener le bilan des incidents à ses véritables proportions. Selon les chiffres communiqués par les autorités responsables, 116 personnes, dont 8 Européens, ont été tués à Alger, Oran et Bône. Des autopsies qui ont pu être pratiquées sur 60 victimes d'Alger, il ressort que :

- 5 ont été tuées par balles de fusil,
- 24 par balles de revolver, toutes d'un calibre non dévolu par les forces de l'ordre,
- 7 égorgées,
- 18 tuées par coups de couteaux,
- 4 mortes par fractures ou contusions,
- 2 brûlées.

Ces constatations permettent d'affirmer que la grande majorité des victimes n'ont pas été tuées par le service d'ordre.

Le Général de Gaulle a décidé, d'autre part, les premières mesures suivantes :

1. arrestation, à Alger et à Paris, en vue de leur mise en jugement, d'un millier d'activistes considérés comme indirectement ou directement responsables des troubles ;

2. dissolution en Algérie d'organisations telles que le "Front pour l'Algérie française" (F.A.F.), le "Front National pour l'Algérie française" (F.N.A.F.) et "l'Association générale des Elèves des Lycées et Collèges

.../.

d'Algérie" (A.G.E.L.C.A.).

Si l'on rapproche, enfin, ces mesures de celles qui, à la suite des événements insurrectionnels intervenues à Alger du 24 au 31 janvier 1960, ont été prises à l'encontre de personnes en totalité d'origine européenne, la preuve est faite que le Gouvernement français, sans aucune discrimination, s'attache à rechercher et punir, par des peines prévues par la loi, les auteurs de troubles, quels qu'ils soient ./.

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31 December 1960

Dear Mr. Ambassador,

You will remember that, together with the Chairman of the Afro-Asian group, you handed me on December 14, 1960, a memorandum regarding events in Algeria which had been taking place the days before you saw me.

I wish to inform you that I had a talk with the Permanent Representative of France regarding the matter about which you had approached me, explaining to the Representative the grave concern felt. Later, the French Representative, informally, provided me with detailed information on the recent unrest in Algeria. He also informed me about measures taken by the French Government in order to forestall further unrest of the same character.

Further steps from my side in line with the wishes expressed in your memorandum would have had to be taken in a purely personal capacity, within the limits imposed by that condition. I felt that I could not in the light of the information received usefully pursue the matter any further for the moment.

I do not believe what I have found possible to do merits your mentioning it to your colleagues in the group. Were you to be asked about the matter, I believe you may find it sufficient to say that you have been informed by me that I took the matter up with the Permanent Representative of France.

With all good wishes for 1961 and warm thanks for encouragement and assistance in the past year,

Dag Hammarskjöld

H.E. U Thant,
Permanent Representative to
the United Nations,
Permanent Mission of Burma to
the United Nations,
888 Madison Avenue,
New York, N.Y.