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GP/jk
Orig: SG
File: Iran-Iraq
XRef: Iraq
b/f: VD/EO/AS
cc: Mr. Cordovez

Confidential

ref: Trip Iraq

NOTES ON THE SECRETARY-GENERAL'S MEETING WITH
THE DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER AND FOREIGN MINISTER OF IRAQ

held in the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister,
on 9 April 1985 at 10.00 hrs.

Present:

The Secretary-General	H.E. Mr. Tariq Aziz, Deputy
Mr. Diego Cordovez	Prime Minister and Foreign Minister
Mr. Alvaro de Soto	of Iraq
Mr. Samir Sanbar	H.E. Mr. Ismat Kittani, Under Secretary,
Mr. Giandomenico Picco	Ministry of Foreign Affairs
	H.E. Mr. Sahawi, Under-Secretary of
	State, Ministry of Foreign Affairs
	Mr. Mohammed El-Haq Hammoud, Legal
	Counsel, Ministry for Foreign Affairs
	Two Aides

The Secretary-General said that he would like to focus his discussions on the follow up of his present trip to the area. The only common denominator he had found so far was the desire to find peace. Both sides insisted on abiding by international law and the United Nations Charter. His eight-point proposal contained two aspects: One, under numbers one and eight, referred to the cessation of hostilities and the mechanism for negotiation. The others, numbers two through seven, referred to real measures which could be taken to reach that end. If one could add to this the possible Iranian position vis-a-vis the Security Council, namely, its availability under certain circumstances to address the Council, there was enough material to begin work.

The Deputy Prime Minister said that Iraq would do its best to facilitate the mission of the Secretary-General and his approach. The President was pleased that the Iranians had been willing to discuss all aspects of the question. As for the distrust question, it was a vicious circle but also a basis for starting a pragmatic solution. The best way was to find what both sides

wanted and then to strike a bargain: There was a list of points which both sides had put forward. Both sides would receive an assurance that each other's position would be respected or both positions would be violated. One could not embark on a partial solution unless one embarked on a process for a final solution. He suggested, therefore, some alternative approaches:

1. To invite both parties to go to the Security Council. If the Iranians refused to do so, then
2. The Secretary-General could set up a system of proximity talks. This could be done anywhere in the world.
3. Also, one could consider two or three processes at the same time. These processes would be, on the one side, to work out a complete solution to all the problems, and this could be made public; a second process would be to reach a comprehensive agreement in stages and with a specified timetable.

One should ask the Iranians what their priorities were and one should ask the Iraqis what their priorities were. There would be different steps that one would implement one by one if the above suggestions were acceptable. Within this context, Iraq would have no objection to discuss all political problems including that of who started the war. This could be discussed in parallel with the process in which the Secretary-General was engaged with the parties. Iraq could not accept any partial solution which would not satisfy the position of both sides. Iraq could not accept to stop attacking civilian targets if Iran was massing troops for a new offensive. If such an offensive were to work, there would be nothing left and no need for negotiations.

The Secretary-General said that there was almost an agreement on the approach. This would be first to proceed to a Security Council debate and then to start on the basis of proximity talks even though this would be difficult for the Iranians to accept.

Mr. Cordovez noted that the eight points of the Secretary-General could be considered as a starting point. It was accepted unconditionally by Iran which had, therefore, accepted the concept of a cessation of hostilities and comprehensive statement. If Iraq were to refuse acceptance of the paper because there was no timetable for cessation of hostilities, Iran could likewise say they could not accept a ceasefire without a definition of the aggressor beforehand and an agreement on reparations.

In his view, the first step was to go to the Security Council. Having done that, there were two problems which remained; the problem of timetable for the Iraqis and the problem of cessation of hostilities for the Iranians. Nevertheless, the Secretary-General's eight points could be a basis for the proximity talks. It would be useful, therefore, if the Secretary-General could say the concept of the paper was accepted by both sides.

The Deputy Prime Minister noted that there was no Iraqi position represented in that paper. All measures envisaged in the paper were in favour of Iran. Iraq on its side, would like to see wording which would take care of a complete exchange of prisoners of war as well as the withdrawal of troops to the international borders. If these two elements were added to the paper, then Iraq could accept it as a basis for discussion.

Mr. Cordovez specified that he was not referring to the paper as it was and added that he saw no problem in considering some amendments to it.

The Secretary-General said that he wished that Iraq had made this point when first commenting on the paper.

Mr. Kittani helped to clarify the discussion by saying it was his understanding that what the Secretary-General and Mr. Cordovez were saying now was an acceptance of the paper not as it stood, that is to say, with the deadlines as they were, but with the elements without the deadlines and possibly with some additions as the Foreign Minister had mentioned.

The Deputy Prime Minister reiterated that if those two elements were added and the dates left blank, Iraq would consider that as a basis for discussion.

The Secretary-General said that he was prepared to take the position suggested by the Deputy Prime Minister.

At that point, the Deputy Prime Minister added a further matter with regard to point five of the eight points and said that when speaking of ports, one should be clear that it referred also to Shatt al Arab. No use of Basra could be made without clearing the Shatt al Arab. While the legal dispute could be solved later, a practical solution should be found earlier. The waterways should be open if a deal is to be struck.

Mr. Cordovez said that this matter could only be dealt with at the moment of the ceasefire.

The Deputy Prime Minister said it was not correct to imply that while fighting continued in the Shatt al Arab, it would not continue in Bandara al Khomeini.

The Secretary-General said that one should first move vis-a-vis the Council and there was still time to proceed with regard to his eight points.

The Deputy Prime Minister reiterated that it was not a question of eight points, it was a question of adding two further elements and a timetable. He asked the Secretary-General to submit a new paper with those changes. He would then be prepared to accept the paper, even without an advance ceasefire, even though this was against any practice or any logic. In order to facilitate the approach of the Secretary-General, he was prepared also to discuss the question of defining the aggressor. However, he remarked that while it might take long to discuss the issue of the aggression, the Secretary-General might face the strange reality that without a ceasefire, parallel processes would be going on. Despite everything, Iraq would be prepared to proceed along that route.

The Secretary-General said that the ceasefire remained a major objective for him.

Mr. Cordovez said that one should then proceed to the Council first to see that everyone's objectives were confronted with reality.

Mr. Sahawi asked whether the Secretary-General would recommend to the Security Council to invite both parties.

The Deputy Prime Minister said that Iran could not refuse to go if invited by the Council.

The Secretary-General said he would consider the suggestion, even though it would be up to the Council to decide its own course of action.

The Secretary-General then expressed regret at the lack of co-ordination among the different efforts.

The Deputy Prime Minister indicated there was no other real effort under way and had very poor words for the recent Indian initiative. The Indians had first suggested a ceasefire for one week. When Iraq added that such a ceasefire would have to be followed up, they then added that after one week, one should reach a permanent cessation of hostilities. The Indians then went to Teheran but they were not successful in their discussions.

He felt that if Iran decided to settle, they would only go to the United Nations. Iraq, in a way, felt likewise, because the Secretary-General based his position on international law and not on commercial or other interests, from which unavoidably no other country could be free. He said other international organizations did not have the ability to help in this matter. If, for instance, there was a need for observers to check the ceasefire, no other international organization could help.

In reply to a request by the Secretary-General, it was then agreed to retain the United Nations team in Baghdad.

* * * *

The Secretary-General then briefly touched upon the security of the ECWA staff. It was explained that it would not be practical to move the ECWA family from its present location as the chances of being hit by Iranian missiles were the same no matter where they moved in the Baghdad area.

Mr. Kittani noted that the United Nations should not be the first to "push the panic button" and confirmed he did not feel there was any real danger in any particular part of the city.

The Secretary-General concurred with this approach. As for the forthcoming session of ECWA, Mr. Kittani asked the Secretary-General to see that representatives of United Nations bodies and programmes be sent.

The Secretary-General then mentioned the issue of the successor of the Executive Secretary, Mr. Al-Attar.

The Deputy Prime Minister noted that any choice made by the Secretary-General would be welcomed by the Government of Iraq. He would only caution about the choice of a Syrian or Iranian national.

He then asked when the security arrangements made for the visit of the Secretary-General could be lifted, and the Secretary-General added that as a gesture of good will, they should be kept as long as possible. The Iranian side indicated they would be kept until Wednesday evening.

0075/21

GP/jk
Orig: SG
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Confidential

ref: Trip Iraq

NOTES ON THE SECRETARY-GENERAL'S MEETING WITH
THE PRESIDENT OF THE REVOLUTIONARY COMMAND COUNCIL OF IRAQ

held in the Office of the President
on 8 April 1985 at 19.25 hrs.

Present:

The Secretary-General	H.E. Mr. Saddam Hussein, President
Mr. Diego Cordovez	of the Revolutionary Command
Mr. Alvaro de Soto	Council of Iraq
Mr. Giandomenico Picco	H.E. Mr. Tariq Aziz, Deputy
	Prime Minister and Foreign Minister
	H.E. Mr. Ismat Kittani, Under Secretary,
	Ministry of Foreign Affairs
	One Interpreter
	One Notetaker

The Secretary-General expressed satisfaction for the meeting. He believed that direct contacts with the leaders of countries engaged in a conflict was indispensable for anyone who tried to help in the search for a negotiated solution. He noted that the visit to Iraq and to Iran during the same time period was the best approach for the Secretary-General. Separate visits would not have produced the same effect.

The President welcomed the Secretary-General and stressed the full confidence he had in the Secretary-General and in the international organization. The United Nations was the right forum to deal with matters of conflict. The visit of the Secretary-General to both countries was most appropriate.

Iraq had been in favour of peace since the beginning of the war. It accepted all decisions taken by the international organizations, but unfortunately such acceptance was interpreted by the other side as a sign of weakness. The international organization was a creation not of the will of one nation but of the expression of the need of the world. Iraq was part of this expression. Iraq was prepared to co-operate with international organizations and it was confident that its rights would not be infringed upon. Iraq would accept the principles of the United Nations Charter.

Iraq wished to be free and did not want to interfere in the internal affairs of others. In fact, he felt that both countries, Iran and Iraq, should let their people select their leadership without foreign interference. Unfortunately, Iran was affected by the desire for expansion; it was a fatal sickness. This attitude was against the right to self-determination of peoples. Furthermore, the international community would never accept, nor would the Iraqi people, that Iraq be swallowed by Iran and become an appendage of an empire under a religious cover.

He did not intend to engage in propaganda. All he was saying was based on facts; Iran had interfered in the affairs of Bahrain, had attacked Kuwait, had interfered with Saudi Arabian freedom of navigation; and it made no secret that after toppling the regime in Iraq, on the basis of "divine" will it would establish an Iranian type of regime in Iraq. Until recently, Iran had stated that having transformed the Islamic countries into proper Islamic nations, it would proceed to convert the non-Moslem to Islam. Iranian behaviour, in other words, affected the whole world.

The leadership in Teheran was pursuing an impossible dream and the world should tell Iran about it so as to help the Iranian people to overcome their sickness. His Government had always co-operated with the Secretary-General and retained its confidence in the Secretary-General. This, of course, did not mean there were no differences. Sometimes physical distance did not help in understanding situations.

The position of Iraq was very clear. Iraq wanted peace; it did not expect, therefore, that the Secretary-General would press Iraq on anything which would affect the dignity and sovereignty of the country. The recent impression about Iran's attitude was that it was now massing new army personnel close to the frontier. However, in the conversation that the Secretary-General had with the Iranians, some indication had emerged, and Iraq was prepared to test those indications. Iran was unfortunately planning for a new attack and it was fomenting Iraqi attacks on city centres to cover up the attack which it would eventually unleash against Iraq. The Iraqi reality was that Iran had always tried to expand at the expense of Iraq. Iran violated the agreement regarding the borders during the time of the Shah.

As for who started the war, one could see with historical evidence at hand that the hostilities started before 22 September 1980. There was use of armed force well before then. Iran first closed the Shatt Al-Arab and sunk some vessels; all this was well before 22 September 1980. But the arrogance of the Iranian regime manifested itself in other ways also; when Iraq sent a telegram of

congratulations for the establishment of the Islamic Republic, Khomeini replied in a stiff way - he used the form of address that in Islam is only used for the infidels. Again, before that date, in receiving a clergyman from Iraq, the Imam Khomeini advised him not to leave Iraq but to remain and foment the Iraqi people against their own government. In the spring of 1980, when the Gulf countries were very concerned at the situation in Iran, he had advised them to be patient as Iran had just gone through a revolution. He had advised those countries to send congratulations to Khomeini and to wish him well, to indicate that the Gulf countries would respect the Islamic revolution. It was subsequently learned, when Bani Sadr left Iran, that Iraq had sent three envoys to Teheran asking Iran not to interfere with Iraq. But Bani Sadr himself rejected the messages of those envoys and instead indicated that Iran was ready to reach Baghdad. Then attacks on border stations began, as well as interference with navigation. The world was not aware of all these exchanges, but was alerted to the situation only after 4 September. The truth was that after that the war escalated, Iraqi cities were hit on 4, 5, 6 and 7 September; then there was an army engagement; then dogfights in the sky and all this well before 22 September.

If you want to defend your territory from attack, you don't stand still but move forward to protect your lines. Even when the Iraqi Army was inside Iran, the Iraqi Government made clear that they were in Iranian territory and never claimed that territory belonged to Iraq. It was one of the reasons why the Iraqi soldiers were then repelled from that part of the territory, because they were fighting in a territory which they knew they would eventually have to give up. To avoid these difficulties, Iraq decided in June 1982 to withdraw; it made clear that it had no territorial ambitions in Iran.

Iran had maintained since 1980 that after occupying Iraq, it would topple the regime. Because of this position of principle, his Government would have to ponder very carefully whatever word the Secretary-General had received in Iraq. His Government demanded the withdrawal of both armies to their international borders and the non-interference of each in the internal affairs of the other. His Government would co-operate with any action which would shorten the war and be part of a plan to bring the hostilities to an end, but Iraq could not co-operate with actions that would in fact prolong the war. His Government intended to give Iran a chance to work in this direction.

When the Secretary-General assessed the position of the two sides, he should do so on the basis of the United Nations norms of behaviour. What Iraq wanted was to live in peace within internationally-recognized borders according to rules of

international behaviour. He had no room for maneuvering in any negotiations as any move would be tantamount to a giving up of Iraqi territory. There was no flexibility on the issue of withdrawal to international borders or on the issue of non-interference.

Iraq was no longer what it was when he had taken over. Malnutrition, illiteracy and poverty had ravaged Iraq. Baghdad was no more than a small village with a legendary past. His Government had now built a new country and he did not need war to destroy what had been built. The regime in Iran wanted a war because it had built nothing and had nothing to lose. He regretted the loss of young Iranian lives and hoped that Iran would agree to the principle of international behaviour. After five years of war, his Government was still stable and in power. This meant that the people of Iraq wanted his Government as they could not continue to fight if the Government was unpopular. It was the proof of the legitimacy of the Iraqi Government. No people would defend its territory if they did not believe in their own Government.

The Iranians should be told that the people of the region had no intention of following the Iranian logic. Nobody could be as pleased as Iraq if peace were achieved. Iraq had no intention of continuing to kill Iranians but the situation was unfortunately a tragic one. He intended to co-operate with the Secretary-General always.

The Secretary-General said that the real problem was one of mutual distrust. Ways had to be found to break the vicious circle of mistrust; to do so, one should use the political determination for peace expressed by those concerned. He could not say if Iran was flexible in its posture. But he could say that the Iranian leadership had been respectful of the Secretary-General's position. They were restrained in referring to the Iraqi Government and did not use him for propaganda purposes.

All subjects were discussed in Teheran and when they referred to Iraq as violating international conventions, he reminded the Iranian leadership that the basic convention was the United Nations Charter, which required that disputes among Member States be resolved by peaceful means.

It was true that Iran expressed great frustration at the position adopted by the Security Council and was seeking some rectification. He had suggested that the Iranians go to the Security Council and state their case. He had the feeling that the Iranians had been convinced to do so. They had also accepted discussions on the basis of the eight-point suggestions, it being understood that the cessation of hostilities was part of it.

It was his duty, of course, to continue searching for a way to put an end to the war. The two approaches perhaps could be combined. On the one hand, the political aspect of the problem could be tackled and on the other, the cessation of hostilities could be pursued. Ways should be found to engage the Iranians in a negotiation process that would lead to the end of the hostilities. He had told the Iranians that he would be prepared to continue this quest personally and to return to the area if it was warranted.

It was important to engage the Iranians in a process and to set up a mechanism by which the present stalemate would be overcome. He or an envoy of his could then follow the process very closely. He intended to report to the Security Council at the end of his visit and would also explain to the Council that for the Iranians the position of the Security Council represented a stumbling block on the way to progress. Indeed, he felt that the Security Council had to take up the matter first if any process were to be initiated afterwards. He intended to leave those ideas with the President and to have discussions with the Foreign Minister on other details.

The President said that he was indeed confident that the Secretary-General wished peace, and he reassured the Secretary-General of Iraq's co-operation as well as of Iraq's honesty in expressing its opinion on any suggestion put forward. He was confident the Secretary-General would not submit ideas which would infringe upon the sovereignty of Iraq. Some ideas might prolong the war; others might shorten it. Furthermore, he was sure the Secretary-General would only submit suggestions in line with the United Nations Charter and international law.

The Secretary-General said he was not a mediator but his intention was to sound out ideas in line with the principles of the Charter. Indeed, he saw his task as a very easy one since both sides had reiterated their determination to abide by the rules of international law. His Koran was the Charter of the United Nations. He expressed again his confidence that further talks with the Foreign Minister would be useful.

The President assured the Secretary-General that his activity would produce some results; Iraq was prepared to save the Iranians from themselves. Iraq would do so provided it did not jeopardize its own security.

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NOTES ON THE SECRETARY-GENERAL'S MEETING WITH
THE DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER AND FOREIGN MINISTER OF IRAQ

held IN the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister,
on 8 April 1985 at 17.45 hrs.

Present:

The Secretary-General
Mr. Diego Cordovez
Mr. Alvaro de Soto
Mr. Samir Sanbar
Mr. Giandomenico Picco

H.E. Mr. Tariq Aziz, Deputy
Prime Minister and Foreign Minister
of Iraq
H.E. Mr. Ismat Kittani, Under Secretary,
Ministry of Foreign Affairs
H.E. Mr. Sahawi, Under-Secretary of
State of the Ministry for Foreign
Affairs
Mr. Mohammed El-Haq Hammoud, Legal
Counsel, Ministry for Foreign Affairs
Two Aides

The Secretary-General explained that his position had always been that he could only visit both countries, Iran and Iraq, and that no individual visits could take place. He had gone to Iran on his own terms and had raised all issues. In outlining his discussions in Teheran, he said that they had been serious and businesslike, that moderate language had been used, that no derogatory phraseology against Iraq had been mentioned and that he, the Secretary-General, had not been the subject of any public demonstration. Iran had made clear, however, that it found itself in a difficult position in searching for an agreement with a country, the Iraqi Government, which had not honoured the 1975 Algiers Agreement. It was basically a problem of trust. Iran further complained about the attitude of the Security Council. That body had to rectify its position before Iran could proceed to any agreement on a ceasefire. He, the Secretary-General, had suggested to the Iranian authorities that they make a recourse to the Security Council and address that body. Iran had also made clear that it would not be curbed by the military superiority of Iraq. At the same time, however, the Iranian leadership had expressed interest in peace, as it needed peace for reconstruction. Iran was aware that an escalation of the war might lead to involvement of the superpowers.

Iran had reiterated its acceptance of the eight-point suggestions, even when he had outlined to them that the first of the eight points referred to the cessation of hostilities. Iran also reiterated its confidence in the Office of the Secretary-General and its readiness to continue discussions with the Secretary-General.

The Deputy Prime Minister said that Iraq had always relied on the Secretary-General and would continue to do so. When Iran referred to confidence in the Secretary-General, one would expect it to start a negotiating process. It was important that in the discussions with the Secretary-General the Iranians had dropped what he called "crazy conditions". It was important that Iran was prepared to continue discussions with the Secretary-General. The problem was now the public posture of Iran. Indeed, there was an important chance in Iran, which the Iranians still tried to cover up with propaganda. As for the distrust between the two countries, this was only natural. Iraq was prepared to discuss any difference between the two countries. Iraq also needed assurances about Iran's behaviour after the conclusion of possible negotiations but one could rely on the United Nations to find guarantees for both countries. However, this was a technical problem, and not a major one at that.

Until now, Iran was not prepared to settle anything outside the battlefield. As for Iraqi military superiority, he stressed that his Government used it for the purpose of peace. If this had not been the case, Iran would have imposed its own will on Iraq. It was the position of Iraq that both countries should live free within their own borders without any policy aimed at hegemony over the other. If Iran complained about bad relations with the Security Council, it should sit in the Council and discuss a solution to the territorial and other problems. The question remained whether Iran was prepared to settle or continue the war. Iran still repeated that it would not settle any dispute with the present Iraqi regime. Iraq was prepared to deal with temporary arrangements only if they would lead to an end to the war.

The Secretary-General said that he did not believe his conversations in Teheran would lead to a breakthrough. Nevertheless, his contacts had been very useful. He recalled that neither of his interlocutors in Teheran had referred to the third condition, namely, the toppling of President Saddam Hussein, but had only referred to condemnation and reparations. Condemnation could be provided by a resolution of the Security Council. He wondered whether the Security Council could be expected to find a formulation acceptable to all in this regard.

The Deputy Prime Minister said he was prepared to go to the Security Council.

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