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LETTER DATED 10 FEBRUARY 1984 FROM THE SECRETARY-GENERAL ADDRESSED TO
THE MINISTER FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF THE ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN

I have the honour to acknowledge receipt of your message of 4 February 1984 (S/16314), informing me of recent developments in the conflict between the Islamic Republic of Iran and the Republic of Iraq and reiterating your Government's request for a fact-finding mission to investigate allegations of military attacks on civilian areas.

I wish to stress at the outset that, as Secretary-General of the United Nations, I remain deeply concerned with the mounting toll in life and continued suffering exacted by this conflict. Equally, I cannot be indifferent to the wider issues involved, especially at a time when there is a threat of escalation of the level of hostilities.

It is in the light of these considerations that I have consistently stressed to Ambassador Rajaie-Khorassani that I am prepared to dispatch a mission to visit the war-stricken areas in both countries, all the more so since both parties have made repeated allegations of attacks on civilian targets. Once there is an understanding between the parties on the scope of its functions, a mission can depart to the area at very short notice. It would ascertain the facts in the civilian areas subject to military attack in order to update the report of the previous mission sent on the request of your Government. I would further propose that the mission, which would be headed by one of my senior aides, also ascertain the authoritative positions of both Governments regarding other questions related to the conflict. As you, yourself, have pointed out, one of the main purposes of the United Nations is to maintain international peace and security and to take effective measures to suppress acts of aggression. Given the respective positions of the two parties regarding the resolutions of the Security Council, it is only through direct discussions with the Governments that the Secretary-General can hope to contribute towards any efforts in this direction.

This letter reflects essentially my abiding concern over all the grievous consequences of this tragic conflict. In the meeting that we had on 30 September 1983, as well as in frequent discussions with your Permanent Representative, I have made every effort to be of assistance. Therefore, I earnestly hope that your Government will react positively to a proposal that I make in a renewed attempt to respond to your concerns.

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I am sending a letter along similar lines to the Foreign Minister of the Republic of Iraq. Inasmuch as your Government has requested that its letter should be circulated as a document of the Security Council, I am arranging for this letter to be treated in the same manner.

(Signed) Javier PEREZ DE CUELLAR
