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CABLE DATED 11 MARCH 1961 AND MESSAGE DATED 31 MARCH 1961 FROM THE SECRETARY-GENERAL ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO CONCERNING THE ABDUCTION OF LIEUTENANT DIMASSI OF TUNISIA

Cable dated 11 March 1961 from the Secretary-General to the President of the Republic of the Congo

MAY I MAKE A STRONG APPEAL ON HUMANITARIAN GROUNDS FOR YOUR PERSONAL INTERVENTION IN THE CASE OF THE OFFICER OF THE TUNISIAN CONTINGENT, LIEUTENANT DIMASSI, AND HIS CHAUFFEUR, WHO WERE ABDUCTED BY ELEMENTS OF THE ANC AT ABOUT 5 P.M. ON 1 MARCH ON THE ROAD TO LOVANUM AND HAVE NOT BEEN SEEN OR HEARD OF SINCE BY ANYONE IN THE UN OPERATION. DESPITE PERSISTENT INQUIRIES BY THE UN COMMAND AND THE TUNISIAN CONTINGENT, AND THE APPEALS MADE BY THE MINISTER FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF TUNISIA TO MR. BOMBOKO, THE FATE OF THESE TWO MEN REMAINS A MYSTERY WHICH IS DEEPLY AND UNDERSTANDABLY DISTURBING TO THE TUNISIAN AUTHORITIES AND PEOPLE, TO THE TUNISIAN CONTINGENT IN THE CONGO AND TO THE UNITED NATIONS. I HAVE BEEN ASKED BY THE TUNISIAN GOVERNMENT TO MAKE A FURTHER URGENT APPEAL IN THIS MATTER AND, SINCE ALL THE OTHER EFFORTS HAVE SO FAR PROVED FRUITLESS, I MUST NOW ASK URGENTLY FOR YOUR PERSONAL ASSISTANCE AND INTERVENTION FOR THE RETURN OF THIS OFFICER AND HIS CHAUFFEUR SAFE AND SOUND TO THEIR UNIT. IF BY SOME TRAGIC CIRCUMSTANCE, THESE PERSONS ARE DEAD, I WISH TO BE INFORMED IMMEDIATELY OF THEIR PLACE OF BURIAL SO THAT THEIR BODIES MAY BE RECOVERED. I GREATLY HOPE, HOWEVER, THAT THROUGH YOUR ASSISTANCE THEY MAY BE RELEASED IN GOOD HEALTH.

Message dated 31 March 1961 from the Secretary-General through
his Acting Special Representative addressed to the President of
the Republic of the Congo

I bitterly regret that I am forced once again to ask you for information about the circumstances in which Lieutenant Dimassi, a Tunisian national, was abducted on 1 March 1961 by elements of the ANC.

You will remember that on 11 March 1961, i.e. almost three weeks ago now, I begged you most earnestly, in a cable sent to Tananarive, to intervene personally in this matter. Mr. Abbas also raised the question with Mr. Bomboko and Colonel Kiembe. So far I have had no reply, and it is with great distress that I am compelled to draw from this silence the only logical conclusion, a conclusion of the utmost gravity. I must state unequivocally that any authorities which may be involved in the fate that I fear Lieutenant Dimassi has met will bear a heavy burden of responsibility.

In the present circumstances, I feel bound to ask you to send me most urgently a report on the inquiry, which I am sure, you have ordered into the abduction of this man. I also wish to receive information concerning any punitive action which you and those under your authority have taken against those responsible for what, I fear, has been a shocking crime.

You are aware that I owe it both to the Government of the Tunisian Republic and to the main organs of the United Nations to make a complete report on the circumstances of this deplorable event. It is accordingly my intention to publish this communication together with the text of my cable of 11 March, to which I have referred. In view of the time that has already elapsed, publication will take place twenty-four hours after this note has been delivered to you. I greatly hope that by then I shall have received the complete report which I am confident you will send me, so that I can have it published at the same time.

