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LETTER DATED 11 DECEMBER 1987 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF
ETHIOPIA TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

I have the honour to forward herewith the enclosed message addressed to Your Excellency by His Excellency Mr. Berhanu Bayih, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the People's Democratic Republic of Ethiopia.

I kindly request Your Excellency to have the contents of the message circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Tesfaye TADESSE
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

Annex

Letter dated 11 December 1987 from the Minister for Foreign
Affairs of the People's Democratic Republic of Ethiopia
addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the **honour** to bring to Your Excellency's attention the **reactions** of my Government to the baseless and malicious allegations **levelled** against the Government of the People's Democratic Republic of Ethiopia by the Government of the **Republic** of the Sudan contained in document S/19331 circulated on 10 December 1987.

In response to these false and self-serving accusations, it is necessary that I **place on** record the series of events unfolding in our area which the Ethiopian Government has been **following** with considerable concern and anguish.

On **12 November** 1987, the international media reported that the Sudan People's Liberation Army (**SPLA**) had attacked and captured the town of Kurmuk in the Blue **Nile province** of south-east Sudan.

Three days later, the Prime Minister of the Sudan accused Ethiopia of **involvement** in the capture of Kurmuk.

On the **following** day, 16 November 1987, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People's Democratic Republic of Ethiopia issued a press statement refuting the self-serving allegations of the Sudanese Prime Minister and expressing its strong objections **to** the attempt to use Ethiopia as a scapegoat for the manifold problems **confronting the** Government in Khartoum.

Ethiopia's rejection of the wild accusation notwithstanding, Khartoum chose to escalate its propaganda barrage with increasing shrillness, making insinuations **about** the imagined Ethiopian involvement in the capture of Kurmuk by the SPLA.

In **the** circumstances, it appears that the Government of the Sudan is seeking, **first** and **foremost to** save face in the wake of the serious and successive defeats inflicted on **its** Army in Southern Sudan by the **SPLA**. For that purpose, Ethiopia has, apparently, been used as a convenient scapegoat.

Secondly, **it** seems **clear** that the Khartoum Government's allegations against Ethiopia are meant to divert **public** attention at home from the manifold domestic **problems** by **whipping** up anti-Ethiopian feelings through the use of a trumped-up external interference or threat.

Thirdly, the false allegation against Ethiopia could be a classic case of **guilt complex**. I believe the international community is well aware of the extent **to** which successive governments of the Sudan **have been** actively engaged in **harbouring** and assisting diverse anti-Ethiopian counter-revolutionary and **anti-unity groups** who have, over the years, freely used Sudanese territory both as springboard **for their** destructive missions against their fellow Ethiopians and as a **conduit** for assistance they receive from **elsewhere**.

In spite of this, however, recognizing both the underlying causes and the most plausible peaceful remedy, Ethiopia has **consistently** maintained that the Sudanese people should peacefully resolve their problems by themselves.

In this context, I should recall **that** it was Ethiopia that brought together the Government of the Sudan and opposition groups in Southern Sudan and enabled them to reach the 1972 Addis Ababa Agreement. The facts speak for themselves and it is the violation of this Agreement and the imposition of other hated measures that sparked the present conflict some four years ago.

Yet, Ethiopia was, once again, instrumental in bringing together representatives of the Sudanese People's Liberation Movement (SPLM) and Sudanese political groups, known as the National Salvation Alliance of the Sudan, where they hammered out a joint document for action. This document, entitled "The Koka Dam Declaration: A Proposed Program for National Action", spells out a set of pre-conditions to be implemented before the convening of a constitutional conference. At the same time agenda items were also agreed upon by the two sides.

However, the national action programme did not take off the ground: nor did the agreed-upon constitutional conference take place, mainly because of the intransigence of the Khartoum Government,

If any single factor has contributed to the worsening of the situation, it is evidently this **impasse** between the parties to the conflict. I believe that the facts set forth above sufficiently reveal the underlying causes of the Sudanese national problems.

Moreover, reliable information reaching my Government indicates that the Government of the Sudan has been systematically taking the following hostile actions against the People's Democratic Republic of Ethiopia for the purpose of making Ethiopia responsible for the difficulties that are of its own making:

(1) High officials of the Sudan are engaged in whipping up popular emotion and was hysteria against Ethiopia;

(2) The Sudanese Government has instigated anti-Ethiopian demonstrations;

(3) The Sudan delegation to the recent Arab League summit in Jordan was reported to have requested of the participants financial and military assistance to wage war against Ethiopia;

(4) The Ethiopian Embassy in Khartoum, the staff of Ethiopian Airlines, and the Ethiopian community in the Sudan as a whole are being subjected to constant and unwarranted harassment by the Sudanese internal security;

(5) Hundreds of Ethiopian citizens living in the town of Damazin were rounded up, forcibly loaded onto lorries and transported to other towns where they were manhandled and subjected to endless indignities. Two members of the Ethiopian community, one of them a deacon of the Ethiopian Community Church, whose sole crime was attendance of the ceremonies establishing the People's Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, have been ordered to leave the Sudan;

(6) Officials of the Sudanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs have summoned some African and Arab ambassadors to their offices and briefed them on a long list of fabricated grievances which their Government has against Ethiopia;

(7) Prime Minister Saddiq El-Mahdi, who had earlier announced that he would attend the recent Organization of African Unity (OAU) special summit at Addis Ababa, abruptly cancelled his plan and the Sudan revealed that it would seek the transfer of the headquarters of OAU from the Ethiopian capital,

In the face of all these and numerous other acts and provocations, the Government of the People's Democratic Republic of Ethiopia kept calm and refrained from taking any action which would aggravate the situation. Moreover, we have fully co-operated with those friendly States who have endeavoured to defuse the tension.

In this context, I would like to draw Your Excellency's attention to the recent meetings between President Mengistu Haile Mariam and Prime Minister Saddiq El-Mahdi on the sidelines of the Preferential Trade Area (PTA) for Southern and Eastern Africa held in Kampala from 3 to 4 December 1987. During the exchange of views, which was held in an atmosphere of candidness and cordiality, the two leaders agreed to set up a joint high-level committee to explore the whole range of problems adversely affecting bilateral relations, with a view to seeking durable solutions. In the light of that meeting of minds between the two leaders, we are surprised and, indeed, bewildered by the blatant and malicious allegations contained in the Sudanese communication.

Ethiopia remains committed to its traditional good-neighbourly disposition and genuine brotherhood towards the people of the Sudan. My Government will also continue to exercise maximum self-restraint and uphold the unity and territorial integrity of the Sudan and will stand true to its conviction that the Sudanese people should peacefully solve their internal problems by themselves. We are committed to the principles of good-neighbourliness, non-interference in the internal affairs of others, mutual respect and peaceful co-operation with all countries near and far, especially our immediate neighbours.

But should the Government of the Republic of the Sudan persist in its present misguided course of hostility, provocations and adventurism and continue to exacerbate the situation, it alone will be held entirely responsible for the dire consequences of its actions to peace and security in this area.

I kindly request Your Excellency to circulate this information as a United Nations document to all States Members of the Organization.

Berhanu BAYJH
Minister of Foreign Affairs
of the People's Democratic
Republic of Ethiopia