

Letter to Congressional Leaders Reporting on Iraq's Compliance With United Nations Security Council Resolutions March 5, 1996

Dear Mr. Speaker: (Dear Mr. President:)

Consistent with the Authorization for Use of Military Force Against Iraq Resolution (Public Law 102-1), and as part of my effort to keep the Congress fully informed, I am reporting on the status of efforts to obtain Iraq's compliance with the resolutions adopted by the U.N. Security Council.

Since my last letter to you on January 4, 1996, on Iraq, the Government of Iraq has come no closer to meeting its obligations under applicable Security Council resolutions. The U.N. Special Commission on Iraq (UNSCOM), responsible for dismantling Iraq's weapons of mass destruction programs, continues to find evidence that Iraq is hiding information on its past weapons programs. UNSCOM also found evidence as recently as a few months ago that Iraq continues to pursue acquisition of prohibited weapons technology. Iraq has made no progress either in accounting for nationals of Kuwait and third countries missing since the occupation or in returning stolen Kuwaiti property. Saddam Hussein continues to provide safe haven for known terrorists. Given all this, the Security Council maintained sanctions without change at the January 5, 1996, review.

Saddam Hussein's unwillingness to comply with the norms of international behavior extends to his regime's continuing threat to Iraqi citizens throughout the country. We and our coalition partners continue to enforce the no-fly zones over northern and southern Iraq as part of our efforts to deter Iraq's use of aircraft against its population. The human rights situation throughout Iraq remains unchanged. Saddam Hussein shows no signs of complying with U.N. Security Council Resolution 688, which demands that Iraq cease the repression of its own people. Iraq's repression of its southern Shi'a population continues, with policies aimed at destroying the Marsh Arabs' way of life and important environmental resources.

We continue to provide humanitarian assistance, along with international and humanitarian relief organizations, to the people of northern Iraq. Deteriorating security conditions forced us to issue notice in late January for all Americans

in the area to exercise maximum caution in their activities. We have facilitated talks between the two major Kurdish groups in an effort to help them resolve their differences and increase stability in northern Iraq. However, Iran continues to look for opportunities to expand its influence in the area, as demonstrated by the visit of an Iranian Foreign Ministry official to the area in early January.

Pursuant to Security Council Resolution 986, Iraq is authorized to sell a prescribed amount of oil for the purchase of humanitarian supplies. In early February, the Government of Iraq sent a delegation to the United Nations to discuss the details of implementation of this Resolution. Nonetheless, it remains unclear whether Saddam Hussein is serious about using this mechanism to relieve the humanitarian suffering in Iraq. It is not clear whether Iraq will accept Resolution 986 as written, but the United States and other members of the Security Council have emphasized that the Security Council will not agree to amending the terms of the Resolution.

The Multinational Interception Force (MIF) conducting the maritime enforcement of sanctions against Iraq has, since my last report, encountered the busiest enforcement period since 1991, diverting 24 dhow vessels carrying Iraqi dates worth an estimated \$3.5 million. Since October 1994, the MIF has diverted 50 sanctions violating vessels to Gulf ports with oil and date cargoes exceeding an estimated value of \$18 million. The expeditious acceptance of these violating vessels by the United Arab Emirates, Bahrain, and Kuwait has greatly contributed to the deterrent effect of MIF sanctions enforcement operations. It has also enhanced enforcement efforts by allowing MIF vessels escorting the diverted vessels to return to patrol operations.

We continue to achieve a significant foreign policy objective in maintaining multinational participation in the MIF. Ships from the United States, Belgium, New Zealand, and the United Kingdom participated in MIF operations during the past 2 months. Additionally, we have received firm commitments from The Netherlands and Australia to send frigates to participate in the MIF from March through July of this year.

The United States continues to work with Honduras, the United Arab Emirates, and India concerning sanctions violations committed by vessels under their flags. Honduras has designated its mission to the United Nations to conduct deflagging proceedings for vessels of Honduran registry. India has initiated "registry deletion" proceedings against vessels operating under its flag.

The Commander of the U.S. Fifth Fleet, who serves as the coordinator for the MIF, recently completed a series of briefings for the U.N. Iraq Sanctions Committee. The briefings continued our practice of close coordination and consultation with the Sanctions Committee and members of the Security Council on the issue of maritime Iraq sanctions enforcement. In addition to enforcement of sanctions, the U.S. force presence in the region is intended to maintain the capability to respond rapidly to possible Iraqi aggression or threats against its neighbors.

Security Council Resolution 687 affirmed that Iraq is liable under international law for compensating the victims of its unlawful invasion and occupation of Kuwait. Although the U.N. Compensation Commission (UNCC) has approved some 790,000 individual awards against Iraq, worth about \$3.0 billion, it has been able to authorize the payment of only the fixed awards for serious personal injury or death (aggregating approximately \$13.5 million). The remainder of the awards cannot be paid because

the U.N. Compensation Fund lacks sufficient funding. The awards are supposed to be financed by a deduction from the proceeds of future Iraqi oil sales, once such sales are permitted to resume. However, Iraq's refusal to meet the Security Council's terms for a resumption of oil sales has left the UNCC without adequate financial resources to pay the awards. Iraq's intransigence means the victims of its aggression remain uncompensated for their losses 5 years after the end of the Gulf War.

To conclude, Iraq remains a serious threat to regional peace and stability. I remain determined that Iraq comply fully with all its obligations under the U.N. Security Council Resolutions. My Administration will continue to oppose any relaxation of sanctions until Iraq demonstrates peaceful intentions through its overall compliance with all of the U.N. Security Council Resolutions.

I appreciate the support of the Congress for our efforts, and shall continue to keep the Congress informed about this important issue.

Sincerely,

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to Newt Gingrich, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Albert Gore, Jr., President of the Senate. This letter was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on March 7.

Remarks Prior to Discussions With King Hussein of Jordan and an Exchange With Reporters

March 7, 1996

Middle East Peace Process

The President. Let me say that I am delighted to have King Hussein here today, especially at this important time for the Middle East. As ever, the United States is grateful for his leadership and his courage. And I look forward to discussing with him today what we can do together to continue to stand against the forces of terrorism and for the forces of peace in the region. We'll have a number of other things to talk about, but I'm so glad that he's here.

Q. Your Majesty, what do you think the prospects are for resuming the peace negotiations?

And what do you think the goal is of the bombings?

King Hussein. As far as I'm concerned, I'd like to thank you, sir, for giving me the pleasure and privilege of being with you here today and with our friends.

I would like to say that we are more than shocked; we are really angered by what we have seen in the way of violence in our part of the world. And we must do everything we can to put an end to this.

And I believe it is the action of a small group against an overwhelming majority of people in