

UNITED NATIONS

GENERAL ASSEMBLY SECURITY COUNCIL



Distr.
GENERAL

A/35/118
S/13825
27 February 1980

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

GENERAL ASSEMBLY
Thirty-fifth session
Item 49 of the preliminary list*
ISRAELI NUCLEAR ARMAMENT

SECURITY COUNCIL
Thirty-fifth year

Letter dated 26 February 1980 from the Permanent Representative
of Iraq to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to enclose herewith a news clipping entitled "U.S. Doubts Israel Set Off A-Bomb" from The New York Times of 22 February 1980.

I would kindly request that this clipping be circulated as an official document of the General Assembly, under item 49 of the preliminary list, and of the Security Council.

(Signed) Salah Omar AL-ALI
Permanent Representative

* A/35/50.

ANNEX

U.S. Doubts Israel Set Off A-Bomb

Special to The New York Times

WASHINGTON, Feb. 21 -- Administration officials said tonight that they had no evidence to confirm a report that Israel, with the assistance of South Africa, had detonated a nuclear device in the South Atlantic last fall.

A mysterious light signal similar to that of a nuclear explosion was picked up Sept. 22 in the southern hemisphere by an American satellite designed to watch for clandestine nuclear weapon tests, and there was speculation at the time, never confirmed here, that it was a nuclear device detonated by South Africa. The South African Government vehemently denied the suggestion.

Although specialists have not been able to establish any other explanation, such as lightning, solar flares or a meteoroid, for the double flash characteristically associated with nuclear explosions, no confirming evidence could be found of such a blast. A search for bomb debris in the atmosphere and a careful combing of earthquake and barometric records for attendant shock waves were fruitless.

However, the recorded flash was characteristic of a small detonation equal to 2,000 to 3,000 tons of TNT. Hence, long-range effects, such as fallout and shock waves, were less likely.

CBS News reported tonight that Israel had tested "a nuclear bomb" in the Atlantic Ocean off the coast of South Africa last September with the "help and cooperation" of the South Africans, who had first offered Israel use of a South Atlantic test site in 1966.

CBS said an Israeli spokesman here called the report "complete nonsense" and a spokesman for the South African Government said the report was "ridiculous".

It said that further studies of the incident were under way, but that the United States had no information to suggest that either Israel or South Africa had detonated a nuclear device.

South Africa was considered a possible source of a nuclear test because it had advanced nuclear technology and the satellite data was detected off its coast. The CBS report said that an as yet unpublished book by two Israeli journalists on the history of atomic weapons production in Israel said that country had built up a nuclear arsenal with uranium supplied by South Africa.

The network said the unpublished book suggested that the United States knew of Israel's nuclear weapons but did not provide any help in their development or production.
