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Sixteenth session

REQUEST FOR THE INCLUSION OF AN ADDITIONAL ITEM IN THE AGENDA  
OF THE SIXTEENTH REGULAR SESSION: ITEM PROPOSED BY GHANA,  
INDIA, UNITED ARAB REPUBLIC, VENEZUELA

AN INTERNATIONAL INVESTIGATION INTO THE CONDITIONS AND  
CIRCUMSTANCES RESULTING IN THE TRAGIC DEATH OF  
MR. DAG HAMMARSKJOLD, AND MEMBERS OF THE  
PARTY ACCOMPANYING HIM

Letter dated 27 September 1961 from the Permanent Representatives  
of Ghana, India, United Arab Republic and Venezuela

We, the undersigned representatives, have the honour to request that an item entitled "An international investigation into the conditions and circumstances resulting in the tragic death of Mr. Dag Hammarskjöld, and members of the party accompanying him" be inscribed on the agenda of the sixteenth session of the General Assembly, as an urgent and important matter.

In accordance with rule 20 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly, an explanatory memorandum is attached.

(Signed) Alex QUAISON-SACKY  
Permanent Representative of Ghana  
to the United Nations.

(Signed) C.S. JHA  
Permanent Representative of India  
to the United Nations.

(Signed) Omar LOUTFI  
Permanent Representative of the United  
Arab Republic to the United Nations.

(Signed) Carlos SOSA-RODRIGUEZ  
Permanent Representative of Venezuela  
to the United Nations.

MEMORANDUM

The Secretary-General of the United Nations, Mr. Dag Hammarskjöld, accompanied by Dr. Heinrich A. Wieschhoff and six other United Nations Secretariat officials, two Swedish soldiers from the 11th infantry battalion stationed in Leopoldville and a flight crew of six took off in a DC-6B aircraft from Ndjili airport at 1700 hours on 17 September 1961 for Ndola, a small town located on the border between the Province of Katanga and Northern Rhodesia where Mr. Hammarskjöld was to meet Mr. Moise Tshombe of Katanga. The aircraft did not reach its destination, and the following morning the world was shocked by the sad and tragic news of the death of Mr. Hammarskjöld and the members of the party accompanying him, with the exception of Mr. Harold M. Julien, the sole survivor, who died in hospital a few days later.

It cannot be denied that there is world-wide concern with respect to the circumstances surrounding the accident resulting in the tragic death of the Secretary-General and his party. It is, however, understood that some national inquiries, arising either from legal obligations or from national concerns are being conducted or are envisaged by the authorities concerned. The United Nations owes it to itself that a thorough probe be made into the circumstances resulting in the tragic death of Mr. Hammarskjöld and a number of other international civil servants. Needless to add that world public opinion everywhere expects that a full and impartial international investigation be immediately carried out to ascertain the exact circumstances of the tragic accident, the conditions which compelled the Secretary-General and his party to undertake the flight from Ndjili to Ndola at night without adequate escort or other precautionary measures, and other matters which may have a bearing on the accident. The United Nations should seek the co-operation of all concerned in making such an investigation.

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