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LETTER DATED 5 MAY 1980 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF
ITALY TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE SECRETARY-
GENERAL

I have the honour to inform you that the heads of State and Government and the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the nine member States of the European Community, meeting as the European Council, issued in Luxembourg on 28 April 1980 the following declaration on the situation in Afghanistan, Iran and the Middle East:

"1. The heads of State and Government and the Foreign Ministers examined the international situation. They expressed grave concern at the trend of recent events, especially in Afghanistan, Iran and the Middle East. They considered that these events now more than ever require of the member States of the European Community that they show cohesion.

"2. The European Council noted with deep concern that Soviet military forces have not been withdrawn from Afghanistan despite the condemnation of the international community expressed by the General Assembly of the United Nations and despite the repeated calls of the Nine and of the Islamic Conference and the ASEAN countries.

"The European Council reaffirmed the view of the Nine that a solution in accordance with the resolution of the United Nations General Assembly could be found in an arrangement which allowed Afghanistan to remain outside competition among the Powers and to return to its traditional position as a neutral and non-aligned State.

"Respecting the right of the Afghan people freely to determine their own future, they believe that to this end the great Powers and the neighbouring States should undertake to respect the sovereignty and integrity of Afghanistan, to refrain from interference in its internal affairs and to renounce all forms of military presence or association with it.

"The Nine are ready to support, in concert with friendly and allied countries, any initiative designed to promote such a solution, emphasizing that their own proposal is neither rigid or exclusive.

"In this connexion, they believe that the Islamic and non-aligned countries have a particularly significant role to play.

"3. Since the occupation of the United States Embassy in Tehran and the seizure of its staff as hostages, the Nine have repeatedly condemned this inadmissible violation of international law. They reaffirm their solidarity with the Government and people of the United States in their present time of trial.

"They consider that the situation created by this violation opens the door to developments fraught with serious consequences. A return to a state of legality is the only way to ensure peace and security.

"The European Council reaffirms the decisions taken by the Foreign Ministers of the Nine on 22 April in Luxembourg.

"The Nine declare their full support for the steps which the Secretary-General of the United Nations intends to take to secure the release of the hostages.

"4. The Nine reiterated their belief that only a comprehensive, just and lasting settlement can bring true peace to the Middle East.

"The European Council, conscious that Europe may in due course have a role to play, instructed the Foreign Ministers to submit a report on this problem on the occasion of its next session in Venice.

"5. The European Council denounces the acts of violence committed in southern Lebanon against members of UNIFIL and demands that they should cease immediately, and that the force be permitted to carry out in full its mandate from the Security Council.

"6. At this time of crisis in world affairs the European Council believes that it is vital that international procedures for the management of crisis and the easing of tensions be used to the full and that the Charter of the United Nations and international law be fully upheld."

I should be very grateful if you would have this letter circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Umberto LA ROCCA
Ambassador
