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LETTER DATED 26 JANUARY 1999 FROM THE REPRESENTATIVES OF THE
RUSSIAN FEDERATION AND THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE
UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

We have the honour to transmit herewith the text of the statement on Kosovo, Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, issued after the meeting in Moscow between the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, Mr. Igor S. Ivanov, and the Secretary of State of the United States of America, Mrs. Madeleine K. Albright, on 26 January 1999 (see annex).

We should be grateful if you would circulate the present letter and its annex as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Sergey LAVROV
Ambassador
Permanent Representative
of the Russian Federation
to the United Nations

(Signed) A. Peter BURLEIGH
Ambassador
Acting Permanent Representative
of the United States of America
to the United Nations

Annex

Statement on Kosovo issued by the Minister for Foreign Affairs
of the Russian Federation and the Secretary of State of the
United States of America, in Moscow, on 26 January 1999

Secretary Albright and Foreign Minister Ivanov expressed their preoccupation with the recent deterioration in the situation in Kosovo. They noted positively the outcome of the Contact Group Political Directors meeting in London on 22 January. The sides in Kosovo must work harder to achieve an interim political settlement providing substantial autonomy for Kosovo and should engage in meaningful intensive negotiations for that purpose. Such a settlement should respect the territorial integrity and sovereignty of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. The Russian Federation and the United States of America, backing the efforts of Ambassadors Christopher Hill and Wolfgang Patritsch, will continue to press the sides to agree on such a political settlement, and will collaborate in the Contact Group towards that end.

Secretary Albright and Foreign Minister Ivanov expressed their complete commitment to the unimpeded functioning of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) Kosovo Verification Mission under the leadership of Ambassador William Walker. All attacks on and threats to the Mission must cease immediately. It is incumbent upon everyone in Kosovo to ensure the safety of the Mission and other international personnel. They call on the authorities of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and the media to create a supportive atmosphere for the activities of the Mission and its Head. The authorities of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia should facilitate the work of the Mission by fulfilling the Head of Mission's requests for adequate security arrangements and other measures to make fully effective the agreement between OSCE and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia.

The United States and the Russian Federation firmly demand that the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia comply fully with the resolutions of the Security Council, particularly with regard to police and military units, and its agreements with the OSCE and other international entities. They call on the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia to do so without delay.

The United States and the Russian Federation reiterate their indignation at the massacre of Kosovar Albanians in Racak, which cannot be justified. Those responsible must be brought to justice.

The authorities of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia must give their full cooperation to the International Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia, as required by resolutions of the Security Council. The authorities of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia must conduct a full investigation of what happened at Racak with the participation of the Tribunal. Judge Louise Arbour and Tribunal investigators should be allowed to enter and work in Kosovo, to participate in the investigation of the massacre in Racak. The authorities of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia should identify the officers operating in Racak at the

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time of the massacre and suspend them until the results of the investigation become available.

The United States and the Russian Federation urge the Kosovo Albanians to fulfil all their obligations and commitments. "Kosovo Liberation Army" provocations have contributed significantly to the renewed deep tensions in Kosovo. The United States and the Russian Federation condemn such provocations and demand they end immediately. Measures should be developed to discourage such activity whenever feasible, in the interest of ensuring full compliance with the commitments and obligations undertaken by the sides, including implementing the arms embargo under the relevant Security Council resolutions.

Hostage-taking must cease. All hostages should be released. Secretary Albright and Foreign Minister Ivanov appreciated the work of the Kosovo Verification Mission in such situations. They called upon the Serbian authorities to carry out the commitments in their 11-point Statement of Principles of a Political Settlement of 13 October 1998, in particular to mitigate the sentences of persons detained in connection with the Kosovo conflict and to provide due process to all detainees. Such steps would contribute to easing tensions.

Recent escalated hostilities in Kosovo have displaced thousands more civilians. This has put at risk progress made since last year in averting a humanitarian catastrophe. The sides must avoid actions that affect the civilian population and must facilitate the work of international and non-governmental organizations providing humanitarian assistance. The authorities of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia should provide all necessary facilities, including radio communication, to humanitarian organizations and remove impediments they have encountered.

Secretary Albright and Foreign Minister Ivanov decided to maintain close contacts on the matter of Kosovo in order to coordinate United States and Russian support for a resolution of the crisis.
