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LETTER DATED 19 JUNE 1998 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE
OF ERITREA TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT
OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

Upon instructions from my Government, I have the honour to transmit to you a statement issued by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the State of Eritrea in Asmara today, 19 June 1998, concerning Ethiopia's violation of the moratorium on air strikes.

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

(Signed) Haile MENKERIOS
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

Annex

Statement issued on 19 June 1998 by the Ministry of Foreign
Affairs of Eritrea on the violation by Ethiopia of the
moratorium on air strikes

The Government of Eritrea had accepted, on Sunday, 14 June 1998, the proposal put forward by President Clinton on the total ban of the use and threat of use of air strikes by both sides. The Government of Eritrea had accepted this proposal, which it saw "as a positive first step towards ending the war", because it did not start the air war in the first place, and all the actions that it had taken were in legitimate self-defence and a means of deterrence.

The Government of Ethiopia has, however, violated this agreement, both through its official belligerent pronouncements and its communications to commercial airlines and shipping lines. Through these threats to use air strikes in violation of its expressed commitment to the United States Government, the Government of Ethiopia is effectively maintaining the illegal blockade that it had imposed on international flights and shipping.

The efforts to de-escalate the conflict have thus been frustrated as the Government of Ethiopia continues to escalate the tension.

The Government of Eritrea has communicated these violations to the United States Government. The Government of Eritrea will await a positive response. If all efforts to persuade the Government of Ethiopia to honour its commitments on the total ban of air strikes fail and the blockade continues, however, the Government of Eritrea will have no option but to take appropriate deterrent measures.
