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LETTER DATED 20 JANUARY 1965 FROM THE FIRST DEPUTY  
PRIME MINISTER AND MINISTER FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF  
INDONESIA ADDRESSED TO THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

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On 31 December 1964, the Head of our Permanent Mission in New York conveyed to Your Excellency the content of President Sukarno's statement on that date, to the effect that Indonesia would withdraw from the United Nations if neo-colonialist "Malaysia" be seated in the Security Council. Pursuant to that statement I have to inform you that on 7 January 1965, after the seating of "Malaysia" as member of the Security Council, our Government, after very careful consideration, has taken the decision to withdraw from the United Nations.

My Government was fully aware of the great weight and impact of such a decision, but in the circumstances which have been created by colonial powers in the United Nations so blatantly against our anti-colonial struggle and indeed against the lofty principles and purposes of the United Nations Charter, my Government felt that no alternative had been left for Indonesia but withdrawal from the United Nations. Summing up and balancing all the considerations in their negative and positive aspects we have come to the conclusion that our decision may become the catalyst to reform and retool the United Nations in spirit and in deed, lest the present atmosphere of complacency shown by the neo-colonial Powers may undermine the lofty principles of the United Nations and consequently the decline of the United Nations as an international body for collective security and harmonious co-operation may become irrevocable. These feelings have already been reflected by many Members of the United Nations and most of them already felt that something had to be done soon.

Already in 1960, in his address before the General Assembly on 30 September, President Sukarno reminded the United Nations of its shortcomings both politically and organizationally; the need for retooling was strongly felt. Yet, at that time Indonesia had no intentions to leave the United Nations, imperfect as it might be. For us the problem of "Malaysia" within the United Nations was just the further proof of this international body being manipulated by colonial and neo-colonial Powers.

"Malaysia" which formation was rejected by two out of the three signatories to the Manila Agreement, was then forced into the United Nations by deliberate avoidance of any voting on 17 September 1963. It was a successful manoeuvre of neo-colonial Powers in the United Nations. Indonesia voiced its disapproval of such a manoeuvre. But we were patient enough until another absurd colonial

manoeuvre occurred namely the pushing of this "Malaysia" into the United Nations Security Council. This makes a mockery of the sense of the Security Council itself, according to Article 23 of the Charter, the election of a non-permanent member of the Security Council should be guided by the importance and contribution of the candidate-country in the maintenance of peace and security in the world. What happened was, that this "Malaysia" only a few months old at the end of 1963, this feeble and highly controversial new "state", opposed and not recognized by its neighbours, this real tool of British neo-colonialism in South-East Asia, was moved as a candidate of the Security Council and pushed into it by manipulation and pressures of colonial Powers in the United Nations. What contribution for the maintenance of peace and security in the world has this "Malaysia" really rendered? Its very birth has caused trouble and insecurity in the region of South-East Asia! Thus, this practice and policy in the United Nations was not only a violation of the Charter, but it made a mockery of the function and purpose of the United Nations Security Council. And indeed, against the opposition of Indonesia and many other anti-colonial Powers, this "Malaysia" was recently seated in the Security Council. Indonesia could have challenged the legality of its election due to its non-voting procedure, but Indonesia did not. Indonesia could have insisted on a voting procedure in that election as required by the Charter, but it did not. Indonesia wanted to be co-operative, both with the President of the General Assembly, Ambassador Quaison Sackey from Ghana, as well as with the majority of Members of the United Nations, in particular with the Afro-Asian group with a view to the election of other non-permanent members to the Security Council. Indonesia had no intention to obstruct the work of the United Nations and much less to wreck the United Nations; but it felt obliged to point out in the strongest way what the United Nations indeed should not have done.

This decision of my Government is of course a revolutionary one, unprecedented as it may be. This however, was taken for the good of the United Nations itself, which in our view need a strong reminder from time to time. It might even be, that this decision of my Government could well entail a beneficial effect for the speedy solution of the problem of "Malaysia" itself. Arrogance displayed so far for a settlement based on previous agreements might be dissolved, in the general desire for the just solution of burning and acute problems in South-East Asia as a whole.

As to your personal appeal, Mr. Secretary-General, that Indonesia should not withdraw from its co-operation with the United Nations, I want to assure you that Indonesia still upholds the lofty principles of international co-operation as enshrined in the United Nations Charter. This, however, can be implemented outside as well as inside the United Nations body.

Indonesia has been active in the field of international co-operation for a better world and it will continue to do so. However, due to the serious reasons I mentioned above, Indonesia has decided at this stage and under the present circumstances to withdraw from the United Nations and in addition also from specialized agencies like the FAO, UNICEF and UNESCO. A separate letter will be sent to those specific agencies.

While our actual withdrawal from the United Nations has been already carried out in New York as of 1 January 1965, I would suggest that, due to the technical winding up of the Indonesian Permanent Mission in New York and reciprocally your Office in Indonesia, officially our respective offices would be closed on 1 March 1965. I would appreciate it highly if you would be helpful in having the office of the Indonesian Mission in New York maintain its official status till 1 March 1965, which will also be the case with your United Nations office in Djakarta.

For the Government of the Republic of Indonesia,  
The First Deputy Prime Minister/  
Minister for Foreign Affairs,

(Signed) Dr. SUBANDRIO

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