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LETTER DATED 5 MAY 1970 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF
THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED
TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

I have the honour to refer to the letters of 7 and 27 February 1965 from the Permanent Representative of the United States of America to the President of the Security Council concerning the aggression against the Republic of Viet-Nam and to inform you of the following acts of armed aggression by forces of North Viet-Nam based in Cambodia which have required appropriate measures of collective self-defence by the armed forces of the Republic of Viet-Nam and the United States of America.

For five years North Viet-Nam has maintained base areas in Cambodia against the expressed wishes of the Cambodian Government. These bases have been used in violation of Cambodian neutrality as supply points and base areas for military operations against the Republic of Viet-Nam. In recent weeks North Viet-Nameese forces have rapidly expanded the perimeters of these base areas and expelled the remaining Cambodian Government presence from the areas. The North Viet-Nameese forces have moved quickly to link the bases along the border with South Viet-Nam into one continuous chain as well as to push the bases deeper into Cambodia. Concurrently, North Viet-Nam has stepped up guerrilla actions into South Viet-Nam and is concentrating its main forces in these base areas in preparation for further massive attacks into South Viet-Nam.

These military actions against the Republic of Viet-Nam and its armed forces and the armed forces of the United States require appropriate defensive measures. In his address to the American people on 30 April President Nixon stated:

"... if this enemy effort succeeds, Cambodia would become a vast enemy staging area and a springboard for attacks on South Viet-Nam along 600 miles of frontier: a refuge where enemy troops could return from combat without fear of retaliation.

"North Viet-Nameese men and supplies could then be poured into that country, jeopardizing not only the lives of our men but the people of South Viet-Nam as well."

The measures of collective self-defence being taken by United States and South Viet-Nameese forces are restricted in extent, purpose and time. They are confined to the border areas over which the Cambodian Government has ceased to exercise any effective control and which has been completely occupied by North Viet-Nameese and Viet Cong forces. Their purpose is to destroy the stocks and communications equipment that are being used in aggression against the Republic of Viet-Nam. When that purpose is accomplished, our forces and those of the Republic of Viet-Nam will promptly withdraw. These measures are limited and proportionate to the aggressive military operations of the North Viet-Nameese forces and the threat they pose.

The United States wishes to reiterate its continued respect for the sovereignty, independence, neutrality and territorial integrity of Cambodia. Our purpose in taking these defensive measures was stated by President Nixon, in his address of 30 April, as follows:

"We take this action not for the purpose of expanding the war into Cambodia but for the purpose of ending the war in Viet-Nam and winning the just peace we all desire.

"We have made and will continue to make every possible effort to end this war through negotiation at the conference table rather than through more fighting in the battlefield."

I would request that my letter be circulated to the members of the Security Council.

Accept, etc.

(Signed) Charles W. YOST
