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*Le secrétaire d'État aux Affaires extérieures
au représentant permanent auprès des Nations Unies*

*Secretary of State for External Affairs
to Permanent Representative to United Nations*

TELEGRAM G-124

Ottawa, August 16, 1960

CONFIDENTIAL. OPIMMEDIATE.

Repeat Accra, Washington, London (Information).

UN DIFFICULTIES IN THE CONGO

Following for the Minister:

We have been very concerned at the recent news from the Congo and at the possible outcome of further Security Council discussions on this subject. Lumumba's criticism of Hammarskjöld¹¹ raises fundamental questions as to the role of the UN and, indeed, the whole future of the Congo itself.

2. In case you should have a conversation with Hammarskjöld, we have given thought here to a possible line of approach which might be put to him and possibly to certain African delegations in New York: the same arguments could be used also in Accra where, we understand, there is now a tendency to follow a more sober line in regard to Congo developments.

3. A possible point of departure might be taken from Lumumba's obvious appeal to African nationalist aspiration in attempting to settle independently, e.g. without UN interference, his domestic affairs and to enlist, if possible, in coping with the local situation, assistance, primarily of African states. This is an approach which non-African countries need not necessarily oppose. It is one which might even provide a basis for cooperation with them, at least if its inherent limitations are appreciated.

4. We assume that most African states are basically concerned with preventing the issue from involving big blocs in direct conflict. If this is the case, the African states are bound to realize that an appeal to either side, in the event of UN failure, would be bound to defeat their basic aspirations not to become pawns in the big power rivalry. The question then arises whether cooperation and assistance from sources outside Africa, which we assume are essential even to an African solution, will really be possible outside the UN framework. Appeals to individual European or other countries are not likely to be satisfactory as this is likely to involve delays and limitations which can hardly be accepted in the circumstances.

5. If it is agreed that in terms of African aspirations there is in fact no immediate practical alternative to UN assistance, then the problem is one of determining what are the necessary limitations and whether such limitations are acceptable. While it is clear that on the one hand there can be no direct intervention in Congolese domestic affairs, it must be accepted as obvious, on the other, that the UN cannot allow itself to become the instrument of the Congolese Government in matters which are controversial in terms of east-west conflict or in general UN context.

6. Even with such limitations, it seems to us that the case for UN assistance is strong. The direct benefits of the UN presence for the Congolese government are in themselves quite

¹¹ Voir/See *Documents on International Affairs 1960* (London : Oxford University Press/Royal Institute of International Affairs, 1964), pp. 289-94.