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Minutes of the reception of the President Leader Saddam Husayn, may God protect him, for Mr. Shin Ganata Muhana Balayuji [or Balayogi] President of the Indian Parliament, the morning of Sunday August 23, 1998.

Present from the Iraqi side:

- Dr. Sa'dun Hamadi / National Assembly President

Present from His Excellency's Office:

- Lieutenant General Dr. 'Abd-al-Hamid Mahmud / Secretary of the President of the Republic

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Mr. President Leader:

Welcome, I am glad to see you in Baghdad. How are you doing?

Mr. Shri Balayuji:

Thank you very much Mr. President. Everything is well at my home country especially that the new government is now running the issues in an excellent way.

Mr. President Leader:

We have sent you a message about the subject of the nuclear explosions which you had conducted before the arrival of a message [to us] from Pakistan about the same subject. So, we have also sent a message to Pakistan. We have endeavored diligently to publish both letters after you have received them, in order to keep Iraq's position publicly known and clear. As you know, whenever we take a position we are never shy or fearful about it, but, rather, we make it public. There are well known nations that try to monopolize power and then try to monopolize development exclusively to themselves.

In the past, before ten years or more, the West declared that they were seeking to develop the third world countries. But when these countries started to

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develop, they started to strike the developed countries, to create problems to them and to threaten them with aggression. A period of time earlier, the West, and with the United States at their forefront, was advocating pluralism in each country of the third world, whereas at the international level they were advocating the monopolization of the centers of polarization and influence. Therefore, you see the double standards and that the treatments are based on the interest, not on a fixed governing principle. You also can see how dangerous the signals have started to appear at the international level.

Hence, this way, you can notice that in the past ten years the world has become tired and exhausted due to the large number of the problems which have resulted from such policies, without being able to resolve these difficulties. That is a worrying situation of unrest for the whole world, as you can see; it does not allow the sight to settle on the possibility to achieve a society of peace in the world.

The Western policies in general, and the U.S. one in particular, are not based on making friends on the basis of fixed stable standards, but are based most of the time on the basis of a policy which is based on provocation or aggressiveness by a state against another; in order to weaken one and cause trouble to the other. It is a policy that is founded on the basis of threatening to use force

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and actually using it sometimes. For instance, the United States is not satisfied to see that India maintains natural cooperative relations with its neighbors, as well as it is not satisfied when Iraq establishes natural cooperative relations with its neighbors, and the like.

Let us get back to a closer subject in the geographical (computations) considerations and the possibility of the interests to meet. Let us state that India is actually a large country and that the Arab Nation does not have any [negative] sensitivities towards India, as there is nothing in their history but good matters, whether it is Baghdad's history with India or all the history of all the Arabs with it, and that most of the fundamental weight of the Arabs resides in Asia. I am talking now, about matters, which I have talked about in 1974 with Mrs. Indira Gandhi, as we [Iraqis] were the ones who took the initiative to establish strong improved relations with India. It was on that basis that the relations had started to grow and we have been coordinating our positions in the Non-Aligned Movement, whenever possible. As we have said, India is a large and well-bred deep-rooted country, but in the world of these days the image of a large country without numerous friends beyond its national borders remains different from the image of a large country with numerous friends beyond its natural borders. The Arab Nation is among the neighboring areas of India. However, you have competitors in this respect, of course ... Not in the intimate friendship, but in terms of interests.

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However, let us return to state that the opportunity for Arab — India relations can grow with many well-known elements more than the opportunity of the others if that opportunity were closely pursued to deepen its foundation. You know that as far as Iraq is concerned, it is always willing to maintain solid good relations with India for the principal reasons, which we have mentioned. Not because we are subjected to a blockade, but because this has been our policy since 1974.

Mr. Shri Balayuji:

Mr. President, allow me first to thank you for giving me the opportunity to meet with you and for kindly dedicating some of your precious time to meet with me ... The [Iraqi] National Assembly has prepared for us a full program and it was useful for us to meet with the ministers of Health, Industry and Trade and others, in addition to our meeting with the Deputy Prime Minister.

There is a feeling among the Iraqis that India's position could have been better towards Iraq in the international arena, and we appreciate this feeling. However, we would like to clarify that India has been going through numerous economic crises since 1991, and therefore had to establish a program to fix the economy and had to make several structural adjustments in the economic reform. The government has changed three different times in India since 1991, and due to these problems, we could not

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pay enough attention to our deserving friends in the international arena ... We suffer for the continued suffering of the Iraqi people and I shall make it a personal duty to convey this suffering as well as expose it to the view of the world, and we shall do everything possible to end the economic sanctions which are imposed on Iraq.

Mr. President I admire your personality and would like to convey to your Excellency the admiration and appreciation of my accompanying delegation and also, to convey to you the regards of the Prime Minister and of the President of the Republic. Moreover, this is not my first visit to Iraq, but my third visit to this great nation. In fact I have visited it in 1994 and 1995 when I was a member of the Parliament; and during my last visit, your Excellence showed us special kindness and had set free two Indian citizens who were jailed in Iraq.

We have excellent relationship with Iraq, since India and Iraq belong to two great famous civilizations. Moreover, India wishes to continue this good relationship through the ratification of economic agreements with the Iraqi government, and the exchange of official delegations in different domains such as roads, railways, petroleum, health, agriculture and the like. We are

also glad that the joint Indian — Iraqi Commission will resume its work after an eight years interruption, as meetings will be held in New Delhi in this coming September

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The result of this should give a thrust to the relationships between our two countries and I would like to point to your Excellency that we are planning to send humanitarian assistance to Iraq, consisting of food supplies, medications and school supplies. Moreover, India is also planning to endeavor to cooperate with Iraq in the technical training field and in the exchange of scholarly fellowships; in addition to other cultural activities such as participating in the coming Babel International Festival and holding cultural weeks between our two countries.

India is against the use of force to settle problems; and the Prime Minister made that clear when he addressed the Security Council, at which time he confirmed the policy of India which is that India insists always on the peaceful resolution of problems.

Moreover, we will also present this point of view, which is our point of view, in the coming meeting for the International Parliamentary Union, which will be held in Moscow next September, as we will coordinate with Iraq and will establish a united front to propose lifting the blockade against Iraq.

I would like to confirm to your Excellency that the nuclear tests, which India has been conducting, are not addressed against any country, but only to ensure India's security. As to the imposed sanctions on us due to that, they are very limited. Moreover, I also take this opportunity to present the utmost thanks to your Excellency for Iraq's equitable and objective position regarding the conduct of nuclear tests.

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The two Prime Ministers of India and Pakistan have held a meeting in New Zealand in which they have reached a working formulation to improve the relationships between the two countries. They will also meet anew, within the side discussions of the summit, which will be held in South Africa to deliberate about how to peacefully resolve the pending problems between our two countries. Moreover, India has offered Pakistan to sign a treaty about No-First-Strike with nuclear arms.

I would like to bring to the kind attention of your Excellency that there are two Indian citizens who have been sentenced to six years jail term in Iraq, of which two years have been served. They are two poor citizens and I plead for your Excellency's clemency in their favor.

I thank your Excellency for granting me your precious time to explain India's situation and for allowing me, one more time, to convey the regards of the people of India, of the Prime

Minister and of the President of the Republic who have the utmost admiration for your courage and your bravery.

I would like to bring to the kind attention of your Excellency that many industrial products in India carry the name of Saddam Husayn, that many Indian families have given the name of Saddam to their children, and the Indian merchants earn

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a lot of money by selling large quantities of shirts and clothing bearing your Excellency's picture.

Mr. President Leader:

I thank you my friend for your personal feelings and the feelings of your accompanying delegation, and I wish that you convey my greetings to their Excellencies the Prime Minister and the President of the Republic, and to confirm to them that Iraq is ready to cooperate in all domains, which they believe that are beneficial to the two countries. I also wish that you convey my greetings and regards to the friendly people of India, and confirm to them that Baghdad has been and remains still a friend to India.

As we have mentioned in the two messages which we have sent to the Prime Ministers of India and Pakistan, we confirm now, that if there has been an importance in the past to resolve the problems between you and Pakistan, this importance to do so is growing even more, now. As you well know and can see; some of the Western media, and even the Zionism, are upset by the improvement of relations which you have announced between you and Pakistan. They will therefore, attempt to create problems between you in order to minimize the extent of the pride of the Indian and Pakistani people for what they have achieved in terms of their scientific development achievement, and so that you lose the opportunity for scientific and economical development.

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Mr. Shri Balayuji:

Mr. President, we shall never forget the Iraqi government's support to India during the Bangladesh War and the petroleum crisis of 1974.

Mr. President Leader:

I have missed to respond to your appeal regarding the two Indian prisoners and as long as you requested it from me, it is natural that I accede to your request. Therefore we shall free them, and they can travel with you, if you wish so.

Mr. Shri Balayuji:

Many thanks Mr. President. Prior to my arrival to Iraq, His Excellency the Prime Minister had personally requested me to convey to you personally the desire of the Indian government to cooperate with Iraq and to sign commercial agreements with Iraq in all fields.

Mr. President Leader:

Convey my greetings to him and tell him that we have the same willingness.

With respect to the blockade, there definitely will come a time when it will end

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Our people are steadfast, and they are active people as you know. They work in spite of the dire circumstances. Moreover, there are people who are dying, and they are very dear to us. They are dying due to the lack of food, of medication, and of other life necessities. But as to the outcome, we are sure of victory, God Willing. It is natural that the support of those who are carrying out the blockade will become more and more fragmented, whenever more and more voices rise more and more against it.

Reassure his Excellency the Prime Minister that we are standing steadfast, we are working and we are resisting.

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His Excellency then greeted his guest with expressions of affection and esteem.

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