17 August 1967

Dear Ambassador Thalmann,

I write this letter to you as a follow-up to my letter of 12 August, in order to bring to your attention a few points not covered in that earlier communication.

First of all, I wish to point out that the Permanent Representative of Israel here has assured me you will have the full cooperation of his Government in your mission and that you will have full freedom of movement and access in the City of Jerusalem. I interpret this as necessarily meaning that you will have freedom to meet and talk with anyone in the Old City if you consider it helpful to your mission to do so. I interpret this also as meaning that you would have the right in all such meetings and talks to be alone and not to have present any representative of the Government of Israel, civilian or military. I would consider it indispensable to the effective fulfillment of your mission that you should be able to carry on your talks without any such presence. I say this to you only to alert you to a possibility that a "liaison officer" might be assigned to you who might wish to be with you at your meetings, which I hope and, in fact, assume is only remote. I will, however, convey my assumption in this regard to the Permanent Representative of Israel.

You will not, of course, be expected to go into the streets of Jerusalem and conduct interviews; that would be physically hopeless and, in any case, might serve only to create commotion. A more realistic problem is that of talking with ex-Arab officials of Jerusalem, some of whom are still in the Old City, while others have been exiled. You

His Excellency
Ambassador Ernesto A. Thalmann
Chief of the International Organizations
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Berne, Switzerland
will, no doubt, wish to talk to the Arab Mayor and other elected officials
of the Old City who are, I understand, still resident there although no
longer functioning in their official capacities. I would assume that if
you request to see them you will be enabled to do so. As to those who
have been exiled, such as the former Governor of Jerusalem who, I am
told, is confined to the city of Safad, you could ask the appropriate
Israel authorities to bring the person or persons concerned to Jerusalem
for the interview by you. There are non-official exiles from Jerusalem
in Amman and other places in Jordan, but I would think it not essential
for you to try to contact them. I think it would be advisable for you
to follow the principle that since the General Assembly resolution refers
to the situation in Jerusalem you will not be going outside of the City
in pursuance of your task.

Some of those exiled from Jerusalem are named in document 3/3110
which is among the documents which I enclose with this letter for your
information.

Among the religious leaders you may wish to see, I mention the
following:

✓ Bishop Najib Qubein
  Mr. Labib Nasser
  Dr. Amin Maja
✓ Dr. George Farah
  Mr. Daoud Telil
  Mr. Raja Elisa

In view of the short time at your disposal, made necessary by the
obligation which I have to submit a report without much more delay,
I do not expect the information you will gather to be in any sense
exhaustive. I do hope that you will be able to get some very clear
impressions of the situation which now exists in order that I may make
a meaningful and objective report to the Security Council and the General
Assembly.

With best wishes,

Yours sincerely,

[Signature]

U Thant