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CABLEGRAM DATED 2 FEBRUARY 1949 FROM THE
ACTING MEDIATOR TO THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

For President Security Council:

I have the honour to inform you that the following invitation to armistice negotiations has been sent by me on 30 January to all of the Arab States other than Egypt.

"In pursuance of the Security Council resolution of 16 November 1948 calling upon the parties in the Palestine conflict to enter into negotiations looking toward the immediate establishment of an armistice and my previous communications to you on this subject, I herewith extend to you a formal invitation to undertake within the next ten days negotiations under United Nations Chairmanship concerning the implementation of the resolution of 16 November. This invitation is being extended simultaneously to all of the Arab States other than Egypt, which is now engaged in such negotiations at Rhodes. I am extending this invitation in my capacity as Acting Mediator and not as Chairman of the current Egyptian/Israeli negotiations. With reference to the negotiations now going on at Rhodes I must inform you that although rapid progress was achieved in the early stages and significant accords reached, important differences relating specifically to the implementation of the resolution of the Security Council of 4 November 1948, must be resolved before an armistice agreement can be signed here.

"I would suggest Rhodes as the place for the negotiations because it is neutral ground and has all the necessary facilities, but any other place which might appear more suitable to the parties would be seriously considered. United Nations plans can be placed at the disposal of the Delegations for regular transport to and from Rhodes should this place be agreed upon.

"If this most earnest invitation is favourable received it will be for the Arab States themselves to decide whether such negotiations should be entered into collectively or separately. In view of the difference problems involved, they might be carried on separately but simultaneously at the same place.

"I will deeply appreciate an indication of your reaction to this invitation within the next few days, including your views as to whether the negotiations should be on a collective or separate basis, and the earliest date on which they might begin.

"If the need should arise for consultation on any aspect of this invitation I shall be glad to send a personal emissary to you for this purpose."

Ralph Bunche
Acting Mediator
