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THE PRIME MINISTER

26 July 1988

Dear Ron,

Thank you for your letter of 11 July about the Iranair flight 655.

The incident was a tragedy for all concerned. It illustrated the terrible costs of the conflict in the Gulf and the dilemmas that can confront naval forces deployed there in order to uphold freedom of navigation.

The accident seems at least to have helped bring home to the Iranian leadership the urgent need for an end to the Gulf conflict. Let us hope that they mean what they say. I was glad that the Security Council was able to agree unanimously the terms of a resolution on the incident which called clearly for implementation of SCR 598. This was a good start. I hope we can now continue to work together to support the Secretary-General's efforts to bring a settlement in the Gulf region. We are doing what we can ourselves and through moderate Arab governments to urge Iraq to exercise restraint and co-operate in the establishment of a ceasefire as soon as possible.

Yours
sincerely

Ronald Reagan

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The President of the United States of America.