

**Nachtflug in den Tod**  
IT-Protokoll der internationalen Fassung

Time                      Transcript

---

*Voice Dag Hammarskjöld (Not part of the international version)*

(Will the chaos in Africa precipitate a world war? Will the struggle for Katanga be the UN's downfall? Every means is justified to end the war conducted by Belgian mercenaries, from France and Germany against UN troops., against us and the Congo. Every means is justified, even a cease-fire.

The United Nations must not be allowed to be defeated by Tshombe - the Belgian straw doll and British protege. But how can the UN withstand their pressure? Who will save the United Nation's mission?)

*Sture Linnér (off):*

The time for the flight to the Katanga province was on the 17<sup>th</sup> of September 1961 at 5 to 5 in the afternoon by a plane with a Swedish crew of six very experienced men and ten other passengers: legal and political advisers, bodyguards, his secretary a.s.o.

As to Dag Hammarskjöld he was surely very strained and stressed...

*Voice Dag Hammarskjöld (From his diary „Markings“: 07-06-61)(Not part of the international version)*

(Trött och ensam.../

Müde und einsam.

Müde

bis der Verstand schmerzt.

Taub die Finger

bebend die Knie...

Jetzt gilt es,

jetzt darfst du nicht versagen...)

*Sture Linnér (off):*

This was a dangerous expedition - dangerous physically and also it was dangerous and delicate from a political point...

*Sture Linnér (off / on):*

There was nothing unusual about the departure. We stood chatting on the tarmac, we commented on the fact that the plane had been shot actually at actually the day before without apparently the fuselage being seriously damaged and we were wondering whether the rumors were right that white mercenaries were behind this shooting. Because there was an international riffraff in the service of Tshombé being paid to make life as difficult for the UN people as possible, possibly to drive us out from the Congo... We went into the plane, sat down, were ready for take-off, when he suddenly said: 'You know, I wonder whether it is wise for us both to leave at this stage when the central government in the Congo is so wobbly. Neither of us then would be able to control what happens in the capital during the absence.' So I said: 'I stay behind with pleasure', because I had been against this mission from the beginning, knowing Tshombé well enough, I thought, never ever to trust either him or his advisers in the background. So I stepped down from the plane and Hammarskjöld was kind enough to accompany me. We stood talking again for a few minutes and then he disappeared and I realized of course the day after that in this way he actually saved my life...

*UN-Speaker:*

Please repeat after me...I, Dag Hammarskjöld, solemnly swear to exercise in all loyalty, and conscious...

*Dag Hammarskjöld:*

I, Dag Hammarskjöld, solemnly swear to exercise in all loyalty, discretion and conscious...

*UN-Speaker:*

...the functions entrusted to me as Secretary General of the United Nations...

*Dag Hammarskjöld:*

...the functions entrusted to me as Secretary General of the United Nations...

*UN-Speaker:*

...to discharge those functions and to regulate my conduct with the interest of the United Nations only in view...

*Dag Hammarskjöld:*

...to discharge those functions and to regulate my conduct with the interest of the United Nations only in view...

*UN-Speaker:*

...and not to seek or accept instructions in regard to the performance of my duties from any government or other authority extern to the organization.

*Dag Hammarskjöld:*

...and not to seek or accept instructions in regard to the performance of my duties from any government or other authority extern to the organization.

*Sture Linnér:*

There was at that time of course the cold war at it's very coldest, meaning that there was a polarization between the western block and the eastern block. And each block used the internal chaos to foster there own interests, paying off this party or that party, this tribe or that tribe, so that they rose against each other.

Everybody outside of Africa who had the means to export arms was extremely interested in doing so and making handsome profit. The tension became so great that I know that the Secretary General who was -I needn't to say that- but he was very very...a sort of...cautious in his statements to both the Security Council and the General Assembly, nevertheless didn't hesitate to say that there might be an international war caused by all those tensions...not only fighting inside the Congo, but a war which might spread all over Africa and then heaven knows where...

*Newsreel Voice over:*

Independence for the Belgian Congo: After Centuries of Belgian control, King Baudouin grants the Congo home rule. Yet no sooner has the coveted freedom finally be achieved than Belgian paratroopers are forced to intervene to tackle looters. Mr. Tshombe, governor of the province of Katanga, secedes from the Congo - under the protection of Belgian officers assisting Tshombe and his young army. Communist elements and the UN became involved, and Tshombe's Katangan army fights back with fierce determination. Law and order are restored.

*Prof. Alan James:*

There were very large interests involved in the Congo, not least economic ones because the country and particularly Katanga was very rich in minerals. Katanga produced most of the world's cobalt, ten per cent of it's copper, much ..... besides including uranium, which was used in the nuclear weapon's

program of the West. And for these reasons the West was very keen to maintain order in the Congo so that its companies, its western based companies, could continue to produce minerals and to ensure that those minerals would not move in the direction of the eastern block.

*Prof. Alan James:*

At this time Hammarskjöld was under very strong pressure from the West and particularly from Britain which took the lead. This was because Britain was worried that what the UN was doing in Katanga would upset the good order which at thus far being maintained there. She therefore sent a government minister, the Marquess of Lansdowne, to the Congo to put strong pressure on Hammarskjöld to negotiate a cease-fire and to warn him, that if he didn't, Britain would consider withdrawing her political and financial support from the UN operation. And Britain also pressed the United States successfully to make representations to Secretary General along these lines. And Hammarskjöld gave in under this pressure and agreed to go to a meeting in Northern Rhodesia with Tshombé where the Marquess of Lansdowne would be waiting for him. And it was on his way to that meeting that he was killed.

*Sture Linnér:*

One week before his death Dag Hammarskjöld wrote a letter which was later to be known as his will to a close friend of his, instructing him what to do as to the appointment of an executor of both his will and other economic transactions and also telling him what to do with his private papers...Dag Hammarskjöld was at that time 56 years old, full of vitality, building a home for his retirement in the southernmost part of Sweden a.s.o...full of vitality, I repeat. Nevertheless he felt that the situation in the Congo was so full of dangers, both in a physical sense for all UN members and in a more general sense as regards the UN charter and all the ideals he stood up for...There were attacks after attacks against the United Nations...

*American Voice Newsreel (off):*

In Elisabethville and around the edges of town heavy fighting continues. Each day since fighting began more UN troops had been brought in the battle...

*Prof. Peter Wallenstein:*

Hammarskjöld was confronted with a very complicated situation. On the one hand there was the increasing tension among the cold war parties, there was crisis over Cuba, was crisis over Berlin, a summit meeting had failed, the U-2 spy plane had been shot down, American presidential election created uncertainties. On the other

hand Hammarskjöld was very committed to Africa, he had been touring Africa, he had the strong feeling that Africa was beginning to move, that there was an intense interest to create strong states for the welfare of the societies in order to remedy some of those colonial effects that Africa had been victim for several hundreds of years....There was also the mining interests Congo being rich in many types of resources and of course Congo was very central in Africa as such. And what would happen to Congo, would it be a precedent for what could happen to many other parts of Africa...So he wanted to connect the United Nations to the aspirations of the Africans to avoid becoming a battle field in the cold war, avoid being a victim of the western colonial intervention, and avoid being exposed to tribal confrontations which could endanger the states as a whole.

*Prof. Karl Birnbaum (off / on):*

I think the crucial feature was his capacity to combine a firm grip on reality with ideals and visions that could inspire people...

At the United Nations this capacity enabled him to launch an array of innovative diplomatic methods that offered solutions to seemingly intractable problems...

His father was a recognized lawyer holding public offices both internationally and here in Sweden in the government up to the level of Prime Minister during World War I. During Hammarskjölds formative years he resided as a governor of Uppsala in this impressive castle...

*Claude de Kémoularia:*

L'utériel...l'austérité suédoise se manifeste dans sa plénitude dans ce château dont on comprend pourquoi quand le père était gouverneur, les pièces froides, sans friture, sans tapisserie, très austère. On comprend ce qui a été la formation du caractère de Dag Hammarskjöld et l'austérité, la rigueur de son caractère.

*Prof. Karl Birnbaum:*

Another important element of Hammarskjölds upbringing was his religious orientation. His mother was a deeply religious person whom Hammarskjöld once described as holding radical democratic views with warm human undercurrents.. The depth of Hammarskjölds own religiousness became known only after his death through the publication of his diary 'Markings'. It revealed that he was himself committed to these moral standards and these moral standards later helped him both in personal crisis and during the pressures he was exposed to in the United Nations.

Dag Hammarskjöld:

I bring to this task the firm will to devote myself without any reserve carried out by the United Nation's Organization in pursuit of its high aims. I am here to serve you all. In so doing I shall count on your understanding, on your advice and to give to what I have to say the attention that it may reserve. I am animated by the desire to meet all problems with an open mind. It is for you to judge how I succeed, it is for to correct me if I fail... My work shall be guided by this knowledge.

Prof. Peter Wallensteen:

When Hammarskjöld took over the organization it was in disarray. Working conditions were not appropriate ones. There were FBI-agents in the premises, some of his American staff were threatened to be brought into a hearing in the US senate in a committee led by Joe McCarthy, the senator. So he immediately wanted to establish himself as the leader of the organization, the one who had the right to hire and to fire and in that sense he could protect his staff. He removed the FBI-agents and it became clear who was in charge of the organization. And that also established the integrity of the organization vis-à-vis the outside world. It was very clear that this was an international organization committed to the Charter as such and where he used article 101 as the basis for his actions...

A year later, in 1954, there was a situation in Guatemala which also showed how he acted internationally with the same moral principles. A democratically elected government had nationalized some land property belonging to American companies; it created a crisis in the country, an invasion followed from the neighboring country Honduras, clearly sponsored by the CIA and as the US perceived the situation, this was a communist government, but it was elected. So Hammarskjöld acted to bring this to the UN Security Council. The United States objected to this, instead preferred to put it to the OAS, the Organization of American States, where they had the control. Hammarskjöld clearly argued why this should be a case for the United Nations, but the Americans postponed the actions, prolonged the deliberations so that the government could be overthrown. By that sense there was no case any longer. But Hammarskjöld's position was made very clear and the United States understood it. The net result still was that he was rebuffed by the United States and it looked like a failure for Hammarskjöld's ambitions...

Voice Dag Hammarskjöld (From his diary „Markings“: 06-08-61) (Not part of the international version)

(Was fürchte ich?  
Wenn sie treffen und töten,

was ist da zu beweinen?  
Andere gingen voran.  
Andere folgen...)

*Anders Hellberg:*

There remained radio-silence except from few short messages to the tower in Salisbury and the Tower in Ndola at a length stage. There was real fear about attacks from the air from a small jet aircraft, Fouga Magister, based in Katanga that had caused some trouble to the UN...Therefore the captain flew around the Congolese and Katangese territory instead of directly from Leopoldville to Ndola... Dag Hammarskjöld was not at a safe position during this flight. The UN had no air force support in the Congo at this time. The jet fighters provided by the Ethiopians for the UN were not allowed to enter the neighboring states.

*Prof. Alan James:*

Hammarskjöld asked London for overflying rights for the fighter aircraft which he hoped to get from Ethiopia to the UN operation in the Congo. The reason for this need was that the Katangan forces had at least one fighter, Fouga, which was causing the UN great trouble. Hence Hammarskjöld wanted to get his own aircraft. Unfortunately this was exactly the time when London was very cross with Hammarskjöld about what was going on in Katanga and therefore some delay issued. But then Britain agreed to grant the overflying rights, communicated the decision to New York, but by that time Hammarskjöld was dead.

*Dag Hammarskjöld:*

Mr President. I regret that it was necessary to call again the attention of the Security Council for the problem we are facing in the Congo. I would have hoped that through full, active and immediate cooperation of all those concerned we would by now have reached a more advanced stage in the implementation of the Security Council's resolutions than we have...And I would have hoped that it would not have come to what temporarily may appear as a deadlock requiring the consideration of the Council...I said that I would have hoped for active support from all those concerned. Such support has only partly been forthcoming. And I must note that a lack of support has been registered from quarters which I might have expected to act differently.

*Sture Linnér:*

It might not be out of focus to say that even a member of the United States government, and a very well known member at then, had personal interests in the diamond business in the Katanga...Now...That gives you perhaps an idea of the real forces that were obstructing the work of the United Nations in the Congo.

*Prof. Peter Wallensteen:*

Hammarskjöld's relation with the United States was complicated. There was this FBI affair, there was his opposition to the way Guatemala was handled and by the end of 1954 a new situation emerged which demanded his attention. This was the situation when American pilots had been held in the People's Republic of China which the United States had no diplomatic relations with. The Chinese of course refused to give them out to the Americans. There was a lot of attention on this in the United States and the issue was then given to the Secretary General probably in the expectation that he would fail but the American authorities would protect themselves. Hammarskjöld took on the challenge. He used his background as a Swedish diplomat, he used the Swedish connections with China: Sweden had recognized China. And in this way he could establish direct relationship with Chinese leadership. To the surprise of many he succeeded in making a visit in Peking at the end of 1954.

*Chinese Voice Newsreel (off)*

*Sture Linnér (off / on):*

During this visit to Peking the question of the release of the American pilot prisoners was raised and it ended in the release of all of them. In this way Hammarskjöld proved that he was not the tool of either super power, of no power at all.

The Chinese made an offer which Dag Hammarskjöld found quite generous and in which he sincerely believed: that the American families could come to China and visit their sons. This, however, was turned down by the US government which refused to issue visas for these families to go to China.

*Anders Hellberg (off / on):*

It was a flight of six to seven hours. Ten minutes past midnight Captain Hallonquist reported he was overhead Ndola and descending...

At the airport there was a welcoming party consisting of the world press, of Lord Alport, the British High Commissioner of Rhodesia and Moise Tshombe, the rebel chief.

*Dr. Conor Cruise O'Brien:*

First of all: they had no interest in preventing the plane in landing. They were there

to meet the plane and as they saw it -and as I think: correctly- Hammarskjöld's journey to meet them on that turf which was basically hostile to the UN was caving in. He was doing what they wanted him to do and what was subsequently done: making peace on terms that allowed Tshombe to resume in the Congo.

*Anders Hellberg:*

There was no tape recorder at Ndola tower as there should have been so we don't know exactly what happened between the tower and the plane and in the plane. The last contact with the tower was ten minutes past midnight... We don't know what happened next.

*Voice Dag Hammarskjöld (From his diary „Markings“:07-06-61) (Not part of the international version):*

(Trött och ensam.../

Müde und einsam.  
Müde  
bis der Verstand schmerzt.  
Taub die Finger  
bebend die Knie...

Jetzt gilt es,  
jetzt darfst du nicht versagen...)

*Anders Hellberg:*

The wreckage was found at Tuesday the 18<sup>th</sup> of September. 'Dagens Nyheter' had a correspondent in Ndola and reported in the morning of the 19<sup>th</sup> September... It was, of course, met by shock and total disbelief by the Swedish public. Dag Hammarskjöld was a very well known person, almost a Prime Minister. It was believed by the Swedish public then that the aircraft was shot down by the Katangese rebels of Mr Tshombe.

And, indeed, it was very hard to believe that the Secretary General just disappeared. The aircraft was seen over the tower and then didn't land. Lord Alport, the British High Commissioner of Rhodesia concluded that Mr. Hammarskjöld probably had gone somewhere else. And the airport manager just closed down the airport and went to bed.

Björn Virving:

At 3 o'clock in the morning two sergeants went up to the airport manager Williams who was staying at the hotel and reported that they had seen a glow in the direction where the aircraft disappeared. At that time probably most of the crew already was dead except for Sergeant Julian who was Dag Hammarskjöld's body-guard. Subsequently investigation have revealed that he probably could have survived if they had started the rescue already in the morning.

Dr. Conor Cruise O'Brien:

So what they did was, they closed down the airport and they announced that it seemed that Hammarskjöld had gone home and gone back to Leopoldville. They believed me to be with him and they believed that this would have been my advice. It would have been my advice actually but I wasn't on the plane, fortunately for me...So when it crashed, as I said, they panicked, closed down the airport, got out. This was in the middle of the night. The search didn't begin until rather late in the following morning. By the time they found the wreckage the only survivor was dying and died without being able to tell people what had happened on the plane.

Björn Virving:

They started searching in the wrong direction and not until 3 charcoal burners reported the site of the crash they started the rescue at the site. These charcoal burners had been working out in the forest during the whole night. They had seen what happened. They unanimously reported that they had seen 2 aircraft in the air: one bigger, evidently Hammarskjöld's aircraft, and a smaller one.

Dikson Bulen:

Well, before the airplane was fastly coming, yes the airplane was...like what...the airplane was...ohoo...

*Question:* Usual, normal?

No. When it stand back, went to ....it was right. When then the small airplane was following ....and we saw that the small was...fell something like a fire on the top...

*Question:* Down to the big airplane...?

Yeah...And when we saw that and the airplane was retaining back, has no power to move along...and it fell down.

Björn Virving:

Well there were actually at least 8 eye witnesses on the crash. 4 of them were charcoal burners that were located out in the forest and another 4 was white officers, police officers that saw a glow in the direction of the crash. And actually the charcoal burners tell that they have seen a smaller aircraft going up above the

bigger aircraft that obviously is Hammarskjöld's aircraft and then they catches up with it before the procedure turn. And out there are a few charcoal burners that tell that they see a smaller aircraft following the bigger aircraft all the way until it crashes.

Timothy Kankasa:

I have no doubt in my mind that we saw the plane cycle, because the place where we were living, it is even today in the airport corridor. All the planes either come and run straight or they cycle. In this case a plane cycled and then we -I say we, because I had some friends- saw a second plane which I sincerely believe, interfered with the first plane. Some minutes later there a thunderous sound which we couldn't make out it was.

Björn Virving:

Some of the African eye-witnesses were included in the Rhodesian report. But in that report they tried everything to make them unreliable and tried to disregard their statements.

Timothy Kankasa:

It was incredible that all the black witnesses were supposed to be unreliable and the white witnesses, those who gave evidence, if they gave evidence in favor of the fact that there was nothing fishy, it was pure accident, were reliable.

Sture Linnér:

What I do know is that the day the news of this reached the capital Léopoldville the Belgians arranged a series of parties to celebrate the event. They even had the cheek of inviting me and my wife to participate. Unbelievable the hostility against the UN in other words.

Björn Virving:

I can't believe it could have been an accident because there are too many eye witnesses and too many indications in the documents I have read that indicates that

it must have been some kind of interference from a third party.

Timothy Kankasa:

Big interest were involved, for ex. the federal government, for ex. mining companies at that particular time both in Sambia and Zaire. All these were interested. Perhaps big power rivalry couldn't be ruled out either. All this were, I think, which made some people not give evidence as they should have given. Perhaps some people had their interest to safeguard. People like myself and the charcoal burners had nothing to safeguard but to tell the truth.

Sture Linnér:

One may wonder who the people could have been who might have had an interest in killing the Secretary General. To that I would say, at first hand, the first thought of mine anyway goes to this peculiar, wild, reckless, moral less group of mercenaries who were paid well and who loved to kill anyway. They were proving their incarnation in other countries, in other conTranscripts, who were paid very well...If you want to probe a little bit deeper there were also strong financial external interests in the Katanga copper mines and other mineral sources, which might have found those mercenaries useful and easy tools to employ for eliminating Dag Hammarskjöld.

Claude de Kémoularia:

Quand les anciens des Nations Unies se retrouvaient on se disait: vous y croyez-vous à la mort d'Hammarskjöld, le rapport des Nations Unies? Bon: mais ça s'arrêtait là. Nous n'allions pas au-delà...Et puis, un jour il s'était trouvé qu'un journaliste de l'agence UPI, United Press International, un Français, m'a téléphoné pour me dire: dis moi, je le puis exactement: je l'ai rencontré un soir à l'Opéra. Et, nous nous sommes naturellement serrés la main, et il m'a dit: oh, figure toi, que hier est venu à UPI un type qui prétendait savoir les conditions réelles de la mort de Dag Hammarskjöld au Katanga et qui cherchait à négotier la vente de ces informations. J'étais chef du bureau, où chef adjoint du bureau, j'ai dit, c'est ce qu'il va nous raconter, nous ne sommes pas en état de le vérifier. En plus une agence de presse doit être extrêmement prudente, mais j'ai un viel ami -il pensait à moi- qui a été au cabinet de Dag Hammarskjöld, peut-être sera-t-il intéressé à recevoir ce type...Il m'a donc dit: je t'appellerais, je te donnerais son nom, et si tu m'autorises je le donnerais ton téléphone pour qu'il t'appelle et tu me dira c'est qu tu en penses si tu le vois...

*Over Voice (off):*

After several postponements the meeting took place in the evening of<sup>1</sup> Thursday<sup>2</sup> 13 February. *They told...that they were... foreign volunteers in Katanga... They don't call themselves mercenaries...The Katangese Army's main structure was constituted by these foreign volunteers. These mercenaries...were really head of the Katangese Army...They told...that there was an intimate link between...the foreign volunteers and some European personalities...*

*The great boss of the „Volontiers d'étranger“ was Lieutenant Colonel Lamouline...he was a former major in the Belgium army and was attached to the Katangese Government...The idea was to use 2 planes to meet Dag Hammarskjöld's plane...They planned to use 2 Fouga Magister bi-planes, two seaters...*

The Fouga type was CM 170 equipped with 2 machine guns and 4 rockets. The range of action was given as 1.400 km...

The 2 Fouga planes... were ordered to proceed on a night mission...

*This night of 17<sup>th</sup> September was clear, the (weather)l conditions were perfect. The 2 Fouga Magister left and went on their way to the region of Ndola...*

*In fact not the 2 Fouga Magister intercepted the plane, only one...The name of the pilot was de Beukels... de Beukels was vertically over Dag's plane, behind...he has opened...lights (and) had called (Dag Hammarskjöld's plane) ordering it to fly to Kamina...(Dag Hammarskjöld's) captain or radio operator had replied that that he must check with his passengers...The DC 6 of Dag Hammarskjöld looked as if it was hesitating but anyway continuing its manoeuvres to land...de Beukels ...turned off his light and started machine-gun fire, not in order to bring down the plane but to make the tracers visible and thus show that he meant business...some of the bullets had...hit the...tailplane, where you have the rudder...the DC 6 seemed to be wandering... the pilot of the DC 6 was trying to fight against this wandering and it is then that the plane crashed in the forest...*

(de Beukels) immediately returned to Kolwezi where he arrived at 01.05... (He) had been taken...to Kamina where the „court martial“ had been led by Delamouline together with a few representatives of „Union Minière“, somebody who de Beukels thought was a representative of the Belgian government...

M. de Kémoularia had ...related this meeting to...the Swedish ambassador...They had arranged for a Paris meeting ... M. de Kémoularia claimed

---

<sup>1</sup> Quoting from the Swedish government's report from 1993.

<sup>2</sup> Quoting from the transcript of tape recording by ambassador M. Claude de Kémoularia.

that such a meeting took place on 15 November 1974 but there has been no confirmation of this from the Swedish diplomat... There are also reports that... Prime Minister Palme (was briefed) ... on that day...

*Claude de Kémoularia (on):*

Apparemment les autorités suédoises, sans avoir fait des recherches sur place, mais se basant sur les données qu'ils ont pu obtenir, ont estimées que cela n'était pas vrais et ont donc décidées de ne pas donner suite à ce que j'ai suggéré - c'est pour savoir la vérité qui peut faire une enquête? Les Nations Unies? Elles ont fait une enquête. Il est rare de rouvrir, après tout pourquoi pas, où le gouvernement suédois

puisque celui qui est mort était le secrétaire général des Nations Unies et le plus illustre des enfants de la Suède et de l'Europe moderne...

*Nils Hansell:*

Dag Hammarskjöld loved solitude. Whenever he had time he went for long walks in Lappland and later he bought this lonely estate at the southern coast of Sweden, a few miles from Ystad and a few hundred meters from the sea...

According to his last will all his possessions in New York were brought here to Backåkra without changing the character of the house. It was plain and simple and that's how it remained...

Dag Hammarskjöld planned for a chapel on the hills near the sea, a very simple chapel without favoring any special confession, just as he had done in New York.

Because of his sudden death it was never completed and today there is a meditation place just behind the dunes...