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THE SITUATION IN THE MIDDLE EAST

Letter dated 18 June 1970 from the Permanent Representative of Israel to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

On instructions of my Government I have the honour to refer to my letters of 9 June 1970 (A/7984, S/9832 and A/7985, S/9833), concerning the irregular and biased character of the Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Population of the Occupied Territories, and in particular the fact that two of its three members, Somalia and Yugoslavia, have fully identified themselves with Arab belligerency against Israel.

On 14 June 1970 the Prime Minister of Ceylon, the third member of the Committee, made the following declaration:

"Diplomatic and other relations with Israel will be suspended until such time as the Government of Israel either conform to the resolutions of the United Nations Security Council of 22 November 1967 and subsequent dates and withdraw its armed forces from the territories of the United Arab Republic, Syria and Jordan which they occupied by force after 4 June 1967, or arrive at any solution acceptable to the Arab States concerned."

The Israel Ministry for Foreign Affairs commented on this declaration on 15 June 1970, stating, inter alia:

"We are convinced that this step will serve no positive purpose, and certainly not the cause of peace in the Middle East. Moreover, it is irreconcilable with the aspiration of the peoples for progress and co-operation amongst the nations of the world.

"The decision of the Government of Ceylon to suspend diplomatic relations with Israel shows that the new régime in Ceylon has seen fit to adopt a position of discrimination toward Israel.

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"The decision to suspend relations deviates from the accepted mutual level of relations, and gives encouragement to all the extremist factors which are rendering peace in the Middle East more distant. The step which the Government of Ceylon has taken is all the more surprising, since in other international conflicts where it has sided, from the point of view of outlook or policy, with one side to the conflict, it has not drawn any conclusion at the diplomatic level toward the other side. Therefore the Government of Ceylon is behaving in a biased fashion towards Israel.

"As for the allegation of the Government of Ceylon relating to its grounds for suspending relations, Israel has no obligation under the terms of the resolution of the Security Council or international law to alter the cease-fire lines in default of the establishment of a permanent peace. Therefore, the Ceylonese justification lacks any international basis.

"The Government of Ceylon would have done better to use her relations with the Arab States to influence them to respect the cease-fire, in accordance with the resolution of the Security Council, and to achieve an agreement between the sides on the establishment of a just and lasting peace."

This latest official expression of Ceylon's partiality in the Middle East conflict demonstrates again to what ridicule principles of the United Nations Charter are put by the Special Committee, established on the basis of discrimination, composed of three States inimical to Israel and functioning as a tool of Arab propaganda.

I have the honour to request that this letter be circulated as an official document of the General Assembly and the Security Council.

(Signed) Yosef TEKOAH
Permanent Representative of Israel
to the United Nations
