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LETTER DATED 23 AUGUST 1966 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE  
OF SYRIA ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

I have the honour, on instructions from my Government, to bring to your attention and that of the members of the Security Council the act of aggression committed by the Israel authorities on 15 August 1966.

At about 5.30 a.m. (local time) on 15 August 1966 an armoured Israel launch crossed the boundaries of the defensive area by approaching the eastern shore of Lake Tiberias and replied to the warning addressed to it by one of our shore positions by firing its automatic weapons. The fire was returned. Several other launches of the same type then rushed towards it under the protection of two Israel jet aircraft which bombed our positions. Our aircraft had to intervene to meet this unprovoked attack.

The presence of armoured launches near the eastern shore of Lake Tiberias constitutes a flagrant violation of article V, paragraph 6, of the General Armistice Agreement.

Such an act of provocation by the Israel authorities in this sensitive area, at a time when tension has been heightened by the recent instances of Israel aggression on 14 July 1966, can only be interpreted as a pretext for making another attack on our shore positions in this area.

What makes this act especially serious is that it was committed less than a month after the Israel aggression of 14 July last against Syrian territory.

The Government of the Syrian Arab Republic has spared no effort, especially since 1 May 1966, to safeguard peace in the area, being aware of its responsibilities as a Member of the United Nations.

It was for that reason that I addressed to the Security Council my two letters, S/7288 of 11 May 1966 and S/7320 of 24 May 1966, drawing the attention of the Council to Israel's aggressive intentions, which it shortly afterwards confirmed by committing its criminal action against Syrian territory on 14 July 1966.

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Moreover, the Syrian authorities have given evidence of their full co-operation with the Chief of Staff of UNTSO in his efforts to reduce tension, as the report submitted by the Secretary-General to the Security Council on 28 July 1966 (S/7434) clearly shows, whereas these efforts were being obstructed yet again by Israel.

Israel, however, true to its past marked by bloodshed and destruction, made its criminal attack of 14 July 1966, which was admitted with unparalleled arrogance by the Israel authorities and by their representative in the Council, while the Israel Chief of Staff later boasted in a broadcast from Radio Jerusalem: "We are ready to play the game again. We shall apply the rules that suit us best."

In fact, Israel, favoured and supported by the imperialist Powers which prevented its condemnation by the Council for the crime committed, is continuing its "game" with a further act of provocation, followed by another act of aggression on the eastern shore of Lake Tiberias.

In informing the Council of this explosive situation, for which Israel bears full responsibility, the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic wishes to point out that it has used all legitimate means and channels to draw the Council's attention to the repeated Israel acts of aggression in order constantly to remind it of its responsibilities.

At the same time, the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic will not refrain from exercising its right of self-defence, recognized by the Charter, both on this occasion and on any other which may arise in the future.

I should be grateful if you would have this letter circulated to the members of the Security Council as an official document.

(Signed) Georges J. TOMEH  
Ambassador  
Permanent Representative