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THE SITUATION IN THE MIDDLE EAST

Letter dated 28 May 1971 from the Permanent Representative of Syria
to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Acting upon instructions from my Government, I have the honour to state that, despite repeated complaints and pleas to Your Excellency on Israel's unlawful behaviour in the Golan Heights since June 1967, the Israeli occupying authorities never desisted from continuing their systematic policy aiming at the colonization of Arab land with intensive settlement coupled with the demolition of Syrian towns and villages and the forcible eviction of the inhabitants.

Despite numerous resolutions condemning Israeli violations of international law and norms of civilized behaviour, the occupiers have persisted in their adventurist course. Following are some samples of their sinister behaviour:

(1) The Israel Digest, American Edition, an official publication of the Israeli Government, in its issue of 30 April 1971, reported the following:

BUILDING ALLOCATION FOR GOLAN HEIGHTS

"The Housing Ministry has allocated IL50m. (50m. Israeli pounds) for building in the Golan Heights in 1971, the Ministry's Director-General, Mr. Ycsef Sharon, announced recently. The new houses would fill the needs of the present population, and allow for a 20 to 30 per cent growth. Seven new settlements will be started and three existing ones expanded, while a village center is to be established."

(2) In a special dispatch from Tel Aviv dated 18 May 1971 it is stated that:

"An auxilliary plant of Israel Aircraft Industries, which is owned by Israel's Defense Ministry, is being built on the Golan Heights, captured from Syria in the June 1967 war.

* Also issued under the symbol S/10213.

"This first construction by a military industry in an occupied territory was regarded by observers as a diplomatic signal of Israel's determination to keep the Golan Heights an integral part of Israel."

(Daily News, Wednesday, 19 May 1971)

(3) On 11 March 1971, two Israeli bulldozers razed to the ground all houses north of the military hospital in the occupied city El-Kuneitra.

(4) On 16 February 1971, the Israeli occupying authorities bulldozed all new houses at El-Kuneitra City and pulled out the doors and windows of big buildings in that city, including those of the military hospital of the Golan.

(5) On 13 December 1970, they completely bulldozed the two villages of Ain Aisha and Jwezeh.

(6) On 19 October 1970, they opened fire at 1415 local time on shepherds living east of El-Kuneitra, killing one of them. They then took away 324 sheep and 81 goats.

(7) In mid-October 1970 the Syrian delegation to the Mixed Armistice Commission learnt through the Red Cross that some students from the Syrian University had been captured by the Israeli occupying authorities. Following are their names:

- (a) Adnan Ibrahim Asaad Youssef Badran
(Department of Arabic Language - Second year)
- (b) Hamdan Ali Mahmoud Isefan
(Department of English - First year)
- (c) Naim Mohammed Rashid Farsat
(Faculty of Law - First year)
- (d) Adnan Abdul Rahman Youssef Omar
(Faculty of Business Administration - First year)

(8) On the nights of 13 and 14 August no less than twenty houses were demolished in the occupied village of El-Rafid.

(9) On 1 August 1970, the Israeli occupying authorities destroyed a large number of low cost houses east of the El-Kuneitra City and forced the inhabitants to cross to Syria.

To conclude, I should like to draw Your Excellency's attention to the fact that Israeli destructive and repressive acts in the occupied territory of the Golan are not only in contradiction to Security Council resolution 237 (1967) and

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scores of other United Nations resolutions, but they constitute a grave violation of articles 49 and 53 of the Geneva Convention for the Protection of Civilians in Time of War.

May I also request Your Excellency that the present letter be brought to the attention of both the Commission on Human Rights and of the Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Population of the Occupied Territories.

I shall be grateful if this letter is circulated as a document of the General Assembly and the Security Council.

(Signed) George J. TOMEH
Ambassador
Permanent Representative
