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THE SITUATION IN THE MIDDLE EAST

SECURITY COUNCIL  
Thirty-seventh year

Letter dated 19 March 1982 from the Permanent Representative of  
Israel to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I wish to refer to the letter from the Permanent Representative of the Syrian Arab Republic of 18 February 1982 (A/37/92-S/14876) addressed to Your Excellency.

With regard to certain individuals arrested by the Israel authorities, the Permanent Representative of Syria, not surprisingly, has failed to inform Your Excellency that the individuals referred to in his letter have been engaged for many years in inciting the population in the Golan Heights to acts of violence, hatred and subversion. Moreover, Kamal Kinge Abu-Salah, one of those mentioned in his letter, even played a prominent role in bringing about the imprisonment of many residents of the Druze village of Majdal Shams during the period of Syrian rule over the Golan Heights prior to 1967.

The other contentions of the Permanent Representative of Syria in his letter are equally distorted. Thus, contrary to his assertion, no houses have been demolished or damaged in the Golan Heights since the cessation of hostilities in the area. Similarly, no houses have been sealed, contrary to another ludicrous allegation made by the Permanent Representative of Syria.

Likewise, there is no truth whatsoever to the Syrian representative's assertion that pools were filled with earth in order to prevent shepherds from using them for their animals. On the contrary, in recent years, a number of

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\* A/37/50.

projects were completed which not only increased the water supply for farming and drinking but also enhanced the reliability of the entire water system in the Golan Heights. This includes the newly developed irrigation station near Brechat Ram, an additional drinking-water supply line to the village of Majdal Shams and a drinking-water supply line to the village of Bukaatah. These projects enhance the over-all supply of water to villagers and livestock alike, and have thus contributed to the substantial improvement in the living standards of the population since 1967.

Equally untrue is the assertion of the Permanent Representative of Syria that the marketing of agricultural produce is prevented in the Golan Heights. In actual fact, marketing remains unhampered and production has increased substantially. For instance, the area of apple groves (apples being one of the main products of the Golan Heights) has more than doubled since 1967: from 2400 dunams in 1967 to 6500 dunams last year.

Assistance to agriculture has also been stepped up. Such assistance ranges from providing choice seeds and pesticides to categorizing and marketing the produce in a productive manner. This has resulted in increasing the output of the orchards, and has, over the last three years, resulted in an annual doubling of income.

Contrary to the allegations of the Permanent Representative of Syria, no restrictions whatsoever are placed on the purchasing of agricultural equipment and machinery. As a matter of fact, the increased purchasing of agricultural equipment and machinery has been instrumental in increasing the output in agricultural produce.

In this context, it should be noted that the salaries and taxes of residents of the Golan Heights are identical to those applied in Israel. Moreover, every worker in every branch of employment is covered by National Insurance, and is entitled to medical insurance and hospitalization benefits.

Notwithstanding the claims of the Permanent Representative of Syria, no curfew has been imposed on the local inhabitants of the Golan Heights in their own villages. Certain restrictions on movement between villages were imposed in order to prevent the inciters of violence and subversion from expanding their influence. Those restrictions have since been lifted.

However, despite these measures, families from both Syria and the Golan Heights have taken part in uninterrupted, regular family meetings which take place every other week near Majdal Shams.

The contention by the Permanent Representative of Syria that students from the Golan Heights have been prevented from returning to Syrian universities is equally unfounded. This year, as in previous years, students have travelled from the Golan Heights to Syria in order to continue their studies there. Over 50 residents of the Golan Heights study at Syrian universities, and some of the students have already completed their third year of studies.

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It is pure fabrication to suggest, as has been done by the Permanent Representative of Syria in his letter, that teachers are menaced with dismissal and imprisonment. They are carrying out their teaching functions in the normal fashion.

Probably most ridiculous of all is the allegation that the leaders of the inhabitants of the Golan Heights are prohibited from meeting with representatives of international organizations. In his customary manner, the Permanent Representative of Syria has conveniently forgotten to mention the meeting which took place on 17 February 1982 between local inhabitants of the Golan Heights and a delegation of the International Labour Organisation.

It is thus patently clear that the allegations of the Permanent Representative of Syria do not bear even the slightest resemblance to reality. They do, however, fully conform to the pattern established by Syria in general and its Permanent Representative in particular with regard to any matter relating to the Arab-Israel conflict.

As is well known, Syria is a country which regards itself as being in a state of war with Israel. The Syrian letter in question must be viewed against this background. It is, in fact, no more than the product of the fertile and malevolent imagination of its author. At the same time, it constitutes yet another manifestation of the willingness of Israel's enemies to abuse the means and machinery of the United Nations in their relentless campaign of vilification against my country.

I have the honour to request that this letter be circulated as an official document of the General Assembly, under item 34 of the preliminary list, and of the Security Council.

(Signed) Yehuda Z. BLUM  
Ambassador  
Permanent Representative of Israel  
to the United Nations

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