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THE SITUATION IN THE MIDDLE EAST

SECURITY COUNCIL
Thirty-fourth year

Letter dated 26 March 1979 from the Permanent Representative
of the Syrian Arab Republic to the United Nations addressed
to the Secretary-General

Upon instructions from my Government, I have the honour to transmit herewith a message from His Excellency Mr. Abdul Halim Khaddam, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Syrian Arab Republic.

I kindly request that this message be circulated as an official document of the General Assembly, under items 24 and 25 of the preliminary list, and of the Security Council.

(Signed) Hammoud EL-CHOUFI
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

* A/34/50.

ANNEX

Message dated 26 March 1979 from the Deputy Prime Minister and
Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Syrian Arab Republic to
the Secretary-General

The Egyptian President's determination to conclude a separate peace treaty with Israel has created a situation fraught with danger to the Middle East region, and is contrary to the decisions of previous Arab summit conferences and to resolutions of the United Nations. In our view, and in the opinion of all neutral observers, the chances for establishing a just and comprehensive peace in the Middle East have been jeopardized as a result of this action.

While expressing my appreciation for the stand taken by the United Nations and its awareness of the dangers inherent in this unilateral step and of its possible effects on the situation in the Middle East, I wish to point out that these views reflect the feeling of the vast majority of the Arab States and their condemnation of the Egyptian action. Those States have called for the convening of a conference to enforce measures against the Egyptian Government, in view of its action and its deviation from the decisions agreed upon by Arab States at various Arab summits.

You will no doubt recall the way in which the United Nations, both in the General Assembly and the Security Council, dealt with the question of Palestine and the Arab occupied territories. A number of resolutions adopted by the United Nations, particularly since the 1967 aggression, lay down the basis for a comprehensive solution to the problem within the framework of the United Nations itself.

Following the continued rejection by Israel of that solution and its persistence in perpetuating the occupation of Arab territories, as well as its refusal to recognize the national inalienable rights of the Palestinian Arab people, the Egyptian régime, encouraged by and in close collaboration with the United States of America, undertook to implement a plan aiming at liquidating the problem by fragmenting it into separate solutions, outside the framework of the United Nations and in violation of its resolutions.

Those parties have now agreed on a peace treaty between Egypt and Israel which goes against the will of the international Organization and the bases for a comprehensive settlement laid down by the United Nations. In so doing, they have dealt with one aspect while ignoring the core of the problem. The proposed treaty, instead of paving the way for peace, as claimed by its authors, will in fact impede the peace process which was initiated by the United Nations towards reaching a comprehensive settlement.

The danger of this course of action becomes more apparent since it is completely outside the framework of the United Nations and its decisions, and

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since it ignores totally the Arab occupied territories and the national inalienable rights of the Palestinian people, including their right of return, national independence and sovereignty in Palestine, in accordance with the Charter and General Assembly resolution 33/28, adopted on 7 December 1978. It ignores also the provision contained in that resolution which calls once more "for the invitation of the Palestine Liberation Organization, the representative of the Palestinian people, to participate, on the basis of General Assembly resolution 3236 (XXIX), in all efforts, deliberations and conferences on the Middle East which are held under the auspices of the United Nations, on an equal footing with other parties". Furthermore, the peace treaty is in flagrant violation of General Assembly resolution 33/29, adopted on 7 December 1978, which declares that "peace is indivisible and that a just and lasting settlement of the Middle East problem must be based on a comprehensive solution, under the auspices of the United Nations, which takes into account all aspects of the Arab-Israeli conflict, in particular the attainment by the Palestinian people of all its inalienable national rights and the Israeli withdrawal from all the occupied Palestinian and other Arab territories".

As you can see, the said treaty does not establish any basis for peace in the Middle East region, nor does it safeguard the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people, which means that the ingredients of instability and conflict are still intact. These ingredients have led to the eruption of the Arab-Israeli conflict and its perpetration for over three decades. It is but natural for the Palestinian people to continue to struggle to regain its rights through every means provided for under the United Nations Charter and with the support of the Arab nations and all peace-loving people.

In addition, a part of Syrian Arab territories is still occupied by Israel. Israel continues to reject United Nations resolutions providing for complete withdrawal from these territories. As you well know, this occupation creates another important factor of instability in the region. According to the United Nations Charter, the Syrian people has the right to use all means at its disposal in order to liberate its occupied territory.

The Syrian Arab Republic is bound by the decisions of the Arab summits which explicitly stated that the duty to liberate all the occupied Arab territories and to enable the Palestinian people to regain its inalienable rights, including the right to self-determination and the right to establish its own state on its homeland, was a prerequisite to the establishment of a just and comprehensive peace. The Syrian Arab Republic wishes to confirm that the Egyptian-Israeli treaty will be a serious obstacle to such a solution. We regard the parties to the said treaty as responsible for undermining the opportunity for reaching a just and comprehensive peace, for they have legalized the occupation by Israel of Arab territories and its refusal to recognize the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people. They shall bear all the consequences resulting from a partial settlement in contradiction to United Nations resolutions and to the will of the international community.

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Realizing the imminent danger that would prevail in the Middle East as a result of the Egyptian-Israeli treaty, I find it imperative to appeal to you to work collectively with Member States to implement the United Nations resolutions and to put a stop to the current deteriorating situation in the Middle East. I believe our efforts should be combined in order to bring the problem back to the United Nations, the only possible venue for establishing a just and comprehensive peace in which all parties concerned could participate, including the representatives of the Palestinian people. We shall continue to strive towards achieving such a peace, in the interest of the peoples of the Middle East and of peace throughout the world.
