



# General Assembly

Distr.: General  
21 February 2025

Original: English

---

## Human Rights Council

### Fifty-eighth session

24 February–4 April 2025

Agenda items 2 and 7

### Annual report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and reports of the Office of the High Commissioner and the Secretary-General

### Human rights situation in Palestine and other occupied Arab territories

## Human rights in the occupied Syrian Golan

### Report of the Secretary-General\*

#### *Summary*

The present report is prepared pursuant to Human Rights Council resolution 55/31 of 5 April 2024 on human rights in the occupied Syrian Golan, in which the Council requested the Secretary-General to report to it on the matter at its fifty-eighth session.

---

\* The present report was submitted to the conference services for processing after the deadline for technical reasons beyond the control of the submitting office.



## **I. Introduction**

1. The present report is submitted pursuant to Human Rights Council resolution 55/31 of 5 April 2024, in paragraph 1 of which the Council called upon Israel, the occupying Power, to comply with the relevant resolutions of the General Assembly, the Security Council and the Human Rights Council on the occupied Syrian Golan, in particular Security Council resolution 497 (1981), in which the Security Council decided, *inter alia*, that the decision of Israel to impose its laws, jurisdiction and administration in the occupied Syrian Golan Heights was null and void and without international legal effect and demanded that Israel, the occupying Power, rescind forthwith its decision.

2. In the same resolution, the Human Rights Council, *inter alia*, called upon Israel to cease changing the physical character, demographic composition, institutional structure and legal status of the occupied Syrian Golan, emphasized that the displaced persons of the population of the occupied Syrian Golan must be allowed to return to their homes and to recover their property, and demanded that Israel, the occupying Power, immediately cease all settlement-related plans and activities in the occupied Syrian Golan. In paragraph 11 of the resolution, the Council requested the Secretary-General to bring the resolution to the attention of all Governments, the competent United Nations organs, specialized agencies, international and regional intergovernmental organizations and international humanitarian organizations, to disseminate it as widely as possible and to report on the matter to the Human Rights Council at its fifty-eighth session.

## **II. Implementation of Human Rights Council resolution 55/31**

3. On 15 November 2024, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), on behalf of the Secretary-General, addressed a note verbale to the Government of Israel, referring to Human Rights Council resolution 55/31 and requesting information on steps taken or envisaged concerning the implementation of the resolution. At the time of finalizing the present report, no reply had been received.

4. On the same day, on behalf of the Secretary-General, OHCHR addressed a note verbale to all permanent missions in Geneva to draw their attention to Human Rights Council resolution 55/31 and to request Member States to provide information on any steps taken or envisaged concerning the implementation of the relevant provisions of the resolution. The Permanent Missions of Cuba, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Oman and the Syrian Arab Republic responded to the request.

5. Also on the same day, on behalf of the Secretary-General and pursuant to Human Rights Council resolution 55/31, OHCHR addressed a communication to the competent United Nations organs, specialized agencies, international and regional intergovernmental organizations and international humanitarian organizations to bring the resolution to their attention. At the time of reporting, no submissions had been received.

## **III. Replies received**

### **A. Syrian Arab Republic**

6. On 5 December 2024, the Permanent Mission of the Syrian Arab Republic to the United Nations Office and other international organizations in Geneva addressed a note verbale to OHCHR stressing that Human Rights Council resolution 55/31, like all previous relevant Council resolutions, remained unimplemented in the light of the continuation by Israel, the occupying Power since 1967, of practices that systematically violated the human rights of the people of the occupied Syrian Golan.

7. The Syrian Arab Republic noted that such Israeli practices constituted a continuing violation of the principles of international law, the provisions of the Charter of the United Nations and relevant resolutions related to the occupied Syrian Golan adopted by the Security Council, including resolutions 237 (1967), 242 (1967) and 497 (1981), the

General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council, the Human Rights Council and the Commission on Human Rights. The Israeli practices were also a flagrant violation of the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War (Fourth Geneva Convention), which affirmed the protection of civilians in time of war, and Additional Protocol I to the Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949, and relating to the Protection of Victims of International Armed Conflicts (Protocol I).

8. The Syrian Arab Republic emphasized that violations had persisted due to the immunity provided by the United States of America to Israel, allowing it to evade accountability for its actions. The Syrian Arab Republic renewed its condemnation of the unlawful declaration by a previous Administration of the United States of America recognizing the annexation by Israel of the occupied Syrian Golan. Furthermore, the following Administration of the United States had not reviewed or rescinded that declaration, which blatantly violated relevant provisions of international law, in particular the Fourth Geneva Convention and Security Council resolution 497 (1981). In that resolution, the decision of Israel to impose its laws, jurisdiction and administration on the occupied Syrian Golan was deemed to be null and void, having no international legal effect. The declaration also contradicted General Assembly and Human Rights Council resolutions relating to the occupied Syrian Golan, including Human Rights Council resolution 49/30, in paragraph 1 of which the Council renewed its demand that Israel, the occupying Power, comply, in particular, with Security Council resolution 497 (1981), among other resolutions of United Nations organs, and rescind immediately its null-and-void decision to impose its laws and jurisdiction on the occupied Syrian Golan, which remained unimplemented.

9. The Syrian Arab Republic recalled that, in the period following the illegal declaration issued by the United States, the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries had reaffirmed, in the final document of the eighteenth summit of Heads of State and Government of the Movement, held in Baku on 25 and 26 October 2019, its principled position regarding the occupied Syrian Golan and the protection of the rights of the Syrian citizens living there. The countries of the Movement had condemned the recognition by the United States of the annexation by Israel of the occupied Syrian Golan and had called upon the international community and the Security Council to assume their responsibilities in that regard, considering that the declaration constituted a violation of international law, the Charter of the United Nations and relevant resolutions of United Nations organs, in particular Security Council resolution 497 (1981). The Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) had condemned, in March 2019, the recognition by the United States of “Israeli sovereignty” over the occupied Syrian Golan. OIC had called upon the international community and the Security Council to assume their responsibilities in that regard, emphasizing that the declaration constituted a blatant violation of international law and relevant resolutions of United Nations organs, in particular Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) and 497 (1981). OIC had affirmed that the decision of the United States did not change the legal status of the occupied Syrian Golan under international law and relevant resolutions of United Nations organs, as it remained a territory of the Syrian Arab Republic under occupation. The General Secretariat of OIC had urged all countries worldwide to respect resolutions of international legitimacy and refrain from recognizing any measures inconsistent with them in that context.

10. The Syrian Arab Republic stressed that, in a report entitled “Economic and social repercussions of the Israeli occupation on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and of the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan”,<sup>1</sup> submitted to the General Assembly at its seventy-ninth session, the Secretary-General had recalled Security Council resolution 497 (1981). In that resolution, the Security Council had decided that the decision of Israel to impose its laws, jurisdiction and administration in the occupied Syrian Golan was null and void and had no international legal effect. It was stressed in the report that the long-standing Israeli occupation of the Palestinian territory and the Syrian Golan continued to adversely affect the living conditions of the Palestinian and Syrian populations and the social and economic development of the occupied territories.

<sup>1</sup> [A/79/187-E/2024/68](#).

11. The Syrian Arab Republic noted that all Arab and Islamic States, through the resolution adopted at the Extraordinary Arab and Islamic Summit held in Saudi Arabia on 11 November 2024, had stressed the need to end the Israeli occupation of the Syrian Golan and had strongly condemned the repeated Israeli aggressions against the territory of the Syrian Arab Republic, including the targeting of civilians, the destruction of civilian buildings and infrastructure and the violation of its sovereignty. In turn, the countries of the Group of Friends in Defence of the Charter of the United Nations, in a political declaration issued at their sixth ministerial meeting, held on 27 September 2024, had affirmed the need for the withdrawal of Israel from the occupied Syrian Golan and the implementation of relevant United Nations resolutions and had condemned the repeated Israeli attacks against the territory of the Syrian Arab Republic.

12. The Syrian Arab Republic stated that the occupying Power had continued its attempts to legitimize its occupation and impose its laws on the occupied Syrian Golan through efforts to organize local council elections. However, the outright rejection of those attempts by the people of the Golan, who had boycotted the elections both as candidates and as voters, had led to their failure and had thwarted the objectives sought by the occupying Power. Since the beginning of the occupation of the Syrian Golan, the Israeli occupation authorities had persistently sought to impose Israeli identity documents on Syrians to entrench the occupation and had attempted to prevent Syrian citizens in the occupied Golan from visiting their homeland, the Syrian Arab Republic, and maintaining contact with their relatives there.

13. The Syrian Arab Republic noted that the Israeli authorities continued to engage in a series of practices aimed at consolidating their occupation of the Syrian Golan, including through the construction, expansion and confiscation of agricultural land and the expansion of settlement-related commercial activities. In particular, the Syrian Arab Republic highlighted that:

(a) The implementation of the wind farm project had continued to escalate, despite the Human Rights Council expressing its disapproval, in its resolution 55/31, of the Israeli authorities' decision to proceed with the project, citing its detrimental impact on the human rights of Syrian residents in the occupied Golan, and despite its call for an immediate halt to all related actions. That escalation was evident in the increasing number of massive wind turbines and the growing confiscation and seizure of land;

(b) Given the scale of the wind turbines, their proposed locations and the extensive land area that they would occupy, the project ranked among the largest and most hazardous globally. The turbines were set to span an estimated 6,000 dunums, causing severe health and environmental risks. Under normal circumstances, a single turbine must be located no less than 10 km away from residential areas due to the numerous health issues that it could cause, including illnesses linked to electromagnetic frequencies, concentration difficulties caused by the waves emitted and persistent ear tinnitus. Moreover, positioning the turbines in or near orchards would deepen the housing crisis in the occupied villages and critically harm the economic livelihood of Golan residents by devastating the agricultural sector. That would ultimately lead to their forced displacement from their homes and lands in the coming years, violating a broad range of human rights, including the rights to health, housing and development;

(c) Despite strong opposition from the residents of the Golan to the installation of the turbines, the Israeli authorities remained adamant about proceeding with the project, planning to erect approximately 42 turbines in the Tall al-Faras area and 30 turbines in the occupied regions of Tall Sahel and Mansurah;

(d) Since the planning stage of the project, the Syrian Arab Republic had repeatedly warned of the project's severe health and environmental risks to the residents of the occupied Syrian Golan and the grave violations of international human rights law and international humanitarian law arising from it. The continued implementation of the project clearly reflected the Israeli authorities' persistent obstinacy in pursuing a systematic, discriminatory settlement policy in the occupied Syrian Golan, relentlessly targeting its residents. That constituted a blatant violation of all relevant resolutions adopted by the various organs of the United Nations, including the General Assembly, the Security Council, the Economic and Social Council and the Human Rights Council. Among those resolutions

were Human Rights Council resolution 55/31, concerning human rights in the occupied Syrian Golan, and resolution 55/32, concerning Israeli settlements in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and the occupied Syrian Golan. In the latter resolution, the Council had demanded that the occupying Power, Israel, comply with the Fourth Geneva Convention, immediately cease all actions causing the alteration of the character, status and demographic composition of the occupied Syrian Golan and cease all settlement activities unconditionally;

(e) The illegal actions associated with the project – such as land confiscation, environmental and health damage, and the deliberate intent to displace residents of the targeted areas – constituted a flagrant violation of international law. Those principles obligated the occupying authorities to refrain from exploiting occupied territories for their own benefit in ways that harmed the interests of the local population, especially when such harm was irreversible;

(f) The continued implementation of the project, despite its disastrous consequences, and the Israeli authorities' resort to repression and intimidation to enforce it, once again demonstrated their policy of creating facts on the ground to entrench their occupation of the Syrian Golan. Those actions were aimed at solidifying the illegal annexation, altering the character of the occupied lands and inflicting irreparable damage, thereby eliminating any future prospects for achieving a just and comprehensive peace based on ending the occupation. That included the full withdrawal of Israel, in accordance with relevant Security Council resolutions, in particular resolutions 242 (1967), 338 (1973) and 497 (1981), from Palestinian territories, including East Jerusalem, and from the Syrian Golan, which it had occupied since 1967. In resolution 497 (1981), the Security Council explicitly declared the imposition by Israel of its laws, jurisdiction and administration in the occupied Syrian Golan to be null and void and without any international legal effect;

(g) In its recent concluding observations on the fourth periodic report of Israel under the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights,<sup>2</sup> the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights had expressed its concern about the situation of Syrian citizens in the occupied Syrian Golan affected by renewable energy projects and prevented from accessing, controlling and developing their natural resources;

(h) The Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Palestinian People and Other Arabs of the Occupied Territories had repeatedly expressed, in its reports, grave concern about the effects of the project on the population of the occupied Syrian Golan.

14. The Syrian Arab Republic noted with concern the targeting of the agricultural sector and the imposition of restrictions on the work of Syrian residents of the occupied Syrian Golan in agriculture, explaining that the Israeli authorities viewed agriculture as a cornerstone of their settlement project in the occupied Syrian Golan. Consequently, they continued to implement a multi-year plan that they had approved to develop and support agriculture in existing Israeli settlements in the occupied Syrian Golan. The plan was aimed at encouraging youth to join the agricultural sector by providing substantial support and assistance to settler farmers in areas such as poultry raising. Those policies were discriminatory and racist, designed to favour Israeli settlers while undermining Syrian agriculture and farming, which were central to the resilience and livelihood of Syrians in the occupied Golan. There were discriminatory practices affecting the right to work, highlighting the challenges faced by Syrian workers and employers in the occupied Syrian Golan. Those individuals experienced arbitrary and unjust treatment, particularly in the agricultural sector, with limited access to water resources and difficulties in marketing their products. Syrian workers often struggled with weak competitiveness due to the advantages granted to settlers. In addition, many were exploited in difficult labour sectors, receiving low wages and facing various fees and taxes imposed in a discriminatory manner. For example, Syrian agricultural workers were subjected to multiple taxes on their daily or permanent labour output, ranging from 15 to 35 per cent. Moreover, a 30 per cent tax was imposed on, inter alia, refrigerators used for preserving agricultural products, with the potential for future increases.

<sup>2</sup> E/C.12/ISR/CO/4.

15. The Syrian Arab Republic further noted the expansion and escalation of settlements, and the increase in their number and populations, with the Israeli authorities announcing a series of settlement plans aimed at doubling the number of Israeli settlers in the occupied Golan within five years, in line with previous measures announced and initiated by the occupying authorities. In particular, the Syrian Arab Republic highlighted that:

(a) In April 2019, plans to expand settlements in the occupied Syrian Golan had been revealed. They included the construction of 30,000 housing units, the development of new settlement cities and the transfer of 250,000 settlers to the region in order to alter its demographic composition. Among the more recent settlements was one inaugurated in June 2019, which had been named after the then President of the United States, Donald Trump. That settlement had been built on the lands of the Syrian village of Al-Qanaba'a and was an addition to the previously existing settlements. The occupation authorities had begun making arrangements to accommodate Israeli families in that settlement. The settlements committee had also announced that there would be new temporary housing to accommodate the families of the new settlers who were expected to move in;

(b) The so-called Israeli regional council for settlements continued to announce a number of settlement expansion projects in its weekly bulletin. That came in response to the increasing number of settlers. For instance, in the settlement of "Metzar" and the newly established "Trump" settlement, the use of temporary houses or caravans to accommodate settlers until they transitioned to permanent housing had gathered pace significantly. The same situation had been observed in the settlements of Odem and An'iam. In addition, the construction of service facilities was ongoing in Katzrin, Kidmat Tzvi, Nov, Kanaf, Neve Ativ and Yonatan;

(c) One of the primary objectives discussed at the Israeli regional strategic economic development conference in the occupied Syrian Golan that had taken place in 2021, in a settlement constructed on the ruins of the Syrian village of Khasfin, was the expansion of settlement projects in the occupied Syrian Golan, both physically and in terms of population, with the goal of reaching half a million settlers by 2048;

(d) Those expansionist settlement plans were accompanied by Israeli colonial policies. A key aspect of the policies was that they prevented members of the Syrian Arab population from exercising their livelihoods. That included confiscating their land, prohibiting them from building on it and besieging them in their villages and cities. Those actions restricted natural growth, stole natural resources, destroyed the environment and limited the movement of members of the Syrian Arab population, all with the aim of forcing them to leave their lands. In addition, the authorities used various pretexts to displace them forcibly, often through projects that created geographical and demographic realities supportive of settlement policies;

(e) The Israeli authorities had exerted continuing pressure on owners in occupied Syrian villages to accept ownership documents issued by the so-called Israeli Survey Registry, instead of the ownership documents registered in their native Syrian Arab Republic. In many cases, lands had been confiscated to further the Israeli plan for "Judaizing" the land by imposing alternative "Israeli documents".

16. The Syrian Arab Republic emphasized that the Israeli authorities had continued to tighten their grip on the population in the occupied Syrian Golan to prevent members of the population from building, especially in the occupied village of Majdal Shams, which had exacerbated the urban crisis in three villages extending from northern Majdal Shams to the village of Ayn Qinyah, particularly due to the Hermon Nature Reserve project. The Israeli authorities also continued to reject an expansion of the master plan for the village of Majdal Shams, which was facing a severe urban crisis. According to the Syrian Arab Republic, expanding the plan would alleviate the intensity of the urban crisis in the village.

17. The Syrian Arab Republic noted that, in its resolution 2023/34, entitled "Economic and social repercussions of the Israeli occupation on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan", the Economic and Social Council had expressed deep concern about the acceleration of settlement construction in both the Occupied Palestinian Territory and the occupied Syrian Golan. The Council had highlighted that those

actions violated international law and constituted a significant source of Israeli violations and discriminatory policies. The construction and expansion of Israeli settlements, along with the associated infrastructure, in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and in the occupied Syrian Golan were deemed to be illegal and to pose a major obstacle to economic and social development.

18. The Syrian Arab Republic condemned the looting of natural resources, highlighting that the seizure and exploitation of those resources in the occupied Syrian Golan by the occupying Power, primarily for the benefit of its settlers, continued unabated. Israeli and multinational corporations played a significant role in implementing those colonial policies. In particular, the Israeli exploitation of arable agricultural land in the occupied territories of the Syrian Golan had been accompanied by the unauthorized appropriation and misuse of water resources. The Syrian Arab Republic recalled that, in its resolution 2023/34, the Economic and Social Council had affirmed the inalienable right of members of the Arab population of the occupied Syrian Golan to all their natural and economic resources, demanding that the occupying Power refrain from exploiting, endangering or causing loss or depletion of those resources.

19. The Syrian Arab Republic noted that ongoing practices in that regard included:

(a) The confiscation of land from displaced persons, which was often justified by the claim that the owners were absent, resulting in the land being classified as State property. That included the confiscation of communal lands owned by the general population, such as those in the village of Mas'adah. In addition, land near the ceasefire line had been confiscated and mined, and further land had been seized for the construction of military camps and positions. Roads had also been built in areas far from the ceasefire line. Many lands had been fenced off under the pretext of being set aside for the Nature Protection Authority. The most recent estimates indicated that approximately 100,000 dunums of land had been affected. Furthermore, land was indirectly confiscated through procedures that involved granting agricultural loans in exchange for mortgaging property to an Israeli bank. If the loan was not repaid within a specified period, the property or land was confiscated. In the town of Jubata al-Khashab, located in the occupied Syrian Golan, dozens of dunums had been cut off from the demilitarized zone approved by the United Nations in 1974. That had been done to dig a trench towards Syrian territory, resulting in the separation of significant portions of land that had once belonged to Jubata al-Khashab;

(b) The discriminatory practice of the appropriation and sale of potable water and the refusal to allow certain non-potable water sources to be used by the people in the occupied Syrian Golan. Furthermore, the Syrian inhabitants were prohibited from drilling wells. Irrigation water was stored, and Syrian farmers were provided with limited quantities at prices significantly higher than those charged to the settlers.

20. The Syrian Arab Republic noted that the occupying authorities did not provide hospitalization benefits to Syrian Arab workers who had sustained injuries while working, as those workers were not covered by compensation laws. In addition, they were pressured to join Israeli trade unions.

21. The Syrian Arab Republic drew attention to the report of the Director-General of the International Labour Organization (ILO), issued in May 2024, on the situation of workers of the occupied Arab territories. In the report, the Director-General highlighted the ongoing discriminatory practices by Israel against Syrians in the occupied Syrian Golan, particularly in the labour sector. It was noted in the report that social justice could not be achieved under occupation and that the annual ILO mission to assess the situation of workers of the occupied Arab territories had not been accommodated by the Israeli authorities.

22. The Syrian Arab Republic provided further information on the right to health, highlighting that the occupying Power continued to exploit health needs to pressure Syrian citizens. For instance, it included the statistical data of Syrian citizens from the occupied Syrian Golan in its own records, forced Syrian citizens to rely on its own health systems and compelled them to pay exorbitant health insurance contributions deducted from the salaries of workers and employees. The Syrian Arab Republic emphasized that the occupying Power had disregarded repeated requests to establish integrated health centres in each of the villages within the occupied Syrian Golan. In addition, demands for the construction of a 30-bed

hospital capable of performing minor surgeries had been ignored. Moreover, Syrian doctors in the occupied Syrian Golan – 95 per cent of whom had received their education at Syrian universities – faced restrictions on their ability to attend practical events and seminars held outside the region due to movement and travel limitations imposed on them. Children in the occupied Syrian Golan also endured psychological consequences stemming from the ongoing occupation and its discriminatory practices. Those included the imposition of foreign educational curricula and the disruption of social ties with their relatives in the homeland.

23. The Syrian Arab Republic noted that discriminatory practices had been evident during the response to the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic, leading to a reduced supply of medical materials in clinics located in the occupied villages. Despite the work of the medical staff at those clinics, the shortage of medical supplies and equipment had worsened the suffering of Syrians and increased the number of infections. In addition, the occupying Power had failed to provide detailed statistical data on Syrian citizens in the occupied Syrian Golan in the context of the pandemic response, which had made it difficult to assess and address their needs effectively.

24. The Syrian Arab Republic recalled that the World Health Assembly annually adopted a decision urging the World Health Organization (WHO) to support the Syrian population in the occupied Syrian Golan through health-related technical assistance. However, due to the policies of the Israeli authorities, which prevented WHO teams from accessing the occupied Syrian Golan for a field assessment of the health situation, WHO remained unable to fulfil that part of its mandate.

25. The Syrian Arab Republic expressed concerns regarding cultural rights, noting that the Israeli authorities continued to implement policies aimed at erasing Arab cultural identity. That included imposing Israeli educational curricula and requiring education to be conducted in Hebrew instead of Arabic, with the aim of severing the ties of Syrian Arab students to their heritage and perpetuating discrimination and oppression. That strategy was intended to undermine the national identity of the Syrian Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan. The Syrian Arab Republic noted that the Israeli authorities had deliberately appointed unqualified teachers and introduced Israeli programmes to further control the educational process and influence the national allegiance of students to the Syrian homeland. They also maintained a policy that deprived Syrian youth of the right to pursue university education, including access to Syrian universities, largely through restrictions on freedom of movement and travel bans. In addition, Syrian students who travelled to Europe for their studies faced pressure upon their return to the occupied Syrian Golan. They were coerced into accepting Israeli citizenship, with the threat of being prevented from returning to Europe to continue their education if they refused.

26. The Syrian Arab Republic reaffirmed that the colonial policies and practices of the Israeli authorities constituted flagrant violations of the civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights of Syrians in the occupied Syrian Golan. They included violations of the right to work, the right to education, the right to own property, the right to movement, the right to preserve cultural and historical heritage and the right to enjoy the highest attainable standard of health. The racist and discriminatory practices of the occupation authorities, along with the restrictions and siege imposed on Syrians in the occupied Syrian Golan, posed a serious threat to their future existence, growth and development.

27. The Syrian Arab Republic called upon the international community not to remain silent on the violations of the Israeli authorities, which were of a systematic nature and aimed at perpetuating their occupation of the Syrian Golan, including by changing its demographic, geographical, cultural, security and political character, to continue to monitor the Israeli authorities' flagrant violations of international law, and to compel them to cease their illegal settlement practices and repressive measures against Syrians in the occupied Syrian Golan and to end their occupation of the occupied Syrian Golan.

28. The Syrian Arab Republic reiterated its call to the United Nations and its Member States to exert pressure on the occupying Power to end its occupation of the Syrian Golan and to withdraw from the entire territory thereof to the lines of 4 June 1967, and not to recognize any legal status arising from the Israeli authorities' violations of the peremptory norms of international law.



29. The Syrian Arab Republic urged Member States to avoid providing any assistance to the Israeli authorities, especially in commercial and tourism activities, that would contribute to the ongoing occupation of the Syrian Golan.

30. The Syrian Arab Republic requested that the Secretary-General and OHCHR consider the inclusion of all business enterprises and commercial companies involved in activities that had directly or indirectly, even if inadvertently, supported the construction and expansion of settlements in the occupied Syrian Golan, in violation of international law and Security Council resolutions, including resolution 497 (1981). The activities of those settlement companies must be covered in any follow-up report on the matter.

31. The Syrian Arab Republic had called for the opening of the Qunaytirah crossing, the sole route connecting the people of the occupied Syrian Golan to their homeland. That crossing was crucial, as it would allow for family visits, the transportation of crops and the enrolment of students in Syrian universities and would address other humanitarian needs. The current closure of the crossing prevented those essential activities and represented a violation of the fundamental rights of people in the Golan.

32. The Syrian Arab Republic condemned the ongoing aggression by Israel against its territory, in disregard of Security Council resolutions and international law. The attacks on civilians and infrastructure disrupted United Nations humanitarian efforts in the Syrian Arab Republic, violating international law and threatening regional and global peace and security. They also violated the 1974 Agreement on Disengagement between Israeli and Syrian Forces and various Security Council resolutions, including resolutions 242 (1967), 338 (1973) and 497 (1981). The provisions of the Fourth Geneva Convention applied to the Syrian territory occupied by Israel since 1967.

33. Lastly, the Syrian Arab Republic emphasized that the international community's failure to address the long-standing violations of international law by the occupying Power had contributed to the prolonged occupation and had amplified the crimes of the occupying Power. That situation had enabled the ongoing bloodshed of the Palestinian people. Those actions formed part of the criminal record of the 75-year-old settler-colonial occupation regime, which was rooted in apartheid and genocide. The situation had been facilitated by the support of certain countries for the actions of the Israeli military against the Palestinian people, as well as their use of the media to distort history and misrepresent facts. Such efforts were aimed at suffocating and displacing the Palestinian people and justifying those crimes.

## **B. Cuba**

34. On 28 November 2024, the Permanent Mission of Cuba to the United Nations and other international organizations in Geneva addressed a note verbale to OHCHR in which it reiterated its rejection of the illegal Israeli military occupation of the Syrian Golan, which continued despite the sustained demand of the international community to cease the de facto imposition of Israeli laws, jurisdiction and administration over that territory.

35. Cuba stated that the international community had repeatedly expressed grave concern over the suffering of Syrian citizens in the occupied Syrian Golan, due to systematic and ongoing human rights violations committed by the Israeli occupying forces since 1967. Similarly, it had demanded an end to the occupation of the Syrian Golan Heights.

36. Cuba strongly condemned the continued air strikes carried out by Israeli forces against residential areas in Damascus, in blatant violation of international law and international humanitarian law. It denounced the air strike carried out on 14 November 2024 by Israeli forces targeting the Mazzah residential neighbourhood in Damascus, where diplomatic missions, including that of Cuba, and United Nations offices were located.

37. Cuba considered those actions to be heinous crimes that had caused dozens of civilian casualties, including of women and children, and destroyed residential buildings. Cuba stated that those actions were part of the aggressive policy of Israel against Middle Eastern nations, as evidenced by the genocide against the Palestinian people in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank, the attacks in Lebanon, and other aggressions on Syrian territories.

38. Cuba emphasized that the Charter of the United Nations stipulated that Members of the Organization must refrain from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any State in their international relations and that the occupation by Israel of the Syrian Golan, ongoing for over 50 years, in systematic and continuous violation of the human rights of its people, was contrary to the principles of the Charter and international law.

39. Cuba noted its rejection of practices and conduct aimed at controlling and seizing the natural resources of the occupied Syrian Golan by Israel, in flagrant violation of General Assembly and Security Council resolutions on the permanent sovereignty of the Syrian Arab population over its natural resources in the occupied Syrian Golan. Cuba stated that any present or future actions or measures by Israel that intended to modify the legal status, physical character and demographic composition of the occupied Syrian Golan and its institutional structure, as well as measures to implement Israeli jurisdiction and administration in the illegally occupied territory, must be considered null and void, and without legal effect.

40. Cuba emphasized that Israel must cease practices that contravened the full enjoyment of human rights for the Syrian Arab residents of the occupied Syrian Golan, including refraining from the use of repressive measures. Cuba noted that foreign occupation, policies of expansion and aggression, racial discrimination, the creation of settlements, the imposition of *faits accomplis* and the annexation by force of territory, as had occurred in the occupied Syrian Golan, were practices that violated international instruments and norms and had a negative impact on the human rights of the Syrian Arab population of the Golan.

41. Cuba stated that Israel must withdraw immediately from the entire territory of the occupied Syrian Golan to the lines of 4 June 1967, in compliance with Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973), and that it must renounce its intention to annex the Golan, which was a territory under the sovereignty of the Syrian Arab Republic. Cuba emphasized that the continued illegal occupation and *de facto* annexation of the Syrian Golan by Israel constituted an obstacle to the achievement of a just, comprehensive and lasting peace in the region.

42. Cuba condemned the violations of international humanitarian law committed by Israel against Syrian detainees in the occupied Syrian Golan and reiterated its concern that those practices persisted. It also reiterated its concern over the prevalence of inhumane conditions in Israeli prisons.

43. Cuba expressed its strongest condemnation of the declaration by the Government of the United States recognizing the occupied Syrian Golan as a territory of Israel. It considered that declaration to constitute a serious and flagrant violation of the Charter of the United Nations, international law and relevant resolutions adopted by the Security Council, in particular resolution 497 (1981). It noted that that recognition violated the legitimate interests of the Syrian people and the Arab and Islamic nations, with serious consequences for stability and security in the Middle East.

44. Cuba noted that it would continue to support the legitimate claim of the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic to recover the Golan Heights and the demand for the total and unconditional withdrawal of Israel from the illegally occupied territory.

### **C. Iran (Islamic Republic of)**

45. On 6 December 2024, the Permanent Mission of the Islamic Republic of Iran to the United Nations and other international organizations in Geneva addressed a note verbale to OHCHR, asserting that the occupied Syrian Golan was an integral part of the Syrian Arab Republic and that the ongoing occupation had led to significant human rights violations against the Syrian Arab residents living there. Israel had suppressed those residents through illegal settlements, the imposition of its laws and the exploitation of natural resources, which jeopardized their livelihoods. The Islamic Republic of Iran condemned the illegitimate measures taken by Israel and highlighted the systematic human rights violations occurring in the Golan Heights. The deteriorating humanitarian situation and continuous violations of

international law by Israel had largely been ignored by international organizations. The refusal by Israel to adhere to Security Council and General Assembly resolutions underscored the inability of the United Nations to end the occupation, a situation made worse by support from the United States, providing a shield of immunity and hindering accountability.

46. The Islamic Republic of Iran explained that, in line with the implementation of Human Rights Council resolution 55/31 of 5 April 2024, it had:

(a) Condemned the measures taken by Israel to extend its jurisdiction and laws to the occupied Syrian Golan;

(b) Condemned all legislative and administrative measures and actions taken or to be taken by Israel that were intended to alter the demographic and legal status of the occupied Syrian Golan. Those actions constituted a flagrant violation of international law and of the Fourth Geneva Convention and had no legal effect;

(c) Emphasized that the occupying Power must cease changing the physical character, demographic composition, institutional structure and legal status of the occupied Syrian Golan; and called for the displaced persons of the population in the occupied Syrian Golan to be allowed to return to their homes and recover their property;

(d) Condemned Israel for the imposition of its citizenship and Israeli identity cards on Syrian nationals residing in the occupied Syrian Golan; and called for the cessation of repressive measures against them and the discontinuation of all practices hindering the enjoyment of their fundamental rights, including their civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights;

(e) Objected to any position held by States or organizations that recognized “Israeli sovereignty” over the occupied Syrian Golan;

(f) Emphasized that Israel, as an occupying force, lacked sovereignty over any land in the Syrian Arab Republic or any other Arab countries. The Golan Heights were unequivocally deemed to be an occupied segment of Syrian territory, in accordance with resolutions of United Nations organs, including the Security Council. The sole viable solution to the issue was the termination of the occupation;

(g) Noted with regret that the actions of Israel, as an occupying Power, reflected its indifference to ending the occupation of the Syrian Golan Heights and other dominions of the Arab lands and its efforts to strengthen that occupation and benefit from new regional and international developments;

(h) Declared that the Golan Heights had always been considered to be part of Syrian territory and that the occupation by Israel since June 1967 did not change the historical and legal status of the Golan Heights;

(i) Strongly condemned the prolonged occupation by Israel of the Syrian Golan and the numerous breaches by Israel of the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Syrian Arab Republic, including attacks on civilians and civilian infrastructure, in particular Damascus International Airport;

(j) Emphasized the necessity of preserving the civilian nature of the occupied Syrian Golan and banning any military activity by Israel;

(k) Condemned the discriminatory practices against the Syrian citizens in the occupied Syrian Golan, particularly with regard to housing, work, cultural rights and the right to education, among other basic human rights;

(l) Called for the prevention of the establishment of any facility that would allow Israel to explore for oil and gas in the occupied Syrian Golan;

(m) Condemned the ongoing depletion and plundering of natural resources as a flagrant violation of the principles of the permanent sovereignty of the people under foreign occupation over their natural resources;

(n) Condemned the new settlement plan of Israel, involving the construction of wind turbines on land belonging to the people of the occupied Syrian Golan, alongside the

aggressive confiscation of land, which not only represented a clear violation of resolutions of United Nations organs but also contradicted the principles of international law;

(o) Called for the prevention of any air-, sea- or ground-based military aggression against the Syrian Arab Republic launched from the territory of the occupied Syrian Golan;

(p) Categorically and strongly condemned the repeated attacks launched by Israel from the Golan region against the territory of the Syrian Arab Republic and the use of the Golan airspace to increase the range of missile and air attack against civilian targets and civilian infrastructure located on Syrian soil.

47. The Islamic Republic of Iran firmly asserted its position in support of the return of the Golan Heights to the Syrian Arab Republic. It invited all States and international organizations to avoid any double standards and unequivocally condemn the repeated acts of aggression by Israel. In addition, it called for condemnation of any policy that allowed the continuation of the occupation, which was leading to persistent violations of human rights by Israel, while also stressing the importance of holding Israel accountable for its actions. Those violations encompassed rights such as self-determination, health, sanitation, safe drinking water, housing, freedom of assembly and freedom of expression.

#### **D. Oman**

48. On 6 December 2024, the Permanent Mission of Oman to the United Nations and other international organizations in Geneva addressed a note verbale to OHCHR expressing its deep concern about the worsening situation in the occupied Syrian Golan. Oman considered that that deterioration was due to Israel, the occupying Power, having failed to comply with relevant resolutions of international legitimacy, including the resolution under review, none of the requirements of which Israel had met. Oman reaffirmed the illegitimacy of the current measures and the realities that Israel was attempting to impose.

49. Oman called upon the Secretary-General, supported by available international mechanisms, to supplement reporting and briefings with concrete proposals that addressed the worsening situation in the occupied Syrian Golan and to proceed with developing practical measures aimed at achieving the objectives outlined in Human Rights Council resolution 55/31 of 5 April 2024, entitled “Human Rights in the occupied Syrian Golan”.

50. Oman also called upon the Secretary-General to persist with efforts to safeguard the rights of the Syrian people in the occupied Syrian Golan and leverage all available legal and procedural mechanisms to protect the territorial integrity of the Syrian Arab Republic. Israel, as the occupying Power, must be compelled to fulfil its obligations in line with relevant resolutions of international legitimacy, notably Security Council resolutions 242 (1967), 338 (1973) and 497 (1981). Oman stressed the need to strengthen the international consensus rejecting the actions of Israel that contravened international law and reaffirming their complete illegitimacy, with particular emphasis on the imposition by Israel of its laws and jurisdiction on the occupied Syrian Golan. That included condemning illegal practices by Israel, such as discrimination, land confiscation and settlement expansion.

---