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Further report on the status of the cease-fire  
in the Middle East

The following report on the situation on 1 January 1974 in the Egypt-Israel sector is based on information received from the headquarters of UNEF and UNTSO:

1. General assessment of the situation

During the period under review, there has been a noticeable decrease in the number of firing incidents observed, in particular in the Austrian battalion area west and south of Ismailia. Over-all the situation remains relatively calm.

A tense atmosphere exists in the areas of the Irish battalion position 502 (AMR 393-046) and the Swedish battalion position 1121 (AMR 390-065), east of Kantara, caused by movements forward of Egyptian forces in that area. Headquarters has requested Egyptian authorities in Cairo to withdraw their forces involved in the movements forward. There has been an increase in air activity during the period under review; however, such activity appears to be restricted to aerial reconnaissance. There were five exchanges of fire and four cases of firing, one each by Egyptian and Israel forces and two by unidentified forces.

2. Reports on ground activity (firing)

(a) Austrian battalion:

Position 103 (AMR 139-580): 1/ Between 1658 2/ and 1715 exchange of machine-gun fire by Egyptian and Israel forces. It was not possible to determine which party commenced or first ceased firing owing to distance.

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1/ AMR: Approximate map references. It should be noted that while UNTSO has been using the Egyptian Red Grid system, UNEF, for technical reasons, has had to adopt temporarily the Universal Traverse Mercator system. UNEF will change to the Egyptian Red Grid system as soon as the required maps are available.

2/ All times GMT.

(b) Irish battalion:

Position 502 (AMR 393-046): Between 1010 and 1012 and between 1100 and 1130 artillery fire by Israel forces.

(c) Swedish battalion:

(i) Position 1109 (AMR 732-872): At 0935 exchange of machine-gun fire, which ceased immediately, by Egyptian and Israel forces. It was not possible to determine which party commenced or first ceased firing.

(ii) Position 1106 (AMR 273-811): At 0936 machine-gun and mortar fire by Egyptian forces and immediately afterwards machine-gun and mortar fire by Israel forces (exchange of fire). At 0954 both parties ceased firing. Between 1822 and 2233 sporadic small-arms fire by unidentified forces (identification not possible owing to darkness and distance).

(iii) Position 1102 (AMR 268-813): Between 0942 and 0954 anti-tank gun fire by Egyptian forces.

(iv) Position 1105 (AMR 282-808): Between 1139 and 1142 machine-gun fire by Egyptian forces and machine-gun and anti-tank gun fire by Israel forces (exchange of fire). It was not possible to determine which party commenced or first ceased firing owing to nature of terrain. Between 2207 and 2209 small-arms fire by unidentified force (identification not possible owing to darkness).

(d) UNTSO Patrols:

(i) Patrol 27 (AMR 7380-8550): Between 0405 and 0420 machine-gun fire by Israel forces.

(ii) Patrol 14 (AMR 7225-8540): Between 1742 and 1748 exchange of machine-gun fire by Egyptian and Israel forces. It was not possible to determine which party commenced or first ceased firing owing to distance of incident from position of observation.

3. Reports on ground activity (movement forward)

(a) Swedish battalion:

Position 1121 (AMR 390-065): At 0915 Egyptian forces moved forward approximately 200 metres to a position at AMR 386-035. Land mines were seen to be placed in the area. Company commanders of the Irish battalion and the Swedish battalion immediately contacted Egyptian authorities in Ismailia requesting that their forces be withdrawn. Israel authorities were also contacted and requested not to open fire on Egyptian forces. The Egyptian authorities agreed to withdraw their forces by 1230. However, troops were still in position at 1557. There was no firing by Israel forces. A further meeting was arranged with Egyptian authorities for 0700 on 2 January.

(b) UNTSO Patrol 13 (AMR 7520-8768):

Between 1658 and 1700 two Egyptian forces personnel moved forward of their forward defended localities and were first observed at AMR 7540-8760 and last observed at AMR 7530-8765.

4. Reports on air activity

(a) Austrian battalion:

Position 105 (AMR 265-379): Between 0818 and 0819 two unidentified jet aircraft flying east to west, turning south then east, were observed east of the position.

(b) Finnish battalion:

(i) Position 213 (AMR 537-183): Between 0703 and 0704 one unidentified jet aircraft, flying north to south, was first observed north of the position and last observed south of the position.

(ii) Position 211 (AMR 586-254): Between 0707 and 0708 two unidentified jet aircraft, flying north to south, were first observed north of the position and last observed south of the position.

(iii) Headquarters: Between 0832 and 0833 two unidentified jet aircraft, flying north to south, were first observed north of the position and last observed south of the position. Between 0840 and 0841, two Israel forces jet aircraft, flying east to west, were first observed east of Suez and last observed west of Suez.

**With regard to the unidentified aircraft mentioned above, their types and nationality could not be determined owing to high altitude and limited visibility.**

5. Complaints by the parties

(a) Complaints have been received from Israel alleging that:

On 30 December:

(i) During the night of 29-30 December the Egyptian forces moved forward and took up positions in the area between the forward defended localities south-west of Suez City.

(ii) At 0158 Egyptian forces opened fire at Kilometre 143 on the Suez Canal.

(iii) At 0400 Egyptian forces opened fire in Suez City.

(iv) At 0600 Egyptian forces opened fire 9 kilometres south-west of Fayid.

- (v) At 0645 Egyptian forces opened fire 7 kilometres west of Suez.
- (vi) At 0735 and at 0838 Egyptian forces opened fire 13 kilometres south-west of Ismailia.
- (vii) At 0800 Egyptian forces opened heavy artillery fire 21 kilometres west of Fayid.
- (viii) At 0843 Egyptian forces opened fire at Kilometre 136 on the Suez Canal.
- (ix) At 0955 Egyptian forces opened fire four kilometres east of Checkpoint Delta.
- (x) At 1000 Egyptian forces opened heavy artillery fire eight kilometres south-east of El Ballah.
- (xi) At 1113 Egyptian forces opened fire east of Kilometre 143 on the Suez Canal.
- (xii) At 1210 Egyptian forces opened fire nine kilometres west-south-west of Ismailia.
- (xiii) At 1300 Egyptian forces opened heavy artillery fire 16 kilometres west of Suez.
- (xiv) At 1315 Egyptian forces opened fire five kilometres south-east of Kilometre 101 on the Suez-Cairo Road.
- (xv) At 1400 Egyptian forces opened heavy artillery fire 13 kilometres south-west of Ismailia.
- (xvi) At 1500 Egyptian forces opened fire south of Abu Suweir.
- (xvii) At 1525 Egyptian forces opened artillery fire south-east of Nifisha.
- (xviii) At 1530 Egyptian forces opened fire east of the Small Bitter Lake.
- (xix) At 1530 Egyptian forces opened mortar fire east of Ismailia.
- (xx) At 1540 Egyptian forces opened fire south of Ismailia.
- (xxi) At 1542 and 1605 Egyptian helicopters overflew the region of Ayun Musa.
- (xxii) At 1630 Egyptian forces moved forward three kilometres east of Suez.

(xxiii) At 1850 Egyptian forces opened fire east of El Ballah.

On 31 December:

(xxiv) During the night of 30-31 December Egyptian forces moved forward and took up positions 17 kilometres south-east of Port Fouad.

(xxv) At 0230 Egyptian forces opened fire south-east of Kilometre 101 on the Suez-Cairo Road.

(xxvi) At 0350 Egyptian forces opened fire east of the Small Bitter Lake.

(xxvii) At 0600 Egyptian forces opened fire in the area of former OP Orange.

(xxviii) At 0800 Egyptian forces opened fire east of El Ballah.

(xxix) At 0814 Egyptian forces opened fire east of Kilometre 61 on the Suez Canal.

(xxx) At 0950 Egyptian forces opened fire south of Suez City.

(xxxi) At 1105 Egyptian forces opened fire 3.5 kilometres east of Adabiya.

(xxxii) At 1450 Egyptian forces opened fire five kilometres north-east of Suez City.

(xxxiii) Between 1510 and 1550 Egyptian forces opened fire in the city of Suez.

**(xxxiv) At 1605 Egyptian forces opened fire 12 kilometres south-east of Fayid.**

(xxxv) At 1710 Egyptian forces opened fire east of Kilometre 62 on the Suez Canal.

(xxxvi) At 1735 Egyptian forces opened fire eight kilometres east of Kilometre 62 on the Suez Canal.

(xxxvii) Between 1955 and 2010 Egyptian forces opened fire east of Kilometre 62 on the Suez Canal.

(xxxviii) At 2002 Egyptian forces opened fire 13 kilometres south-east of Fayid.

(xxxix) At 2010 Egyptian forces opened fire south-east of Mifisha.

Complaint (vii) was confirmed by United Nations observation (see S/11057/Add. , para. 1 (a)). The other complaints were not confirmed by United Nations observation. However, complaints (xxxii) and (xxxiii) may be related to the incidents reported in S/11057/Add. , para. 1 (b).

(b) Complaints have been received from Egypt alleging that on 1 January:

(i) Between 0814 and 0819 Israel forces aircraft overflew area from Bitter Lakes to Suchna (far-south of Suez).

(ii) Between 0935 and 0955 Israel forces opened artillery, mortar and small-arms fire in area four kilometres south-west of Ismailia.

(iii) Between 1015 and 1145 Israel forces opened mortar fire in area 18 kilometres north-east of Ismailia.

(iv) Between 1250 and 1255 Israel forces opened fire in area 15 kilometres east of Ismailia.

(v) At 1500 Israel forces opened small-arms fire in area four kilometres south of Ismailia.

(vi) Between 1510 and 1530 Israel forces opened mortar fire 15 kilometres east to south-east of Ismailia.

Complaint (iii) was confirmed by United Nations observation although there is a discrepancy in timing. The other complaints were not confirmed by United Nations observation. However, complaint (ii) may be related to the incident reported in paragraph 2 (d) above.

#### **6. Firing on or close to United Nations personnel and installations**

##### **Swedish battalion:**

(a) Position 1106 (AMP 13-811): Between 0935 and 0954 mortar rounds by Israel forces impacted within 15 metres of position (paragraph 2 (d) above refers). Position tent and personnel sleeping bags sustained superficial damage. No casualties.

A protest has been lodged by UNEF with the Israel forces authorities.

