

UNITED NATIONS
SECURITY
COUNCIL



Distr.
GENERAL

S/11057/Add.208
7 January 1974

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

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

The following report on the situation on 6 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:

The over-all situation remained relatively quiet, with only three exchanges of fire. Of the firing incidents not involving exchanges of fire, nine were initiated by Egyptian forces, two by Israel forces and nine by unidentified forces.

The situation in the Finnish battalion and Austrian battalion areas was particularly quiet on 6 January, with only two minor firing incidents by unidentified forces.

2. Reports on ground activity (firings):

(a) Irish battalion:

(i) Position 501 (AMR 443-186): 1/ Between 0720 2/ and 0752 sporadic machine-gun fire by Israel forces. Between 2016 and 2030 sporadic machine-gun fire by Egyptian forces.

(ii) Position 502 (AMR 393-046): Between 0811 and 0820 between 0855 and 0905, between 0950 and 1015, between 1250 and 1254 and between 2015 and 2030 mortar fire, all by unidentified forces. Identification was not possible owing to distance from the position and in the last incident owing to darkness. Between 1015 and 1016 machine-gun fire by unidentified forces. Identification was not possible owing to distance from the position. Between 1018 and 1025 sporadic mortar fire by Israel forces.

1/ AMR: appropriate map reference. 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.

Between 1145 and 1212 machine-gun fire by Egyptian and Israel forces (exchange of fire; it was not possible to determine which party commenced or ceased firing first owing to distance from the position). Between 2010 and 2030 sporadic machine-gun fire by Egyptian forces and, immediately afterwards, sporadic machine-gun fire by Israel forces (exchange of fire). Sporadic fire continued until 2115, at which time both parties ceased firing.

(b) Swedish battalion:

(i) Position 1104 (AMR 168-795): Between 0000 and 0130, between 1715 and 1725, between 1752 and 1758, and between 2310 and 2320 sporadic machine-gun fire by Egyptian forces.

(ii) Position 1102 (AMR 268-813): Between 0810 and 0815 artillery fire and between 2105 and 2115 sporadic machine-gun fire by Egyptian forces.

(iii) Position 1121 (AMR 390-065): Between 1953 and 2000 artillery fire by Egyptian and Israel forces (exchange of fire; it was not possible to determine which party commenced or ceased firing first owing to darkness).

(c) UNTSO patrols:

(i) Patrol 13 (AMR 7490-8840): Between 0855 and 1013 sporadic artillery fire by unidentified forces. Identification was not possible owing to distance from patrol.

(ii) Patrol 24 (AMR 7350-8204): Between 1730 and 1735 sporadic machine-gun fire by unidentified forces. Identification was not possible owing to darkness.

(iii) Patrol 18 (AMR 7380-8210): Between 1731 and 1745 machine-gun and small-arms fire by unidentified forces. Identification was not possible owing to darkness.

3. Reports on ground activity (movement forward):

(a) Finnish battalion: Position 227 (AMR 549-166): At 0850 approximately 20 Egyptian soldiers advanced 30 metres forward of existing Egyptian forward defended localities. Negotiations initiated by Finnish battalion resulted in the Egyptian soldiers withdrawing to their original positions at 0932.

(b) Swedish battalion:

(i) Position 1123 (AMR 426-195): At 0920 two Egyptian soldiers advanced 100 metres forward of existing Egyptian forward defended localities to observe Israel forward defended localities. At 0930 both soldiers returned to their forward defended localities. The Swedish battalion has protested to local Egyptian forces commander.

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(ii) Position 1121: With reference to S/11057/Add.195, para. 3 (a), the situation remained unchanged.

4. Complaints by the parties:

(a) Complaints have been received from Egypt alleging that on 6 January:

(i) Between 0800 and 0900 eight Israel forces jet aircraft overflew the area between Suez and the Bitter Lakes.

(ii) Between 0810 and 0825 Israel forces opened small-arms fire in an area 3 kilometres south of Abu Suweir.

(iii) Between 0815 and 0820 Israel forces opened machine-gun fire in an area 10 kilometres south-east of El Qantara.

(iv) At 0940 Israel forces opened fire in an area 10 kilometres south-east of El Ballah.

(v) At 1040 Israel forces opened artillery fire in an area 10 kilometres south-east of El Ballah.

(vi) At 1200 Israel forces opened small-arms fire in an area 6 kilometres east of El Ballah.

Complaint (vi) was not confirmed by United Nations observation but may be related to the incident reported in paragraph 2 (a), (ii) above. The other complaints were not confirmed by United Nations observation.

(b) Complaints have been received from Israel alleging that on 6 January:

(i) At 0100 Egyptian forces opened fire east of the Little Bitter Lake.

(ii) At 0300 Egyptian forces opened fire east of El Ballah Island.

(iii) At 0305 Egyptian forces opened fire south-west of Fayid (AMR 7410-8450).

(iv) At 0710 Egyptian forces moved forward south of Abu Suweir (AMR 7220-8730).

(v) At 0800 Egyptian forces opened fire east of kilometre 136 of the Suez Canal.

(vi) At 0823 Egyptian forces moved forward in Suez city.

(vii) At 0830 Egyptian forces opened heavy artillery fire east of El Ballah Island.

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(viii) At 0915 and 1010 Egyptian forces opened heavy artillery fire east of kilometre 62 of the Suez Canal.

(ix) At 1045 Egyptian forces opened fire south of Abu Suweir.

Complaint (vi) was not confirmed by United Nations observation but may be related to the incident reported in paragraph 3 (a) above. The other complaints were not confirmed by United Nations observation.

5. Other matters:

Swedish battalion: The local Egyptian forces commander has advised the Swedish battalion that the road leading south from the junction at UTM Grid 3760-3829 would be closed daily at 1000, except for emergency use. This is the only access road to three of the Swedish battalion positions (Positions 1107, 1108 and 1110). At 1150 a Swedish battalion vehicle proceeding to Position 1107 was stopped. Negotiations by Swedish battalion resulted in the vehicle being allowed to proceed. Representations were made to Egyptian liaison staff to solve the problem.
