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THE SITUATION IN THE MIDDLE EAST

SECURITY COUNCIL  
Twenty-eighth year

Letter dated 21 November 1973 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 draw Your Excellency's attention to the following:

1. On 19 November 1973, Ambassador Jacob Doron, the Israeli representative to the Special Political Committee, declared in his major statement before the Committee during the debate on item 45, entitled "Report of the Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Population of the Occupied Territories":

"... As is well known, the Government of Israel considers that this Convention /the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War of 12 August 1949/ 1/ does not apply in the present case for a number of legal reasons and reserves its position on the applicability of the Convention in the administered areas. Notwithstanding this reservation, which has been consistently made since 1967 and has been officially explained to those competent on the matter, Israel continues taking the provisions of the Convention as its standard.

"This has been confirmed many times by the ICRC as a practical matter, the theoretical and legal position remaining reserved by Israel."

2. The Jerusalem Post, an Israeli newspaper, reported on 13 November 1973, under the heading "Plan afoot to double Golan population":

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1/ United Nations, Treaty Series, vol. 75, No. 973, p. 287.

"KUNEITRA. - A plan to double the population of the Golan Heights by establishing a regional centre and four new settlements is to be discussed this week by the Ministerial Committee for Settlement in the Administered Territories, headed by Minister-without-portfolio Israel Galili.

"The director of the Zionist Organization's Settlement Department, Yehiel Admoni, said yesterday that the plan would cost about If 250 m. to implement and should be completed by 1975.

"In addition to the Golan settlement plan, the Committee will also discuss the problem of water supplies for existing settlements on the Heights and ways of preventing any future evacuation of the civilian population." (emphasis added)

It is the view of my Government that such statements, which reveal Israeli determination to continue its illegal policies and practices in Arab territories occupied since 5 June 1967, constitute a flagrant violation of the Charter of the United Nations, of international law and, in particular, of the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War of 12 August 1949.

I respectfully request that the text of this letter be circulated as an official document of both the Security Council and the General Assembly.

(Signed) Haissam KELANI  
Ambassador  
Permanent Representative of the  
Syrian Arab Republic to the  
United Nations