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LETTER DATED 13 AUGUST 1971 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF SYRIA
TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

On instructions from my Government, I have the honour to bring to your attention the following.

The Members of the United Nations have been informed through United Nations Press Release IB/2643 of 15 July 1971 that the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development granted Israel a loan of \$30 million "to expand and improve the country's highway network" and "to provide additional capacity for its expansion". This news must be shocking not only to the three Member States, Syria, the United Arab Republic and Jordan, parts of whose territories under Israeli occupation exceed three times the area of Israel, but to every United Nations Member which has a minimum of respect for the integrity of the United Nations and its specialized agencies.

This is the second loan to Israel in a little over one year; for on 4 June 1970, under the pressure of the American President of the World Bank, Mr. McNamara, and in the face of the opposition of a large number of Member States, Israel was given \$25 million, which we protested in our letter to you of 5 June 1970 (A/7983, S/9823).

This loan becomes all the more shocking when contrasted against the very ugly record of Israel in the United Nations. To set the record clear, the number of resolutions on the Arab-Israeli conflict and Palestine question adopted by the General Assembly, the principal organs of the United Nations and specialized

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agencies - UNESCO and WHO - from the first cease-fire decision of 6 June 1967 up till now totals 53 resolutions and decisions. These resolutions and decisions have, on the one hand, affirmed every Arab right and confirmed, on the other, Israel's utter disregard of these rights and its deliberate ignoring of every principle of the Charter. A record which makes Israel a candidate to be expelled from the world Organization in accordance with Article 6 of the Charter. Specifically, of the 53 resolutions referred to above, 14 "Condemn" or "Strongly condemn" or "Specifically condemn Israel" for "flagrant violations" of the Charter including attacks on the Arab countries, its refusal to apply the Fourth Geneva Convention and its violations of human rights. Nineteen of those 53 resolutions either "Deplore" or "Deeply deplore" or "Strongly deplore" or "Note with dismay the refusal of Israel" to co-operate in implementing specific resolutions or "urgently call upon the Government of Israel". To give one instance, resolution 9 (XXVII) adopted by the Commission on Human Rights on 15 March 1971 stated inter alia:

"Strongly deplores Israel's policies in the occupied territories aimed at placing the population in a general state of repression, fear and deprivation, and particularly deplores:

(a) Requisition of hospitals and their transformation into lice stations;

(b) Abrogation of the national laws and interference with judicial system;

(c) Refusal to allow the textbooks approved by the Director-General of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization to be used in the occupied territories, and the insistence on forcing Palestinian children an alien system of education;

"Calls upon Israel once again to comply fully with its obligations under the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War of 12 August 1949;

"Again calls upon Israel to enable forthwith the refugees and displaced persons to return to their homes;

"Once again calls upon Israel to heed and to implement the many resolutions adopted by the United Nations organs and the specialized agencies for the safeguarding of human rights in the occupied territories;

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"Reaffirms that all measures taken by Israel to colonize the occupied territories, including occupied Jerusalem, are completely null and void".

One wonders whether the President of the World Bank, Mr. McNamara, a hero of the barbaric Viet-Nam war, as now proved by the Pentagon Papers, knows of Israel's record. It would therefore be advisable if Mr. McNamara could acquaint himself with only the four yearly reports of the Commissioner-General of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency from 1967 to 1970. In the legal section of those reports, he will find that Israel has driven old refugees from their camps, damaged agencies and staff property, caused death and injury of staff members, requisitioned hospitals and schools for military training and demolished to the ground refugees' buildings - all of which constitute war crimes and crimes against humanity.

The claims by the United Nations Relief and Works Agency against Israel for losses and damage now standing, are well over one and a quarter million dollars.

Mr. McNamara might as well acquaint himself with two reports of the International Committee of the Red Cross published in the August and September 1970 issues (No. 113 and 114) of the International Review of the Red Cross. The Sunday Times of London, on 11 October 1970, stated under the title "Israel Guilty of Geneva Breach, Says Red Cross" by Philip Knightley and Alan Macgregor:

"The International Committee of the Red Cross in an outspoken report released last week accuses Israel of blowing up Arab towns, villages, camps, and houses in its occupied territories in defiance of the Geneva Conventions.

"The report lists the following villages and camps which (according to the former inhabitants in interviews with ICRC delegates) have been destroyed: Yalou, Beit Nuba, and Imwas, in the Latroun area; Surif, Beit Awwa, Beit Mirsem, and Il Shuyoukh, in the Hebron Area; and Jiflik, Agarich, and Museirat-Jordan Valley."

Moreover, Israel with its majority population of European colonists and settlers took by force more than two billion dollars worth of Arab Palestine property and real estate in 1948. From then on, in addition to this source of illegally acquired and permanent assets, billions of American dollars poured into it to

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consolidate the work of usurpation and advance the settlers to a super status, a status of privileged social, economic and technological development in relation to that of the region as a whole.

Surely Israel is being well rewarded for such criminal acts by loans from the World Bank "to expand and improve the country's highway network". This consolidation from the United States to Israel's expansionism and colonialism has continued unabated to the present time. The second loan by the World Bank is part of the same United States pattern. Even from 1967, after Israel's aggressive third war against the Arabs, America's assistance to Israel, including the most sophisticated armaments and tax deductible money, has run into the billions in spite of the severe indictments of Israel by the United Nations and specialized agencies.

I shall be grateful if this letter is circulated as a document of the General Assembly and the Security Council. I would specially be grateful if a copy of it is brought to the attention of the President of the World Bank.

(Signed) George J. TOMEH
Ambassador
Permanent Representative
