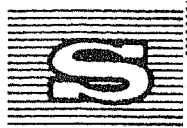


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LETTER DATED 27 JANUARY 1967 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF ISRAEL
ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

I have the honour to refer to my letter to you of 25 January 1967 (S/7698) and to report on yet another case of road-mining in the vicinity of the Syrian border.

This morning, at 0905 hours, an Israel patrol discovered a landmine freshly laid in the track near the armistice demarcation line, at a spot about 600 metres westward of the Syrian military position of Tel-Azaziyat. The footprints of one person led in the direction of the military position. The mine was of the British Mark II type which has been regularly used in such incidents.

This is the eighth case of mine-laying in that particular locality on the Syrian border, from last September (see attached sketch map).

What makes the latest case even graver is that it has taken place after the commencement of the extraordinary session of the Israel-Syria Mixed Armistice Commission. My Government has made clear that continued acts of violence, terrorism and sabotage along the border are totally incompatible with the conduct of talks aiming at "a practical arrangement on problems of cultivation on the ADL (armistice demarcation line) in order to secure a peaceful atmosphere on the ADL for farmers and civilians in the area".

It will be recalled that on 13-14 January, a sabotage and mining outrage occurred at the Israel village of Dishon near the northern border, in which two players in a soccer game were injured, a spectator killed, and a water installation damaged. The tracks from the scene of the outrage led in the direction of the Syrian border (see document S/7684). It was indicated at the time from Arab sources that one of the raiding party had been injured and left behind. Yesterday, during work in an orchard belonging to the village, a dead and partly-buried body was found which appears to be that of the missing saboteur. The physical evidence indicates that he was killed by the accidental explosion of

a mine he was laying in a hole dug in the ground next to the body. One arm was shattered and the other severed from the body. The man was dressed in khaki with a military belt and rubber-soled commando boots of the identical type used by Syrian commando units. Nearby were lying a military haversack, two hand-grenades and an empty ammunition box with an inscription indicating that it was of Syrian army manufacture. The Mixed Armistice Commission was informed of the discovery.

The attitude of the Syrian Government regarding terrorist raids into Israel is a repudiation of Syrian responsibilities under the armistice agreement. In the letter from the Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister of Syria to the Secretary-General, dated 23 January (S/7696), it is stated that "We do not accept to be guardians of Israel for the protection of its security" (page 5). This statement reaffirms that made by the Syrian representative before the Security Council on 25 July 1966. In attempting to justify the raids into Israel territory, he said that - "Nor can Syria conceive its duty as being guardian or protector over what the Israelis consider to be their frontiers". Similarly, the Prime Minister of Syria declared on 10 October 1966, that "we are not the guardians of Israel's security". In the Security Council debates which took place between July and November 1966, this Syrian claim of non-responsibility was categorically rejected by the great majority of Council members. They insisted that Syria could not shed obligations it had solemnly undertaken by its signature to the Israel-Syria General Armistice Agreement of 1949. In these statements, particular stress was laid on article III (3) of the agreement, laying down that "no warlike act or act of hostility shall be conducted from territory controlled by one of the Parties to this Agreement against the other Party or against civilians in territory under control of that Party".

It may also be recalled that in the draft resolution submitted to the Security Council on 3 November by Argentina, Japan, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nigeria and Uganda (S/7575/Rev.1), and supported by ten members of the Council, the first two operative paragraphs read:

"1. Deplores the incidents which have been the subject of this debate, as well as the loss of human life and casualties caused by them;

"2. Invites the Government of Syria to strengthen its measures for preventing incidents that constitute a violation of the General Armistice Agreement;"

It was clear from the context of the debate, and from the negative reaction to the draft resolution from the Syrian representative, that the second operative paragraph implied a rejection of the Syrian claim of non-responsibility for sabotage raids conducted from Syrian territory into Israel.

It is most disturbing that in his recent letter to the Secretary-General, the Syrian Foreign Minister should again repeat the same inadmissible claim. As was made abundantly clear in the relevant Security Council debates, that attitude cannot be reconciled with Syria's express obligations under the Armistice Agreement.

Such a position is not only totally unacceptable in principle, but is dangerous and sinister when reaffirmed while new acts of sabotage and terrorism are actually being perpetrated on Israel territory, by persons infiltrating across the border.

I am instructed to put on record the extreme gravity which my Government attaches to these repeated attacks, and to the attitude of the Syrian Government concerning them. These acts and policies must inevitably create fresh tension along the border and endanger any prospect of maintaining peace and quiet in the area.

I have the honour to request that this letter be circulated among the members of the Security Council as a Council document.

Please accept, etc.

(Signed) Michael COMAY
Permanent Representative

* MINE-LAYING INCIDENTS IN VICINITY OF SYRIAN
MILITARY POSITION OF TEL-AZAZIYAT
SEPTEMBER 1966 - JANUARY 1967.

