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LETTER DATED 20 FEBRUARY 1967 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE
OF SYRIA ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

I have the honour, on instructions from my Government, to refer to my letter addressed to Your Excellency on 8 February 1967 (S/7725) transmitting the text of a statement by Mr. Levi Eshkol to the Israeli Army weekly - Bamahane. The first two paragraphs of that statement read:

"Tranquillity along our frontiers is of greater concern to us than ISMAC's efforts - fruitless, for the time being - to distribute cultivated lands in the demilitarized zone."

"If this tranquillity is not maintained, we shall act with arms and methods of our choosing."

Subsequent to this statement the following two incidents took place:

On 13 February 1967, at about 1500 hours local time, an Israeli armoured car stationed at a point whose approximate map reference (MR) is 212/550 - 294/500, and supported by Israeli regular soldiers stationed near the approximate points (MR) 212/900 - 294/000 of the northern demilitarized zone, opened fire from machine-guns in the direction of Arab farmers peacefully cultivating their lands at the approximate points (MR) 213/300 - 294/450 of the same region.

Firing continued until 1600 hours local time. Consequently, the Syrian authorities filed a complaint on the incident with the Syrian-Israeli Mixed Armistice Commission.

Nevertheless, at about 1028 hours local time the following day, 14 February 1967, an Israeli armoured car stationed at the same point as the previous day, opened fire from machine-guns in the direction of Arab farmers cultivating in the same site as the day before. The Syrian side submitted another complaint to the Chief of the Israel-Syria Mixed Armistice Commission, requesting that an immediate investigation be carried out on the two incidents and that the two complaints be included on the agenda of the forthcoming meeting of the Commission.

Both incidents were clear acts of provocation committed by the Israeli Military Forces, whose very existence in the demilitarized zone is a violation of the General Armistice Agreement.

Coming as they did after the belligerent statement of Mr. Levi Eshkol, they were but manifestations of Israel's continued aggressive intentions against Syria. In fact, provocations such as those mentioned in this letter are committed by Israel, while Israel attributes alleged incidents to Syria, all falsely advanced. The mischievous Israeli purpose is clear: to hamper and paralyse the work of the Israel-Syria Mixed Armistice Commission as Israel did since 1951, and to make fruitless, its efforts to distribute cultivated lands in the demilitarized zone since they have occupied militarily the major parts of the demilitarized zones, and driven the Syrian peasants out.

I sincerely hope that this destructive and by now traditional Israeli stand will not escape the attention of the members of the Security Council.

I would be grateful if the text of this letter could be circulated to the members of the Security Council as an official document.

Please accept, etc.

(Signed) George J. TOMEH
Ambassador
Permanent Representative
