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NOTE OF 8 MAY 1967 FROM THE SECRETARY-GENERAL
TO THE SECURITY COUNCIL

I wish to inform the Security Council that I have sent on 8 May 1967 the following message to General Odd Bull, Chief of Staff of the United Nations Truce Supervision Organization in Palestine:

"1. I have taken careful note of the reports on your untiring efforts to bring about a resumption of the 80th emergency and extraordinary meeting of the Israel-Syrian Mixed Armistice Commission. In this regard, I have given particular attention to your conclusion that, following the serious incidents of 7 April 1967 and as a result of the fighting that took place then, the gap between the positions of the parties on the resumption of the ISMAC meeting has widened and consequently it is not possible for the time being to expect any fruitful convening of such a meeting.

This adverse development is most disturbing. You have done everything that reasonably could be done to bring the two parties together again in the meeting. It is indicative of the extreme difficulty of the situation with which UNTSO must deal that it has proved impossible to bring the two parties to a discussion of the agenda item on cultivation which they had both approved in advance. It is, I fear, all too evident that, until an understanding is reached with the two parties on practical arrangements on cultivation problems along the Armistice Demarcation Line between Israel and Syria, the situation in that sector will continue to be extremely tense and unstable and could easily erupt again as it did last month.

2. I strongly endorse your appeal to both parties, as set forth in your letters to them of 4 May 1967, to exercise the utmost restraint, to observe scrupulously the unconditional cease-fire and to make use of the ISMAC machinery in order to resolve any differences which may arise between them. I also approve and support your intention to continue, in the light of the responsibilities entrusted to UNTSO by the Israel-Syria General Armistice Agreement and by the

relevant Security Council resolutions, to exert every possible effort to help maintain an atmosphere of quiet by averting incidents between the parties.

Although, unfortunately, the MAC meeting cannot now be resumed, the interests of peace in the area dictate nevertheless that the effort to achieve an ad hoc understanding on cultivation in the areas of difficulty be not abandoned. It seems to me, therefore, that now you should initiate, as soon as possible, separate discussions with each of the parties with a view to achieving an understanding on practical arrangements for cultivation problems along the Armistice Demarcation Line. I know that this will impose an additional burden upon you, but in the prevailing circumstances there seems to be no helpful alternative. In the course of the new discussions which you will now undertake, you may well find it advisable and helpful, at an appropriate stage, to put before the parties for their consideration your own ideas about what could be a reasonable, just and practical cultivation arrangement. You would be fully entitled to do this in the proper discharge of the responsibilities given to you by the General Armistice Agreement. You, of course, will be in best position to judge both the substance and the timing of such a step. When this is done, it should be made clear, naturally, that the practical arrangements aimed at would in no way prejudice the rights, claims and positions of either party. It should also be made clear to the parties that the separate discussions are to be undertaken only so long as the 80th emergency and extraordinary meeting of ISMAC remains in abeyance and until it can be convened again. It should be emphasized that we still expect and will press for the resumption of this meeting.

I consider it advisable to inform the Security Council of this message to you and accordingly it will be circulated.

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