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NOTE

Symbols of United Nations documents are composed of capital letters combined with figures. Mention of such a symbol indicates a reference to a United Nations document.

Documents of the Security Council (symbol S/. . .) are normally published in quarterly *Supplements of the Official Records of the Security Council*. The date of the document indicates the supplement in which it appears or in which information about it is given.

The resolutions of the Security Council, numbered in accordance with a system adopted in 1964, are published in yearly volumes of *Resolutions and Decisions of the Security Council*. The new system, which has been applied retroactively to resolutions adopted before 1 January 1965, became fully operative on that date.

FOURTEEN HUNDRED AND FORTY-EIGHTH MEETING

Held in New York on Sunday, 8 September 1968, at 9 p.m.

President: Mr. G. IGNATIEFF (Canada).

Present: The representatives of the following States: Algeria, Brazil, Canada, China, Denmark, Ethiopia, France, Hungary, India, Pakistan, Paraguay, Senegal, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and United States of America.

Provisional agenda (S/Agenda/1448/Rev.1)

1. Adoption of the agenda.

2. The situation in the Middle East:

Letter dated 2 September 1968 from the Acting Permanent Representative of Israel addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/8794);

Letter dated 8 September 1968 from the Permanent Representative of Israel addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/8805);

Letter dated 8 September 1968 from the Permanent Representative of the United Arab Republic addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/8806).

Statement by the President

1. The PRESIDENT: I wish to apologize to the members of the Council for the short notice at which this meeting of the Council has been convened. Early this afternoon I received a request from the Permanent Representative of Israel for the immediate resumption of the meeting of the Security Council adjourned on 5 September 1968. Confirmation of that request is contained in document S/8805 dated 8 September 1968, which has been distributed to members. I immediately began consultations with members for the meeting this evening. In the meantime, I received a request from the Permanent Representative of the United Arab Republic for an urgent meeting of the Council. That request is contained in document S/8806 dated 8 September 1968, which has also been distributed to the members of the Council.

Adoption of the agenda

2. The PRESIDENT: I call on the representative of Algeria on a point of order.

3. Mr. AZZOUT (Algeria) (*translated from French*): The Security Council is meeting this evening as a matter of urgency to consider the new situation arising from the incidents which have occurred today, 8 September, in the Suez Canal area. This is a new item included in the

Council's agenda at the request of the United Arab Republic (S/8806).

4. The PRESIDENT: In reply to the representative of Algeria, in ordering the agenda for tonight we have followed the precedent of prior situations: namely, that we have kept the item under the general heading of "The situation in the Middle East" and have added the new item to which the representative of Algeria has referred, the letter dated 8 September from the Permanent Representative of the United Arab Republic addressed to the President of the Security Council.

5. I call on the representative of the Soviet Union on a point of order.

6. Mr. MALIK (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (*translated from Russian*): The representative of Algeria was quite right in pointing out that the previous letter from Israel had no connexion with the incident in question. In accordance with the previous letter from Israel the Security Council was convened, the parties were heard and the members of the Council expressed their opinions and arranged for consultations. The permanent members of the Security Council held talks, and so did the non-permanent members of the Security Council. Now, today, an entirely different question has urgently arisen. You, Sir, as President of the Security Council, have received a letter from the United Arab Republic [S/8806] and a letter from Israel [S/8805]. You have called today a meeting of the Council on this question. But what has the letter of 2 September [S/8794] to do with this? Doubts naturally arise as to why that letter has been included in the present agenda.

7. We all understand very well that the problem of the Middle East is linked up with many other questions. Beginning as far back as last year, since the time when the aggression began and Arab territory was seized by Israeli troops, various questions have been discussed many times, and each of them, when it arose, was discussed independently. For this reason doubts naturally arise as to why it was necessary to fit the letter of 2 September into the present agenda, since the Security Council has been convened in connexion with a new question.

8. The PRESIDENT: In answer to the representative of the Soviet Union I would explain that the Presidency was guided by rule 10 of the provisional rules of procedure, which states that:

"Any item of the agenda of a meeting of the Security Council, consideration of which has not been completed

at that meeting, shall, unless the Security Council otherwise decides, automatically be included in the agenda of the next meeting.”

The letter which I received from the representative of Israel, contained in document S/8805, specifically referred to the resumption of the discussion, and, as I say, I followed both the procedure laid down in the provisional rules of procedure and the practice of the Security Council, in setting out the agenda which is before us. If the representative of the Soviet Union would like to make a formal motion regarding the way in which he would like to have this agenda ordered I can consult the Council on that. But I have only done what I believed to be normal under the provisional rules of procedure, and I refer particularly to rule 10.

9. Mr. MALIK (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (*translated from Russian*): I only wish to draw attention to the fact that we have met today on another urgent question and not on the one in respect of which we reached agreement on how to proceed with our work further.

10. The PRESIDENT: I have taken note of the remark of the representative of the Soviet Union. Unless there are further remarks, I shall take it that the agenda is adopted.

The agenda was adopted.

The situation in the Middle East

Letter dated 2 September 1968 from the Acting Permanent Representative of Israel addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/8794);

Letter dated 8 September 1968 from the Permanent Representative of Israel addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/8805);

Letter dated 8 September 1968 from the Permanent Representative of the United Arab Republic addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/8806)

11. The PRESIDENT: In accordance with the decision previously taken by the Council, I propose now, with the consent of the Council, to invite the representatives of Israel and the United Arab Republic to participate in the discussion without the right to vote.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Y. Tekoah (Israel) and Mr. M. A. El Kony (United Arab Republic) took places at the Council table.

12. The PRESIDENT: The Security Council will now continue its examination of the question before it, contained in the three letters referred to in the agenda.

13. Before calling on the first speaker on my list, I understand that the Secretary-General wishes to make a statement and I now call on him.

14. The SECRETARY-GENERAL: In three brief cable messages in the course of this afternoon the Chief of Staff of UNTSO, General Odd Bull, has informed me of the

heavy and prolonged exchange of fire along the Suez Canal during the day of 8 September, that is today. The report from the Chief of Staff on the firing exchange was received by me only at 8.58 local time tonight. This is understandable since the Chief of Staff compiles his reports to me on the basis of the reports which he receives from the military observers in the field; in this case there would be quite a number of field reports from the observation posts on both sides of the canal. Throughout most of today the observers have had to concentrate on efforts to stop the firing by arranging a cease-fire that would hold. Only then could attention be given to reporting.

15. The first of the three short messages which I received from the Chief of Staff this afternoon reads as follows:

“Heavy exchange of fire along almost all the canal started at 1332 hours GMT. As reported by the Ismailia control centre, weapons used are artillery, mortar, tanks, machine-guns, recoilless and small arms. Cease-fire proposed for 1450 hours GMT and agreed to by both parties. However, sporadic fire still going on at 1512 hours GMT in OP Echo and OP Hotel area.”

Since several references are made in General Bull's reports to the term “OP”—observation posts—I should like to call the attention of the Council to the fact that the locations of the various United Nations observation posts are already given in documents S/8053/Add.3 and Add.4 dated 31 October and 1 December 1967.

16. The second message which I received from General Bull this afternoon reads as follows:

“Heavy exchange of fire recommenced at 1535 hours GMT. New cease-fire proposed for 1630 hours GMT.”

17. The third message which I received reads as follows:

“Exchange of fire in canal area has ceased and since 1650 hours GMT all OP's have nothing to report.”

18. I immediately asked General Bull to expedite to the extent possible the transmission of his report on this latest breach of the Security Council's cease-fire demand. In view of the fact that no messages about further firing have been received from General Bull, I think it is safe to conclude that the cease-fire arranged by the United Nations observers has been holding since it became effective at 1650 hours GMT on Sunday, 8 September.

19. The latest report just received—at 8.58 p.m. local time—is being processed and will be circulated in English and French tomorrow morning,¹ but in the meantime, for the benefit of the members of the Council I shall now read it out. It was sent to me by General Odd Bull from Jerusalem at 2305 hours GMT on 8 September and reads as follows:

“1. Observation post Lima reported at 1306 hours Z (GMT), explosions observed on east side of the canal in the OP Gold/OP Red area. Again at 1308 hours Z, explosions observed in the same area.

¹ Subsequently circulated as document A/7930/Add.78.

"2. OP's Red and Gold reported that explosions were seen at 1308 hours Z on both sides of the canal about one kilometre south of OP Red.

"3. At 1311 hours Z, OP Lima reported heavy explosion observed on west side opposite area OP Gold and OP Red. At 1314 hours Z, OP Lima reported heavy explosion observed on east side close to OP Red, and 1317 hours Z, OP Lima reported heavy explosion observed in OP Gold and OP Red area. OP Lima reports confirmed by OP's Red and Gold.

"4. Between 1308 hours Z and 1317 hours Z, fire died down to resume with intensity at 1329 hours Z.

"5. At 1325 hours Z, OP Pink reported Israel Defence Forces initiated fire.

"6. At 1332 hours Z, OP Mike reported fire initiated by United Arab Republic. Fire returned by IDF at 1336 hours Z. Artillery, mortars, tanks, heavy machine-guns and light machine-guns used. OP Gold reported United Arab Republic initiated fire at 1332 hours Z.

"7. At 1436 hours Z, OP Copper reported fire initiated by United Arab Republic. At 1332 hours Z, OP Blue reported initiation of fire by United Arab Republic. At 1343 hours Z, OP Kantara reported fire initiated by United Arab Republic. At 1342 hours Z, OP Silver reported fire initiated by United Arab Republic. At 1345 hours Z, OP Yellow reported fire initiated by United Arab Republic.

"8. At 1335 hours Z, OP Hotel reported hearing firing. At the same time OP Lima reported exchange of fire in OP Red Area.

"9. At 1440 hours Z, fire was returned in OP Copper area, at 1343 hours Z in OP Silver area and immediately in other OP areas.

"10. First cease-fire time was proposed at 1355 hours Z for 1450 hours Z. Accepted by Senior Israel representative at 1405 hours Z and by Senior United Arab Republic liaison officer at 1418 hours Z. This first cease-fire was not effective.

"11. At 1350 hours Z, OP Echo reported firing by IDF with artillery and mortars. At 1355 hours Z, OP Juliet reported artillery, mortar and tank fire from both sides.

"12. Due to damage to Kantara control centre, communications message from headquarters UNTSO to Kantara control centre were then relayed by Ismailia control centre.

"13. At 1411 hours Z, all OPs on west side of canal reported shooting from both sides of canal with artillery, tanks and machine-guns.

"14. From 1435 hours Z to 1452 hours Z, all OPs on west side of canal reported heavy firing from both sides with artillery, mortars, tanks, heavy machine-guns and light machine-guns.

"15. As firing continued in most areas a new cease-fire time was proposed for 1630 hours Z. At 1541 hours Z, Ismailia control centre informed Kantara control centre that according to information from UNTSO headquarters, IDF liaison officer accepted cease-fire time of 1630 hours Z. At 1607 hours Z, Senior United Arab Republic liaison officer accepted cease-fire time at 1630 hours Z. Firing continued in most areas. Israel Defence Forces ceased firing at or soon after 1630 hours Z, United Arab Republic finally ceased fire at 1705 hours Z.

"16. Cease-fires as follows:

| | <i>Israel Defence Forces</i> | <i>United Arab Republic</i> |
|------------------|------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| OP Copper area: | 1630 hours Z | 1705 hours Z |
| OP Kantara area: | 1650 hours Z | 1650 hours Z |
| OP Yellow area: | 1630 hours Z | 1647 hours Z |
| OP Silver area: | 1625 hours Z | 1630 hours Z |
| OP Pink area: | 1607 hours Z | 1630 hours Z |
| OP Gold area: | 1640 hours Z | 1646 hours Z |
| OP Red area: | 1652 hours Z | 1652 hours Z |
| OP Blue area: | 1636 hours Z | 1650 hours Z |

"17. During the incident, weapons used were small arms, light machine-guns, heavy machine-guns, tanks, mortars, artillery from both sides. Observation post Pink reported ground-to-ground missiles used by IDF. Kantara control centre heard three rounds that sounded like ground-to-ground missiles used by IDF.

"18. *Casualties:* Major E. T. F. Flyger, United Nations military observer, Argentina, was very slightly wounded at OP Red. Wound caused by wooden splinters from door. Israel Defence Forces liaison officer advised eight IDF soldiers killed and seventeen wounded, and two civilians wounded, Kantara.

"19. *Damage:* East side: Kantara control centre reported antenna damage, electric power line cut, water truck damaged and windows broken at Kantara control centre headquarters. OP Silver: Two caravans burnt out. Caravans damaged at OP's Gold and Red. Slight damage to jeeps, OP Kantara; OP Yellow light damage. West side: Severe damage caused to Ismailia control centre headquarters and some damage to United Nations residences. Full report of damage to follow."

That is the end of the report up to this moment.

20. The PRESIDENT: I recognize the representative of the Soviet Union on a point of order.

21. Mr. MALIK (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (*translated from Russian*): It is not on a point of order that I should like to speak, but I should like to put a question to the Secretary-General regarding the documents which he has read out.

22. The PRESIDENT: I have been requested to ask the Secretary-General whether he might like to give any clarification of the report he has just submitted. Would the Secretary-General wish to reply to questions put to him at this stage?

23. The SECRETARY-GENERAL: I do not think I am in a position to elaborate on the report which I received this afternoon from General Odd Bull. For the moment I am in a position to submit the report as it is. I do not think I should attempt to clarify any aspect of the report.
24. Mr. MALIK (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (*translated from Russian*): I do not mean that the Secretary-General should comment on and explain the substance of the documents or communications. But, taking into account the fact that we have no document before us and have only listened to everything, the question naturally occurs to me whether anything is said in this text about the explosion by the Israeli side of a mine which Israeli field engineers, as is stated in the letter from the Israeli representative [*S/8805*], detonated at 1 p.m. Is anything said about this explosion in the text of these documents, in General Bull's report? This question is of great importance because it was following this explosion that the exchange of fire took place. Without the text this is difficult to determine. Is there no possibility of clarifying whether in the text of the documents received from General Bull there is any mention of the explosion by the Israeli side, by the Israeli command, of a mine which, as a matter of fact, was the beginning of the exchange of fire?
25. The PRESIDENT: Does the Secretary-General wish to reply to that?
26. The SECRETARY-GENERAL: Mr. President, I have nothing to add to what I have just read. Early in the afternoon, as I reported to the Council, I received three short reports from General Odd Bull and at 8.58 p.m. I received a long report which I have just read out. I did not receive any other report today.
27. The PRESIDENT: The reports will be distributed as documents at the same time as the record of this meeting of the Council, for perusal in detail, and we shall, of course, also have the statements of the parties who have asked to speak. The long report which the Secretary-General has just read out will be circulated as a Security Council document.¹
28. The first speaker on my list is the representative of Israel, on whom I now call.
29. Mr. TEKOAH (Israel): I regret that it was necessary to inconvenience members of the Security Council in requesting this urgent meeting at such short notice. Egyptian attacks in violation of the cease-fire have assumed, in the course of the day, such dimensions that an immediate convocation of the Security Council became essential.
30. The report we have just heard from the Secretary-General emphasizes the gravity of these developments and the United Arab Republic's responsibility for repeatedly initiating fire throughout the afternoon. Indeed, the United Arab Republic was first to attack and last to cease fire.
31. Today, at 1300 hours local time, Israeli forces in the Suez Canal sector discovered an anti-vehicle mine laid in a track on the east bank of the canal approximately ten kilometres north of Port Tawfiq. In the afternoon, at approximately 1500 hours, the mine was detonated by Israeli sappers. The explosions of this detonation were reported by the United Nations military observers in General Bull's report. Some minutes afterwards, United Arab Republic military positions opened fire on those sappers and on other Israeli forces in the area. At approximately 1510 hours, Egyptian artillery fire was opened along an extended sector from Kantara to the Port Tawfiq area. Fire was returned.
32. The United Nations military observers proposed a cease-fire for 1650 hours. Israel agreed and stopped firing, but as the United Arab Republic forces continued shelling along the whole length of the canal sector, the cease-fire did not come into effect.
33. As is already known, Egyptian artillery batteries and other military installations are situated in the immediate proximity of and inside Egyptian towns and other inhabited localities. Sometimes such batteries and installations are positioned next to hospitals, schools and public buildings. The International Red Cross and other international organs have repeatedly drawn attention to this rash policy creating serious dangers for the civilian population. The Cairo authorities turned a deaf ear to all these remonstrances.
34. At 1810 hours, the United Nations military observers made another proposal for a cease-fire for 1830 hours. Again Israel agreed. By 1835 hours, fire ceased, except for small-arms fire by the Egyptian forces in the Port Tawfiq area.
35. Israeli casualties include eight soldiers killed and seventeen wounded, three seriously. In the town of Kantara, the only inhabited point on the east bank, the Egyptian artillery bombardment damaged a church, two mosques and numerous houses. Two local Arab inhabitants were wounded.
36. One United Nations military observer was also wounded by United Arab Republic fire, and two observation posts were hit, burned and had to be evacuated. Kantara control centre was damaged.
37. I should like to express our regret to the United Nations and to the Government and delegation of Argentina on the wounding of the United Nations military observer, Major E. T. F. Flyger.
38. Only a few days ago, on 5 September at approximately 0900 hours local time, three anti-vehicle mines were discovered planted on the patrol track in the same area about ten kilometres north of Port Tawfiq. Footprints of several persons led to and from the Suez Canal. It is obvious that the mines were laid by an Egyptian commando unit which had crossed to the east side of the canal from the west.
39. In my statement on 4 September [*1446th meeting*] I expressed my Government's concern lest the Egyptian attack carried out on 26 August was a prelude to a renewed campaign of violence along the cease-fire line. Today's developments strengthen this concern. The repeated plant-

ing of anti-vehicle mines in the same place, within sight of Egyptian army positions only 200 to 300 metres distant, leaves no doubt whatsoever about the origin and well-planned nature of these military operations.

40. The fact that today fire was opened by the Egyptian army several minutes after the detonation of the mine, and that only a few minutes later United Arab Republic artillery launched an attack along the entire front from Kantara to Port Tawfiq, indicates that this was a premeditated, large-scale and unprovoked assault in flagrant violation of the cease-fire.

41. It is interesting to note with what self-assured cynicism the Egyptian authorities reported on the progress of their attack. At 2003 hours, Radio Cairo broadcast as follows:

“Israel requested a cease-fire for 1630 hours. The exchange of fire continued, however, until 1830 hours when it ended. The Egyptian authorities agreed to the cease-fire on condition that Israel would not reinforce its troops on the east bank of the Suez.”

42. There could not have been a clearer admission of Egypt's guilt in this refusal to agree to the cease-fire proposed by the United Nations military observers and accepted by Israel. The United Arab Republic's statements which have been issued since the attack proclaim in unequivocal terms that today's aggression is to be regarded as the beginning of a new Egyptian policy in the warfare against Israel. The attempt to impose conditions on the acceptance of the cease-fire, the boastful, arrogant communiqués, are ominous in tone and substance, and contain a clear threat of further escalation.

43. It seems fairly obvious that the United Arab Republic is trying to undermine the cease-fire and create a situation of grave danger in the area. One wonders what could be the possible motives behind this menacing move. One cannot but recall that only yesterday the Cairo semi-official daily *Akhbar el-Yom* wrote:

“The revelation of the true role played by Zionism and imperialism in the events in Czechoslovakia has led to the revolutionary forces in the entire world preparing themselves to act against Israeli aggression in the Arab region. The events in eastern Europe have opened the eyes of all to the imperialistic Zionist danger.”

No comment is necessary on this.

44. At the 1446th meeting on 4 September, I asked the Egyptian Government a simple question: Is Egypt ready to take all necessary measures to prevent, in the future, military attacks in violation of the cease-fire? The answer came today in a hail of shells and bullets, in fire and death.

45. Whatever its motives, the recrudescence of Egyptian aggression has brought the situation in the area to a point of extreme danger. Egyptian aggressive designs must be arrested. There can be no further delay under these grave circumstances. We appeal to the Security Council to act immediately and effectively to stop Egyptian acts of aggression and help maintain the cease-fire.

46. The PRESIDENT: I now recognize the representative of the United Arab Republic, who is the next speaker on my list.

47. Mr. EL KONY (United Arab Republic): On 4 September 1968 when I addressed the Council, I commented on the motives that had induced the Israeli authorities to resort to the Security Council, and I had this to say:

“... it is imperative for responsible people to search and ask for the motives that have spurred Israel to bring an unfounded case before the Security Council. What makes the search even more urgent is our cognizance of Israel's past history, its present behaviour and its future designs. Despite its membership in the United Nations and its verbal acceptance of the Charter, its principles and objectives have consistently maintained that among all the membership of the United Nations it should be the one entitled to take the law into its own hands. Very recently Mr. Tekoah arrogantly informed this Council that no one, and I repeat ‘no one’, has the right to advise Israel on the conduct of its defence policy. That policy is pursued regardless of its victims—be they innocent men, women and children—the rules of international law, the principles of the Charter, or even the basic tenets of human behaviour. Israel's past and present bodes ill for the future. This should be the main concern of the Security Council.

“Israel seldom resorts to the Security Council and has always preferred to rely on naked force to achieve its ends. If today Israel has opted for a different course, it is not without misgivings that we should view its decision, for it is customary for Israel to use the language of peace when it intends to embark imminently on acts of war.

“Should we then assume that in bringing to the Council a groundless accusation under the pretence that it is seeking justice, Israel may in fact be creating a pretext to start a full-scale military operation against my country, against Jordan, or both?” [1446th meeting, paras. 35-37.]

Today this is no more an assumption; it is a fact; it is a reality.

48. Israel did not have the patience to wait for the conclusion of the deliberations of the Council; for while the Council was still discussing the Israeli allegations, the Israeli forces opened fire today at 1600 hours local time, in the area of Port Tawfiq and Suez, using artillery and tank fire. Israel continued to escalate the firing by extending the shelling to the cities of Ismailia and Kantara. Even according to the report we just heard from the Secretary-General, there are grounds for believing that missiles were used by Israel. Our armed forces were obliged to return the fire in self-defence. This wanton Israeli attack caused heavy losses in civilian life in addition to the wide damage and destruction to buildings and public installations in both cities. I shall keep the Security Council informed about this latest Israeli act of aggression.

49. Having endured for the past twenty years the wiles and guiles of Israeli behaviour, we are by now alert to all

their worn-out tactics. One of those tactics is to strike a blow and then to race to the Security Council with a complaint, labouring under the delusion that by resorting to the Security Council, it will exonerate itself for the acts of shame and aggression it has committed. We should no longer be credulous of the Israeli contentions; on the contrary, we should be wary of all the Israeli initiatives because every time Israel professes its respect for the principles of the Charter, it has always been a cloak for future nefarious activities. The case at hand is a typical example of such duplicity, as has constantly been the case in the past.

50. At this juncture, I only want to remind the Council that when, on 5 June 1967, Israel treacherously committed aggression against my country, it came rushing to the Security Council complaining that it had been aggressed upon. The tactics of yesterday are being repeated today.

51. It should by now be clear that the Israeli allegations on 26 August 1968, which were not corroborated by the United Nations observers, were advanced to cover up for the aggression committed today. Israel, again resorting to the same tactics, claims that the detonation of an anti-vehicle mine on the east bank of the canal motivated our forces to open fire.

52. This is another futile attempt to cover up for today's premeditated act of aggression. The civilian population along the Suez Canal has, since the treacherous Israeli aggression of 5 June 1967, been the target of systematic and indiscriminate Israeli shelling from across the Suez Canal. The casualty toll among the civilian population has amounted to 332 killed and 767 injured. Since it is the primary duty of every Government to exert all efforts in order to ensure the safety of its population, and in view of the brutal and wanton attacks perpetrated by the Israeli armed forces against innocent men, women and children, the United Arab Republic Government had to resort to its right of self-defence, in conformity with the Charter.

53. Lord CARADON (United Kingdom): We have listened tonight to reports of grave events, and I believe that it must be in the minds of all of us that we should, if we possibly can, take urgent action to deal with this situation. I think that it was right that the Council should be immediately called; in accordance with our tradition we were ready to come to the Council without delay, at only an hour or two's notice.

54. The reports which we have received since we came indicate that that urgency was justified. I believe that it may well be that we would wish to continue our discussion of these grave events on another occasion; but I would respectfully suggest to you, Sir, and to the Council, that at this stage we could best serve the purposes of the Council by recessing our proceedings—a short recess, I would hope—so we can consider together what immediate action can be taken. I believe that it is in the interest of speed and in accordance with the gravity of the situation we discuss that we should not seek to prolong the open debate in the Council, but that we should consult together with a view to the most urgent action that we can take. I therefore put that suggestion to you, Sir, and to the members of the

Council—that we should have a short recess to consider what action can be most effective at this stage.

55. Mr. MALIK (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (*translated from Russian*): I wish to speak about the impressions that one gathers from the situation. From the official letter of the representative of Israel [S/8805] it is clear that an anti-vehicle mine, laid in a track, was discovered by Israeli troops. Even if this mine was really there, it seems to have been without a time mechanism. Why was there such a hurry to explode it? Would it not have been better to inform the United Nations observers? Once the mine had been discovered and the decision was taken to explode it so that it would not hinder road traffic, the latter side should have been notified that this explosion was not the beginning of a bombardment and exchange of fire. One would think that it would have been logical for the Israeli side to start by doing this.

56. In the same letter it is stated, however, that two hours later, at approximately 1500 hours, immediately following the demolition of the mine by Israeli field engineers, an exchange of fire began, and this has been confirmed by the representative of Israel in his statement today. The question naturally arises—and we are entitled to ask the representative of Israel—why did the Israeli side, knowing perfectly well the tense situation in this area where the armed forces of two countries stand opposite each other, act precisely as it did? Why was it necessary to be in such a hurry to detonate the detected mine, immediately following which the exchange of fire is said to have begun, causing many casualties and material damage?

57. The Israeli representative has spoken here about who was guilty of starting the exchange of fire. But logic speaks for itself: whoever first exploded the mine without informing the headquarters of the United Nations observers, whoever first raised a din is the one guilty of starting this incident which entailed such unfortunate consequences and, apparently, is doing so increasingly, as we can see from the subsequent reports of General Bull. However, a legitimate question arises: did the United Nations observers pay attention to this explosion, to the explosion of a mine by the Israeli side? According to the interpretation I understood the statement of the Israeli representative to mean that the Israeli command informed the United Nations observers of this explosion *post factum*, that is, after the explosion. But why was this not done beforehand and why was a message not sent in good time to the headquarters of the United Nations observers to announce that "We intend, at 1500 hours, to explode a mine; please inform the other side that this is not the beginning of a bombardment, that the explosion is not connected with any military operations and that it is simply a normal explosion of a detected mine which is hindering road traffic".

58. Naturally the supposition arises that if Israel had acted otherwise, if the Israeli command had acted otherwise, a serious incident of this kind entailing such unfortunate consequences, casualties and material damage might have been prevented. Another question that naturally arises is that the attention of the United Nations observers and General Bull would have been drawn to this circumstance and that he would have passed on his information concern-

ing the mine. Doubt and legitimate suspicion arise as to why Israel acted precisely in the way it did. If it had had peaceful intentions, it would perhaps have acted differently and the incident would have been prevented. But it acted precisely in the way it did, and as a result there followed a chain of events which led to such unfortunate consequences. And this in its turn gives rise to the question: was there really a mine or was it the usual "canard"?

59. I should like to draw attention to one more point. According to the Russian interpretation of General Bull's reports which were read out, the expression "Israel Defence Forces" is used repeatedly in them. The United Arab Republic armed forces are not mentioned at all in this way. The impression is created that, on the east bank of the Suez Canal, the Israel Defence Forces are defending themselves against someone. But the whole world knows that this is not so. Everyone knows why the Israeli forces are there. Against whom are they defending themselves? In reality it is the Arab armed forces who are defending themselves against the armed forces of the aggressors who have come right up to the Suez Canal from the east. For this reason one would like to express the wish that the United Nations observers and General Bull would pay more attention to the terminology in their reports. Otherwise one is left with a rather unpleasant taste where the authors of such reports are concerned, which, of course, is undesirable for United Nations observers.

60. In conclusion, we have the right to put a question to the official representative of Israel here. Does he himself consider such acts of the Israeli command to be normal, logical and legitimate, as when a mine, discovered on a track or on a road—and as far as is known, in a deserted spot in the Sinai Peninsula—and representing no immediate danger, is exploded within two hours and without informing the United Nations observers at all regarding this? Taking into account that such a way of dealing with the mine and its detonation led to human casualties and considerable material damage, the conclusion naturally suggests itself that Israel ought not to have done this, and if it did, it thereby took the initiative and laid the beginning of the whole chain of extremely unfortunate consequences, for which, undoubtedly, it will have to bear the responsibility.

61. The PRESIDENT: I have not lost sight of the suggestion made by the representative of the United Kingdom. He did not, however, make a motion under rule 33 of the provisional rules of procedure. In the meantime I have been asked to add the name of the representative of the United States to the list of speakers, and the representative of Israel has indicated a desire to exercise his right of reply. I call now on the representative of the United States.

62. Mr. BALL (United States of America): Within the last few days the representative of the Soviet Union has made a great point of the fact that the Council was being asked to act on inadequate evidence. Tonight we have had a long report from General Bull, and we also have had three brief reports from General Bull, which have been read out to us by the Secretary-General. Those reports have not been circulated and the last one in particular is long and complicated and requires considerable study. We are also

assured by General Bull that further reports will be forthcoming. Certainly, I think that his analysis of the raw evidence which he has given to us in his longer report would be of very great use and importance to the Council. I can think of nothing more fruitless tonight, therefore, than for us to engage in the kind of long speculative statements such as we have just heard from the representative of the Soviet Union, statements based on hypotheses and suppositions and inferences drawn from inferences. Therefore, I would consider it very sensible if we were to follow the suggestion made by the representative of the United Kingdom.

63. With that in mind, I would move, under rule 33, that we adjourn for a brief period of perhaps forty-five minutes for purposes of consultation, with the thought in mind that we may be able to act on this very important matter tonight, because I think that speed is of the essence, as the representative of the United Kingdom suggested. And I would hope that further consideration of this matter might be given by the Council after we have had the benefit not only of being able to examine the reports of General Bull, but also, hopefully, of further interpretation from him as to just what the significance of those reports may be.

64. The PRESIDENT: I would draw the attention of the representative of the United States to the fact that a motion for suspension has to be decided without debate. Before recognizing him and entertaining that motion, I had taken note of the desire of the representative of Israel to exercise his right of reply. In these circumstances, would the representative of the United States have any objection to hearing the representative of Israel before putting the motion to the vote?

65. Mr. BALL (United States of America): I would not wish to deny the representative of Israel his right of reply, but I have a feeling—I had it very much in mind when I made my motion—that although I am sure we should benefit from his reply to the extent that it would be addressed to the rather supposititious statement by the representative of the Soviet Union, nevertheless it can only lead to the kind of discussion tonight which seems to me in essence to be very fruitless. I see no point in trying to discuss this serious matter when we do not have before us the kind of evidence which the representative of the Soviet Union has been insisting for the last few days that we should have.

66. The PRESIDENT: I interpret the United States representative's reply to my question to mean that he has in fact moved the suspension of the meeting under rule 33. Under that rule I am required to recognize that a motion for suspension shall be decided without debate.

67. Mr. MALIK (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (*translated from Russian*): A point of order.

68. The PRESIDENT: Is it related to the motion?

69. Mr. MALIK (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (*translated from Russian*): No.

70. The PRESIDENT: Since I have not recognized the representative of Israel on a point which does not concern

the motion, I am afraid that I cannot make an exception until we have reached a decision on the point of order under rule 33. I have before me a motion to suspend the meeting. This, of course, does not exclude the possibility of continuing the discussion after the suspension for whatever purposes the Council may decide, but I must ask the Council to decide on the motion without debate, as required under rule 33. Is there any objection to the motion to suspend the meeting?

71. Mr. MALIK (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (*translated from Russian*): A point of order.

72. The PRESIDENT: I can only entertain that the point of order raised by the representative of the Soviet Union is in opposition to the suspension of the meeting. I must abide by rule 33, that is, that the question of suspension has to be decided without debate, and since the representative of the Soviet Union has raised, I take it, an objection, I must put the question of the suspension of the meeting to the vote of the Council. I have put a motion to the Council which has been moved by a member, and under the rules that particular motion is not subject to debate. Do I take the point of order of the representative of the Soviet Union as an objection to the suspension of the meeting for consultation? The representative of the Soviet Union has been co-operative to the extent of saying that he is not objecting to the suspension of the meeting. I give him the assurance that he and others have the right to exercise the right of reply when we resume our discussion. With that comment, may I take it that there is no objection that this meeting be suspended for consultation. Since there is no objection we shall suspend the meeting for half an hour.

The meeting was suspended at 11.20 p.m., and resumed at 1.05 a.m.

73. The PRESIDENT: When the Council suspended its meeting to permit consultations, the President conducted consultations with all members of the Council. After extensive consultations the President has been authorized to make the following declaration:

“The Security Council, having met urgently to consider the item on its agenda contained in document S/1448/Rev.1, having heard the reports of General Odd Bull presented by the Secretary-General, and having heard the statements of the representatives of Israel and the United Arab Republic, deeply regrets the loss of life, and requires the parties strictly to observe the cease-fire called for by the Security Council’s resolutions.”

74. Unless any member of the Council wishes to speak, I shall consider that this declaration will be taken as the declaration of the President, to be communicated to General Bull and the parties, and that the next meeting on this item will be arranged following normal consultations among members of the Council. I have a request for a meeting for tomorrow afternoon, but I shall be conducting consultations in the normal way with members of the Council. Unless any member has a comment, I shall adjourn the meeting subject to consultations as to the time of the next meeting.

The meeting rose on Monday, 9 September, at 1.10 a.m.

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