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REPORT OF THE SPECIAL COMMITTEE TO INVESTIGATE ISRAELI PRACTICES
AFFECTING THE HUMAN RIGHTS OF THE POPULATION OF THE OCCUPIED
TERRITORIES

Letter dated 7 September 1989 from the Permanent Representative
of the Syrian Arab Republic to the United Nations addressed to
the Secretary-General

On instructions from my Government, I have the honour to enclose herewith the statement of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Syrian Arab Republic on the Israeli practices affecting the human rights of the Syrian Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan, presented to the Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Population of the Occupied Territories during its visit to Damascus from 24 to 27 May 1989.

I would be grateful if you would have this statement circulated as an official document of the General Assembly, under item 78 of the provisional agenda.

(Signed) Ahmad Fathi AL-MASRI
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

* Reissued for technical reasons.

ANNEX

Statement of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Syrian Arab Republic presented to the Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Population of the Occupied Territories

The Israeli occupation authorities are continuing their flagrant and deliberate violation of international law, including the Charter of the United Nations, the Hague Conventions of 1899 and 1907, the 1949 fourth Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War, the 1966 International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and the 1966 International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination.

Furthermore, they flout resolutions of the General Assembly, the Security Council and the relevant specialized agencies and defy the international community and world public opinion.

Since 1967, the occupied Arab Golan has been subjected to the strategy of aggression pursued by the Israeli authorities, who have declared the Golan an integral part of Israel and are carrying on activities, both openly and covertly, designed to Judaize and annex the Golan and strip the Syrian Arab people of their ethnic character and their history, the aim being to continue to establish settlements and to expand them in order to change the composition of the population of the region and destroy its economic structure, expropriate its water resources, modify its socio-cultural characteristics and efface the identity of the indigenous inhabitants. They are thereby violating United Nations resolutions, specifically Security Council resolution 497 (1981), adopted unanimously on 17 December 1981, and the resolution adopted by the General Assembly at its ninth emergency special session on 5 February 1982 and reaffirmed since then at every regular session of the General Assembly.

In the face of the brutal forces of occupation, our Arab people of the Golan have risen up with laudable bravery, reaffirming on every occasion their attachment and allegiance to their Syrian Arab homeland, opposing Israel's occupation and its decision to annex the region by imposing on it an Israeli identity, defying the repressive Israeli authorities until they withdraw fully from the territory of the Golan, and also giving their support and aid to the heroic intifadah of the Palestinian people.

Political committees have been set up in order to receive donations in cash and in kind, thereby making it possible to send funds and large quantities of food and clothing by various means to the occupied territories of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. This solidarity has enabled the inhabitants of the Golan to withstand the brutal sanctions of the occupation forces.

The heroic uprising of the Palestinian Arab people, which has entered its eighteenth month, has won the admiration of the international community and shown the whole world that the Palestinian people are determined to regain all their rights and will accept nothing but complete independence.

The intifadah has proved incontrovertibly that the Arab citizens subjected to the occupation can bear it no longer and are determined to put an end to the occupation of all occupied Arab territories. The struggle in the territories will continue in all its forms until they are liberated, thereby refuting the Zionists' propaganda and their false claim that the Arab population is satisfied with the occupation and the existing state of affairs.

The valiant resistance of the Arab people in the occupied territories has led the occupying Power to step up the means of repression, and it has moved on from its policy of the "iron fist" to a new policy of "broken bones", resorting to murder, exile and the destruction of houses, committing serious violations of human rights and fundamental freedoms and perpetrating war crimes and genocide, which have been condemned by the international community. The world has witnessed all these crimes, which have revealed that Zionist racism is based on hatred of other peoples in general and of the Arab people in particular, a hatred which lies at the heart of all these crimes and the effects of which have been apparent for a long time in many countries, thereby confirming the sound basis of the United Nations resolution that determined that Zionism was a form of racism and racial discrimination.

There has also been increased participation by the Zionist settlers in the crimes committed, with the protection of the Israeli occupation forces, against the Arab citizens of the occupied Arab territories. The settlers have even outdone the Israeli authorities in the intensity of their racism, hostility and hate.

The long series of terrorist acts committed by the Israeli occupation forces brings to mind the savage and inhuman acts perpetrated by the racist régime of Pretoria against the peoples of South Africa and Namibia, and the Nazi crimes perpetrated against the Europeans during the Second World War.

There is a need to recall the dangers of such practices, given the explosive situation in the region and the threat it poses to international peace and security.

1. Policy of annexation and colonization

Since its occupation of the Syrian Arab Golan in 1967, Israel has pursued a policy aimed at annexing and Judaizing it and encouraging the establishment of settlements. To that end it adopted a law in December 1981 imposing its laws, jurisdiction and administration on the occupied Syrian Arab Golan, and on 12 February 1982 promulgated a decree requiring its inhabitants to carry Israeli identity cards.

On the ruins of 147 Syrian Arab villages which it has destroyed in the Golan and of which only Majdal Shams, Mas'adah, Buq'ata, Ain Qinabah and Al-Fajr remain, Israel has already established a network of 42 settlements comprising agricultural, industrial and tourist establishments aimed at exploiting the wealth and resources of the region in order to annex and Judaize it, and is on the point of establishing three new settlements.

These settlements draw their water from lake Tiberias, Baniyas and Mas'adah, and a large number of earth dikes and tourist installations have been built on Mount Hermon and on the shores of lake Tiberias, and a denser road network has been constructed around the villages of the Arab Golan in order to cut it off completely and destroy the existing population centres in order to remove all traces of Arab life and create the impression that the Golan is an uninhabited area.

Israel's policy has been expounded many times, for example in the statement made by Yitzhak Shamir on 21 July 1987 to the Israeli newspaper Ma'ariv:

"Those who speak of an international peace conference want to give up Judea, Samaria, the Gaza Strip and the Golan Heights completely. We've been accused of not being for peace, but the government coalition says openly that there's no question of giving up the lands of Israel, whether we are speaking of Judea, Samaria, the Gaza district, the Golan Heights or Jerusalem."

In a statement to the daily Ha'aretz on 16 October 1987, Shamir declared that Jerusalem, the Sharon, Samaria, Galilee and the Golan formed a whole and that it was difficult to say that the people of Israel would one day abandon those areas.

In a ministerial statement delivered to the Knesset on 22 December 1988, during the period in which his party was collaborating with Ma'arach, Shamir announced that the policy of establishing settlements was continuing. He also declared on 16 May 1989, in presenting the so-called Israeli "peace plan", that Israel would not give up a single inch of ground.

2. Confiscation of lands

The Israeli occupation authorities have promulgated many military decrees amending the law applicable to the occupied Arab territories and the land-tenure system in order to justify the process of confiscation, destruction and expropriation, invoking military requirements or security reasons. Various decisions have been taken in that regard, such as annulling all recourse in respect of land-tenure disputes dating back to the period of the British Mandate for Palestine, while other decrees have authorized the transfer of property only with the support of the military governor.

Most of the laws relating to seizure have been amended in order to facilitate operations aimed at confiscating the totality of Arab lands. All lands belonging to individuals who were absent at the time of the occupation in 1967 are considered the property of the State, in accordance with the Decree of 23 July 1967 relating to vacant property, and in 1969 the occupation authorities promulgated a law whereby Israeli nationals have the right to purchase land in the occupied Arab territories, thereby encouraging them to set up Jewish settlements. The authorities have established settlements by means of military announcements, and for security reasons have forbidden access to areas in which they were set up, and, by various means, have confiscated from their lawful owners lands situated in clearly defined locations.

By means of such practices, the Israeli authorities confiscated in the Golan 360 hectares of land owned by Syrian Arabs, decreed them to be military zones and then turned them into settlements close to Syrian villages. The Israeli authorities have taken over natural water resources, dug wells on confiscated Syrian lands and piped the water to the new settlements.

In 1980, Israel confiscated farmlands belonging to Syrian peasants in the village of Jouls. On 12 April 1986, the occupation authorities surveyed the area named Al-Qati, which stretches south-west of Majdal Shams to Jisr Ma'ad, north of Mas'adah, in order to ready it for annexation; that area covers more than 1,000 dunums of fertile land. On 22 April 1986, the Israeli occupation forces put barbed wire round an area of 150 dunums in the region of Balan, near Majdal Shams, and prevented the inhabitants from approaching; this operation was kept secret in order to take the inhabitants by surprise and prevent them from organizing resistance. The Israeli daily paper Yediot Aharonot dated 27 May 1987 reported that the Israeli authorities would enclose other areas in order to prevent illegal building there.

On 24 July 1986 the Israeli daily newspaper Hamodia reported that the occupation authorities were levelling ground at Ain Tineh and felling all trees in the area. The daily Hatzsofeh reported on 28 October 1986 that an Israeli had been expelled from the village of Buq'ata for appropriating seven dunums of land and installing a water tank there for agricultural purposes and that the Israeli authorities and the land administration had had the land ploughed and the water tank destroyed.

As indicated in the reports of the Director-General of the International Labour Office, the confiscation operations continue and, for a set period, the military authorities are confiscating for the State lands they occupy in order to establish new settlements. They make the inhabitants hand over their land deeds in order to put the official stamp on them indicating the transfer of ownership.

On 20 July 1988 Ha'aretz reported that the occupation authorities were setting fire to forests and then taking over the land, and that they had also lit fires in parts of Galilee and in the Golan, especially in the areas of Al-Ahrash and Al-Ra'y.

It should be pointed out that, of the 1,176 square kilometres of the Golan, the Syrian Arabs are able to utilize only 200,000 dunums, including 15,000 for agricultural purposes.

3. Expropriation of water resources

The Israeli occupation authorities are putting pressure on the inhabitants of the occupied Syrian Arab Golan in order to make them emigrate, taking over their water resources for the benefit of the Israeli settlements and preventing the inhabitants from digging new wells, the aim being to deprive them of their livelihood and weaken them economically.

The inhabitants of the Golan depend for their water on Birqat Ram, at Mas'adah, which contains 2 m to 3 m cubic metres of water enclosed in volcanic rock and have to collect the water in large metal tanks before supplying it to their lands through an extensive network of pipes. The Israeli authorities, however, have forbidden them to use this water to irrigate their apple orchards and meadows. The inhabitants of the Golan face colossal obstacles every time they wish to install tanks or dig new wells, since they have to obtain the prior permission of the Governor, who refuses to give it and does not even let them install the plastic pipes they need for irrigating their orchards. By contrast, the Zionist settlers are allowed to pipe water to their lands, to dig wells and even to pump water from the wells of Arab farmers, thereby forcing the local population to construct surface reservoirs in order to collect rain water.

The Israeli authorities took to court many farmers in the Golan who had refused to close their tanks, alleging unauthorized use of State water resources and harm to neighbouring lands; the occupation forces then blew up the tanks.

The occupation authorities thereby intended to deal a fatal blow to apple production and marketing, which constitute the main source of income of the inhabitants of the Golan; the expropriation of the spring water and its diversion to the Zionist settlements form part of that policy. The Israeli authorities have seized the springs at Al-Ya'furi, Al-Mushairifah and Ras Abu Sa'ad and installed pipes dozens of kilometres long in order to supply water from Mas'adah to the farm settlements established on the slopes of Tel Abu al-Nada, thereby significantly reducing the level of the watertable whereby the Arab inhabitants irrigate their meadows and causing Syria to install pipes in 1984 in order to pump water to Majdal Shams. Furthermore, the villages of Mas'adah, Buq'ata and Ain Tinah at present lack drinking water, and the Syrian Arab Republic has been forced to dig new wells in order to supply them.

It should be noted that the development plan submitted by the World Zionist Organization in 1975 provided for the supply of 7,590,000 cubic metres of water to the Jewish settlers, who number about 10,000, as compared with 2.1 m cubic metres to the inhabitants of the Syrian villages, who number more than 15,000.

As a result of the confiscation of springs, artesian wells are now the only source of water (including drinking-water) for the population of the Golan, which is prejudicial both to income-generating crops, including the apple crop, and to the population's health, particularly since the six available wells, which are managed by the Israeli water authority, are often polluted.

Recently, the Israeli authorities forbade the population of the village of Buq'ata to use the drinking-water channelled to them through pipes from Syria and to repair the feeder pipes on their side of the frontier; moreover, the occupation authorities finally destroyed the pipes, which were 2 kilometres long.

4. Economic and social changes

The annexation policy and settlement plans implemented in the occupied territories, including the Syrian Arab Golan, have had an impact in all spheres of economic and social life and have resulted in a deterioration in agriculture, industry and education. The policy and plans in question have also had the effect of linking the territories' economies to the Israeli economy, driving thousands of farm-hands, labourers and craftsmen onto the Israeli labour market and obliging the majority of the population to emigrate in order to earn their livelihood. In the course of 22 years of repressive occupation, no economic links have been established between the Zionist settlers and the patriots of the Golan. In 1981, the occupation authorities raised taxes and continued to bring physical pressure to bear on the population. They also urged the administration not to provide any services to those who opposed both the annexation and the constraints on the population's freedom of movement in the Golan Heights - a measure that followed the increase in the prices of primary products and the refusal to grant benefits to poor families, even though a tax amounting to approximately half of the value of the apple crop was collected each year. Recently, the occupation authorities forbade growers to export their apple crop and even refused to buy apples from them. In view of these measures, in the same year the population of the Golan staged demonstrations, during which the forces of occupation arrested a number of press correspondents and journalists and destroyed their film showing demonstrations, prisons and detainees.

In 1984, the occupation authorities continued to engage in such practices, preventing the population of Majdal Shams from exporting their products to Syria.

With assistance from the forces of occupation, Israeli tax collectors perpetrated provocative acts and acts of intimidation, checking the identity of all individuals who passed through many check-points set up at crossroads, which obliged many Syrian families to leave their villages in search of a better life and in order to escape the living conditions and the economic circumstances imposed on them by the occupation authorities.

This harassment continued in 1989. Many families' land was confiscated, a total economic blockade was imposed on the Golan, the freedom of the population of the Golan to work was restricted, workers' wages were reduced, workers registered with the military administration were obliged to carry out unpleasant work (tarring roads and repairing sewers, for example), and many workers were wrongfully accused of collaborating with the Syrian authorities, the aim being to give the occupier a pretext for imprisoning them and preventing them from working in their fields.

From 14 to 17 April 1989, the Syrian Arab citizens of the Golan commemorated the evacuation from Syria of all colonialist forces. On that occasion, the Israeli authorities arrested dozens of people and imposed fines amounting in some cases to 2 million Israeli pounds, to be paid in a lump sum, on pain of imprisonment. The purpose of the measures in question was to impoverish the population of the Golan, to weaken their determination to resist the occupier, and to force them either to submit to the occupation authorities or to emigrate, which would make the population vacate the Golan.

Agriculture

The agricultural situation deteriorated owing to the confiscation of extensive tracts of fertile land, and as a result the people of the region now have only 200,000 dunums in their possession. In addition, there was the seizure of water resources by the Israeli occupier; the prohibition on the digging of new wells by the population on their own land; and measures designed both to make farmers' access to their land difficult - consisting, in particular, in the placement of mines both around and on their land - and to separate farms from one another by means of surrounding them by Jewish settlements with a view to taking possession of them and to denying the agricultural products of the population of the region market access so that they should not compete with Israeli settlements' products; not to mention the confiscation by Israeli tax collectors of stored apples on a variety of pretexts and the destruction of cold-storage plants. Currently, the apple crop amounts to 45,000 tons per year.

The chief problem facing Syrian Arab farmers is the fact that their apple crop, which is their main source of income, no longer has market access. The measure denying the apple crop market access was adopted on 12 March 1988, the day on which Shlomo Weizmann, President of the Israeli Farmers' Union - using as a pretext the unremitting hatred and hostility shown by the population of the Golan in respect of the forces of occupation - announced a boycott of the apples grown by them. In economic terms, the measure in question was to have a catastrophic effect on the population of the Golan, whose living conditions worsened, with all that that implies (for example, a deterioration in health and social conditions and in increase in the number of unemployed Syrian workers, who became a source of cheap labour for the Israeli economy).

Furthermore, the occupation authorities have gone to great lengths to stage the burning of forests and orchards. This policy forms part of a comprehensive Israeli settlement plan designed to take away the sources of income of the Arab population of the Golan, to force them to submit to the authority of the occupier, and to oblige them to leave their homes and their land. The occupation authorities recently perpetrated further criminal acts. On 21 May 1989, taking advantage of the wind direction, they set fire to the strip of land adjacent to the cease-fire line, thus destroying wheat, barley and other crops. The resulting damage was assessed to be 1.5 million Syrian pounds. On 27 May 1989, the occupation authorities once again set fire to forests and land under cultivation.

Pasture land

The occupation authorities are endeavouring to reduce the amount of pasture land by building roads, by uprooting trees and by setting fires, with the aim of dealing a death-blow to economic activity in the region and depriving the Arab population of the Golan of milk. (It is known that the population is supplied with milk by the region's goat-farmers.) The Israeli authorities therefore issued decrees forbidding Arab villagers to keep goats without authorization. The measure in question enables the authorities to confiscate entire flocks of goats - which they resell at absurdly low prices - on the pretext that the goats are a threat to the environment. Moreover, the forces of occupation place mines in fields and on

pasture land, which leads to loss of human life and decimates livestock, and has the effect of removing a source of income for the Arab population and of depriving their families and children of both milk and meat. On 31 May 1989, this criminal Israeli practice took the life of Amir Ben Fendi Abu Jabal, a child of three and a half years of age, who was killed by a mine.

Industry

The Israeli occupation authorities have prevented the emergence in the occupied territories of a local economic policy to promote the establishment of enterprises and workshops, and are hindering all efforts to promote the regional economy's various production sectors. They also stand in the way of Arab investment and the granting of loans, and oppose all industrial or agro-industrial projects for fear that they might compete with Israeli producers, who completed construction of a cannery in the Kinsrin settlement, in the occupied Golan, on 9 June 1987. In addition, the occupation authorities exercise control over prices, stocks and the marketing of virtually all fruit grown in the Golan, as well as over all other aspects of life there.

The occupier forbids the population of the Golan to form groups in order to obtain the loans that they need in order to set up a cold storage network, make joint investments and set up carpentry and storage facilities, the aim being to impoverish them, to oblige them to buy their supplies from the Israeli settlements, and to promote the penetration of Israeli industrial products (for example, bricks, tiles, wood products, ironmongery, and equipment for quarrying marble).

5. Situation with regard to education

The main goal of the Israeli occupation authorities' education policy is to stifle any national feeling among the population of the occupied Arab Golan, with a view to cutting them off from their national, historical and cultural roots and severing their ties with their mother country, Syria.

The Israeli occupation authorities do not hesitate to disregard the principle of the inviolability of the occupied Arab territories' educational and cultural institutions. The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization has adopted a whole series of resolutions condemning Israel in that connection. However, the occupation authorities fail to heed those resolutions and continue to engage in the practices in question, committing acts of intimidation in respect of students and teaching staff and subjecting them to racial discrimination. As a result of this policy, which the population of the Golan has protested against, the situation with regard to education has deteriorated. In implementing the policy in question, the occupation authorities have engaged in the following practices:

(1) They have replaced Syrian Arab curricula by Israeli curricula, prohibited Syrian textbooks, forced Syrian students to learn Hebrew, and imposed education policies inciting hatred, intolerance and religious fanaticism, with the aim of eliminating any Arab national characteristics from the education provided;

(2) They have arbitrarily dismissed many teachers - because of their nationalist views - and have replaced them by unqualified teachers; and they have obliged the teachers whom they have not dismissed to teach in accordance with the requirements of Israeli curricula;

(3) They have closed many schools;

(4) They have allowed the premises of Arab educational institutions to become dilapidated (the institutions remaining open are no longer fit for providing an adequate education) and are not authorizing the construction of any new schools. Furthermore, they refuse to ensure that schools have the means to provide proper medical monitoring; there is, in fact, only one doctor in the region providing medical care in educational institutions;

(5) They place serious constraints on all administrative procedures and refuse to issue registration certificates for children who are members of families that oppose the occupation, which means that they cannot be enrolled in schools either in the region or elsewhere;

(6) They have been preventing students from the Golan from completing their higher education either at Syrian universities (since 1982) or at universities in socialist countries, and they exert pressure on consulates in order to ensure that they do not issue entry visas to students wishing to go somewhere else in order to complete their higher education. As for the few Arabs who are permitted to attend Israeli universities, they do not have an opportunity to study in the fields in which they are the most able;

(7) They authorize Israeli soldiers to enter the premises of educational institutions, in disregard of the rules guaranteeing their inviolability, in order to force these students to follow Hebrew courses;

(8) They have imprisoned both students and teachers;

(9) They hinder access to employment for the small number of Syrian Arab citizens holding Israeli university degrees.

6. The labour situation

The economic and social situation in the occupied Arab territories cannot be divorced from the inhuman conditions in which workers and the majority of the population are living under the rule of the Israeli occupiers, what with the total lack of civilized laws and the contempt for the rules of law that are observed by the international community.

Throughout Palestine and the occupied Arab territories, including the Golan, Arab workers suffer racial discrimination and coercion, being forced to endure working conditions that are extremely precarious in relation to those enjoyed by Israeli workers in respect of security, national insurance, wages, health care, job security and general safety, as well as in respect of trade-union activities.

In the occupied areas, Arab workers are not free to establish trade unions or to exercise their trade-union rights under the occupation régime. Whatever trade-union premises Arab workers might have are always liable to be raided by the police, threatening to shut them down. Most union members and union leaders have been subjected to administrative detention, house arrest or deportation, so that Arab workers might continue to suffer the worst forms of exploitation and to work in inhumane conditions, enduring all forms of racial discrimination and separation from their Israeli counterparts.

In that connection, appearing before the United States Special Committee on Preferences on 17 November 1988, Mr. Mari Rozenbloth said that the Israeli authorities were continually violating the right of Arab workers to form associations and trade unions; that they were shutting down the premises of existing associations and expelling union members; that they also were persecuting Arab workers and prohibiting them from defending their rights, as documented in reports by the United States Department of State, which noted that the Israeli authorities had rejected over 100 applications from Palestinians to establish associations; and that the authorities had shut down the premises of a number of trade unions on the pretext that they failed to meet security standards. Mr. Rozenbloth stressed that imprisoned Arab workers did not enjoy due process, and that deportation measures against union members accused of stirring up violence and unrest were arbitrary.

Appearing before the same Committee on 17 November 1988, Ms. Judith Tchumasky said that while the statement by the Israeli Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, as reported by the Israeli Embassy in Washington, contained a number of untruths, it did acknowledge that workers in the occupied territories did not receive unemployment benefits, family allowances or retirement pensions. The Israelis were deliberately distorting the rules established by the International Labour Organisation so as to give a semblance of legitimacy to Israeli practices. Ms. Tchumasky called for the exclusion of Israel from the trade-preference system because of what she saw as its failure to extend internationally recognized rights to those workers.

The employment situation in the occupied Syrian Arab Golan is characterized by a number of essentially seasonal features. Zionist settlers/landowners and the owners of Israeli businesses hire workers during peak periods, imposing any terms they wish.

The low living standards among the Arab population in the occupied territories and the villages of the Golan have prompted inhabitants to find work by any means they can in order to increase their income. This situation is the direct result of a number of measures taken by the Israeli authorities to bring Arab workers from the Golan into the Israeli job market, so as to capitalize on the difference in wages between the two regions and weaken those workers' links with their land and their nation. Vocational training centres have been established to that end; such centres have attracted youths and students from schools which had no teachers, and thus have been a poisoned apple to deprive them of an education. In 1979 alone, more than 1,786 youths were trained at such centres and sought work in Israeli businesses far from the Golan, where they were given extremely difficult, low-wage jobs, such as excavation, road surfacing, field work and drain construction.

The deplorable condition of Arab workers in the occupied territories and the Golan is reflected in the following facts:

(1) In the past five years, the Israeli economy has absorbed over 40 per cent of the active population of the occupied territories in order to meet its demand for cheap, skilled Arab labour;

(2) Most of the Arab workers are obliged to do difficult and poorly paid work requiring no qualifications;

(3) The labour situation in the agricultural sector varies from season to season, whereas the situation in the industrial sector remains stable; Arab workers therefore run a high risk of unemployment;

(4) The conditions of employment for Arab workers are not the same as for their Israeli counterparts, whether in terms of the level and nature of jobs to be done, or in terms of wages;

(5) The Israeli economy exploits cheap Arab labour; the Arab population has become dependent on the job market in Israel and also suffers the consequences of the domination that has accompanied the occupation, as well as the consequences of arbitrary controls and measures restricting the export of produce and the manufacture of products used in agriculture;

(6) The effect of inflation, and of the impact of inflation on the wages policy, has been to attract Arab workers, particularly from border regions;

(7) Arab farmers cannot obtain export licences to market their produce in European countries;

(8) The vocational training which children receive at school is nothing more than elementary technical training;

(9) The work permits issued to Arab workers only appear to give job security; they are no guarantees of employment, and employees may lose their jobs when their permits expire, or even for any other spurious reason given by the employer;

(10) Arab workers are denied recourse to the courts, and the option to file grievances with military tribunals exists only on paper;

(11) Deductions are made from the wages of Arab workers on the same basis as with Israeli workers, but the former do not enjoy the same social benefits;

(12) The military régime in effect since 1979 still exists, with all the accompanying restrictions on civil and trade-union rights, and on freedom of movement;

(13) The right of Arab workers to join a union is also limited; they therefore cannot defend their rights through that channel.

7. The situation in the health field

Since the Arab territories were first occupied, in 1967, Israel has pursued a well established policy regarding medical institutions: it seeks to undermine them completely so that Arab patients will be treated in Israeli hospitals. The occupation authorities believe that the continued functioning of these medical establishments constitutes a demonstration of independence from them which is inconsistent with their policy of Judaization and stamping out all traces of Arab identity in the occupied areas.

The World Health Organization has recalled that the situation in the health field worsened seriously in the wake of the restrictions imposed by the occupation authorities in the health sector and the arbitrary and inhumane measures applied by those authorities.

The report of the WHO Tripartite Committee, issued as document C-42/14 on 12 April 1984, states that the health situation in the occupied Syrian Arab Golan has deteriorated in recent years, largely because of the measures taken by Israel. The report specifies that the Golan villages have only four clinics, and that these facilities cannot function normally under such conditions.

As a result of this situation, nearly 75 per cent of the region's patients and inhabitants go to West Bank hospitals run by Arab charitable organizations; however, in emergencies they are forced to seek treatment in Israeli hospitals. Furthermore, the Water Department cuts off the water supply of villages in the Golan when ground-water levels fall because the occupation authorities are pumping the water for use by the settlements. For its part, the Sick Fund (Kupat Holim) refuses to respond to demands for assistance from inhabitants of Syrian villages; it does not send ambulances to them when they request them and fails to come to the aid of pregnant women and gravely ill children.

Chief among the arbitrary measures adopted by the Israeli authorities are the following:

- (1) Since 1967, the development of hospitals, clinics and other health-care centres has been impeded;
- (2) The Israeli authorities are trying to decrease the level of services provided by Arab health-care centres by cutting back their equipment and facilities;
- (3) They interfere with the provision of services by the centres and occasionally close the centres, citing security reasons;
- (4) Each year, appropriations for Arab health facilities are reduced, while foreign aid and gifts are prevented from reaching their destination on time.

In the villages of the occupied Syrian Arab Golan, health problems are aggravated by the fact that only the absolute minimum is done to provide first aid and preventive and therapeutic care. And the situation in the health field is deteriorating, as the following show:

/...

(1) Villagers in the Arab Golan lack any means of building hospitals or improving the health situation;

(2) An Israeli identity card must be produced in order to use the facilities set up for Sick Fund participants and to obtain family allowances and retirement pensions provided by the National Insurance Institute (Keren Habituah Haleumi). In addition, a health card fee of over 2,000 Israeli pounds has recently been instituted; this measure reflects a total lack of humanitarian feeling and is designed to exploit patients and impose Israeli nationality on them by force;

(3) The cost of medical screening, treatments and medicines is high, and the four existing clinics cannot meet the needs for services; they lack medical equipment and specialized medicines - for example, they have no gynaecologist and no paediatrician. Moreover, there is only one school doctor for all the schools in the Golan, and this doctor cannot be replaced;

(4) Doctors are on call only during a few hours and on certain days of the week;

(5) There are no centres which specialize in maternal and child welfare, and no pregnancy-monitoring centres in particular;

(6) There is not a single pharmacy in any village in the Golan;

(7) Schools do not provide adequate medical services, and health status is generally mediocre;

(8) The Sick Fund provides assistance when and as it chooses;

(9) The population complains of polluted water;

(10) Despite a resurgence in epidemics, the authorities take no action;

(11) There is no drainage system in the villages for sewage disposal.

8. Human rights violations, torture, massacres and cruel and inhuman treatment

Israel is violating international and humanitarian law throughout the occupied Arab territories more and more systematically. Its barbarous racist policies have caused the Security Council to adopt many resolutions on the subject, including resolutions 605 (1987), 607 (1988) and 608 (1988). The policy of terror adopted by Israel in the occupied Arab territories is exemplified by, among other things, beatings designed to break detainees' bones, the use of toxic gas, toughening of the iron fist policy, demolition of homes, destruction of villages, banishment, administrative detention, house arrest, detention of children, minors and the elderly, curfews, sealing off of camps, suppression of the freedoms of opinion, expression and assembly, and news blackouts. This policy has exceeded all bounds since the general uprising began throughout the occupied Arab territories, including the Golan: some residents have even been buried alive and children massacred.

In the detention camps, detainees are constantly subjected to the most barbarous torture: long interrogations late into the night, beatings until they become unconscious, hot and cold showers, being forced to crawl on their knees or to stand for long periods with their arms up, having lighted cigarettes applied to the most sensitive parts of their bodies, electric shocks, being deprived of food and having blood samples taken weekly, the aim being to so weaken detainees that they have been reduced to invalids, and thus parasites, by the time they are released.

In the best traditions of fascism, this policy and these racist practices are designed to terrorize the Arab population so that they either give up or simply leave the occupied territories for ever. In our 1988 report, we cited numerous statements by Israeli officials which bore out this assessment.

We wish to recount here certain episodes in the struggle waged by our Syrian Arab people in the occupied Golan against Israeli occupation and oppression.

On 24 January 1989, a resident of Majdal Shams was arrested and accused of resisting the occupation authorities because he had distributed tracts denouncing the Israeli occupation.

On 22 February 1989, Israeli authorities arrested two teenagers from Majdal Shams and accused them of setting up a rocket launcher at a bend in the road to Mount Hermon with the intention of blowing up an Israeli vehicle.

On 16 April 1989, the Israeli daily paper Ha'aretz reported that at the weekend police from Qiryat Shmona had arrested two residents of Majdal Shams, accusing them of raising the Syrian flag in the village, where anti-Israeli slogans had been written on the walls.

Between 17 and 21 April 1989, the occupation authorities arrested over 30 inhabitants of the Golan. They also stepped up daytime and nighttime patrols to prevent the Syrian population from commemorating Syrian independence and declared the entire region a military zone to prevent the news media from reporting on Israel's acts of repression in the Golan. Those detained and accused of violating the laws in force included Nadim Taoufic Ayyoub (24 years), Wahid Assaid Ahmed (24), Majid Awwad (20), Kacem Mazid Assaid Ahmed (22), Moufid Awwad (20), Shakib Youssef Abou Jabal (17), Kacem Mustapha Mahmoud (22), Ali Abou Awwad (30), Hassan Abdallah Alkaich (18), Hassan Alkaich (35) and Moufid Alwali (30). Following these incidents, the Security Council called on Israel to abide by the provisions of the fourth Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War.

In this connection, the Israeli daily paper Ma'ariv reported in its 18 April 1989 issue that the police and security forces were to reconsider their policy towards the Arab population of the Golan, particularly with regard to visits to Syria, following the incidents that had marked the commemoration of Syrian independence. Demonstrators from Majdal Shams had gathered in front of the residence of the Commander of the northern region, raised the Syrian flag and made the "V for victory" sign. Some 500 people had also gathered in the evening on the

main square at Majdal Shams, singing patriotic songs. Tracts had allegedly been distributed and roads into the village had been blocked with tyres. At Mas'ada, the Syrian flag was hoisted on a school roof and hundreds of villagers joined up with the demonstrators from Majdal Shams, singing patriotic songs.

In its 21 April 1989 issue, the Israeli daily paper Davar reported that police in Galilee had in previous days arrested six residents of the Golan whom they suspected of having raised the Syrian flag during demonstrations and festivities commemorating Syrian independence. The police had also found a Syrian flag on the desk of the vice-chairman of the Buq'ata local council.

In its 24 April 1989 issue, the daily paper Davar reported a statement by the Registrar for the northern region that Israeli authorities had stopped giving inhabitants of the Golan the necessary authorization to visit their relatives in Syria or in the border area, on the pretext that they had taken part in demonstrations or raised the Syrian flag on the occasion of the commemoration of Syrian independence.

Between 11 and 15 May 1989, on the occasion of demonstrations in Kuneitra province marking the anniversary of the usurpation of Palestine and the fourteenth festival of the Baath pioneers, the occupation authorities arrested 52 people from the villages of Mas'ada, Buq'ata, Majdal Shams and Ein Qinyah for having gathered in the border zone to join in the festivities organized by Syrian children on the other side of the border. The occupation authorities also cut off water and electricity supplies to punish residents for having violated Israeli laws by raising their country's flag or joining in the commemoration of Syrian independence. Residents were also subjected to tear gas bombs, smoke bombs and beatings. Detainees whose names are known included Salman Youssef Fakhreddin, Youssef Soulaiman Ibrahim, Hayel Hassan Abou Jabal, Fawzi Hassan Abou Jabal, Majod Farès Abou Jabal and Khaled Mazid Abou Salah.

Lastly, we wish to recall that the occupation is itself a violation of human rights and that Israeli practices against the population of the occupied Arab territories are among the grave breaches enumerated in article 147 of the fourth Geneva Convention of 1949 relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War. These grave breaches, which are in fact war crimes, include wilful killing, torture or inhuman treatment, wilfully causing great suffering or serious injury to body or health, unlawful deportation or transfer of a protected person, depriving such a person of the rights of fair and regular trial prescribed in the Convention, and the destruction and appropriation of property not justified by military necessity and carried out unlawfully and wantonly. These breaches are also referred to in article 85 of the first Protocol additional to the Geneva Conventions, relating to the protection of victims of international armed conflicts, which further characterizes as a grave breach the transfer by the occupying Power of the civilian population of the occupied territory with a view to settling in that territory.

These serious violations, which are in fact crimes of war, call for the implementation of measures regarding collaboration between the parties to the Convention, namely article 146, by virtue of which each High Contracting Party

undertakes to search for persons alleged to have committed such grave breaches and to bring them, regardless of their nationality, before its own courts. These violations also call for the implementation of the provisions of the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, which stipulates that genocide means any acts committed with the intention of killing the members of a group, causing serious bodily or mental harm to members of the group or deliberately inflicting on the group conditions of life calculated to bring about its physical destruction in whole or in part.

It is imperative that the international community co-operate with a view to preventing and punishing the crimes of war and the crime of genocide committed by Israel so that the massacres, terror and destruction, practices which are part and parcel of this racist and expansionist régime can be brought to an end.

No effort must be spared - and your Committee has a major role to play in this regard - in ending the repression inflicted on the Arab inhabitants of the occupied Arab territories by ending the Israeli occupation, which is an impediment to international efforts to establish a just and comprehensive peace in the Middle East.
