



Security Council

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Identical letters dated 16 December 2013 from the Permanent Representative of the Syrian Arab Republic to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

On instructions from my Government, I should like to set out the position of the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic regarding the report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Disengagement Observer Force (UNDOF) over the period from 12 September to 3 December 2013.

- The Government of the Syrian Arab Republic reiterates that it is committed to its obligations under the Agreement on Disengagement and has accordingly respected the mandate of UNDOF. For over four decades, for as long as Israel has occupied the Syrian Golan, the Government has facilitated the work of UNDOF in every way, cooperating and coordinating closely and fully with the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and UNDOF command.
- Mindful of its obligations, Syria has exercised the utmost restraint in confronting the activities of armed terrorist groups in the UNDOF area of operation, something that is acknowledged in the report of the Secretary-General. Syria understands the character of the area and the obligations that are in force. It reiterates that the actions of Syrian law enforcement forces are a response to an emergency situation arising from exceptional circumstances, namely the terrorist activities of terrorist groups in the area of separation.
- My Government recalls that the actions of its law enforcement forces in the area of separation are the very least that can be done to respond to the local inhabitants' appeal for help. The population is being subjected to terrorist attacks, which also target UNDOF personnel and are directly assisted by Israeli occupation forces and the intelligence services of Arab, regional and international States that are well known to all. It is surprising that the abnormal situation in the area of separation has been justified and that the activities of the armed terrorist groups, which are supported by Israel, have been ignored, particularly as many of those activities are detailed in the report. For instance, paragraph 7 of the report states that on 12 September 2013, an armed group comprising between 500 and 700 terrorists attacked and took control of three Syrian armed forces positions to the south of the UNDOF area of operation. Elsewhere, the report states that the terrorist groups have on several occasions opened fire on United Nations vehicles. Indeed, it states unambiguously that the armed groups have obtained heavy weapons, anti-tank



missiles and rocket-propelled grenades. It draws attention to their increased use of explosive devices within the UNDOF area of operation, and to the theft of Nations weapons and ammunition, vehicles and other assets for use in terrorist operations. The Secretary-General states that countries with influence must strongly convey to the armed opposition groups the need to halt their activities. Syria expects that the United Nations Secretariat will not let matters rest there, but will rather recommend that the Security Council take immediate measures in respect of States that support and fund the terrorist groups. Such action would be consistent with Security Council resolutions, particularly those on counter-terrorism, and would ensure the protection of UNDOF personnel and the inhabitants of villages located near the area of separation.

- It is no secret that Israel is directly involved in supporting the terrorist groups. Israel has provided the groups with logistical assistance. It has transported injured terrorists over the line of separation to Israeli hospitals, where they have received treatment before being returned to Syrian territory, again over the line of separation, in order to resume their terrorist activities. Such activities have been acknowledged in periodic reports of the Secretary-General, including the latest report. The report's timid references to Israeli violations are insufficient and unacceptable. Those violations do not only contravene the 1974 Agreement on Disengagement; they also endanger UNDOF personnel. In point of fact, on 6 March 2013 and 7 May 2013, terrorist groups abducted peacekeepers belonging to the Philippines contingent. Terrorist groups have, moreover, repeatedly attacked UNDOF personnel and facilities. My Government therefore calls on the Security Council to fulfil its responsibilities under the terms of its own resolutions, including those on counter-terrorism, by taking immediate measures in respect of the States that support, fund and give safe haven to the armed terrorist groups. To ignore the danger posed by the groups' presence and activities in the area of separation would exacerbate the instability of the area and jeopardize the safety and security of United Nations personnel.
- Syria commends the efforts of UNDOF to fulfil its mandate. It again emphasizes the need to address the fundamental reason for the presence of UNDOF, namely the continuing Israeli occupation of the Syrian Golan. The Security Council must take immediate action to end the Israeli occupation of the Syrian Golan in accordance with the relevant resolutions, particularly Security Council resolution [497 \(1981\)](#), which requires Israel to withdraw fully from the Syrian Golan to the line of 4 June 1967.

I should be grateful if the present letter could be issued as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) **Bashar Ja'afari**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative