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REPORT OF THE SPECIAL COMMITTEE TO INVESTIGATE ISRAELI PRACTICES
AFFECTING THE HUMAN RIGHTS OF THE PALESTINIAN PEOPLE AND OTHER
ARABS OF THE OCCUPIED TERRITORIES

Letter dated 28 June 1990 from the Permanent Representative of
Syria 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 for 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 Palestinian People and Other Arabs of the Occupied Territories during its visit to Damascus, Syria, from 23 May to 5 June 1990.

I would be grateful if this statement were circulated as an official document of the General Assembly under item 77 of the preliminary list.

(Signed) Ahmad Fathi AL-MASRI
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

* A/45/50.

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 Palestinian People and Other Arabs of the Occupied Territories

The Israeli occupation authorities are continuing their flagrant and deliberate violations of international law, including the Charter of the United Nations, the Hague Conventions of 1899 and 1907, the 1949 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 and other international covenants. 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, in occupied Palestine, the Syrian Arab Golan and southern Lebanon alike.

Since 1967, the occupied Arab Golan has been subjected to the comprehensive and declared strategy of aggression pursued by the Israeli authorities, who maintain that the Golan is an inseparable 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, with the aim of continuing to establish settlements, expand them and bring in new immigrants from all parts of the world. This has become evident in the recent policy of bringing in vast numbers of Soviet refugees to the occupied territories, with a view to changing the composition of the population of the region and destroying its economic structure, expropriating its water resources, modifying its socio-cultural characteristics and effacing 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 on 5 February 1982 at its ninth emergency special session (ES-9/1) and reaffirmed since then at every regular session of the General Assembly.

In the face of these practices, our Arab people of the Golan have risen up with laudable bravery to resist the occupation, reaffirming on every occasion their attachment and allegiance to Syrian Arab homeland, rejecting the occupation and the decision to impose Israeli laws and 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 Arab people. Popular 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 their brothers in the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip. As a result of their stand of solidarity with their Palestinian brothers, the inhabitants of the Golan have been exposed to brutal sanctions on the part of the occupation authorities.

One of the examples of the solidarity of the people of the Golan with their brothers' intifadah was the dispatch of delegations from the occupied villages of Majdal Shams, Mas'adah, Ayn Qunyah and Buq'ata to participate in the open sit-in and hunger-strike staged in front of the Red Cross headquarters in Jerusalem to express condemnation of the latest Zionist massacre that was carried out in the settlement of Rishon Lezion against Arab workers. In addition, there was the hunger-strike of a number of Syrian detainees in occupation prisons in support of their brothers in the West Bank. The heroic uprising of the Palestinian Arab people, which has entered on its thirtieth month, has won the admiration of the international community and shown the whole world that the Palestinian people is determined to regain all its rights and will accept nothing but complete independence. The intifadah 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 the occupied Arab territories. The struggle in the area will continue in all its many forms until liberation is achieved, constituting a refutation of Zionist propaganda and its false claims that the Arab population is content with the occupation and the policy of the fait accompli.

The valiant resistance of the Arab people in the occupied Arab territories has led the occupiers to step up their means of aggression there. They have escalated from the "iron fist" policy to the policy of bone-breaking murder, deportation, the destruction of houses, and curfews lasting for days, a policy which constitutes a grave violation of human rights and fundamental freedoms, war crimes and the crime of genocide, which are subject to international sanctions. The world has witnessed all these crimes, which have revealed that Zionist racism and its hatred of other peoples in general and of the Arab people in particular are what lies behind the commission of all these crimes, as an embodiment of its venom, the effects of which have long been apparent in many countries of the world, thereby confirming once again the soundness of the United Nations resolution that determined that Zionism is a form of racism and racial discrimination.

Nothing demonstrates that better than the statement made by Knesset Member Rehavam Ze'evi on 24 October 1989, when he said that one Jew is equal to a thousand Arabs. When asked whether he was ready to amend this statement, he said: "Yes, I am prepared to amend it, as follows: one Jew, 10,000 Arabs." These barbarous words were accompanied by an increase in the participation of Zionist settlers in crimes against Arab citizens in the occupied territories, under the protection of the Israeli occupation forces. The racism, aggression and anti-Arab thrust of these crimes were greater than those characterizing the measures taken by the Israeli occupation forces.

The long series of terrorist acts committed by the Israeli occupation forces brings to mind the savage and inhuman acts perpetrated by the racist Pretoria régime against the people of South Africa and the Nazi crimes committed against civilians in Europe during the Second World War. Further proof of that is the statement made by the Israeli Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs, Binyamin Netanyahu, before a meeting of students on 19 November 1989, in which he urged the need for a collective expulsion of the Arabs. Here we must warn once again of the dangers of the continuation of these practices, in view of the explosive situation in the region, and the threat which it presents to international peace and security.

1. Policy of annexation and settlement

Since Israel's occupation of the Syrian Arab Golan in 1967, there has been a continuous policy of occupation aimed at annexing the Golan and Judaizing it by encouraging settlement there. In December 1981, Israel enacted a law imposing Israeli laws, jurisdiction and administration on the occupied Syrian Arab Golan and, on 12 February 1982, issued an order requiring the inhabitants of the Golan to carry Israeli identity cards. On the ruins of 147 Syrian Arab villages in the Golan which Israel has destroyed and of which only Majdal Shams, Mas'adat, Bug'ata, Ayn Qunyah and Al-Fajr remain, Israel has established a network of 43 settlements, comprising agricultural, industrial and tourist projects aimed at exploiting the wealth and resources of the region in order to annex and Judaize it, and it is in the process of completing three new settlements. These settlements draw water from Lake Tiberias, Baniyas and Mas'ada, and a number of earth dikes and tourist installations have been built on Mount Hermon and on the shores of Lake Tiberias. A denser road network has been constructed around the villages of the Arab Golan in preparation for cutting it off completely and destroying the existing population centres in order to remove all traces of Arab life and create the impression that the Golan is an uninhabited area.

It should be noted that the Israeli authorities have recently begun to actively promote settlement in the Golan and to increase the number of settlers there. The most important developments in this connection are as follows:

(1) The Minister for Absorption in the Golan consented, in July 1989, to the establishment of three absorption centres at Kinnasrin, Khisfin and Mevo Hama in order to absorb 400 new immigrants whose arrival was expected (Davar, 18 July 1989);

(2) In August 1989, the Israelis began an effort to increase the number of settlers in the Golan from 6,000 to 12,000 over the next five years. On 5 August 1989, Knesset Member Micha Goldman called upon the Jewish Agency and the Ministry of Absorption to endeavour to send Jewish immigrants from the Soviet Union and South America to the Golan (Ma'ariv, 6 August 1989);

(3) On 6 August 1989, the settlement of Kinnasrin began a housing operation aimed at settling 400 more families in the settlement during 1990;

(4) On 31 October 1989, a new settlement called "Had-Nes" was inaugurated in the southern Golan, able initially to absorb 12 families. The settlement was built by the Betar movement.

The Israeli authorities admitted in May that 30 families of Jewish immigrants from the Soviet Union had moved to take up residence in the Kinnasrin settlement, as the first operation for the settlement of Soviet Jews in the Golan, and, according to Israeli television, the Minister for Absorption, Yitzhak Peretz, said that there were hundreds of empty housing units in this settlement waiting to be filled in the near future with new immigrants. Statements demonstrating this Israeli policy include those made by Yitzhak Shamir to the Israeli newspaper Ma'ariv on 21 July 1987:

"Those who speak of an International Peace Conference want to give up Judea, Samaria, the Gaza District 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."

On 16 October 1987, Shamir stated to the newspaper Ha'aretz: "The city of Jerusalem, the Sharon, Samaria, Galilee and the Golan form an integral whole, and it is difficult to say that the Israeli people will ever give up these areas."

In a ministerial statement delivered on 22 December 1988, Yitzhak Shamir said that the policy of building settlements was continuing. On 19 March 1990, the Prime Minister of Israel, Yitzhak Shamir, announced his adherence to the occupation of the Golan and said in his reply to leaders of Zionist settlements who had written to him to express their concern at the statements of former United States President Carter, that the idea of abandoning the Syrian Heights did not occur to any Israeli (Al-Sharq, 30 March 1990). In April 1990, the Israeli Parliament promulgated a decree stating, inter alia, that the fate of the Golan could not be the subject of any talks, again in the context of a statement about a united Jerusalem and a call for settlement in any portion thereof.

2. Takeover of land

The Israeli authorities have promulgated many military orders amending the law applicable to the occupied Arab territories and the land-tenure system in order to justify the process of confiscation and takeover, invoking security and military exigencies. 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 confiscation have been amended in order to facilitate the full takeover 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, and, in 1979, the occupation authorities promulgated a law whereby Israeli nationals have the right to purchase land in the occupied Arab territories, thereby encouraging them to undertake Jewish settlement activities. The authorities have established settlements by means of military announcements, inasmuch as the land on which these settlements were established was regarded as areas "closed for security reasons". The authorities also confiscated special choice areas from their lawful owners by a variety of means and prevented them from having access to it. Such lands were usually sown with fruit trees.

By means of such practices, the Israeli authorities confiscated 350 hectares of land owned by Syrian Arab citizens in the Golan Heights, decreed them to be military zones and then assigned them to a number of settlements set up close to Syrian villages. The Israeli authorities have taken over natural water resources, dug wells in territory belonging to citizens, after confiscating their land, and pumped off water from this land to new settlements.

In 1980, Israel confiscated agricultural land from Syrian peasants in the village of Julis, and on 12 April 1986, the occupation authorities conducted a survey of the area extending from south-west of the town of Majdal Shams to Jisr Ma'ad north of the village of Mas'ada and known as the Al-Qati' area, in preparation for taking it over. The area covers more than 100 dunums of fertile agricultural land. On 22 April 1986, the Israeli occupation authorities set up barbed wire around an area of 150 dunums in the Balan area, near Majdal Shams, and prevented the inhabitants from approaching it. This operation was kept secret "in order to take the inhabitants by surprise and prevent them from organizing resistance". The Israeli newspaper 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 1985, the Israeli newspaper Hamodia reported that the occupation authorities were levelling ground at Ayn al-Tinah and felling all trees in the area. The newspaper Hatzofeh reported on 28 October 1986 that a citizen had been arrested in the village of Buq'ata on the charge of appropriating 7 dunums of land and installing a water tank there for agricultural purposes and that the Israeli authorities and the land administration had had the area ploughed and the water tank destroyed.

As indicated in reports of the Director-General of the International Labour Office, the confiscation operations are continuing and the military authorities have been taking over land, which, after a set period, is included in the State lands to be exploited for the establishment of new settlements. The Israeli authorities make the inhabitants hand over their land deeds in order to put the official stamp on their takeover of the land.

On 20 July 1988, the newspaper Ha'aretz reported that the occupation authorities were setting fire to trees and natural forests on the land, taking them over and banning the citizens from the forests and that they had recently lit fires in parts of Galilee and the Golan, particularly forest and pasture areas. The total area of land burned by the occupiers in occupied Palestine up to May 1990 is more than 28,000 dunums, and forest fires in the Golan up to the same date have covered more than 18,000 dunums, within the framework of the multifaceted Israeli policy of smashing the economic base of the steadfastness of the citizens of the Golan in withstanding the Zionist occupation and adhering to the land and Syrian identity.

We should like to point out that of the 1,176 square kilometres of the Golan, the Syrian Arabs are able to utilize only 200,000 dunums, of which 15,000 dunums are arable.

3. Takeover of water resources

The Israeli occupation authorities have been putting pressure on the inhabitants of the occupied Syrian Arab Golan in order to make them emigrate, making a livelihood difficult for them and weakening them economically by depriving them of water resources, diverting these to settlements and preventing the inhabitants from digging new wells.

Although the inhabitants of the Golan used to depend on the water of Birkat Ram in Mas'adah, which holds between 2 and 3 million cubic metres of water enclosed in volcanic rock, collecting the water in large metal tanks before supplying it to their lands, the occupation authorities have imposed an embargo on pumping this water to irrigate apple and other orchards.

The inhabitants are faced with a major problem 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.

The Israeli authorities took to court many farmers in the Golan who had refused to close their tanks, alleging use of State water resources and exploitation of and encroachment on neighbouring land.

The occupation authorities seek thereby to destroy the trade in apples and the cultivation of apples as a basic resource of local inhabitants. Consequently, they are confiscating spring water and diverting it to Zionist settlements. The Israeli authorities have seized the springs at Al-Ya'furi, Al-Mushayrifah and Ra's Abu Sa'd and installed pipes dozens of kilometres long in order to supply water from Mas'ada to the agricultural settlements established on the slopes of Tel Abu al-Nada, thereby significantly reducing the level of the water table whereby the Arab inhabitants irrigate their orchards and causing Syria to install a pipeline in 1984 in order to pump water to Majdal Shams. There is now a shortage of drinking water in Mas'ada, Buq'ata and Ayn al-Tinah, and the Syrian Government has dug new wells to irrigate these villages.

It should be noted that the development plan submitted to the World Zionist Organization in 1975 called for the supply of 7,590,000 cubic metres of water to Jewish settlers, who then numbered only 7,000, as compared with 2.1 million cubic metres for the more than 15,000 inhabitants of the occupied Syrian villages.

Artesian wells are now the only source of water (including drinking water), as a result of the confiscation of springs, and this affects the cultivation of crops, including apples, and also public health, particularly since the six existing wells are administered by the Israeli water authority and the water that reaches the inhabitants is often polluted.

Recently, the Israeli authorities forbade the population of Buq'ata to use the drinking water channelled to them through the pipeline from Syria and also forbade them to repair the feeder pipes on their side of the frontier.

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. This situation has also had the effect of linking the

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territories' economy to the Israeli economy, diverting thousands of agricultural, industrial and crafts workers to the Israeli labour market and obliging the majority of the population, if they are able, to immigrate 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 exert material pressure on the population. The occupation authorities prohibited the provision of any government services to any citizen who opposed the concept of annexation and the constraints on the population's freedom of movement in the Golan. That was in addition to the increase in the prices of supplies and the refusal of allowances to needy families, in spite of the taxes that were imposed on one half of the season's apple crop. Recently, the occupation authorities have prohibited exportation of the apple crop and even imposed a ban on buying it. In view of these measures, in the same year the population of the Golan staged demonstrations and a number of newspaper correspondents were arrested and their films of demonstrations, prisons and detainees were burnt.

In 1984, the occupation authorities continued the same treatment, forbidding the citizens of Majdal Shams to export their produce 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 the many checkpoints set up at crossroads, which obliged many Syrian families to leave their villages in search of a better life 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 arresting them and preventing them from working on their land.

The Syrian Arab citizens of the Golan celebrated the anniversary of Syrian independence, during the period from 15 to 18 April 1990. On that occasion, the Israeli authorities arrested dozens of people and imposed new lump-sum taxes; refusal to pay meant being sent to prison. All these efforts were aimed, basically, at impoverishing the population of the Golan, weakening patriotic resistance and forcing the population to submit or emigrate, with a view to depopulating 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 takeover of water resources by the Israeli occupier; the refusal to grant permits to the population to dig new wells on their land; 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 denying the agricultural products of the population of the region access to markets so that they could not compete with Israeli settlements products; not to mention the confiscation by Israeli tax collectors of stored apples on a variety of pretext and the destruction of cold-storage plants.

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 occupation forces - announced a boycott of the apples grown by them.

In economic terms, that 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 an increase in the number of unemployed Syrian workers, who have become 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 the integrated Israeli settlement plan designed to take away the limited sources of agricultural income, subject the Arab population of the Golan to Israeli authority and force them to emigrate from their homes and their land.

Animal husbandry

The occupation authorities are endeavouring to reduce the amount of pastureland by building roads, uprooting trees and 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 the raising of black goats without a special permit. This is used by the occupation authorities to justify the confiscation of the majority of black goats and sell them at absurdly low prices - on the pretext that the goats are a threat to the environment.

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 operating for the benefit of citizens. They also refuse to give their approval to any effort to promote the regional economy's various production sectors. They also prohibit the promotion of Arab investments or the opening of credits and do not permit the establishment of any industrial or agro-industrial project, for fear that they might compete with Israeli producers, who completed construction of a cannery in the Kinnasrin settlement in the occupied

Golan. In addition, the occupation authorities exercised control over prices, stocks and the marketing of virtually all fruit grown in the Golan, as well as over all other necessities of life there.

The occupation authorities prohibit the population of the Golan from co-operating to open credits in order to set up a cold-storage network, make co-operative 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, starting with blocks, tiles, wood products, iron-mongering 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 violate 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 terrorism against 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 who they have not dismissed to teach the requirements of Israeli curriculum. The teachers dismissed include Bahjat Salman Mar'i, Nazim Khatir, Ghassan Abu Salih, Hasan al-Qish, Najat al-Safadi, Tahir Mundhir and Majid Mahmud;

(3) They have closed many schools;

(4) School premises have become dilapidated, and the ones remaining open no longer meet the educational conditions or have the essential requirements. Nor is the inauguration of new schools permitted. The schools do not have the means to provide proper medical monitoring; there is, in fact, only one doctor in the region providing medical care for pupils;

(5) The occupation authorities impose harsh constraints on all administrative procedures and withhold personal documents from children from families that oppose the occupation, thus preventing them from attending school in the region or elsewhere;

(6) They have been preventing students from the Golan from completing their higher education either at Syrian University (since 1982) or at universities in socialist countries, and they exert pressure on consulates in order to ensure that they do not issue 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 did not have an opportunity to study in the fields in which they are best qualified;

(7) They raid the premises of educational institutions;

(8) They have arrested 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 situations in the occupied Arab territories cannot be divorced from the inhuman conditions in which workers and the majority of the population are living, in view of the total lack of civilized laws and the contempt for the laws of the international community under Israeli occupation.

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 by comparison with 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 assembly.

In the occupied areas, Arab workers are not free to establish trade unions or to exercise their trade union freedoms 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 set apart from their Israeli counterparts.

In this connection, appearing before the United States Special Committee on Preferences on 17 November 1988, Mr. Murray Rosenbluth said that the Israeli authorities were continually violating the rights of Arab workers to form associations and trade unions; that they were shutting down the premises of existing associations and expelling union members; and that they were also prosecuting 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 trade unions on the pretext that they failed to meet security standards. Mr. Rosenbluth pointed out that imprisoned Arab workers were denied their right to a fair trial and that deportation methods against union members accused of stirring up violence and unrest were arbitrary.

Appearing before the same committee on 17 November 1988, Ms. Judith Chomsky 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 Israel practices. Ms. Chomsky 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 the workers.

The International Labour Organisation recently published a report warning of the dangers of the situation and living conditions of Arab workers in the occupied Arab territories as a result of the arbitrary practices of the Israeli occupation authorities based on stripping the population of their legitimate rights. The Israeli authorities have resorted to strengthening the economic noose around their necks since the outbreak of the uprising through efforts to rid the land of its legitimate owners and then Judaize it. The report also brought out the fact that, in the context of the policy of racial discrimination, Israel is laying its hands on the economy of the occupied territory and subjecting the citizens to economic harassment by various means, including withholding permission to sell their produce and preventing them from overseeing that produce or engaging in their crafts or trades, in order to force them to take up employment on Israeli farms for absurdly low wages and in harsh working conditions in contravention of all international customs and laws.

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 standard 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 poison apple to deprive them of an education.

In 1979 alone, more than 1,786 youths were trained at such centres to work in construction, excavation, road surfacing, agricultural workshops, drainage work and all kinds of low-paid harsh work. The most outstanding features of the tragic positions of Arab workers in the occupied Arab territories are clear from the following:

(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 demands for cheap, skilled Arab labour;

(2) Most of the Arab workers are obliged to do difficult, unskilled and poorly paid work (black labour);

(3) According to seasonal agricultural conditions, the unemployment ratio decreases, causing stagnation in industrial employment and unemployment among Arab workers;

(4) The rights of Arab workers and Israeli workers are not equal either as to the level and nature of work or as to the level of wages;

(5) The Israeli economy uses cheap Arab labour. There is also an imbalance in business relations arising from the heavy dependence on the job market in Israel and 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 workers, particularly from border regions;

(7) Arab farmers cannot obtain licences to export their agricultural produce to the European community;

(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; there 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 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) Arab workers are denied full or even temporary membership in the Histadrut; they therefore cannot defend their rights through that channel.

7. The health situation

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

The World Health Organization (WHO) 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 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 those 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 it 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 health 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 minimum is done to provide first aid and preventive and therapeutic care. The situation in the health field is deteriorating, as the following show:

(1) Villages 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 children's and old people's benefits 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 and imposes 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 specialists - 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 is not backed by an alternate;

(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, in particular, no pregnancy-monitoring centres;

(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 water pollution;

(10) Despite a proliferation of mosquitoes and the resurgence of epidemics, the occupation 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 resolution 605 (1987) and 607 (1988). The policy of terror adopted by Israel in the occupied Arab territories is exemplified by, inter alia, the breaking of bones, the use of toxic gases, 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 especially 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 still subjected to the most barbarous forms of torture: long interrogations late into the night, beatings until they become unconscious, alternate hot and cold showers, being forced to crawl on their knees or to stand for long periods with their arms raised, having lighted cigarettes applied to parts of their bodies, and particularly to the most sensitive parts, electric shocks, being deprived of food and having blood samples taken weekly, the aim being so to weaken detainees that they are reduced to invalids, and thus parasites, by the time they are released. By way of example, Agence France Presse reported on 20 November 1989 that the inhabitants of Majdal Shams had issued a statement, which was passed on to the agency, concerning the condition of detainees. Among other things, detainees were deprived of their fundamental right to nourishment, with the occupation authorities providing meals consisting of spoiled food. Possibly the most serious and repugnant of the measures taken by the occupation authorities was its placing of mines and explosives on roads leading to villages and other populated areas for the purpose of terrorizing the Syrian population and inflicting the greatest possible number of casualties among them. This operation resulted in the death of a three-and-a-half-year-old child, Amir Abu Jabal, and injuries to female child Misa Abu Jabal, on 31 May 1990.

This policy and these racist practices are intended to terrorize the Arab population, using unspeakable Fascist techniques, so that they either give up, leave or simply vacate the occupied territories for ever. In our 1989 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 the Israeli occupation and its acts of oppression against the Arab population:

On the afternoon of Friday, 21 July 1989, inhabitants of the Golan established a "children's steadfastness camp" at Al-Maqarib, near Majdal Shams. About 300 children between the ages of 6 and 14 from the five Golan villages assembled at the camp to commemorate the anniversary of the martyrs of the Arab nation under the slogan: "Your hand raised against the oppressor is our generations' means of resisting the occupation." On 22 July 1989, the occupation forces attacked the camp and tried to dismantle it and detain its organizers. Residents of the Golan hastened to rescue their children and clashed with the occupation forces in an attempt to prevent them from doing so. The occupation forces continued to seal off the camp and detained 16 citizens on charges of organizing and establishing the steadfastness camp. They subsequently detained 12 individuals, and then a further 40 near Hadrat al-Sira' on charges of setting up the steadfastness camp in support of the intifadah. Among the detainees identified were: Salim Salman Abu Jabal, Nabih Ali al-Halabi, Qasim Mahmud Abu Salih al-Halabi and Nabih al-Halabi from Majdal Shams; Taysir Sabbagh (still in detention), Mufid Abd al-Wali and Hasan al-Qabash from Buq'ata; and Salman Fakhr al-Din and Fakhr al-Din al-Maqat.

On the morning of 24 July 1989, the Israeli police arrested university student Wakid Sha'lan, from the occupied village of Ayn Qunyah, on his arrival at Lod airport from the Soviet Union to spend his summer holiday with his family.

On 27 July 1989, the Israeli police summoned Tahir Mundhir and Nahlah Ahmad, from the occupied village of Ayn Tinah, for questioning and subsequently detained

them. On 26 July 1989, they had detained Yusuf Shakib Abu Jabal, Najlah Shakib and Mufid Abd-al-Wali, from Buq'ata, and Mahmud As'ad Abd-al-Wali and Nur al-Din Salah, from occupied Majdal Shams, on charges of resisting the occupation.

The health conditions of detainees from the Golan in the Ashkelon prison have deteriorated. The occupation authorities refused to provide doctors to treat them and also refused attempts by relatives of the prisoners and the Red Cross to have them examined by doctors and supplied with medicines.

In mid-August, the Kiryat Shmona/Mas'adah police arrested a number of Arab residents of the Golan, together with other residents of Galilee and Jenin. The police chief said in a statement that five Arab residents of the Golan had been detained initially, followed by four more, two of whom were from Buq'ata and the other two (girls) from Majdal Shams.

On 14 August 1989, the Israeli newspaper Hatzofeh reported that the Kiryat Shmona/Mas'adah police had over the past few days arrested a number of citizens of the Golan Heights, together with residents of Galilee and Jenin, on charges of carrying out "chauvinist" activities in villages of the Golan. The Kiryat Shmona police chief, Major Moshe Cohen, said that initially five residents of the Golan had been detained with recordings and popular songs in their possession; at the end of the week the police had arrested two residents of Buq'ata and two girls from Majdal Shams for distributing pamphlets calling for a continuation of the intifadah.

On 7 December 1989, Israel radio admitted that the occupation forces had on 6 December arrested eight youths from the village of Mas'adah on charges of inciting Syrian Arab citizens in the Golan to carry out acts in defiance of the occupation.

On 14 December 1989, to mark the eighth anniversary of the occupation forces' decision to impose Israeli law, our people in the Golan organized a comprehensive general strike. They conducted vigorous demonstrations during which they defied the occupation forces with stones and sticks and clashed with those forces. The demonstrations turned into bloody confrontations when the occupation troops tried to break them up by force, using bullets and tear-gas, which caused injuries to many Syrian citizens of the occupied Golan. The occupation forces had already closed the area and laid military siege to it. The confrontation, in which our people affirmed their adherence to their Syrian identity and affiliation to the Arab community, together with their rejection of Israeli identity, continued, leading the occupation forces to step up their presence and to arrest a number of citizens. According to some agencies, 12 or more individuals were detained, including Sulayman Hasan Shams, Izz al-Din Maddah, Jamal al-Sha'ar and Salih al-Salih, on various charges such as the throwing of Molotov cocktails at enemy patrols, resistance to the occupation and efforts to expel the occupiers, and the distribution of pamphlets stating that the Golan was an inseparable part of Syria, that freedom would come, no matter how long the occupation lasted, and that the resistance was continuing and growing.

On 24 February 1990, the Syrian Arab citizens of the occupied Golan issued a statement deploring Zionist migration to Arab Palestine and the Golan. They described such migration as a practical application of the policy of Zionist

expansion in Arab territory and a fulfilment of Zionist ambitions to establish a so-called Greater Israel by accommodating new settlers on the lands of their original Arab owners, inherited over the ages from their fathers and forefathers, and expelling those owners. Their statement confirmed that they rejected the occupation and the policy of Zionist settlement, intended at this time in particular as an attempt to thwart the courageous uprising in the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip and to foil resistance against the occupation by the free-born citizens of the Golan. The statement also affirmed the continued solidarity in struggle between our people in the Golan and those in Palestine, in their resistance against the Zionist occupation, as well as the free-born population of the Golan's endorsement of the courageous uprising and support for it by every possible means.

On 17 April 1990, Syrian residents of the occupied Golan defied the repressive measures adopted by the occupation authorities to prevent them from celebrating the Syrian independence holiday. They affirmed their determination to join their mother country in commemorating this anniversary and not to heed the military sieges and curfew imposed by the occupation authorities with effect from the afternoon of 16 April. They raised Syrian flags and banners asserting that the struggle against the occupation continued, and demonstrations to commemorate the anniversary in villages of the Golan turned into clashes and violent confrontations. A number of citizens were arrested.

The fact that it massed a large number of troops to suppress the peaceful demonstrations simply indicates that Israel is continuing to intensify its terrorist practices against the population. It is now bringing in more Jewish settlers from all over the world, and statements made recently by Prime Minister Shamir confirmed Israel's determination to press on with its plans for large-scale settlement in the occupied Arab territories as a step towards the establishment of "Greater Israel". By deliberately moving new settlers to the occupied territories, Israel is violating article 49 of the fourth Geneva Convention. 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 or unlawful confinement of a protected person depriving such a person of the rights of fair and regular trial prescribed in the Convention, and extensive 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 war crimes, 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 suppressing the crimes of war and genocide committed by Israel so that the massacres, terror, destruction and other 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 role to play in this regard - to stop the repression inflicted on the Arab inhabitants of the occupied Arab territories by ending the Israeli occupation in all of those territories, constituting as it does an impediment to efforts to bring about a just and comprehensive peace in the Middle East region.

List of those detained in the occupied Syrian Arab Golan

No.	Full name	Village	Sentence	Date of sentence
1	Samir Ali al-Qintar	Jabbat Luhnan	life	1979
2	Bashir Salimat al-Maqat	Majdal Shams	27 years	1986
3	Sidqi Sulayman al-Maqat	Majdal Shams	27 years	1986
4	Asim Mahmud al-Wali	Majdal Shams	27 years	1986
5	Sabtan Nimr al-Wali	Majdal Shams	27 years	1986
6	Ayman Hayil Nu'man Abu Jabal	Majdal Shams	12 years	1986
7	Ziyad Arif Abu Jabal	Majdal Shams	12 years	1986
8	Madhat Salih al-Salih	Majdal Shams	11 years	1986
9	Ismat Mahmud al-Maqat	Majdal Shams	11 years	1986
10	Isam Jamil Abu Zayd	Majdal Shams	10 years	1986
11	Hayil Mahmud Abu Zayd	Majdal Shams	10 years	1986
12	Abd al-Latif al-Sha'ir	Majdal Shams	7 years	1986
13	Yasir Ali Ibrahim	Mas'adah	6 years	1986
14	Khayr al-Din Tawfiq al-Halabi	Majdal Shams	6 years	1986
15	Yasir Salman Sabrah	Mas'adah	unknown	1986
16	Majd Najib al-Kahluni	Majdal Shams	unknown	1986
17	Malik Muhammad Abu Salih	Majdal Shams	unknown	1986
18	Muti' Wahbi Abu Salih	Majdal Shams	unknown	1986
19	Kunj Tawfiq Abu Salih	Majdal Shams	unknown	1986
20	Fahd Arif al-Safadi	Majdal Shams	9 years	1986
21	Rafiq Jamal Qal'ani	Majdal Shams	6 years	1986
22	Nasir Yusuf Abu Shahin	Majdal Shams	5 years	1986
