



Security Council

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Identical letters dated 22 March 2019 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 urgent instructions from my Government, I draw your attention to the following points in connection with the dangerous, ominous and irresponsible statements made on Thursday, 21 March 2019, by the President of the United States of America, Donald Trump, which constitute a threat to the peace, stability and security of the Middle East and the world, and earlier statements by members of Congress and the views expressed by United States Administration officials regarding the status of the occupied Syrian Arab Golan:

- On 21 March 2019, President Trump wrote on his Twitter feed: “After 52 years it is time for the United States to fully recognize Israel’s sovereignty over the Golan Heights, which is of critical strategic and security importance to the State of Israel and regional stability!”
- On 11 March 2019, Senator Lindsey Graham, who is Chair of the Senate Committee on the Judiciary, made a provocative visit to the occupied Syrian Arab Golan together with the Ambassador of the United States to Israel and the Prime Minister of Israel, the occupying Power. During that visit, Senator Graham said, in a reckless statement: “There is no construct I can imagine now or any time in the future for the State of Israel to give the Golan up.”

Given the seriousness of those statements, allow me to point out the following:

(a) The Government of the Syrian Arab Republic strongly condemns the statements made by President Trump regarding the legal status of the occupied Syrian Arab Golan, which the United Nations has recognized as occupied territory in various General Assembly resolutions and in Security Council resolution [497 \(1981\)](#), pursuant to which any measures taken by the Israeli occupation authorities in those occupied territories are null and void and without legal effect.

In that regard, the Syrian Arab Republic would like to underline that there is no greater rogue State or threat to international security and peace in the world today than the United States. By the stances it has adopted, it has made itself an enemy of the Syrian people and all peoples around the world that hold dear the principles of international law and reject policies of domination and colonization and the trampling underfoot of the rights of States. It stands in breach of the Charter of the United Nations and binding international resolutions.



The United States Administration, for all its ignorance and arrogance, has no right or authority to dictate the destiny of the occupied Syrian Arab Golan. Any steps it might take in terms of recognition or infringing the right of the Syrian Arab Republic to recover its sovereignty over that occupied territory are illegitimate and invalid. They constitute a breach of the obligations of the United States vis-à-vis the provisions of the Charter and the principles of international law and make it unworthy of its position as a permanent member of the Security Council.

(b) The Syrian Arab Republic condemns the provocative visit and statements made by United States Senator Lindsey Graham. It regards those incendiary statements with suspicion and concern, given that they were made in the presence of a representative of the United States Government, who passed over them in silence, and especially because they coincided with the release on 13 March 2019 by the United States Department of State of its Country Reports on Human Rights Practices, in which, for the first time, the Department of State dropped the word “occupied” from its references to the occupied Syrian Golan. They also came after the United States had voted, for the first time, against the resolution on the Syrian Golan adopted by the General Assembly at its seventy-third session and the General Assembly resolution on the occupied Syrian Golan, which was adopted as part of the work of the Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee).

My Government attaches no legal or substantive significance either to the statements by the President of the United States or to the politicized reports issued by the Department of State. However, it considers that the omission of any reference to occupation in relation to the Syrian Golan reflects a growing and dangerous new trend in United States Administration policy to openly violate resolutions of the Security Council and General Assembly.

(c) As you know, the United States voted in favour of Security Council resolution [497 \(1981\)](#), which at the time was adopted unanimously by the Council. In that resolution, it is stated that the Syrian Arab Golan is an occupied territory, that the decision by the occupying Israeli usurper to annex the Golan is null and void and without legal effect, and that the occupying Power has no right to take any measures to alter the demographic composition or true identity of the occupied Syrian Golan.

The Government of the United States, the self-styled Middle East “peace broker”, has thus formally abdicated any such role. Its position has long been aligned with that of the Israeli occupation authorities. It has backed them to the hilt as they disregard and violate international law and United Nations resolutions, in particular Security Council resolution [497 \(1981\)](#).

(d) The statements made by the President of the United States, and the fact that the adjective “occupied” in reference to the Syrian Golan was removed from a Department of State report, dovetail perfectly with the United States Government policy of making electoral mileage from undermining the rights of the Syrian and Palestinian peoples in order to win backing and funding from pro-Israeli occupation lobby groups in the United States.

(e) The hostility displayed by the President of the United States and certain officials in the executive and legislative branches is wholly unjustified both morally and legally. It is, rather, an affront to international law and comes from a party that has neither the moral authority nor the legal right to decide the fate of any of the world’s peoples or to toy with the historically established rights of other States. It has been plainly clear since President Trump made his irresponsible statements that the entire international community rejects the position of the United States and recognizes only Security Council resolution [497 \(1981\)](#) and other relevant United Nations resolutions, all of which affirm the sovereignty of the Syrian Arab Republic over the occupied Syrian Golan. However, the terrible crisis afflicting the work of the

United Nations and international relations today stems from the fact that the United States continues, in deeds and words, to hijack and run roughshod over international law, leaving the United Nations utterly incapable of enforcing its own resolutions or fulfilling its mandate to maintain international peace and security.

(f) Given the foregoing, the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic is today more than ever convinced that the Security Council has abandoned its duties and mandate to maintain international peace and security, and that the United Nations has given up on the implementation of its own resolutions regarding the settlement of the Arab-Israeli conflict. The peace process is being deliberately scuppered owing to the aggressive behaviour and policies of Israel, the reckless support they receive from the United States and the subservience of the United States Administration to Israeli policies. Taken together, these basic, dangerous factors have helped create a vacuum on the world stage that is being filled by terrorism and extremism, embodied primarily by the increasingly aggressive conduct of the Israelis, who have flouted international law with the support and connivance of a permanent member of the Security Council.

(g) My Government reaffirms that the occupied Syrian Arab Golan is an integral part of the territory of the Syrian Arab Republic. Now more than ever, its recovery from the Israeli occupiers by all the means provided for under international law remains a national policy priority. This eternal right shall not be bargained over or waived; nor can it be subject to any statute of limitations.

In that regard, the Syrian Arab citizens of the occupied Syrian Golan, who in 1981 thwarted an illegal annexation attempt by Israel, have made known to the entire world their undying and exclusive attachment to their Syrian Arab citizenship. They deserve full support in their ongoing valiant struggle to end the Israeli occupation of their land and return it to its Syrian motherland.

(h) The Government of the Syrian Arab Republic requests that the Secretary-General make a formal and unequivocal declaration reaffirming the established position of the United Nations with regard to the Israeli occupation of the Syrian Arab Golan.

(i) The Syrian Arab Republic calls on the Security Council to take effective measures to ensure that it fulfils its role and carries out its direct mandate to implement its resolutions, in particular resolutions [242 \(1967\)](#), [338 \(1973\)](#) and [497 \(1981\)](#), which require Israel to withdraw entirely from the occupied Syrian Golan to the line of 4 June 1967.

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

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