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LETTER DATED 7 APRIL 1967 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE  
OF ISRAEL ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

I have the honour, on instructions from my Government, to draw attention to the serious situation on the Israel-Syrian border resulting from continued acts of aggression and provocation by Syrian armed forces.

On 2 April, Syrian military positions in the proximity of the border opened fire on a tractor working in one of the fields belonging to the farm village of Ha'on, in the southern sector of the demilitarized zone.

On 3 April, the firing was repeated in the same area, this time using heavier weapons, including artillery.

In both cases, Israel complaints were submitted to the Mixed Armistice Commission, and investigations requested.

The field in question has been under regular Israel cultivation for a very long period. In any case, the opening of fire upon Israel civilian activities in the border area is a gross violation of the General Armistice Agreement and the unconditional cease-fire commitments repeatedly made by the Syrian authorities.

Today, 7 April, at 0945 hours, heavy machine-gun fire was opened from Syrian positions, directed at work proceeding in Ha'on fields that have been under cultivation for years. A little later, Syrian tanks and heavy mortars joined in the shooting, and a number of shells fell on the Israel village of Tel Katzir. Defensive firing was returned from the Israel side.

A cease-fire arranged by United Nations Military Observers came into operation at 11.45 hours. Five minutes later it was broken by resumed Syrian firing at the work proceeding in the Ha'on fields. Two tractors were hit and withdrawn. After artillery, mortar and machine-gun fire had continued for nearly two hours more, from the Syrian positions on the heights overlooking the area, Israel planes were eventually brought into action at 13.30 hours and silenced

three Syrian positions from which the firing was being directed. Syrian planes attempted to intercept the Israel aircraft, and two Syrian MIG.21 planes were shot down.

At 14.55 hours, four Syrian MIGs penetrated Israel air space in the Lake Tiberias area, and were driven off by Israel planes.

At 15.00 hours, Syrian positions opened heavy artillery fire on the Israel villages of Ein Gev, on the shore of Lake Tiberias, and Gadot, in the central sector of the demilitarized zone. These Syrian positions too were silenced by Israel aircraft.

At 16.00 hours, in the central sector of the border, four Syrian MIG.21 planes were intercepted by Israel aircraft. One of the Syrian planes was shot down and the others withdrew.

At 16.25 hours, Syrian MIG.21's again appeared over the border, and were intercepted by Israel planes. Three of the Syrian aircraft were brought down.

The Syrian losses in these air encounters during the course of today have been six MIG.21 aircraft. No Israel aircraft were lost.

The Israel authorities responded affirmatively to every cease-fire proposal made by the United Nations Military Observers.

As a result of the Syrian firing, two Israelis were wounded, and one of them has since died.

In recent letters to the President of the Security Council from the Permanent Representative and the Acting Permanent Representative of Israel, it was pointed out that little progress was being made in the talks on cultivation questions in the demilitarized zone, owing to Syrian obstruction and lack of co-operation, and that there had been a resumption of terrorist raids, and of belligerent threats by official Syrian spokesmen. (Reference is made to the letters of 10 February 1967 (S/7734), 6 March (S/7807), 7 March (S/7811) and 24 March (S/7835)). The present and deliberate resumption by Syrian army positions of the practice of shooting at Israel farm villages and activities is an extremely serious development, which menaces peace and tranquillity in the border area and the region.

I have the honour to request that this letter be circulated among the members of the Security Council as a Council document.

Please accept, etc.

(Signed) Michael COMAY  
Permanent Representative