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LETTER DATED 9 APRIL 1967 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE
OF THE SYRIAN ARAB REPUBLIC ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT OF
THE SECURITY COUNCIL

I have the honour, on instructions from my Government, to present to the Security Council the facts of the latest aggression, committed by regular Israeli armed forces on the Syrian-Israel demarcation lines, and later inside Syrian territory, with the traditional planning and brutality which have become a feature of the Israeli war crimes.

On 7 April 1967, at 0945 hours local time, an armoured Israeli tractor started cultivating a disputed parcel of land in the Demilitarized Zone at the approximate map reference (MR) of 210/00-237/80. This deliberate provocative act was backed by regular Israeli forces, well entrenched in the southern Demilitarized Zone, who opened heavy machine-gun fire against Syrian territory. At 1005 hours, an Israeli tank in the same area joined in the shooting on Syrian territory and was supported by rockets of SS10 type.

At 1015 hours, the Chief of the Mixed Armistice Commission (ISMAC) proposed a cease-fire which was accepted by the Syrian side. The Israeli side refused, offering 1130 hours for the cease-fire. Nevertheless, in breach of their own offer, they continued shelling after 1130 hours.

At 1337 hours, and continuing till 1621 hours, seventy-two Israeli military jet planes penetrated Syrian air space and bombarded the Syrian villages of Al-Nasiriah, Skofia, Mazra'at Izzeddine, Na'ran, Tariq Jisr, Banat Ya'qoub, Jaliliah and Al-'Oullayqah. This massive aerial attack was witnessed by the United Nations Military Observers stationed at their posts in this area.

At 1355 hours, the Israeli military positions, backed by tanks at Ell Al-Qasr, Tariq Samakh and Ain Gev in the southern Demilitarized Zone, opened light and heavy machine-gun fire on Syrian villages and positions. In legitimate self-defence, the fire was returned. Immediately after that, a complaint was submitted to ISMAC, requesting an urgent investigation.

At 1344 hours local time, six Israeli Mirage jet fighters crossed the Armistice Demarcation Lines and penetrated deeply over Syrian territory as far inside as the Damascus area. They were intercepted by Syrian fighters who engaged them in an air battle during which there was recourse to anti-aircraft fire.

This latest Israeli aggression on 7 April led to a full-scale modern battle. It was most decidedly initiated by the Israelis themselves and for the destructive consequences of which they alone carry full responsibility. If, however, their thirst for war against Syria remains unchecked, nay, even encouraged by certain Powers, the whole peace of the Middle East area will be jeopardized. We are duty bound, therefore, to give the most critical and responsible attention to this latest Israeli act of war with all its aspects, implications and ulterior motives if the peace of the whole area of the Middle East is to be safeguarded. The following remarks are necessarily pertinent:

1. The Israeli act of 7 April was executed in full cognizance of the facts and with the sole determination to provoke Syria into a full-scale war and to inflict further destruction and catastrophes upon Syria in particular and the Arab people in general. In fact, beginning with the very first day of this year, Israel started preparing the ground for a large-scale attack on Syria. That is why the Syrian Government urgently alerted the Security Council on 10 January 1967

"to the grave deterioration along the demarcation lines as a result of the reactivation by Israeli authorities of a dual aim: first, to increase tension in such a way as to make a subsequent large-scale aggression against Syria look like a logical outcome of this tension, and, second, to seal the fate of the Demilitarized Zone, liquidate the Arab rights in the tiny remaining portions of the zone, thus expanding further the scope of illegal occupation".
(document S/7673)

In subsequent letters addressed by the Permanent Representative of Syria to the President of the Security Council, the continued Israeli acts of aggression and provocation were pointed out. These acts were aimed at paralysing the work of ISMAC - while attributing this to Syria - since Israeli representatives made no secret of their stand "that the Demilitarized Zone does not fall within the competence of ISMAC" and that they "refused to consider Syria as a party when dealing with the problems of the Demilitarized Zone". (Reference is made to letters of 10 January 1967 (S/7734), 13 January 1967 (S/7680), 20 January 1967

(S/7692), 24 January 1967 (S/7696), 26 January 1967 (S/7699), 8 February 1967 (S/7725), 23 February 1967 (S/7784) and 16 March 1967 (S/7825)). Those continued provocations were nothing but manifestations of this cynical stand.

2. Indeed, anyone who has pursued closely the most recent threats and incitements to war by Israeli leaders and spokesmen, and articles in the Israeli Press, would have known such an attack to be inevitable. Following are few of the numerous threats by Israeli leaders:

On 3 April, the Israeli paper, Ha-Aretz, announced that the Israeli Cabinet had decided to cultivate all areas of the Demilitarized Zones, specifically Lots 51 and 52, which are known to belong to Arab farmers.

On 2 April 1967, the Jerusalem Post quotes Premier Levi Eshkol as follows: "The Prime Minister doubted whether the United Nations 'could do much good either for us or for the Arabs'."

No greater challenge to the authority of the United Nations and previous Security Council resolutions regarding the Demilitarized Zones, or utter disregard of international law and ethics could be conceived than by these words and acts.

On 3 March 1967, in an article entitled, "It May be Time to Act Against Syria", the Jerusalem Post reported:

"The Minister of Transport, Mr. Moshe Carmel, one of the leaders of Ahdut Ha'avoda, suggested last night that the time may have come to 'act vigorously against Syria, whatever her relations with the Soviet Union'."

The Jerusalem Post significantly adds: "Mr. Carmel... was a general in the War of Liberation."

We here digress to note what the "War of Liberation" meant in Zionist ideology, since this is directly relevant to what happened on 7 April, and is intimately connected with the chain of events that have been upsetting and will continue to upset the Middle East area. I quote from official texts of the Department of State of the United States Government:

On 23 January 1943 the American Minister in Egypt, Mr. Kirk, cabled the Secretary of State in Washington as follows:

"On the Jewish side I have found Zionist officials of the Jewish Agency uncompromisingly outspoken in their determination that Palestine at the end of this war shall become not merely a national home for the Jews, but a

Jewish state despite any opposition from the 1,000,000 Arabs living there. In various ways the main result of many of their efforts seems to be to goad Palestinian Arabs into breaking informal truce that has existed since war began. This enormously increased assurance on part of Jews in Palestine stems from two main sources: (a) their feeling that they have the increasing support of public opinion in Great Britain and the United States; (b) their confidence in their increased numbers and in their supply of arms that makes them feel they can more than hold their own in actual fighting with Arabs of Palestine.

"It is no secret that the Hagana, their secret Jewish military organization, has plans fully made and is well equipped not only with small arms, but also with tommy-guns and machine guns smuggled to Palestine during the last two years." (Foreign Relations of the United States, 1943, Vol. IV, Government Printing Office 1964, p. 748)

On 5 May 1943, Brigadier General Patrick J. Hurley, Personal Representative of President Roosevelt, also cabled to the President:

"For its part, the Zionist organization in Palestine has indicated its commitment to an enlarged program for (1) a sovereign Jewish State which would embrace Palestine and probably Transjordan, (2) an eventual transfer of the Arab population from Palestine to Iraq, and (3) Jewish leadership for the whole Middle East in the fields of economic development and control." (Ibid., p. 777)

The further expansion and occupation by the Israelis now of the Demilitarized Zone is but a link and a natural result of this expansionist policy. It is the Zionist "final solution of the Arab problem," namely, to clear the land of its Arab inhabitants, as happened to the Arab people of Palestine.

Indeed, the very conclusion of the statement of Mr. Levi Eshkol of 2 April quoted above, is very revealing. He said,

"Israel has not been approached so far on a treaty on non-proliferation of nuclear weapons. Indeed, there was no difference how men die - whether from nuclear or conventional arms." (Jerusalem Post, 2 April 1967)

The utter cynicism in these pronouncements need hardly be overemphasized, and I leave it to the distinguished members of the Security Council to ponder over the sinister intent behind this statement.

3. The report to the Security Council made by the Secretary-General on the "Present Status of the Demilitarized Zone Set Up by the General Armistice Agreement Between Israel and Syria" (document S/7573) proved beyond any doubt the building

and extension by the Israelis of fortifications in the Demilitarized Zones, the concentration of forces and military equipment, the refusal by the Israelis to permit the United Nations Observers to inspect the area, to dismantle those fortifications, to permit the return of hundreds of Arab farmers to their villages in the Demilitarized Zones, as decreed by the Security Council resolutions and in accordance with the General Armistice Agreement. Instead of respecting and observing these directives, Mr. Levi Eshkol and his Cabinet insisted on cultivating whatever has remained of Arab lands in the Demilitarized Zones and expelling hundreds more of the Arab farmers from these areas. Appeals of the Chief of Staff and ISMAC to meet regularly with the Mixed Armistice Commission to discuss fully the problems of cultivation and warnings through ISMAC to stop cultivation until agreement was reached went unheeded. Several times during the past two weeks the Israelis continued to cultivate the disputed areas in the Demilitarized Zones for the sole purpose of instigating hostilities. This they did by armoured tractors protected by tanks and every armament, illegally placed in the Demilitarized Zones, in violation of the General Armistice Agreement. This demonstrates beyond any doubt a clear criminal intent to provoke a large-scale war with Syria.

4. The detailed description of the aggression on 7 April, as outlined above, is pointed by the use of the large number of jet bombers and fighters in the battle which shelled the innocent inhabitants of villages, killing indiscriminately men, women and children. Details of these atrocities will be communicated in due time to the Security Council. The same Israeli planes penetrated deeply beyond the Armistice Demarcation Line, but failed to inflict further damage on civilian areas, as Syrian planes were able to meet them and defeat their intent. Nevertheless, Israeli bombers used bombs of half a ton weight and napalm bombs against civilians. It will be recalled that the same napalm bombs were employed against Syrian civilians in 1964 and in July 1966. In both cases complaints were submitted by Syria to the Security Council.

5. All this is being perpetrated in flagrant violation of all international agreements and obligations cited above, while the Israeli representatives at the United Nations submit one letter after another, paying lip service to the United Nations and its organs while indulging in full distortions, deliberate lies and hypocrisy. The United Nations and the Security Council, by giving even the

slightese acceptance to these fabrications and falsifications, have made of Israel a pampered professional criminal highly equipped with the most modern destructive tools wherewith to threaten world peace and security.

6. In carrying out this barbaric aggressive warfare, the grave attack of 7 April being but a part of it, Israel is in fact executing the very task for which it was created, namely, to serve as a guardian of imperialist interests in the Arab world. Indeed, one wonders why so much eager interest in the problems of Aden, the South Arabian Federation and British presence in the area was displayed by Israeli Foreign Minister Eban during his visit to London last February (see the Israeli Digest of 10 March 1967). Mr. Eban himself who usually argues that Israel is an integral part of the Middle East (see his article, "Reality and Vision in the Middle East", Foreign Affairs, July 1965), seemed anxious in London to prove that Israel and the Jewish people are an extension of Europe and guardians of European economic interests. The following were his own words:

"The Jewish people were particularly part of European history - part of Europe's glory and of Europe's tragedy, and belonged to Europe's scientific and technological community.

"Moreover, Israel was a good customer in Europe. It was perhaps not known that she was a better customer for British goods than was the Soviet Union; that she was the chief customer in Europe of Italy and France. 'Israel is a small body with a large mouth', he said." (The Jewish Observer and Middle East Review of 24 February 1967)

However, the Arab masses, determined to carry on their revolutionary progress toward a better life, will not be distracted by Israeli obstruction. The Israeli challenge simply adds to their zeal.

7. The Government and people of Syria are determined not to accept more humiliation from the Zionist settlers in Arab Palestine, in spite of all the backing they receive from their masters and regardless of the results. They are determined not to let Israel solve her problems and internal difficulties to their detriment. For the large-scale unemployment in Israel, amounting to at least a hundred thousand unemployed, the strikes, demonstrations and clashes between civilians and police, the participation in a hideous international crime resulting in the gaoling of two Israeli writers, mysteriously tried and locked away, all this and much more will not be solved by precipitating a large-scale war against Syria

and by completing occupation of the Demilitarized Zones, in order to distract the attention of the Israelis themselves and world public opinion.

8. Neither can this aggression on 7 April solve the tenuously artificial existence of Israel in the area, which was described by an English writer in the following terms:

"... despite immense efforts the Israelis have not yet forged themselves into a nation. They are not yet one people. They are simply a collection of Jews from all over the world, and the influence of their mother countries is still stronger on them than the influence of the new Jewish State". (Article by Anthony Carthew, New York Times Magazine, 18 December 1966, p. 83)

Those States, therefore, which have helped to foster this artificial creation, and which have used Israel as a base of aggression against the whole Arab nation since the Suez war up till now, must by this time comprehend the irreducible truth of the artificiality of this Zionist settler régime in Palestine.

9. The aggression of 7 April against innocent Syrian people and territory, the killing of men, women and children, has but added a page of War Crimes and crimes against humanity to the long record of war crimes by the Zionist settler régime. My country, as well as all other Arab independent States, joined the United Nations and declared war on nazism and fascism because of their war crimes and crimes against humanity. The same opposition must in the name of morals, ethics and consistency, face war criminals anywhere. History, the ultimate and final tribunal of mankind, will render its verdict. The dastardly aggression against Syria on 7 April was nothing but another Zionist war crime.

I would be grateful to Your Excellency if this letter is circulated as an official document to the members of the Security Council.

Please accept, Sir, the assurances of my highest consideration.

(Signed) George J. TOMEH
Ambassador
Permanent Representative
