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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

The occupied Syrian Golan

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

The present report has been prepared by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights pursuant to General Assembly resolution [68/84](#), in which the Secretary-General was requested to report to the Assembly at its sixty-ninth session on the implementation of the resolution.

* [A/69/150](#).



1. The present report is submitted pursuant to General Assembly resolution [68/84](#), in which the Assembly called upon Israel, the occupying Power, to comply with the relevant resolutions on the occupied Syrian Golan, in particular Security Council resolution [497 \(1981\)](#), in which the Council decided that the Israeli decision to impose its laws, jurisdiction and administration on the occupied Syrian Golan was null and void and without international legal effect, and demanded that Israel rescind forthwith its decision. The Assembly repeated its call upon Member States not to recognize any of the legislative or administrative measures and actions referred to in the resolution and requested the Secretary-General to report to the Assembly at its sixty-ninth session on the implementation of resolution [68/84](#).

2. On 23 April 2014, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), on behalf of the Secretary-General, addressed a note verbale to the Government of Israel, in which Israel was asked to provide information on any steps it had taken or envisaged taking concerning the implementation of the relevant provisions of the aforementioned resolution. At the time of reporting, no reply had been received.

3. Also on 23 April, OHCHR, on behalf of the Secretary-General, sent a note verbale to the Permanent Mission of the Syrian Arab Republic and all other permanent missions to the United Nations in Geneva, asking Member States to provide information on any steps they had taken or envisaged taking concerning the implementation of the relevant provisions of the resolution. In addition to the response from the Permanent Mission of the Syrian Arab Republic, replies were received from the Permanent Missions of Algeria, Colombia, Cuba and Slovakia to the United Nations in Geneva.

4. In its reply dated 6 June 2013, the Syrian Arab Republic mentioned that, since 1967, the international community had rejected the Israeli occupation of the Syrian Golan, as reflected in several United Nations resolutions, most recently in General Assembly resolution [68/17](#). The Syrian Arab Republic recalled that after 47 years of occupation, Israel continued its practices with impunity and with disregard for international law and United Nations resolutions, despite repeated international calls to end the occupation and to halt its daily repressive practices in the occupied Syrian Golan.

5. The Syrian Arab Republic affirmed that the achievement of a just and comprehensive peace in the Middle East would require the implementation of United Nations resolutions aimed at ending the Israeli occupation of the Syrian Golan and other Arab territories. The Syrian Arab Republic stated that President Bashar al-Assad had shown, on several occasions, his willingness to resume peace negotiations on the same basis upon which the Madrid peace process was started in 1991. It further noted that in international forums, the Syrian Arab Republic had declared its full commitment to relevant international resolutions and had called for their implementation, in particular Security Council resolutions [242 \(1967\)](#), [338 \(1973\)](#) and [497 \(1981\)](#). The Syrian Arab Republic also called for the implementation of the principle of land for peace, in order to ensure the full withdrawal by Israel from all of the occupied Syrian Golan to the line of 4 June 1967.

6. According to the Syrian Arab Republic, in addition to the occupation of the Syrian Golan, Israel persisted in its aggression and provocation by providing logistical support to what the Syrian Arab Republic referred to as “terrorists”, and through military intervention in the Syrian Arab Republic, such as the attacks

against a school and a mosque in Al-Ahmadiyah village. The Syrian Arab Republic mentioned that providing support to those individuals was in flagrant violation of international law and the separation of forces agreement.

7. The Syrian Arab Republic condemned the Israeli settlement policy in the occupied Syrian Golan, noting that Israel continued to disregard the resolutions of the Security Council, the General Assembly and the Human Rights Council on the matter, most recently Human Rights Council resolution [25/31](#). In that resolution, the Human Rights Council confirmed the illegality of the settlements and other Israeli activities in the occupied Syrian Golan, and reiterated its call on Israel to desist from changing the physical character, demographic composition, institutional structure and legal status of the occupied Syrian Golan.

8. The Syrian Arab Republic condemned Israeli practices and conduct aimed at controlling and looting resources in the occupied Syrian Golan, in violation of Security Council resolution [497 \(1981\)](#) and General Assembly resolution [68/235](#) on the permanent sovereignty of the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and of the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan over their natural resources. According to the Syrian Arab Republic, Israel has exploited the natural resources of the occupied Syrian Golan, and allowed settlers to exclusively use those resources, while depriving the Syrian population of their benefits. The Syrian Arab Republic also warned of the risks of the measures taken by Israel to explore for oil in the occupied Syrian Golan and referred to the decision of the Israeli Ministry of National Infrastructures, Energy and Water Resources to grant United States-based Genie Oil and Gas a licence to carry out such exploration, noting that it constituted a gross violation of international law and United Nations resolutions.

9. As in previous notes verbales, the Syrian Arab Republic reiterated its concerns regarding the extraction of water by Israel from Lake Masada, in 2010 to establish a farm for settlers, considering that the action constituted a violation of the Fourth Geneva Convention of 1949 and that it had led to an economic and environmental disaster for the occupied Syrian Golan. Furthermore, the Syrian Arab Republic condemned the funding by the European Union of a survey aimed at promoting alternative tourism in the Israeli settlements in the occupied Syrian Golan.

10. The Syrian Arab Republic called upon Member States to refuse, in accordance with their obligations under international law, the importation of natural or manufactured products from the occupied territories and to remind Israel of its obligations under international law. In that context, the Syrian Arab Republic referred to reports on settlers exporting wine produced in the occupied territory to the European Union while illegally labelling it as an Israeli product.

11. The Syrian Arab Republic repeated its rejection of the decision by the Knesset on 22 November 2010 to organize a general referendum on the withdrawal of Israel from the occupied Syrian Golan and East Jerusalem. According to the Syrian Arab Republic, the decision was not in compliance with Security Council resolution [497 \(1981\)](#) and was a violation of international law, which stipulates that a territory should not be acquired by force.

12. The Syrian Arab Republic reiterated its request to the Secretary-General, the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, the President of the Human Rights Council and the President of the International Committee of the Red Cross

that they pressure Israel to ensure that Syrian prisoners detained in its jails were kept under more humane and healthier conditions, and to condemn inhumane conditions and the deprivation of visitation rights.

13. As in previous notes verbales, the Syrian Arab Republic called for international pressure on Israel to allow the Syrian population of the occupied Syrian Golan to visit their families in the Syrian Arab Republic through the Quneitra crossing. The Syrian Arab Republic noted that preventing such visits was in violation of the Geneva Conventions and customary international humanitarian law and led to the suffering of Syrians in the occupied Syrian Golan.

14. The Syrian Arab Republic concluded by stating that reaching sustainable peace and stability in the Middle East would require measures to ensure the enforcement of all relevant international resolutions, including the Geneva Conventions, without discrimination or selectivity.

15. On 9 July 2014, the Permanent Mission of Slovakia to the United Nations in Geneva sent a note verbale announcing that, in accordance with resolution [68/84](#), it did not recognize any of the legislative or administrative measures and actions taken by Israel.

16. In its response dated 12 June 2014, the Permanent Mission of Cuba to the United Nations in Geneva reiterated the importance of efforts within the framework of the United Nations to end the Israeli occupation of the Syrian Golan. At the same time, Cuba urged the international community not to recognize any legislative or administrative measures undertaken by Israel in line with resolution [68/84](#). Cuba reaffirmed that all legislative and administrative measures and actions taken by Israel to change the legal status, physical characteristics, demographic composition and the institutional structure of the occupied Syrian Golan were null and without any legal validity. Cuba also indicated that the acquisition of territory was non-admissible by virtue of international law and that it was unacceptable for the Syrian Golan to remain under the military occupation of Israel.

17. Cuba called upon Israel to withdraw from all of the occupied Syrian Golan to the line of 4 June 1967, in compliance with Security Council resolutions [242 \(1967\)](#) and [338 \(1973\)](#). It further stated that Israel should renounce its unrestrained attempts to take over the occupied Syrian Golan. In the view of Cuba, the foreign occupation, policies of expansion and aggression, racial discrimination, the establishment of settlements, the creation of fait accompli on the ground and the forcible annexation of territories were practices that violated international instruments and norms.

18. Moreover, Cuba considered that practices and conduct by Israel to control and usurp the resources of the occupied Syrian Golan violated Security Council resolution [497 \(1981\)](#) and General Assembly resolution [68/235](#). Cuba further condemned the “brutal” practices in Israeli prisons and reiterated its serious concerns about the inhumane conditions to which Syrian detainees had been subjected, which had had a negative impact on their health and had put their lives in danger, in clear violation of international humanitarian law.

19. Cuba indicated that, in line with the Arab Peace Initiative and the Madrid peace process, and in conformity with relevant Security Council resolutions, the 120 members of the Non-Aligned Movement had expressed their unconditional support for and solidarity with the legitimate demand of the Syrian Arab Republic to

reinstate its full sovereignty over the occupied Syrian Golan. Cuba considered the ongoing occupation of the Syrian Golan and its de facto annexation by Israel to be an obstacle to achieving a just, comprehensive and durable peace in the region.

20. On 24 June 2014, the Permanent Mission of Colombia to the United Nations in Geneva replied to the note verbale sent by OHCHR. Colombia stated that it viewed the situation in the Middle East as an integral issue and therefore advocated a structured and lasting solution to the situation in the region. Colombia viewed negotiation as the only means to achieve a lasting solution and highlighted that it was unacceptable to use force as a means to obtain territory. Colombia stressed its support for achieving lasting regional peace through consensus and dialogue.

21. On 3 July 2014, the Permanent Mission of Algeria to the United Nations in Geneva responded to the aforementioned note verbale. It stated that on several occasions Algeria had condemned the Israeli occupation of the Syrian Golan and had called for the resumption of Syrian sovereignty over the territory and respect for human rights in the region. According to Algeria, solving the issue of the occupied Syrian Golan was a prerequisite for a fair and comprehensive solution to the Israeli-Arab conflict as a whole.

22. Algeria condemned in the strongest terms possible the repressive practices of Israel against the Syrian population, and its practices to change the demographic composition of the occupied Syrian Golan through the establishment of settlements. Algeria expressed support for numerous resolutions adopted by the League of Arab States in which Israeli practices and gross violations of the human rights of the Syrian population in the occupied territory were condemned. According to Algeria those resolutions called upon the United Nations, the Security Council and the Human Rights Council to urge Israel, as the occupying Power, to respect the Fourth Geneva Convention of 1949 and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights; to protect the rights of the Syrian population in the occupied Syrian Golan; and to facilitate visits by members of that population to their families in the Syrian Arab Republic. The resolutions also called upon those entities to hold Israel responsible for the violations committed on a daily basis in the occupied territory.

23. In addition, Algeria stated that Israel should respect Security Council resolutions concerning the occupied Syrian Golan, particularly resolution [497 \(1981\)](#), and urged the international community to request that Israel abolish its decision to impose its laws, jurisdiction and administration on the occupied Syrian Golan.