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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 pursuant to General Assembly resolution [74/90](#) of 13 December 2019, in which the Secretary-General was requested to report to the Assembly at its seventy-fifth session on the implementation of the resolution. It includes a summary of communications received from the Governments of the Syrian Arab Republic, Qatar and the Islamic Republic of Iran.

* [A/75/150](#).

** The present document was submitted late to the conference services without the explanation required under paragraph 8 of General Assembly resolution [53/208](#) B.



I. Introduction

1. The present report is submitted pursuant to General Assembly resolution [74/90](#), adopted on 13 December 2019, in which the General Assembly called upon Israel, the occupying Power, to comply with the relevant resolutions on the occupied Syrian Golan. The Assembly highlighted in particular Security Council resolution [497 \(1981\)](#), in which the Council, inter alia, 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.

2. Also in resolution [74/90](#), the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General to report to the Assembly at its seventy-fifth session on the implementation of the resolution.

II. Implementation of resolution [74/90](#)

3. On 11 May 2020, 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 referring to resolution [74/90](#) and requesting information on any steps taken, or envisaged to be taken, concerning the implementation of the resolution. At the time of reporting, no response had been received from the Government of Israel.

4. Also on 11 May and on behalf of the Secretary-General, OHCHR addressed a note verbale to all permanent missions in Geneva to draw their attention to the resolution and to request information on any steps taken, or envisaged to be taken, concerning the implementation of the resolution. Responses were received from the Islamic Republic of Iran, Qatar and the Syrian Arab Republic.

5. Also on the same day and on behalf of the Secretary-General, OHCHR addressed a note verbale to the competent United Nations organs, specialized agencies, international and regional intergovernmental organizations and international humanitarian organizations, bringing the resolution to their attention. At the time of reporting, no responses had been received.

6. On 5 June 2020, the Permanent Mission of the Syrian Arab Republic addressed a note verbale to OHCHR, stressing that, since Israel began its occupation in 1967, the international community had been calling for the latter's full withdrawal from the occupied Syria Golan, in compliance with United Nations resolutions, including Security Council resolution [497 \(1981\)](#). The Syrian Arab Republic noted that, in the most recent resolutions on the occupied Syrian Golan, including General Assembly resolutions [74/90](#) and [74/14](#), as well as in previous resolutions on the subject, all legislative and administrative measures and actions taken by Israel, the occupying Power, that purported to alter the character and legal status of the occupied Syrian Golan had been determined to be null and void, to constitute a flagrant violation of international law and of the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War, of 12 August 1949 (Fourth Geneva Convention) and to have no legal effect. The Syrian Arab Republic further noted that, in the two aforementioned resolutions, the Assembly had called upon Israel to desist from any activities that changed the physical character, demographic composition, institutional structure and legal status of the occupied Syrian Golan. The Syrian Arab Republic emphasized in particular the call to desist from the establishment of settlements.

7. The Syrian Arab Republic noted that, despite repeated international resolutions calling for an end to the occupation of the Syrian Golan by Israel, the latter continued

its occupation with impunity. The Syrian Arab Republic also noted that Israel continued to benefit from protection from some Member States of the Security Council, including the United States of America.

8. The Syrian Arab Republic reiterated its categorical rejection of the decision by the President of the United States to recognize what the latter had referred to as “Israeli sovereignty” over the occupied Syrian Golan. The Syrian Arab Republic noted that that action constituted a flagrant violation of international law and of the Charter of the United Nations and relevant United Nations resolutions, in particular Security Council resolution [497 \(1981\)](#), which had been adopted unanimously by the Security Council. The Syrian Arab Republic noted that that action undermined international law and breached legal norms. It affirmed that the decision by the United States did not change the legal status of the Syrian Golan as an occupied Syrian Arab territory, in accordance with international law and relevant United Nations resolutions. The Syrian Arab Republic urged all countries of the world to respect United Nations resolutions and not to recognize any measure that was inconsistent with those resolutions.

9. The Syrian Arab Republic recalled international reactions condemning the action of the United States. It noted the position of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, which, at its summit meeting held in Baku on 25 and 26 October 2019, reiterated its principled position concerning the occupied Syrian Golan and the protection of the rights of its Syrian citizens, condemned the recognition by the United States of the annexation by Israel of the occupied Syrian Golan, called on the international community and the Security Council to live up to their responsibilities in that regard and described the declaration made by the United States as being in violation of international law and of the purposes and principles of the Charter and relevant United Nations resolutions, including Security Council resolution [497 \(1981\)](#). The Syrian Arab Republic also recalled the statement issued in 2019 by the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, in which the Organization condemned the recognition by the United States of “Israelisovereignty” over the occupied Syrian Golan and stressed that it was a flagrant violation of international law and relevant United Nations resolutions, especially Council resolutions [242 \(1967\)](#), [338 \(1973\)](#) and [497 \(1981\)](#).

10. The Syrian Arab Republic condemned what it described as the attempt by Israel to apply its laws within the occupied Syrian Golan through the establishment of local councils therein and praised the rejection of those councils by the residents of the occupied Syrian Golan through the boycotting of elections.

11. The Syrian Arab Republic also condemned what it described as pressure applied by Israel on the population of Arab villages in the occupied territory to accept ownership deeds issued by the Israeli Land Registry instead of ownership deeds issued by the Syrian Arab Republic. The Syrian Arab Republic noted that residents had been threatened with the expropriation of their land if they did not accept the property documents issued by the Israeli Land Registry.

12. The Syrian Arab Republic noted that, in April 2019, Israel had announced plans to expand settlements, including the building of 30,000 housing units, the construction of new cities and the transfer of 25,000 settlers to the occupied Syrian Golan. The Syrian Arab Republic asserted that the aim of those actions was to change the demographic composition of the area. The Syrian Arab Republic condemned the settlement practices carried out by the occupying Power, as well as its attempt to reinforce its occupation and the continued repression of the people of the occupied Syrian Golan, noting that Israel had benefited from unlimited support from the current Government of the United States.

13. The Syrian Arab Republic emphasized the danger of the attempts by Israel to confiscate agricultural land and establish an agricultural reality in support of Israeli settlers. It asserted that such actions were aimed at limiting agriculture as a source of livelihood for the Arab residents of the Golan. The Syrian Arab Republic also noted that those actions significantly restricted the movement of Arab residents, trapping them in their villages and cities, preventing the natural growth of those villages and cities and, in some cases, displacing them from their lands.

14. The Syrian Arab Republic called on Member States to refrain from making any kind of economic or tourism investment in Israeli settlements and to refuse to import agricultural and manufactured products produced in the occupied territories. The Syrian Arab Republic also warned of the consequences of a multi-year plan to develop and strengthen agriculture in the 33 Israeli settlements built in the occupied Syrian Golan, noting that the plan had been approved by the Government of Israel in order to encourage the entry of Israeli youth into the agricultural sector through provision of support and systematic assistance to settlers.

15. The Syrian Arab Republic condemned the continued use and depletion by the occupying Power of natural resources of the occupied Syrian Golan for the benefit of settlers and in support of settlement activities. The Syrian Arab Republic noted that landowners were deprived of the opportunity to benefit from their own land and natural resources, in violation of relevant United Nations resolutions, including General Assembly resolution [72/240](#), entitled “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”.

16. The Syrian Arab Republic reiterated its condemnation of the project to build wind turbines on the private property of Arab residents of the occupied Syrian Golan, noting that the project had harmed more than 3,600 acres of agricultural land and numerous apple and cherry orchards. The Syrian Arab Republic warned of environmental and health hazards associated with the project. It noted that, at the beginning of February 2020, the population of the occupied Syrian Golan had announced a comprehensive general strike to protest the project which, the Syrian Arab Republic noted, would support settlement plans in the occupied Syrian Golan. The Syrian Arab Republic noted that Israeli authorities had arrested individuals who had protested the installation of the wind turbines and that some had been targeted with legal action, which the Syrian Arab Republic described as reprisals for their opposition to the project.

17. The Syrian Arab Republic demanded that due attention be paid to the health condition of the Arab residents of the occupied Syrian Golan and that the relevant international organizations ensure the provision of urgently needed health and medical supplies within the context of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic. The Syrian Arab Republic noted that the Arab population of the occupied Syrian Golan was in a situation of severe vulnerability as a result of an acute shortage of supplies and medical equipment, compounded by what it described as deliberate disregard for the Arab population by the occupying Power.

18. The Syrian Arab Republic warned against the use by Israel of the political and economic support that it received to reinforce its occupation of the occupied Syrian Golan and its continued violation of international conventions and resolutions, especially Security Council resolution [497 \(1981\)](#) and the provisions of the Fourth Geneva Convention.

19. The Syrian Arab Republic renewed its call on the United Nations and Member States concerned with preserving international law to pressure Israel, the occupying Power, to end its occupation of the Syrian Golan. The Syrian Arab Republic further called upon the international community not to recognize any legal situation arising

from violations of the peremptory norms of international law and to refrain from providing any assistance to the occupying Power. The Syrian Arab Republic called on the international community and international organizations to monitor flagrant violations of international law, fundamental human rights and the Fourth Geneva Convention and to express categorical rejection of such violations. It further called on the international community to ensure that Israel, as the occupying Power, ceases such violations and illegal practices, stops its repressive measures against the Arab population of the occupied Syrian Golan and ends the occupation.

20. The Syrian Arab Republic affirmed that the occupied Syrian Golan was an integral part of its territory and that ending the Israeli occupation, by all means afforded under international law, was a right that was not subject to negotiation and had no statute of limitations.

21. The Syrian Arab Republic reaffirmed that the stability of the Middle East region required that measures be taken to implement all relevant United Nations resolutions, especially Security Council resolutions [242 \(1967\)](#), [338 \(1973\)](#), [497 \(1981\)](#) and [2334 \(2016\)](#) calling for an end to the occupation by Israel of Arab territories, including the Syrian Golan, and for the withdrawal of Israel to its borders of 4 June 1967.

22. In a note verbale dated 4 June 2020, the Permanent Mission of Qatar highlighted the position of Qatar concerning the Syrian Golan as an occupied Arab land and noted its rejection of any attempts to undermine international resolutions confirming that the occupied Syrian Golan belonged to the Syrian Arab Republic and was occupied by Israel. Qatar further asserted that the imposition by Israel of its laws, jurisdiction and administration on the occupied Syrian Golan was null and void.

23. Qatar further stressed that any aid provided to Israeli occupation served to undermine international resolutions related to the occupied Syrian Golan, in particular Security Council resolutions [242 \(1967\)](#) and [497 \(1981\)](#).

24. Qatar highlighted its annual participation in the ordinary session of the Council of the League of Arab States convened at the ministerial level, noting its adoption, on 4 March 2020, of a decision on the Palestinian issue and the Arab-Israeli conflict with regard to the occupied Arab Syrian Golan. Qatar attached a copy of the decision to its note verbale.

25. In a note verbale dated 4 June 2020, the Islamic Republic of Iran noted that it was well-recognized that the occupied Syrian Golan was an integral part of the Syrian Arab Republic and that it had been occupied by Israel following frequent acts of aggression committed by Israel against the Syrian Arab Republic in past decades. The Islamic Republic of Iran emphasized that the occupation remained a significant challenge in the region and noted that it entailed violations of the principles of international law, including respect for the territorial integrity of a Member State, as well as flagrant violations of the human rights of the Arab residents of the occupied Syrian Golan.

26. The Islamic Republic of Iran noted that Israel continued to suppress and restrict the rights of the Arab residents of the occupied Syrian Golan through the construction of illegal settlements, the imposition of its own laws and regulations on the occupied people and the implementation of actions that put the livelihoods of the Arab residents of the occupied Syrian Golan at risk, including the misuse of natural resources. The Islamic Republic of Iran noted that those actions had been taken despite frequent condemnation by the international community, over the past 50 years, expressed in numerous resolutions of the Security Council, the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council and the Human Rights Council. The Islamic Republic of Iran highlighted that the principles of its foreign policy included countering occupation and all forms of racial discrimination and negating hegemony. It expressed deep

concern over the human rights situation in the occupied Syrian Golan, which it described as disturbing.

27. The Islamic Republic of Iran noted that it had taken the following positions and actions in the context of paragraph 6 of General Assembly resolution [74/90](#):

(a) Frequent condemnation of policies and practices of Israel in extending its jurisdiction and laws to the occupied Syrian Golan and of disregard by Israel for the adverse effects of those actions;

(b) Rejection and condemnation of all illegal settlements in the occupied Syrian Golan, which have put residents in a difficult situation, forcing some to leave their homes, as part of a policy by Israel to introduce demographic change to the area;

(c) Support for the right of return of refugees to their areas of residence in their homelands;

(d) Condemnation of the imposition by Israel of its citizenship on Syrian nationals residing in the occupied Syrian Golan;

(e) Refusal to recognize any policy or measure aimed at continuing the occupation of the Syrian Golan;

(f) Objection to any position held by States or organizations containing recognition of Israeli sovereignty over the occupied Syrian Golan;

(g) Rejection of any policy or measure conducive to violations of the human rights of the Syrian people living in the occupied Syrian Golan, including the rights to self-determination, health, sanitation, safe drinking water, housing, freedom of assembly and freedom of expression.

28. The Islamic Republic of Iran stated that its firm position was that the occupied Syrian Golan must be returned to the Syrian Arab Republic. It invited all States and international organizations to deplore any position, policy or measures aimed at continuing the occupation and that would lead to continued violations of human rights and the deterioration of the situation in the occupied Syrian Golan.
