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The situation in the Middle East

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Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

The present report contains replies received in response to the note verbale by the Secretary-General dated 31 May 2022 concerning implementation of the relevant provisions of General Assembly resolution [76/11](#), entitled “The Syrian Golan”.

* [A/77/150](#).



I. Introduction

1. The present report is submitted pursuant to General Assembly resolution [76/11](#). In that resolution, which deals with the Syrian Golan, the Assembly demanded once more that Israel withdraw from all of the occupied Syrian Golan to the line of 4 June 1967 in implementation of the relevant Security Council resolutions.

2. On 31 May, in order to fulfil my reporting responsibility under resolution [76/11](#), I addressed notes verbales to the Permanent Representative of Israel, the Permanent Representatives of all other Member States and the Permanent Observer of the State of Palestine to the United Nations requesting them to inform me of any steps that their Governments had taken or envisaged taking concerning implementation of the relevant provisions of the resolution. As at 12 July 2022, replies had been received from Bahrain, Panama, Saudi Arabia and the Syrian Arab Republic. The replies are provided in section II of the present report.

II. Replies received

Bahrain

[Original: Arabic]

Bahrain reaffirms its support for the just demand and the right of the Syrian Arab Republic to fully recover the occupied Syrian Arab Golan to the line of 4 June 1967, on the basis of the peace process, authoritative international resolutions and the achievements made in the framework of 1991 Madrid peace conference. It also reaffirms that the occupation of the Occupied Syrian Arab Golan, which has been ongoing since 1967, poses a continuing threat to peace and security in the region and the world.

Bahrain has supported all United Nations resolutions on the occupied Syrian Golan, the most recent being the World Health Organization resolution entitled “Health conditions in the occupied Palestinian territory, including East Jerusalem, and in the occupied Syrian Golan” ([A/75/26](#)), which was adopted at the seventy-fifth World Health Assembly.

Panama

[Original: English]

The Panamanian State assumes a neutral position regarding the situation of the Arab-Israeli conflict, related to the occupation by Israel of the territories of Altos Golan in Syria, since 1967; therefore, it has refrained from implementing measures in this regard.

Panama carefully observes the efforts of the United Nations to solve the causes of the conflict.

Saudi Arabia

[Original: English]

The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia has always emphasized that the Golan is an Arab-Syrian land and that achieving a just and comprehensive peace in the Middle East requires Israel’s withdrawal from all occupied Arab lands, including the Arab-Syrian Golan, to the line of 4 June 1967.

Saudi Arabia has also been stressing the illegitimacy and illegality of the Israeli settlements in the Arab-Syrian Golan, the violation of the rights of the Syrian people in the Golan, and the exhaustion of the Syrian wealth and natural resources in the Golan.

Moreover, Saudi Arabia always affirms its refusal to impose a “fait accompli” on the Arab lands occupied by Israel, which is a violation of all covenants and resolutions of international legitimacy.

Saudi Arabia also calls on Israel to comply with the resolutions of international legitimacy, including Security Council resolution [497 \(1981\)](#), which called on Israel to rescind its de facto annexation of the Golan Heights and to abide by the previous Council resolutions, including resolution [242 \(1967\)](#) and resolution [338 \(1973\)](#), as well as other General Assembly resolutions which reject Israel’s continued occupation of the Arab-Syrian Golan.

In addition, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia constantly calls on the international community, especially the Security Council, to shoulder their responsibilities to compel Israel to respect international resolutions. Saudi Arabia has also made a number of initiatives to achieve peace in the Middle East, on top of which is the Arab Peace Initiative, presented by Saudi Arabia in 2002.

Syrian Arab Republic

[Original: Arabic]

From the time that Israel occupied the Syrian Golan in 1967, the international community has reiterated that it rejects that occupation and has demanded that Israel, the occupying Power, withdraw from the entire occupied Syrian Golan to the line of 4 June 1967. The General Assembly, in its resolution [76/11](#) of 1 December 2021, entitled “The Syrian Golan”, demands once more that Israel, the occupying Power, withdraw from the entire occupied Syrian Golan to the line of 4 June for 1967, in implementation of the relevant United Nations resolutions.

In that same resolution, the General Assembly also once again demands that Israel, the occupying Power, comply with United Nations resolutions concerning the occupied Syrian Golan, in particular Security Council resolution [497 \(1981\)](#). In that resolution, the Security Council declares that the Israeli decision of 14 December 1981 to impose its laws, jurisdiction and administration in the occupied Syrian Golan is null and void and completely illegal. The General Assembly also demands that Israel should rescind forthwith its decision.

The Government of the Syrian Arab Republic reaffirms that the occupied Syrian Arab Golan has been and will continue to be Arab and Syrian, and that it is an integral part of the territory of the Syrian Arab Republic. Its recovery by all the means provided for under international law is an eternal right that cannot be bargained over or waived and that cannot lapse.

The Israeli occupation of the Syrian Golan has persisted for 55 years. During that time, the United Nations has repeatedly adopted resolutions calling upon Israel, the occupying Power, to end its occupation of the Syrian Golan and cease its blatant violations of international instruments and norms. Nevertheless, to this day, Israel refuses to implement United Nations resolutions and continues to occupy the Syrian Golan, escaping accountability thanks to the protection offered by certain members of the Security Council.

The Government of the Syrian Arab Republic denounces the settlement policies that are being implemented by Israel, the occupying Power, in the occupied Syrian Golan in violation of the relevant Security Council, General Assembly and Human

Rights Council resolutions. In their resolutions, those bodies reaffirm the illegality of Israeli settlement-building and other activities in the occupied Syrian Golan and renew their call on Israel to desist from changing the physical character, demographic composition, institutional structure and legal status of the occupied Syrian Golan and, in particular, to desist from establishing settlements.

The Government of the Syrian Arab Republic condemns all Israeli practices and actions aimed at controlling the natural resources of the occupied Syrian Golan and the systematic looting of those resources by Israel, the occupying Power, in flagrant violation of the principle of the permanent sovereignty of peoples under foreign occupation over their natural resources, Security Council resolution [497 \(1981\)](#) and General Assembly resolution [76/225](#) of 17 December 2021, 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”.

The Government of the Syrian Arab Republic condemns the major increase in the pace of the violations and practices perpetrated by the Israeli occupation against Arab Syrians in the occupied Syrian Golan since the illegal March 2019 declaration of the United States Administration recognizing the annexation by Israel of the occupied Syrian Golan. That declaration blatantly violates the rules of international law, the Fourth Geneva Convention and Security Council resolution [497 \(1981\)](#), in which the Council decided that Israel’s decision to impose its laws, jurisdiction and administration on the occupied Syrian Golan was null and void and without international legal effect. It also violates resolutions concerning the occupied Syrian Golan adopted by the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council and the Human Rights Council. The Syrian Government categorically rejects the statements made in that regard by the Secretary of State of the United States, Antony J. Blinken, as they are part of the ongoing support of America for the occupying Israeli forces. The policies of the United States of America reflect a dangerous propensity to undermine international law, insult the United Nations and ignore all terms of reference, legal precedent and the relevant Security Council and General Assembly resolutions concerning the Arab-Israeli conflict and the absolute need for Israel to end its occupation of Arab lands and withdraw to the borders of 4 June 1967.

The Government of the Syrian Arab Republic condemns Israel, the occupying Power, for pressuring Syrian students studying in Europe who come back to spend their vacations in the occupied Golan by forcing them to accept Israeli citizenship or, if they refuse to comply, by threatening them that they will be prevented from returning to Europe to complete their studies.

In addition to those actions, the occupying Israeli authorities have pressured the people of occupied Syrian villages to accept title deeds issued by the Israel Land Survey Department in place of title deeds registered in their Syrian motherland, on pain of confiscation of their land. Such pressure is all part of the occupying Power’s scheme to Judaize the land by imposing the use of replacement Israeli documents. The Israeli authorities were particularly insistent that landowners in the village of Ayn Quniyah and the industrial area belonging to the village of Majdal Shams should turn over title deeds handed down by their parents and grandparents. That measure would eventually be extended to the rest of the villages in the occupied Syrian Golan. The occupying authorities have threatened to seize the land from its true owners and award it to Israeli settlers if the owners do not accept Israeli title deeds. Prior to all this, escalatory steps taken over the past years by the occupying Israeli authorities had included trying to impose their illegal decision to hold elections for local councils in the occupied Syrian Golan on 30 October 2018. That attempt failed in the face of the determined refusal by Golan residents to take part. They boycotted both the

nomination and election processes as yet another attempt to legitimize the occupation and apply its laws to the occupied Syrian Golan.

The Government of the Syrian Arab Republic calls upon the Secretary-General, the Security Council, 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 to pressure Israel, the occupying Power, to cease its discriminatory and racist practices towards Syrian citizens in the occupied Syrian Golan, which are affecting their health conditions and bringing about a decline in health services just as the coronavirus (COVID-19) is spreading. Israel must also end its destructive practices with respect to the environment and natural resources, especially water. Over the years, Israel has buried some 1500 barrels of nuclear waste at 20 locations in the occupied Syrian Golan – among them Nashbat al-Muqbilah, Qasr Sabib and Birkat Marj al-Mann – in flagrant violation of international law and the Fourth Geneva Convention. Those violations pose ongoing deadly threats in the occupied Syrian Golan, exposing the lives of Syrian citizens to numerous risks, including cancer, which now accounts for 30 per cent of all deaths.

The Government of the Syrian Arab Republic stresses the need for the international authorities referred to above to pressure Israel, the occupying Power, to desist from its practice of issuing peremptory decisions that prevent Syrian citizens in the occupied Syrian Golan from visiting their homeland, Syria, via the Qunaytirah crossing. These arbitrary Israeli actions, which violate the Geneva Conventions and all international norms and instruments, will only bring about further material, psychological and physical suffering for Syrian citizens in the occupied Syrian Golan that is beyond all legal and moral limits. Syria calls for the occupying Israeli authorities to be compelled to open the Qunaytirah crossing, in order to enable Syrian citizens in the occupied Syrian Golan to visit their country and their relatives.

The Syrian Arab Republic condemns the repeated and ongoing Israeli attacks against Syrian territory, including those that are carried from the airspace over the occupied Syrian Golan. Such attacks have resulted in loss of life and damage to public and private buildings. The most recent of those was the attack that the Israeli occupiers carried out against the port of Ladhikiyah on 28 December 2021, in which the container yard was targeted. That attack caused significant material damage, including to United Nations-owned material and equipment in Syria. Moreover, the attack against Damascus International Airport on 10 June 2022 caused significant damage that led to the suspension of flights and the temporary closure of the airport. Those attacks by Israel constitute a flagrant violation of international law, international humanitarian law and legally established protections for civilian installations.

Syria calls on the international community to fulfil its responsibility to deter Israel and put a stop to its aggression, which significantly undermines security and stability in the region. The Government of the Syrian Arab Republic reaffirms that, in order to ensure stability in the Middle East and preserve the credibility of the United Nations, measures must be taken to implement all international resolutions aimed at ending the Israeli occupation of occupied Arab territories, including the Syrian Arab Golan, and compel Israel to withdraw to the line of 4 June 1967, in accordance with the relevant United Nations resolutions, including, in particular, Security Council resolutions [242 \(1967\)](#), [338 \(1973\)](#), [497 \(1981\)](#) and [2334 \(2016\)](#).

In particular, the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic emphasizes the need to refrain from providing any assistance to the occupying Israeli authorities, particularly in the economic, business and tourism spheres, or any support for the continuation of Israeli settlements and/or the establishment of new settlements that

would reinforce the occupation of the occupied Syrian Golan and the continued violation of the human rights of its Syrian Arab population.

The Government of the Syrian Arab Republic renews its call on the international community and international organizations to monitor the flagrant violations by Israel of international law and norms, human rights and the Fourth Geneva Convention; to express its categorical rejection of such violations; and to compel Israel, the occupying Power, to cease its illegal settlement policies and repressive measures against Syrian residents of the occupied Syrian Golan, and to end its occupation of the Syrian Golan.
