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The situation in the Middle East

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Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

The present report contains the replies received in response to the note verbale by the Secretary-General dated 3 April 2023 concerning the implementation of the relevant provisions of General Assembly resolutions [76/12](#), entitled “Jerusalem”, adopted by the General Assembly on 1 December 2021, and [77/26](#) entitled “The Syrian Golan”, adopted by the General Assembly on 30 November 2022, under the agenda item entitled “The situation in the Middle East”.

* [A/78/150](#).



I. Introduction

1. The present report is submitted pursuant to General Assembly resolutions [76/12](#) and [77/26](#). In its resolution [76/12](#), the Assembly stressed that a comprehensive, just and lasting solution to the question of the City of Jerusalem should take into account the legitimate concerns of both the Palestinian and Israeli sides and should include internationally guaranteed provisions to ensure the freedom of religion and conscience of its inhabitants, as well as permanent, free and unhindered access to the holy places by people of all religions and nationalities. In its resolution [77/26](#), entitled “the Syrian Golan”, the Assembly demanded once more that Israel withdraw from all the occupied Syrian Golan to the line of 4 June 1967 in implementation of the relevant Security Council resolutions.

2. On 3 April, in order to fulfil my reporting responsibility under resolutions [76/12](#) and [77/26](#), I addressed a note verbale 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 the implementation of the relevant provisions of those resolutions. As at 12 July 2023, replies had been received from Argentina and Egypt. The replies are provided in section II of the present report.

II. Replies received from Member States

Argentina

[Original: Spanish]

The Government of Argentina reiterates once again its conviction that a definitive solution to the occupation of the Syrian Golan can be achieved only through negotiations between the parties, in accordance with Security Council resolutions [242 \(1967\)](#) and [338 \(1973\)](#), and reiterates that recognition of the occupation of territories contrary to international law does not contribute to such a solution.

In addition, Argentina reaffirms its strong commitment to the sovereignty, independence, unity and territorial integrity of the Syrian Arab Republic.

Egypt

[Original: Arabic]

Every year, Egypt submits a draft resolution entitled “The Syrian Golan” to the General Assembly under the agenda item on the situation in the Middle East.

Egypt submits the draft resolution on the Syrian Golan every year to the General Assembly because it believes that under no circumstances can occupation be accepted as a means of annexing the territory of other States, in contravention of all the principles of international law and the Charter of the United Nations.

Developments over the course of the last decade in the Middle East, and in the Syrian Arab Republic in particular, must not deter the international community from upholding international law and the principles of the Charter. Although the international community is facing great pressure as a result of the many conflicts that have erupted in several parts of the world, Egypt nonetheless believes that only and best way to settle the world’s conflicts, in particular those that have been going on for

decades and where progress towards a solution has stalled, is to resort to international law and avoid escalation.

Egypt stresses it is not possible to stop the situation in the Middle East from deteriorating further unless we respect the principles of international law and honour internationally binding resolutions in relation to all crises in the region. Over the last decade, there have been several new crises in a number of the region's countries. However, those crises must not distract our attention from the Arab territories occupied in 1967, whether the Syrian Golan, south Lebanon or Palestine. It is impossible to imagine that peace, security and stability in the region can be achieved as long as Arab territories continue to be occupied and sovereignty over them is exercised by creating a fait accompli.

Accordingly, Egypt believes that the international community must insist on ending the occupation of all the Arab territories that were occupied on 5 June 1967, in implementation of the relevant United Nations resolutions. The inadmissibility of annexing territories by force and the refusal to recognize any unilateral measures or demographic changes in the occupied areas have long been affirmed in those resolutions.

The draft resolution concerning the Syrian Golan that Egypt submits every year to the General Assembly contains provisions reaffirming Security Council resolution [497 \(1981\)](#) and the principles of international law and the Charter, in particular with regard to the inadmissibility of annexing territories by force, as well as provisions reaffirming that the 1949 Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War is applicable to the occupied Syrian Golan, and that settlement construction or any other Israeli activities in the occupied Syrian Golan that constitute a change in the nature of the occupied Syrian Golan are illegal.

Other provisions of the draft resolution reaffirm that the continued occupation of the Syrian Golan by Israel is an obstacle to achieving just, comprehensive and lasting peace in the region. In addition, Israel is called upon to resume peace negotiations, with a view to bringing about its withdrawal from the occupied Syrian Golan to the line of 4 June 1967, pursuant to the relevant Security Council resolutions.

Egypt looks forward to the day when security, peace and stability will be realized in the Syrian Arab Republic and in all countries of the Middle East region. That aim cannot be achieved without ensuring the primacy of and respect for international law around the world.