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LETTER DATED 19 NOVEMBER 1948 FROM THE REPRESENTATIVE OF THE  
PROVISIONAL GOVERNMENT OF ISRAEL TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE  
SECURITY COUNCIL TRANSMITTING OBSERVATIONS ON THE  
SECURITY COUNCIL RESOLUTIONS OF 4 AND 16 NOVEMBER  
(S/1070 AND S/1080 RESPECTIVELY)

19 November 1948

I have the honour to transmit to you herewith a copy of the  
observations of the Provisional Government of Israel on the resolutions  
adopted by the Security Council on the 4th and 16th November.

This communication was handed to the representative of the Acting  
United Nations Mediator in Israel at midnight on Thursday, November 18th.

I would appreciate it if this document could be circulated at the  
earliest possible moment to members of the Council.

(Signed) Aubrey S. Eban  
Representative of the Provisional  
Government of Israel at the United  
Nations

TEXT OF OBSERVATIONS OF THE PROVISIONAL GOVERNMENT OF ISRAEL  
ON THE RESOLUTIONS ADOPTED BY THE SECURITY COUNCIL  
ON 4 AND 16 NOVEMBER 1948

The Provisional Government of Israel has given most careful consideration to the resolutions of the Security Council of the 4th and 16th November, and to the Acting Mediator's communication transmitted on November 14th.

2. The Government reaffirms its policy of adherence to the principles of the United Nations. It welcomes the Security Council's decision that, "in order to eliminate the threat to the peace in Palestine and to facilitate the transition from the present truce to permanent peace in Palestine, an armistice shall be established in all sectors of Palestine". The Government notes with satisfaction that the Security Council "calls upon the parties as a further provisional measure under Article 40 of the Charter, to seek agreement forthwith, by negotiations conducted either directly or through the Acting Mediator on Palestine, with a view to the immediate establishment of an armistice". The Government of Israel is much encouraged by the reiterated call for direct negotiations made in the Security Council's resolutions of the 4th and 16th of November.

3. It is the consistent policy and practice of the Government of Israel to seek negotiations with the Arab States, whose armies invaded Palestine in wanton defiance of the Charter, with a view to arriving at a permanent peace as envisaged in the resolution of November 16th. The Government of Israel is most anxious to see these negotiations brought to a speedy and successful conclusion and requests that it be notified without delay of the time and place at which its accredited representatives may meet accredited representatives of the Arab States.

4. The Government of Israel notes that the resolution of November 4th calls upon the Governments concerned without prejudice to their rights, claims and position regarding a peaceful adjustment of the future situation, to withdraw those forces which have advanced beyond positions held on the 14th October. The Government understands that it is not the intention of the Security Council to require the withdrawal of forces from positions held before the 14th October; and it notes the Acting Mediator's statement that the withdrawal of military forces north of the defined line is inapplicable to those maintained in the Negeb settlements for defence prior to the 14th October. The Government recalls that since the 15th of May it has uninterruptedly maintained regular mobile forces in the Negeb which

moved freely throughout the area, in addition to static settlement defence in the narrower sense of the term. It notes with satisfaction that the Security Council is not demanding the withdrawal from the Negeb of forces maintained there before the 14th October in order to safeguard the security and independence of Israel and to protect its inhabitants. The withdrawal of such forces from inland areas, including Beersheba, would invite predatory activities by irregulars, a constant menace to the safety of all who dwell in this area. If Beersheba is deprived of defence the way would again be thrown open to Jerusalem, whose protection against aggression from the south could not be guaranteed.

5. The Government of Israel states that forces which entered the Negeb on and after the 14th October for the purpose of re-establishing communications obstructed by the Egyptian Army in deliberate defiance of the truce and the United Nations Chief of Staff's decision, have since been withdrawn to positions north of the line indicated in the Acting Mediator's memorandum.

6. Regarding the coastal area, the Government is prepared, after consultation with the United Nations staff, to order the withdrawal of its regular forces to the north of Deir Suneid, subject to local security arrangements to be agreed upon with the United Nations Chief of Staff.

7. The Government of Israel sees a contradiction between the Acting Mediator's plan for the establishment of neutral or demilitarized zones and his decision that the Egyptians may remain in the Bir Asluj area, and that Egyptian control of the Bir Asluj-Rafah road shall be recognized and maintained. The Government reserves the right to make representations on this point when the matter arises for practical settlement with the United Nations staff.

8. The Government of Israel desires in conclusion to reaffirm its regard for the decision and recommendations of the Security Council, and its readiness to do everything possible to facilitate a peaceful settlement in the conflict which has arisen in Palestine as a result of Arab aggression. It has nominated Colonel Yigal Yadin and Mr. Reuven Shiloah as officers whom the United Nations Chief of Staff may consult in connexion with further arrangements. The Government reiterates its urgent request to the Acting Mediator that it be informed without delay of the place and time of the meeting with the accredited representatives of the Arab Governments. The Government of Israel expresses its sincere hope that this meeting may open direct negotiations establishing peace and good neighbourliness - an objective which Israel has pursued since the very beginning of this unhappy conflict.