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LETTER DATED 13 SEPTEMBER 1974 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF ALGERIA  
TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

I have the honour to transmit to you herewith the text of a declaration concerning Quneitra adopted on 12 September 1974 by the Co-ordinating Committee of the Group of Non-Aligned Countries accredited to the United Nations.

I should be grateful if you would arrange to have the text of this declaration published as an official document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Abdellatif RAHAL  
Permanent Representative of Algeria  
Chairman of the Group of Non-Aligned  
Countries accredited to the  
United Nations

Declaration adopted on 12 September 1974 by the Co-ordinating Committee  
of the Group of Non-Aligned Countries

At the meeting it held in New York on 12 September 1974, the Co-ordinating Committee of the non-aligned countries heard a statement on Quneitra by the Permanent Representative of Syria, Ambassador Haissam Kelani. The Permanent Representative of Syria drew attention to the fact that, during the term of the Agreement on Disengagement between Israeli and Syrian Forces signed in Geneva on 31 May 1974, the Israeli forces committed criminal acts as they withdrew from the Syrian territory they had been occupying by destroying Syrian villages, and in particular the town of Quneitra and the village of Rafid, using for that purpose explosives and bulldozers. He also submitted a report on the destruction and pillaging of buildings, sites and monuments of archaeological, cultural, religious and historical interest carried out by the Israeli occupation authorities in the liberated area of Syria.

The representatives of the non-aligned countries consider that these acts perpetrated by the Israeli forces, without any reason or justification, constitute a flagrant violation of international law, humanitarian principles, the values of civilization and the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War of 12 August 1949, as well as a total violation of the Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict adopted at The Hague, on 14 May 1954, and ratified by numerous parties, including Syria and Israel.

Moreover, international law views the acts committed by Israel as war crimes. Under the terms of the Charter of the Nuremberg International Military Tribunal, wanton destruction of cities, towns or villages, or devastation not justified by military necessity are considered to be war crimes.

The representatives of the non-aligned countries, therefore, firmly condemn the Israeli occupation authorities for these acts of barbarism, which are contrary to international law, international Conventions, and the values of civilization.

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