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FURTHER PROGRESS REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL ON THE UNITED NATIONS DISENGAGEMENT OBSERVER FORCE

1. Following my last report on the United Nations Disengagement Observer Force (UNDOF) (S/11563), the Force has continued to supervise the Agreement on Disengagement between Israeli and Syrian forces and the Protocol to that Agreement in accordance with Security Council resolutions 350 (1974) of 31 May 1974 and 363 (1974) of 29 November 1974.

Composition

2. The composition of UNDOF on 20 January 1975 was as follows:

Austria	511
Canada	157
Peru	353
Poland	81
Headquarters staff on secondment from UNEF.	11
Military observers (detailed from UNTSO)	89
	<u>1,202</u>

3. The Austrian and Canadian specialist troops made available by their respective Governments to assist in the construction of accommodations and to whom reference was made in my last report (S/11563, para. 6) remain with UNDOF. These personnel will be withdrawn from UNDOF when construction work is completed, although some may be absorbed within the Force.

4. The Interim Force Commander of UNDOF, Brigadier-General Gonzalo Briceño Zevallos relinquished his command on 15 December 1974, having been recalled by his Government. Until the appointment of a new Commander, Colonel Hannes Philipp of Austria, Chief of Staff of UNDOF, will be officer-in-charge of UNDOF.

Freedom of movement

5. In my last report (S/11563, para. 13), I noted that the question of freedom of movement remained unresolved. I also stated that continuing efforts were being made to find a satisfactory solution. I can now report some progress in this question. Arrangements have been worked out to enable all personnel of UNDOF to enjoy the freedom of movement essential for the performance of their tasks. I shall continue to seek more general acceptance of the principle of freedom of movement.

Deployment

6. UNDOF troops continue to be deployed within or close to the area of separation, with base camps and logistic support units situated close to that area. The Austrian battalion mans positions in the area of separation north of Quneitra with its base camp at Camp Faouar, 8 kilometres east of the area of separation. The Peruvian battalion is deployed south of Quneitra with its base camp at Camp Bolivar, just west of the area of separation. The Canadian logistic unit shares Camp Bolivar with the Peruvians, and the Polish logistic unit shares Camp Faouar with the Austrians, while the Canadian signal troop has detachments in Camp Faouar, Camp Bolivar, Quneitra and Damascus. The UNDOF military observers are located at Tiberias and Damascus.

7. Following consultations with the parties and with their full agreement, UNDOF has decided, owing to severe weather conditions, that on a temporary basis the position at the summit of Mount Hermon will be left unmanned. With the improvement of the weather at springtime, UNDOF will resume its manning of the position. Two other positions on Mount Hermon - Hotel Base and Hotel South - are still being manned; from these positions daily ski patrols to the summit will be made whenever weather conditions make this possible.

Activities

8. During the period under review UNDOF continued to supervise the implementation of the Agreement on Disengagement between Israeli and Syrian forces, in accordance with its mandate.

9. UNDOF continues to supervise the area of separation by means of static posts and mobile patrols. In mid-December 1974 UNDOF observers began to carry out patrols in the area, augmenting the patrolling done by the Austrian and Peruvian battalions. As noted in paragraph 7 above, UNDOF maintains a position on Mount Hermon from which it hopes to send out patrols regularly to the highest points of the mountain range within the area of separation. It should be noted, however, that ability of UNDOF to continue patrolling this sensitive area during winter depends on its being able to keep the roads open to its positions in order to resupply them. In this matter UNDOF is relying on the co-operation and assistance of both parties.

10. I regret to report that no progress has been made in clearing the minefields

in the area of separation, despite the continuing efforts being made with both parties by General Siilasvuo and UNDOF.

11. UNDOF has continued to receive complaints from the parties about failures to comply with the agreement in the area of separation or the areas of limitation of forces and armament. These have been investigated and the results reported to the party concerned. In addition, UNDOF continued to draw the attention of the parties to violations it has itself observed with a view to having corrective action taken.

12. During the period under review there has been a marked decrease in the number of overflights of the area of separation. It is to be hoped that this trend will continue.

13. UNDOF has continued to make regular bi-weekly inspections and special inspections of the areas of limited armaments and forces. In carrying out this task UNDOF has continued to receive the co-operation of the parties.

14. In the exercise of its good offices, UNDOF arranged the handover of the body of a Syrian civilian who was killed in an Israeli minefield. UNDOF personnel also witnessed the release and handover of three Syrians who had been held by the Israeli authorities.

15. The air link maintained by UNEF between Ismailia and Damascus, which was suspended following the crash of the Canadian aircraft on 9 August 1974, was re-established on 18 December 1974.

Accommodation

16. The programme to provide suitable accommodation for UNDOF troops referred to in my last report (S/11563, para. 23) continued to make satisfactory progress. The prefabricated buildings at Camp Faouar have been erected, although some finishing work is still being done to make the camp more habitable. The construction work in Camp Bolivar is almost completed.