

**Middle East - Suez story No
33-35a: Middle East - Suez
story No 33-35a - 23**

HS L 179:115a



Dag Hammarskjöld's saml.

L 779 : 115_a

Middle East / Suez story - Nr. 35 a.

(as put together by Dag Hammarskjöld
and kept in his safe in his office, U.N. HQ)

13 Sept. - 6 Nov. 56

Dag Hammarskjöld's samtl.

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13 - 14 Sept. 56

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UNITED NATIONS
Department of Public Information
Press and Publications Division
United Nations, N. Y.

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Press Release SG/502
13 September 1956

STATEMENT BY SECRETARY-GENERAL DAG HAMMARSKJOLD
CONCERNING RECENT PALESTINE INCIDENTS

The very serious incidents which have taken place during the last few days in the Middle East, raise the question of the continued validity of the cease-fire arrangement agreed upon in April. I consider it for that reason appropriate to make the following comments.

The Armistice Agreements between Israel and its Arab neighbours contain, all of them, an article prohibiting the use of the military or para-military forces of one party, including non-regular forces, for war-like or hostile acts against the other party. The same articles stipulate, further, that such forces may not advance beyond or pass over for any purpose whatsoever the Armistice Demarcation Lines. Thus, the cease-fire forms part of the Armistice regime itself, as established by the Armistice Agreements.

The arrangements made in April gave to these clauses an independent status so that a breach of the cease-fire could no longer be justified by a violation by the other parties of other clauses of the Armistice Agreements than the one establishing a cease-fire. The new arrangement also made the United Nations a direct party to the cease-fire as the cease-fire obligation was reaffirmed in assurances given to the Organization. The cease-fire, as established in the Armistice Agreements and reaffirmed as an independent obligation to the United Nations, in fact reflects a basic duty of all Member Nations of the United Nations under the Charter.

The establishment in April of a general cease-fire of this legal nature served to alleviate the very tense situation prevailing at that time. It was, on the whole, observed until late in July. From that time on we have witnessed a mounting series of incidents, followed by counter-moves, the most serious of which took place on 10 and 12 September.

Established as an independent legal obligation in relation to the United Nations the cease-fire obviously remains fully valid as such, irrespective of the incidents that may occur. As reflecting a general obligation under the Charter, it can never cease to bind a Member of the United Nations. As a formal obligation, accepted independently of the Charter and binding on the Nations, party to the Armistice regime

(more)

in Palestine, it can be put out of existence only if formally repealed by one of the Governments concerned, or if challenged by actions clearly indicating that the Government does not consider itself as any longer bound by the obligation.

It may be felt that the cease-fire, through the serious violations which have occurred, has been brought to an end. One could just as well say that the fact that all parties in the region, in varying degrees, are violating the Armistice Agreements has annulled the Armistice regime. If a Government, or the United Nations, were to accept such interpretations, it would amount to saying that they, because of various incidents, considered that a state of war had been reestablished. This is obviously unjustifiable. I am sure that no one in a responsible position would endorse such a stand. Neither the Armistice Agreements nor the cease-fire obligations have been repealed by any of the parties concerned, and to say that the cease-fire obligation has been annulled by the violations it has suffered, would be incorrect as well as irresponsible.

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CAUTION: ADVANCE RELEASE

Not to be made public
Before 10:00 PM (EDT)
Friday, 14 September 1956

Press Release SG/503
14 September 1956

NOTE VERBALE

Following is the text of a note verbale handed today by Secretary-General Dag Hammarskjold to Ambassador Abba Eban, Permanent Representative of Israel to the United Nations:

In a Note Verbale dated 12 September I called to the attention of the Government of Israel its solemn undertakings and the serious consequences that might come about if the current chain of events was not brought to an end immediately by careful avoidance of all further acts of violence. In spite of this appeal, and in disregard of the obligations undertaken in the Armistice Agreements and under the cease-fire assurance, a report of the United Nations Observers on an incident on 13 September indicates that Israeli forces have engaged in a new extensive action leading to heavy casualties. It may be supposed that this action is considered to be justified as an act "in self-defence". However, the action now undertaken cannot be considered as within the limits of legitimate self-defence in face of the acts of violence because of which it may be supposed to have been undertaken. In discussions with representatives of the Government of Israel I have repeatedly emphasized that, legal obligations apart, a policy like the one now pursued defeats its own purpose by leading to further tension and highly increasing the risk for acts of violence directed against Israeli persons or territory. In my view events amply demonstrate the utter futility of actions such as those of which the incident of 13 September offers a new example, as actions aimed at protecting Israel's security.

The disregard both of the appeals from the United Nations and of the obligations under the Armistice Agreements, specifically the cease-fire obligation, means that Israel must be held fully accountable for its actions.

14 September 1956

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Press Release SG/504
14 September 1956

NOTE VERBALE

Following is the text of a note verbale handed today by Secretary-General Dag Hammarskjold to Thabet Khalidi, Acting Permanent Representative of Jordan to the United Nations:

In a Note Verbale dated 12 September I called to the attention of the Government of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan the serious consequences that might come about if the current chain of events was not brought to an end immediately by careful avoidance of all further acts of violence. A further incident on 12 September, which is still being investigated, suggests the possibility of a crossing of the Demarcation Line from the Jordan side, which led to new casualties.

I note with great concern that acts of violence have continued. I repeat my appeal to the Government to take all measures possible in order to forestall a repetition of such occurrences. I likewise appeal to the Government to show restraint and to abstain from all actions that would prolong the present serious unrest. It is my firm conviction that such actions would militate against Jordan's own interests in a quick reestablishment of order in the region.

For actions in disregard of the appeals of the United Nations and of the obligations under the Armistice Agreements, specifically the cease-fire obligation, the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan would have to be held fully accountable.

14 September 1956.

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