

# Speeches, statements and press conference by Dag Hammarskjöld concerning Mi...

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## Middle East

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7 Nov. 56

- 2 statements by D.H. before Emergency Special Session of General Assembly.
- Statement by D.H. to the Gen. Assembly re UNTSO station in Gaza.
- D.H.'s message to Egyptian Govt. on operation of U.N. Force.

UNITED NATIONS  
Department of Public Information  
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United Nations, N.Y.

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Press Release SG/520  
7 November 1956

TEXT OF SECRETARY-GENERAL'S STATEMENT BEFORE EMERGENCY SPECIAL  
SESSION OF GENERAL ASSEMBLY ON 7 NOVEMBER 1956

Mr. President,

In the course of the debate, certain requests for clarifications have been directed to me. I feel that at this stage of the discussion I should give a reply.

The Delegate of Syria has expressed a fear that in case of non-compliance by Israel with the request for a withdrawal of forces behind the Armistice Demarcation Lines, there might, on the basis of the position taken in my report, arise a situation where Egypt would be presented with a fait accompli, as the United Nations Force is at present not established with a view to enforce the withdrawal of forces. The Delegate of Syria said that he could not but feel the deepest misgivings concerning this question.

My reply is simple. In case the unfortunate situation envisaged by the Delegate of Syria were to arise, I would consider it my duty to bring it at once to the attention of the General Assembly, or the Security Council, for such measures as those two main organs of the United Nations might decide upon. Egypt will, thus, not be faced with a fait accompli, but could resort to the means provided for in the Charter. My position as to the functions of the United Nations Force does in no way limit the rights of Egypt in these respects. I consider the definition of those functions in the report to be sound as a basis for this first stage in the setting up of the Force.

Another question which has been directed to me concerns the interpretation of the legal situation in respect of a withdrawal of non-Egyptian forces, other than the Israeli forces. In my view it does follow from the resolution of 2 November that all non-Egyptian forces -- with the obvious exception of the United Nations Force, which will be there with the consent of the Egyptian Government -- have to withdraw from Egyptian territory. It goes without saying that "Egyptian territory" in this context must be understood in the sense which follows from international law and the Armistice Agreement.

Still another question which I would like to clarify concerns the interpretation of my indication that the United Nations Force will have to operate within a  
(more)

region extending from the Suez Canal to the Armistice Demarcation Line, as established in the Egyptian-Israeli Armistice Agreement. What I intended to say with this phrase was entirely directed to the situation with which we are faced. The United Nations Force will have to come in at what is at present the dividing line between the Egyptian and Israeli forces. It is at whatever may come to be the dividing line, that they will have to function. As the situation is, that means that the United Nations activities will have to start close to the Suez Canal, but that, after the expected compliance with the recommendations of the General Assembly, they would end up at the Armistice Demarcation Line.

Other points have been raised on which I find it difficult to elaborate what I have said in the report, which to me seems to be self-explanatory. So for, example, I have been asked for an interpretation of what I have said about the length of the assignment of the Force as being determined by the needs arising out of the present conflict. I am sure the Members will appreciate that, in the still unclear situation, it would be premature for me to say how the needs might develop after the end of the immediate crisis. However, the Force being under the ultimate authority of the General Assembly, I think that this point need not give rise to worries. Likewise, I find that the interpretation of my statement concerning previous decisions, to the effect that there is no intent in the establishment of the Force to influence the military balance in the present conflict and, thereby, the political balance affecting efforts to settle the conflict, should be evident. However, this aspect too will certainly be followed closely by the General Assembly.

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Press Release SG/518  
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STATEMENT BY THE SECRETARY-GENERAL TO THE EMERGENCY SPECIAL SESSION  
OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY AT THE OPENING OF THE MORNING MEETING, 7 NOVEMBER 1956

Mr. President,

I do not think that many words are needed in introduction of my Second and Final Report on the United Nations forces, the main document I put before the Members. I only wish to express my warm hope that a decision in line with my proposals will be taken promptly so as to permit us to get going. There should not be left any uncertainty in the minds of people about the determination of the United Nations. I would like to announce that I sent yesterday night instructions to the Chief of the United Nations' Command, after agreement with the Egyptian Government, to proceed forthwith to Cairo for the first contacts.

I have now received the first reply from the Chief of Command in which he informs me that Egyptian authorities agreed in principle to his flying to Cairo, but that detailed arrangements cannot be set up before today.

The Chief of Command has established direct radio contact with Allied forces in Cyprus, which will be necessary for clearance and aircraft passage, and later for other purposes. Egyptian authorities agreed this morning also, in principle, to accept ten observers at once in Cairo. These observers will need jeeps and radios. Therefore the Chief of Command will try to send them by road down to Egypt. The Israel Government has been requested to allow passage.

That is the announcement I feel I should make as the first progress report on the setting up of the force in the area.

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Press Release SG/521  
7 November 1956

STATEMENT BY THE SECRETARY-GENERAL TO THE GENERAL  
ASSEMBLY REGARDING UNTSO STATION IN GAZA

The matter raised by the representative of India is not one which I would like to put before the Assembly. The text to which he refers is a news release\* which is based on an official report from General Burns, but I think that the matter is better handled in regular diplomatic and administrative forms. I have received just this minute a further cable referring to the same matter, which, to my satisfaction, clarifies the situation in one important respect, and with the President's permission I should like to refer briefly to what I find in this new report, as follows:

"The representative of the Israeli Government called and tendered apologies on behalf of the Government for the action taken in the forcible closing of the radio station at Gaza. He stated that, through a misunderstanding of his instructions, the officer in Gaza had exceeded his authority and taken action which was not intended. The forcible closing of the radio station in Gaza was never the intention of the military authorities. He informed me that orders had been given by General Dayan that the radio transmitter would be replaced at once, and that the station can continue to be used."

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\* Note to Correspondents No. 1436.

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Press Release SG/519  
7 November 1956

SECRETARY-GENERAL'S MESSAGE TO EGYPTIAN  
GOVERNMENT ON OPERATION OF UN FORCE

The Secretary-General announced today that he has sent a message to the Egyptian government through its Permanent Representative to the United Nations, Omar Loutfi.

In his message, the Secretary-General, referring to decisions of the General Assembly and noting the acceptance by Egypt of the establishment of a United Nations force, informed the Egyptian government that a decision putting the United Nations force into operation could be effected without any delay by a call on a number of governments to send contingents.

The Secretary-General asked for an immediate reply to the question of whether Egypt would raise objections against participation of troops from any of the designated countries in the force to be stationed on Egyptian territory in fulfillment of the prescribed tasks.

The Secretary-General asked Mr. Loutfi to transmit this message with the greatest possible urgency.

In his message, the Secretary-General said that immediately on receipt of the reply of the Egyptian government he would address a request to the governments of the nations mentioned for the quickest possible execution.

The Secretary-General said that he would keep the Egyptian government informed about further developments and would appreciate an immediate planning in consultation with General E. L. M. Burns as Chief of the United Nations Command for the stationing of the projected force. He added that he would await the advice of General Burns on the size and character of the troops immediately necessary.

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