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3 Feb. 60

- a.) Tekoah, Yosef (Acting Perm. Represent. of Israel to the U.N.)
 - 1 letter to Secco
- b.) Loutfi, Omar (Perm. Represent. of U.A.R. to the U.N.)
 - 1 letter to Secco
 - 1 message to D.M.
- c.) Israel Mission to U.N. - press release

3 Feb 1960 CORDIER/dg

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For Von Horn I transmit herewith texts letters received by Secgen today from
Permanent Representatives UAR and Israel stop

Quote (Cable Editor: quote attached texts as indicated Unquote)

Andrew W. Cordier Executive Assistant
to the Secretary-General



S/4264

מדינת ישראל

ISRAEL

נציגות ישראל
באומות המאוחדות
DELEGATION OF ISRAEL
TO THE UNITED NATIONS

11 EAST 70TH STREET
NEW YORK 21, NEW YORK

TRAFALGAR 9-7600

3 February 1960

Excellency,

I have the honour, on behalf of my Government, to bring to the attention of the Security Council the recent acts of aggression committed by the armed forces of the United Arab Republic against Israel along the Israel-Syrian frontier.

Since December 1959 the area of the village of Beth Katzir in the demilitarized zone near the Syrian border south-east of Lake Kinneret has been subjected to repeated harrassments and attacks from Syrian military positions at Tawfiq. These military positions were illegally established beyond Syria's international boundary in violation of the General Armistice Agreement and were situated inside the demilitarized zone in ruined and deserted houses at Tawfiq.

Six hundred Israel complaints lodged with the United Nations Truce Supervision Organization, since 1957, and repeated attempts by the United Nations to remove the illegal fortifications, were of no avail.

In November 1957 these Syrian military positions launched an attack on Israel villagers, working on their land in the presence of United Nations observers, killing one Israel policeman and wounding another. Since then relative quiet prevailed in the area until mid-December 1959 when Syria renewed her acts of aggression with the obvious intent of upsetting the status quo and gaining control over land outside her territory.

The President
Security Council
United Nations
New York, N.Y.

The tactics adopted were to send to the area Syrian soldiers, frequently dressed in civilian clothes but equipped with army rifles and sub-machine guns, who under the pretext of farming used to cross the ditch separating land cultivated by Israelis from land under Arab cultivation in order to gain control over additional parts of the zone. Israelis approaching the Syrians in the field to prevent the encroachments, were attacked by them with the support of heavy fire from the military positions at Tawfiq.

The Syrian armed penetrations assumed in the last weeks the character of systematic incursions and attacks.

On 24 December 1959 fire opened from the Tawfiq outposts killed an Israel policeman.

On 26 January 1960 Syrian soldiers, accompanying ploughmen, penetrated into the area but withdrew when an Israel police patrol approached and called upon them to leave.

The next day the Syrians appeared in the area several times but at first withdrew each time Israel police in an armoured car shouted at them to leave. Later, however, they opened fire at the Israel police who replied with several warning shots in the air. Single shots were exchanged for some time between the armed Syrians and the police. Later in the day, the military positions at Tawfiq opened heavy fire on a wider area.

On 28 January a similar attempt at penetration into the area took place.

In the morning of 29 January the Syrians appeared again but left shortly afterwards before being challenged. In the meantime the Syrian army was observed concentrating forces and occupying firing positions in and around Tawfiq. In the afternoon the encroachments resumed. Rifle and machine-gun fire was opened from the Syrian outposts when Israel policemen approached and fired warning shots.

In the morning of 30 January the Syrian military positions, illegally maintained at Tawfiq in the demilitarized zone, attacked an Israel police patrol with rifle and machine-gun fire. In the afternoon mortar fire was

directed against the fields of Beth Katzir. The fields were set afire. When the Israeli villagers attempted to put the fire out they came under fire from the Syrian military positions.

On 31 January the Director of Armistice Affairs in the Israel Ministry for Foreign Affairs informed the Chief of Staff of the United Nations Truce Supervision Organization, in reply to a proposal made by the latter, that Israel is prepared "to meet with the other Party to discuss means of preventing recurrence of shooting or penetration from across the international boundary into the demilitarized zone".

On the same day the Syrians advanced again into the area and when an Israel police patrol appeared there, it was attacked by strong rifle, machine-gun and mortar fire. Three policemen were wounded, one of them seriously. The United Nations Truce Supervision Organization called on the Syrians not to interfere with the evacuation of the seriously wounded policeman who had remained in the field. The Syrians refused. When, after two hours the policeman was finally reached, he was found dead.

After midnight, on 1 February, the Syrian military positions started shelling the fields of Beth Katzir. In order to put an end to these attacks Israel Defence Forces cleared the positions in the demilitarized zone of Syrian military forces illegally entrenched there.

On 1 February the Syrian Army Command issued a communique announcing that Syrian forces had returned to Tawfiq and the adjoining hills, thus confirming the continued breach of the Armistice provisions.

On the same day United Arab Republic jet fighters were driven off by Israel fighters from above Metullah in Israel territory.

In the afternoon of 1 February the Syrian positions subjected Beth Katzir to artillery and mortar bombardment. The fire was not returned from the Israel side.

During the night of 1 - 2 February Syrian positions directed intermittent rifle and automatic fire against Beth Katzir and the surrounding area.

The above events were surveyed by the Prime Minister of Israel in the Knesset in Jerusalem on 1 February 1960. Mr. Ben-Gurion explained inter alia that Israel recognized the rights of local Arabs to cultivate their land. Israel did not, however, recognize that Syria had any right to interfere in the zone. The United Nations had been notified of this, the Prime Minister said, and accordingly Arabs had been permitted to cultivate their land. In recent days, however, Syrian soldiers, disguised as civilians had crossed the ditch beyond which, as we had made clear beforehand, they were not entitled to move. After a policeman was killed (on 31 January) and when appeals to the United Nations to secure a cessation of the Syrian attempts to plough in the area were of no avail, we felt compelled, Mr. Ben-Gurion declared, to remove the Syrian outpost. Israel would continue to permit rightful landowners to cultivate land in the zone, but this permission did not extend to the Government, the forces or the police of Syria. If the United Nations were unable to remove the Syrian forces from the demilitarized zone, the Prime Minister added, Israel would be compelled to do so by herself.

On 2 February Israel representatives requested the United Nations Truce Supervision Organization to effect an immediate withdrawal of Syrian forces from Tawfiq and the demilitarized zone in general. In the evening of that day the United Nations Chairman of the Israel-Syrian Armistice Commission informed the Senior Israel Delegate that United Nations observers had confirmed the presence of Syrian army units in the demilitarized zone and that the chairman had urgently requested the Syrian delegation to withdraw all armed forces posted in the demilitarized zone. The Chairman requested Israel to withdraw Israeli armed personnel from the zone. There are no Israeli troops in the demilitarized zone.

The United Arab Republic continues to claim and exercise rights of war against Israel. The acts of aggression perpetrated by Syrian military positions in the demilitarized zone came in the wake of an intensification by the United Arab Republic of her policy of active belligerency towards Israel. In recent months

she has increased her interference with freedom of navigation in the Suez canal despite efforts by the Secretary-General and maritime Powers to bring an end to such interference. Her Government information media as well as her leaders persist in preaching hostility and calling for war against Israel.

As the Government of Israel has pointed out in previous communications to the Security Council, this policy creates a constant threat to peace in the area.

I have the honour to request that this letter be circulated to all Members of the United Nations.

Please accept, Sir, the assurances of my highest consideration.

Yosef Tekoah
Acting Permanent Representative
of Israel to the United Nations



מדינת ישראל

ISRAEL

נציגות ישראל
באומות המאוחדות

ISRAEL MISSION
TO THE UNITED NATIONS

11 EAST 70TH STREET
NEW YORK 21, NEW YORK
3 February 1960

TRAFALGAR 9-7600

PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE PUBLICATION

"The Syrian acts of aggression in the demilitarized zone came in the wake of an intensification by the United Arab Republic of her policy of active belligerency towards Israel.... This policy creates a constant threat to peace in the area", charges Ambassador Yosef Tekoah, Israel's Acting Permanent Representative to the United Nations, in a letter submitted today to the President of the Security Council for circulation among its members.

The letter describes in detail the "repeated harrassments and attacks" to which Syrian military positions, "situated inside the demilitarized zone in ruined and deserted houses at Tawfiq (and) illegally established beyond Syria's international boundary in violation of the General Armistice Agreement" have subjected the Israel village of Beth Katzir, south-east of Lake Kinneret (Sea of Galilee). The Israel representative states: "Relative quiet prevailed in the area until mid-December 1959 when Syria renewed her acts of aggression with the obvious intent of upsetting the status-quo and gaining control over land outside her territory. The tactics adopted were to send to the area Syrian soldiers, frequently dressed in civilian clothes but equipped with army rifles and sub-machine guns, who under the pretext of farming used to cross the ditch separating land cultivated by Israelis from land under Arab cultivation in order to gain control over additional parts of the zone. Israelis approaching the Syrians in the field to prevent the encroachments, were attacked by them with the support of heavy fire from the military positions at Tawfiq."

The Israel note relates that "on January 31 Israel informed the Chief of Staff of the United Nations Truce Supervision Organization in reply to a proposal made by him, that Israel is prepared 'to meet with the other party to discuss means of preventing recurrence of shooting or penetration from across the International Boundary into the demilitarized zone'".

A statement by the Prime Minister of Israel, David Ben Gurion, in the Knesset in Jerusalem on 1 February, is quoted in the Israel note to the effect that "Israel did not, however, recognize that Syria had any right to interfere in the (demilitarized) zone."* recognized the rights of local Arabs to cultivate their land, Israel

"On 2 February, Israel representatives requested the UNTSO to effect an immediate withdrawal of Syrian forces from Tawfiq and the demilitarized zone in general", the note continues, "In the evening of that day the U.N. Chairman of the Israel-Syrian Mixed Armistice Commission informed the Senior Israel Delegate that U.N. observers had confirmed the presence Syrian Army D units in the demilitarized zone and that the Chairman had urgently requested the Syrian delegate to withdraw all armed forces posted in the demilitarized zone. There are no Israeli troops in the demilitarized zone", the Israel note states.

The Israel note to the Security Council concludes by declaring: "The United Arab Republic continues to claim and exercise rights of war against Israel. In recent months she has increased her interferences with freedom of navigation in the Suez canal despite repeated efforts by the Secretary-General and maritime Powers to bring an end to such interference. Her government information media as well as her leaders persist in preaching hostility and calling for war against Israel. As the Government of Israel has pointed out in previous communications to the Security Council this policy creates a constant threat to peace in the area."

The full text of the letter will be published as a United Nations document.

At 12.00 hours on 4 February 1960 an Israeli armored vehicle penetrated the northern sector of the Demilitarized zone on the Syrian- Lebanese-Israeli frontier . It opened machine gun fire at our front line posts, then it withdrew. Our forces did not return the fire.

At 13.00 hours the same day , two Israeli armored vehicles penetrated the same area and opened fire at our posts. Our forces returned the fire and hit one of the two armored vehicles which withdrew to Israeli territory . Our forces did not suffer any casualties

There was no dispute over the right of property of the lands at the northern sector of the demilitarized zone which Israel might have used as a pretext for that action. Furthermore, this area had been relatively quiet for a long time. Consequently the recent attacks constitute an aggression against our armed forces.

From [unclear]

S/4263

PERMANENT MISSION OF THE UNITED ARAB REPUBLIC
TO THE UNITED NATIONS

3 February 1960

Following is the text of a letter, dated today (3 February), from Omar Loutfi, Permanent Representative of the United Arab Republic to the United Nations, to Sir Pierson Dixon, President of the UN Security Council:

I have the honour, upon instructions from my Government, to bring to your attention, as President of the Security Council, a renewed act of aggression by the Israeli armed forces on the United Arab Republic (Syrian region) in violation of the Armistice Agreement.

At 1255 hours (local time) on January 31, 1960, Israeli forces moved towards Arab farmers in the Southern Sector of the Demilitarized Zone North of Lake Tiberias. The farmers were accompanied by a U.N. Observer. The Israeli forces opened fire at 1330 hours.

On the same day General von Horn requested an emergency meeting of the Syrian-Israeli Mixed Armistice Commission to which we agreed, although Israel's position in this connection is not known.

At midnight January 31, and on February 1st, the Israelis shelled some of our positions in the Southern Sector to which reference has already been made, attempting to occupy the village of Tawafik.

At 300 hours on February 1st, the Israelis resumed their firing on our positions in the same Sector, and our artillery returned the fire. The Israelis then occupied the village of Tawafik, but subsequently they were compelled to withdraw by our forces at 530 hours on the same day.

At 830 hours of the same day, the Israelis reengaged our forces using all weapons.

At 11 hours again on the same day, Israeli planes violated the air space of the Syrian region and were engaged by our planes.

At 2030 hours another engagement took place between Arab and Israeli patrols. Israeli forces opened fire, using 120 mm caliber mortars on the village of Tawafik.

(more)

In the afternoon of February 1st, Israeli forces began to evacuate some of the Israeli settlements on the Armistice demarcation line (Kafer Szold, Kafer Shamir).

Israeli forces are being continually reinforced along the Armistice demarcation line.

The above acts of aggression leave no room for doubt about the intention of Israel to pursue its planned aggressive policy in the demilitarized zone in order to occupy the area, in the manner which they have followed in occupying the Auja demilitarized zone, in violation of the Armistice Agreements.

The Government of the United Arab Republic takes a most serious view of this threat by Israel to the peace and security of the area.

While reserving the right of my delegation to pursue this grave matter further, I have the honour to request that this letter be circulated to all members of the Security Council.