

**Middle East - Suez story No  
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Dag Hammarskjöld's saml.

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

2 Sept. - 25 Oct. 56

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5 Sept. 56

Kidron, M. R. (for A. Eban, Perm. Represent. of Israel  
to the U.N.)

- A letter to the President of Secco.

UNITED NATIONS  
SECURITY  
COUNCIL



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LETTER DATED 5 SEPTEMBER 1956 FROM THE REPRESENTATIVE OF ISRAEL  
ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

I have the honour to refer to my letter of 6 June 1956 (S/3606) and of 28 June 1956 (S/3611) concerning the illegal action by the Government of Egypt in holding up the transit of the Greek vessel, S/S Pannegia, bound from Haifa to Elath via the Suez Canal with a cargo of cement.

The circumstances of this illegal Egyptian action were fully described to the Security Council in the letters referred to above. However, all efforts, including personal intervention by the Secretary-General, to induce the Government of Egypt to abide by its international obligations regarding freedom of passage through the Canal have proved of no avail.

From the day of the arrival of the S/S Pannegia at Port Said on 25 May 1956, the Government of Egypt, by premeditated tactics of harrassment, obstruction and delay, has prevented the vessel from continuing on its lawful journey. Local shipping agents were not allowed to make the arrangements necessary for the continuation of the passage, while at the same time the ship's master for many weeks was refused permission by Egyptian authorities to go ashore. The Egyptian authorities even refused to allow the replacement of sailors who had fallen ill.

These and other harrassments were being practiced at the very time when the Egyptian Government was proclaiming its devotion to the principle of freedom of navigation for ships of all nations through the Suez Canal. Despite the formal denials and disclaimers of the Egyptian Government it is an undisputed fact that, as a direct result of Egyptian interference, the S/S Pannegia was unable to traverse the Canal, as it had every right to do.

In the face of the continuing violation of international law and of the persistent denial to the captain and his crew of the elementary facilities to which they are entitled, the S/S Pannegia has now been recalled to Haifa by her charterers.

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The Egyptian Government has thus forced the vessel to abandon the exercise of its right to pass through the Suez Canal. In so doing, Col. Nasser has demonstrated in most brazen fashion his utter disregard for Egypt's obligations under the Constantinople Convention of 1888, and for the explicit ruling of the Security Council of 1 September 1951, at the very time when he is seeking to persuade the world that he is prepared to guarantee the freedom of shipping through the Canal.

I have been instructed to inform the Security Council of the gravity with which my Government views this latest interference by Egypt with the passage of Israel goods and Israel-bound shipping through the Suez Canal. My Government is particularly concerned at the use by Egypt of the methods of harrassment described above to secure, whatever the formal pretext, the effective closure of the Canal to users unwelcome to her.

The continued practise by Egypt of measures which have been explicitly condemned by the Security Council and which are in contravention of Article I of the General Armistice Agreement between Egypt and Israel, has created new tensions which the Government of Israel must view with the utmost concern.

In registering its solemn protest with the Security Council, the Government of Israel reserves its right with regard to further action.

I have the honour to request that the contents of this letter be brought to the notice of the members of the Security Council.

Accept, Sir, etc.

(Signed) M.R. Kidron

for Abba Eban

Permanent Representative of  
Israel to the United Nations

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