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held at Headquarters, N. York

UNITED NATIONS

SECURITY
COUNCIL



GENERAL

S/PV.707
16 December 1955

ENGLISH

VERBATIM RECORD OF THE SEVEN HUNDRED AND SEVENTH MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Friday, 16 December 1955, at 3 p.m.

<u>President:</u>	Sir Leslie MUNRO	New Zealand
<u>Members:</u>	Belgium	Mr. van LANGENHOVE
	Brazil	Mr. de FREITAS VALLE
	China	Mr. TSIANG
	France	Mr. ALPHAND
	Iran	Mr. ENTEZAM
	Peru	Mr. HOLGUIN
	Turkey	Mr. SARPER
	Union of Soviet Socialist Republics	Mr. SOBOLEV
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Sir Pierson DIXON
	United States of America	Mr. LODGE

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Publication of the final printed records being subject to a rigid schedule, the co-operation of delegations in strictly observing this time-limit would be greatly appreciated.

55-31576

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

The agenda was adopted.

THE PALESTINE QUESTION:

LETTER DATED 13 DECEMBER 1955 FROM THE REPRESENTATIVE OF SYRIA ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL (S/3505)

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Shukairy, representative of Syria, and Mr. Eban, representative of Israel, took places at the Security Council table

The PRESIDENT: Before I call upon the parties concerned, certain representatives on the Council have requested permission to speak, and I call upon the representative of Turkey.

Mr. SARFER (Turkey): The tragic incident which occurred on the night of 11-12 December on the Syrian-Israeli border is considered as a matter of great and grave concern by the Turkish Government. Although the final report of the United Nations Truce Supervision Organization has not yet been received, all the preliminary reports, as well as the press release issued in Jerusalem on 12 December by that organization, makes it unfortunately clear that this recent border incident has been caused by the direct action of Israeli armed forces penetrating into Syrian territory. Both the circumstances of this armed attack and the tragic toll of human lives which it has caused make it necessary for my delegation to deplore the initiative taken by Israel in launching such an attack. I wish to extend the sympathy and the condolences of the people and Government of Turkey to the families of the forty-four Syrian soldiers and officers who lost their lives during this incident, as well as to the people of Syria as a whole.

(Mr. Sarper, Turkey)

My Government has always viewed the establishment of lasting peace, security and tranquillity in the Middle East as a very important element in the maintenance of peace all over the world. We have made efforts in the past and will continue our efforts in the future for a peaceful and lasting solution of the existing disputes in this vital area of the world. At a period when all efforts should be co-ordinated towards the ultimate peaceful solution of present disputes, the resort to violence and bloodshed has been a shocking blow. We cannot but express our deep regret that an incident of this nature should have taken place and that the tranquillity of the Middle East should thus be gravely disturbed at a time when the area is more than ever in need of stability and peace.

In considering this question at this stage, we also feel that we must express our satisfaction and appreciation for the restraint which has been shown so far by Syrian and other Arab forces around the frontiers of Israel. We have always deplored retaliation and have considered it as a method which ultimately defeats its own purpose. It is our earnest hope that all the parties concerned will see clearly the shocking effects which such actions produce on world opinion, and that they will act accordingly in the future.

In conclusion, I wish to state that my delegation reserves its right to intervene at a later stage in this debate, after we have studied the final report of the Truce Supervision Organization and heard the parties directly concerned.

Mr. LODGE (United States of America): I speak early at this meeting to express the shock of the United States Government at the military action of last Sunday evening, which the Government of Israel has announced that it undertook on Syrian soil against Syrian forces on the north-eastern shore of the Sea of Galilee. We have not yet received final reports from General Burns or from the Syrian-Israeli Mixed Armistice Commission. Therefore, we cannot now decide what must be the exact position of the Security Council on this attack. The United States Government, however, feels compelled to state, as we have said so many times in the past, that we oppose such acts of military violence.

(Mr. Lodge, United States)

We realize that there may be provocations for such action, and for any provocations, if such there be, there is no excuse.

But regardless of whether or not there are provocations, Members of the United Nations have undertaken not to resort to the use of force in the settlement of their disputes. Israel has specifically undertaken not to resort to force. It is greatly to be regretted that Buteiha should now be added to the list of military actions which Israel initiated at Gaza, at Qibya and at El Hamma.

It seems fitting to recall here the words of the President of the United States as set forth in a statement he issued on 9 November, as follows:

"All Americans have been following with deep concern the latest developments in the Near East. The recent outbreak of hostilities has led to a sharp increase in tensions. These events inevitably retard our search for world peace. Insecurity in one region is bound to affect the world as a whole... I stated last year that our goal in the Near East as elsewhere is a just peace. Nothing has taken place since which invalidates our fundamental policies, policies based on friendship for all of the peoples of the area. We believe that true security must be based upon a just and reasonable settlement... Recent developments have made it all the more imperative that a settlement be found."

The peace and future welfare of the Near East rest in largest measure on the shoulders of the leaders of the countries in that part of the world. There must be restraint regardless of whatever the provocations to fight may be. Should fighting break out again, the only victors will be those who live and rule by misery and chaos. The United States Government is convinced that the responsible leaders in the Near East know this to be true. This Council should encourage as best it can this continued sense of responsibility.

In conclusion, let me repeat here what the United States has already said to the Government of Syria: that we extend our sincerest sympathy for this tragic loss of life.

(Mr. Lodge, United States)

I hope that the President of the Council will see fit to request an urgent report from General Burns detailing all elements of the military action, together with a text of the Mixed Armistice Commission's decision, and setting forth the present situation with regard to the control and policing of the demilitarized zones. We suggest that General Burns be requested to make specific recommendations which may serve as a basis for the further deliberations of the Council when next we meet on this question.

I reserve the right to speak again at a later date after we have received the report of the Truce Supervision Organization.

Sir Pierson DIXON (United Kingdom): The United Kingdom delegation deplores the grave incident which occurred on 11-12 December on the Israel-Syria border. We deeply regret the loss of life and injury which resulted, and we extend our sympathy to the Government of Syria and to the relatives of those who lost their lives. We commend the Government of Syria for the restraint which it has shown in this matter.

We deplore this attack by Israel forces on Syrian forces and civilians. We deplore it for itself and also because, as I have more than once had occasion to say at this table, we are most strongly opposed in principle not only to attacks without provocation, but also to the whole idea that armed attack is in any way justified as retaliation for acts of hostility in the past, real or alleged.

We await a report from General Burns on the incident.

It is already clear, however, that an incident of this kind can only complicate the efforts which my Government with others have incessantly been making to put an end to the disturbed state of affairs in this area and to replace strife by the conditions of tranquillity which are so badly required in the Middle East.

I reserve the right to speak again when the report of the Chief of Staff is in our hands.

Mr. SOBOLEV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (translated from Russian): The Security Council has before it for consideration a complaint by the Syrian Government concerning certain actions by the State of Israel -- specifically, the armed attack by Israel armed forces on Syrian territory in the area of the Sea of Galilee which took place on 12 December. This attack by Israel armed forces resulted in the deaths of thirty-seven members of the Syrian army and twelve civilians, including three women. Eight other members of the armed forces were wounded and thirty taken prisoner.

The USSR delegation tenders its condolences to the Government and people of Syria for the losses they have suffered as a result of this attack. Such acts on the part of Israel armed forces are a serious violation of the United Nations Charter and of the Armistice Agreement, and increase tension in the area.

The USSR delegation considers that the Security Council, which bears the primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security, cannot shut its eyes to so serious a violation of the United Nations Charter and the Armistice Agreement between Syria and Israel. The Security Council cannot but condemn such acts by Israel, acts which result in increasing the tension in this area. It is the Council's duty to take effective measures to prevent similar incidents in the future.

The USSR delegation reserves the right to speak on the substance of the question after it has studied the statements of the parties concerned and the relevant documents.

Mr. ALPHAND (France) (translated from French): The Government of the French Republic has always most strongly condemned the use of force to settle international disputes. Accordingly, we deeply deplore the recent incidents in the area of Lake Tiberias. Let me therefore tender our condolences to the Government concerned for the loss of human life caused by these incidents.

In conformity with the usual practice of the Security Council, we shall await the report of the Chief of Staff of the Truce Supervision Organization before passing judgement. We therefore associate ourselves with the United States representative's suggestion that the Council should ask General Burns for a full report on the incidents.

(Mr. Alphand, France)

Like previous speakers, I reserve the right to make a fuller statement on this subject as soon as we have received a report from the Chief of Staff of the Truce Supervision Organization.

Mr. ENTEZAM (Iran)(translated from French): If the practice of the Security Council allowed one delegation to associate itself with a statement made by another, I should certainly endorse every word of the Turkish representative's statement at the beginning of this meeting. In common with him and with all members of the Council who have spoken I deplore on behalf of my Government the incidents of 11 December arising out of an unprovoked military attack by Israel. We condemn this brutal and unjustified act. We express our sincere sympathy with the families of the victims, and congratulate the Syrian Government on its self-control and moderation. If the Syrian Government had not shown this spirit of moderation, the peace of the Middle East would be in even greater peril, and we might even now be faced with a total war.

Like other members of the Council I do not propose to say any more for the moment and reserve the right to take part in the discussion after we have received General Burns's report.

Mr. TSIANG (China): Before we have heard the statements of the representatives of the two parties directly concerned and before we have received the reports of the United Nations observers on the spot, it is natural and prudent that we should not arrive at final conclusions. However, it is clear that an unprovoked attack has been made. My delegation deplores such an attack, and my country, China, now extends its sympathies and those of our people to the families of the victims of this incident.

Mr. HOLGUIN (Peru)(translated from Spanish): The events which occurred on 11 December in the frontier zone between Israel and Syria constitute a fact which my delegation is the first to deplore, since it introduces an element of violence into the regime of what should be peaceful coexistence between Israel and Syria, instituted under the auspices of the United Nations.

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(Mr. Holguin, Peru)

My delegation cannot countenance such a resort to force, which seems contrary to the very Charter itself. At the same time, however, it feels that before taking such steps as the situation may require the Council should have before it a full report from the Truce Supervision Organization headed by General Burns.

My delegation wishes to express its deep sympathy with the Government and people of Syria on the occasion of this most painful incident.

Mr. van LANGENHOVE (Belgium)(translated from French): Pending the receipt of a detailed report from General Burns I can only associate myself on behalf of the Belgian delegation with the sentiments and views expressed by the other members of the Council.

The PRESIDENT: As no other member of the Council wishes to speak, I as representative of New Zealand desire to make a brief statement.

As representative of New Zealand, I wish to associate myself with those previous speakers who have joined in deploring the violence and bloodshed which occurred in the vicinity of Lake Tiberias on the night of 11 December. Our sympathy goes out to the relatives of the victims.

Although we do not have a full report from the United Nations authority in Palestine, it seems clear that the deaths and injuries which occurred on 11 December were the result of an organized attack by Israeli armed forces within Syrian territory.

My Government has had occasion in the past to censure the acts of armed violence which have more than once been committed in the Palestine area during New Zealand's term in the Security Council. It is a matter of deep regret to us that our views and, indeed, the collective views of the Council have apparently not been heeded. Whatever the provocation -- and I agree with Mr. Lodge that there is no excuse for any provocations, if such there be -- a policy of armed retaliation cannot but lead to a further deterioration in a situation which is tense and explosive. My delegation has, therefore, received the preliminary reports of this latest attack with the deepest disquiet.

I reserve the right to amplify this statement at a later stage of this debate. I call upon the Secretary-General, who desires to make an intervention.

The SECRETARY-GENERAL: In view of the references to the full report we had expected we should have from General Burns, I wish to inform the members of the Council that, following the usual procedures, such full report has been prepared. I am informed by General Burns that it will be sent by pouch tomorrow. Thus we should have it at some time in the first half of next week and should be able to circulate it to members by that time.

The PRESIDENT: The Council will now hear the parties concerned, and I call first upon the representative of Syria.

Mr. SHUKAIRY (Syria): Allow me first of all, Mr. President, to express my thanks to the Council and to you, as President, for the opportunity given me to state our case. Your Presidency, Sir, has contributed immeasurably to the successful conclusion of the thorny question of admission of new Members; we trust that under your able guidance and through your gifted ability, the Council will arrive at a decisive action with regard to the matter now under consideration.

Furthermore, I deem it my duty to express my deep thanks to those representatives who expressed sympathy with my Government and my people regarding the recent tragic and bloody attack.

Before adducing the facts of our complaint, may I be permitted to make these preliminary remarks. This item is not of ordinary character. It is not one of those events which can be described lightly as current incidents taking place across the armistice lines. Israel has made an attack against our country, our people and our army, an attack of a shocking nature, of unspeakable brutality and incredible savagery. This treacherous attack was not only an open breach of the Charter, a flagrant violation of the Armistice Agreement, an act of overt aggression, but a serious disregard for the principles of morality and international decency. It brings to our memories the ghastly war tactics of the Nazi regime against which the United Nations mobilized its material and spiritual resources. The Security Council is, therefore, called upon, with all its heart, with all its mind and with all its will, to live up to its sacred responsibility of maintaining peace and order.

What are the facts of the case? Horrible as they are, they are easy to state.

On the night of 11-12 December 1955, at 2.30 a.m., Israeli armed forces launched a concentrated large-scale attack along the whole area lying to the east of Lake Tiberias. Israeli commandos in boats landed on the eastern shores of the Lake. An Israeli force, estimated at approximately two infantry companies, crossed into Syrian territory from the River Jordan northward and from Ein Gev southward. These forces were supported by armoured cars, aircraft, heavy artillery and armoured launches.

(Mr. Shukairy, Syria)

After a fierce fight which lasted for four hours, Israeli forces occupied four observation posts parallel to the eastern shores of Lake Tiberias and lying on Syrian territory. As a result of this treacherous attack, most of the Syrian officers and soldiers lost their lives while in their trenches. Israeli armed forces attempted, in addition, to advance eastward in Syrian territory with the purpose of occupying the principal defence posts. This act of armed aggression led to severe fighting which lasted for two hours, after which the Israeli forces were compelled to withdraw without having attained their objective.

This planned attack resulted in the deaths of five officers, thirty-two soldiers and twelve civilians, including three women. Eight other soldiers were wounded and thirty taken prisoner.

In the course of this savage attack the Israeli forces used various types of arms, including aircraft, heavy artillery, armoured cars, heavy machine-guns and a large quantity of mines and explosives. A large number of houses belonging to Syrian villagers were destroyed and the occupants killed under the debris. In addition, Israeli forces committed various acts of brigandage, including plunder and looting, regarding which we maintain our full right to reparation, as we also maintain our full rights for all damage and loss of life and property.

These facts have been substantiated, in general, in the preliminary report of the United Nations Truce Supervision Organization in Palestine, which was issued on 12 December 1955. The report states that "Israeli armed forces launched an attack on the Syrian border to the east of Lake Tiberias, between Buteiha Farm and El Kursi". The report further states that "the Israelis blew up the residence of Buteiha Farm, the employees' mess hall and one civilian truck. They demolished the defence works and burned the barracks and tents at the Syrian Army Post". In addition the report states that "the Israeli attack apparently took place at all points at the same time. Explosives were used for the destruction of positions". A provisional list of the Syrian casualties, embodied in the report, mentions forty-one killed.

(Mr. Shukairy, Syria)

These facts speak for themselves with a glaring eloquence beyond the limit of mere words. This whole ghastly attack by Israel was an act of war, possessing all the attributes of war except those of courage and bravery; for it is quite easy to mobilize a military force and strike at isolated posts under the curtain of darkness and with the treachery of surprise. It is made still easier under the umbrella of an armistice, when one party violates the armistice and the other rests in confidence under its provisions.

Article 1 (2) of the Armistice Agreement provides that "No aggressive action by the armed forces -- land, sea or air -- of either Party shall be undertaken, planned or threatened against the people or the armed forces of the other". In this case Israel mobilized land, sea and air forces against the people and the armed forces of Syria -- the very international offence prohibited under the Armistice Agreement. The weapons used, including air craft, armoured launches, armoured vehicles, mortars, explosives and other weapons of destruction, have inflicted loss of life, both civilian and military, and resulted in destruction to military establishments as well as to private property. Brigadier-General Moshe Zadock of the Israel Army commanding the area concerned has admitted boastfully that all installations, pill-boxes and other fortifications in five coastal positions were wrecked, armaments captured or blown up, and a great number of Syrian soldiers killed or routed. This report was contained in The New York Times of 13 December 1955.

Instead of being ashamed of this disgrace, Israel is boastful and filled with pride. This act of aggression stands proved on admission, requiring no additional evidence. Thus, the verdict is conclusive; the attack was planned, pre-arranged and preconcerted. Further, the attack was wilful, premeditated, and carried out with a light heart and in cold blood. This is the only possible dreadful conclusion. Israel must stand before the world condemned for a crime unprecedented since the Armistice Agreement was entered into. Israeli forces carried out this operation against natural barriers. They crossed a lake, a river, an armistice line and an international frontier with a rough terrain, and penetrated into Syrian territory.

(Mr. Shukairy, Syria)

The Israeli attack, however, was of a special character which must be placed before the Council fully, freely and frankly. This armed aggression was carried out without justification. I say "without justification" although, under the Armistice Agreement, no armed attack has any justification. In the last two years -- and I invite the attention of the Security Council to this fact -- the situation along the armistice lines has been relatively calm, with only sporadic events of an ordinary character. For some time before this bloody attack the serenity in the area had been comparatively normal. Syria had committed no act that could provoke this heinous crime perpetrated by Israel. In a statement issued by the Israel delegation to the United Nations on 13 December 1955, as a background to the attack, it was stated in paragraph 8 that: "In the first six months of 1954 alone, Israeli casualties on the Sea were two killed and seven wounded". In just six months, on the strength of this statement of the Israel delegation, as an explanation of this crime, it is claimed that two were killed and seven wounded. And again, the statement referred to a few incidents of a minor character from January to October 1955.

If we accept this statement without challenging it, there would appear to be no ground for Israel to carry out such a large-scale attack resulting in such loss of innocent human life and property. This point, however, need not be laboured at length, for neither the Security Council nor the Armistice Commission has been seized with any serious situation obtaining in the area for some time past.

(Mr. Shukairy, Syria)

One other reason, however, if it could lawfully be described as a reason, was adduced by Israel in justification. The Israeli statement, issued one day after the attack, traced the history of an old dispute regarding the rights of fishing in Lake Tiberias. I do not wish to deal with fishing rights before the Security Council. These rights are governed by an international agreement entered into in 1923 between France and the United Kingdom in their capacity as mandatory Powers of Syria and Palestine respectively. It is neither proper nor pertinent to inject this question into our deliberations when we are dealing with the peace and security of the area. But this dispute is not unique in the world. If Israel is aggrieved, if Israel has a complaint to make, and if Israel has a case to file, then certainly Israel cannot do it at the point of the gun. In this case, it was done by all weapons of sea, land and air. Israel can have recourse to many ways -- civilized ways. Israel can complain to the Armistice Commission, to the Conciliation Commission, or, perhaps, even to the International Court of Justice. Israel can complain to the General Assembly or to the Security Council if the problem has assumed a serious character. But to resort to military force is a flagrant violation of the Charter, let alone the provisions of the Armistice Agreement.

This conduct of Israel, however, discloses a state of mind which is worthy of deep reflection on the part of the Security Council. Israel has untied itself from the law of nations. Israel has acted as though the Armistice Agreement exists no more, as though the Armistice Commission is established no more, and as though the Security Council functions no more. This is the crux of the question. This is the real challenge which the Security Council has to answer, and to answer seriously and definitely.

I come now to deal with the question from another angle. Israel admits the attack, but as a measure of retaliation. To begin with, I must say outright that the attack could not be described as retaliation. Retaliation against what? I will repeat the question: retaliation against what? Nothing outrageous has taken place to provoke an outrageous retaliation. Brutality and savagery are no retaliation to events of a local or ordinary character, even if those events were before the Security Council. To contend retaliation, one has to have a grave situation immediately before, and this is what I wish to

(Mr. Shukairy, Syria)

stress. There must be not only a grave situation, but a grave situation which exists immediately before such a horrible attack, otherwise the attack would be nothing but an open aggression, stigmatised with bloodthirstiness and warlike hunger.

The question of retaliation, however, is not foreign to the Security Council. There is a lengthy line of jurisprudence that has been decided in this connexion by this body. It has been through Israel's violations that this jurisprudence has been built up in the deliberations of the Security Council. On more than one occasion, the Security Council has outlawed retaliation and condemned Israel for any retaliatory action. I shall not cite all the pronouncements of the Security Council on this point; I shall confine myself to the statements made recently in the Council in connexion with the Gaza outrage committed by Israel in February of this year.

In dealing with this question the representative of the United States said, "My Government has repeatedly made its position clear in this Council. We oppose any policy of reprisal or retaliation." He further said, "... resort to force is all the more to be deplored." (S/PV.692, paras. 8 and 9)

The representative of New Zealand, the present President, said, "... the incident as recounted to us does not have the character of a spontaneous foray. It is described to us as a military attack. Therefore, if one side is exclusively at fault, it is at fault not as a result of the lawlessness of its citizens, but as a result of a deliberate, planned and disciplined act which must be regarded as carrying governmental responsibility." (S/PV.692, para. 37)

The representative of China said, "Violent and premeditated aggression, by one party, if substantiated, cannot be justified merely by continuous violations by the other party. That is particularly so because the Security Council is not paralyzed in the Palestine question, and there is therefore a place to which appeal for remedy may be made." (S/PV.692, para. 60)

The representative of the **United Kingdom** said, "When the Security Council in 1953 considered the situation on the Israel-Jordan frontier after the Qibiya incident, it most clearly rejected the thesis that retaliatory action was justified." (S/PV.695, para. 11)

(Mr. Shukairy, Syria)

The representative of France said, "The Israel representative tried to justify this attack by relating it to the situation which has prevailed in that region for several months and to represent it to us as a legitimate retaliation against the many provocations for which he claims Egypt is responsible ... But even if that situation is as Mr. Eban has described it to us, nothing in the facts he related could serve as an excuse, and still less as justification ..."

(S/PV.695, para.21)

I could go on giving more quotations from the remaining members of the Security Council on this point, but what I have said shows, without any shred of doubt, that armed attack is never justified and is no excuse whatever. In fact, the Security Council in its resolution of November 1953 expressed the strongest censure of the retaliatory action committed by Israel in connexion with the Qibiya massacre. Thus, Israel now stands before the Security Council disarmed of any justification for the attack at present under consideration.

With this established, allow me now to invite the attention of the Security Council to the measures which we suggest should be invoked. To begin with, I venture to submit that this outrage has raised a great deal of turmoil and excitement, not only in my country, but in the whole Arab world. I submit further that public opinion all over the world has been aroused to indignation and bitter resentment. Official spokesmen in various capitals have registered their deep regret and condemnation. The whole world is watching the deliberations of this highly esteemed body, which is entrusted with the ultimate responsibility of international peace and security.

The issue in this case is war or no war. The Arab Governments are now under great effort and under great labour to face the wave of anger and indignation which the Israeli attack has aroused. So the crucial question I am putting at this table is: what measures are contemplated by the Security Council? What action does the Security Council intend to take?

I place this question with great alarm and with great anxiety, for the security of the area will depend upon the measures the Security Council proposes to take. I can even say that the confidence of the whole world in this Organization now depends upon the course of action the Security Council will choose. That is why I seriously invite the Security Council to make a serious consideration of the preventive measures to be applied.

(Mr. Shukairy, Syria)

I can take the liberty of saying that a resolution carrying condemnation of the Israeli action may be in the minds of the members of the Security Council. A verdict of condemnation would be a great censure of the action of Israel, but I beg your indulgence and your patience. This is no remedy against Israel. It may be a remedy against a party with a sense of international responsibility, but Israel has now a record before the Security Council. The Security Council, I respectfully submit, should take full account of this record before it adopts its verdict. I shall not deal at length with this point. I shall limit myself to the facts which are pertinent to the remedy which we propose to suggest.

In April 1951 Israel carried out aerial action on the Syrian frontier. The Security Council held that the Israeli action constituted a violation of the cease-fire provision contained in the Security Council resolution of 15 January 1948 and was inconsistent with the terms of the Armistice Agreement and the obligations assumed by all States Members of the United Nations under the Charter.

In January 1953 Israeli military forces, using 50 mm and 76 mm mortars, bangslores, machine-guns, grenades and light arms, attacked the villages of Falame and Rantis. The Mixed Armistice Commission condemned Israel for this act.

On the night of 28 August 1953 Israeli forces launched an attack against several buildings and huts in the Arab refugee camp at Bureg. Bombs were thrown through the windows of the huts in which the refugees were sleeping. Twenty persons were killed, 27 seriously wounded and 35 less seriously wounded. This incident was reported by General Bennike to the Security Council.

In October 1953 Israeli forces attacked at night the inhabitants of Qibiya village by firing from automatic weapons and throwing grenades and using bangalore torpedoes, together with TNT explosives. The result was a massacre and annihilation. Forty-one dwelling houses and a school building were completely blown up, and there were 42 killed and 15 wounded, including men, women and children. The Security Council condemned Israel in the strongest terms of censure for this massacre.

(Mr. Shukairy, Syria)

In March 1954, Israeli forces, heavily armed, carried out a massacre in the village of Nahalin, resulting in great loss of life and property. The Armistice Commission condemned in the strongest terms the action of Israel.

And lastly, in February 1955, Israel committed an attack against the military forces of Egypt in the Gaza strip, resulting in thirty-nine killed, thirty-two wounded, and the destruction of military installations. The Security Council again condemned Israel for this act.

In all these Israeli attacks, heavy weapons were used, and life and property were destroyed. These attacks were military operations and not mere violations. All were designed and prearranged. Israel was condemned for all of them.

Today the Security Council is seized with a military operation similar in design but greater in dimensions. Today the Security Council is seized with a complaint of a highly serious character. The cases I have cited permit a diagnosis of Israel with the disease of war and aggressive tendencies. The cases I have cited disclose a system, a policy, a pattern which Israel is following persistently and consistently. It is sufficient to read the lecture delivered by the Chief of Staff, Brigadier General Moshe Dayan to his officers -- this is not an article or a press clipping but a lecture delivered by him to his officers -- published in the Jewish Frontier in October 1955. In dealing with retaliation, the Israeli Chief of Staff declared the following: "Such an attack is not an act of vengeance. It is a punitive action and a warning that if that country fails to control its residents and prevent their assaults on Israel, Israel forces will wreak havoc in that land."

These are, so to speak, the standing orders of the Israeli Army as issued by the Israeli Chief of Staff -- a punitive action which will wreak havoc. This is the major policy of Israel and this is the real background of the question under deliberation. This explains why the graph of Israeli aggression is mounting year after year and the toll of human suffering is rising.

Israel was condemned by the Security Council, but Israel is pursuing its aggressions and violations. Thus Israel has not heeded your condemnation. To Israel, condemnation seems to be worthless. Condemnation has not deterred Israel from committing the criminal attack we are now considering.

(Mr. Shukairy, Syria)

It was only in March of this year that the Security Council, in its resolution on the Gaza outrage, decided "to call again" -- and I invite the attention of the Security Council to the word "again" -- "upon Israel to take all necessary measures to prevent such action." The "again" refers to the resolution on the Qibya massacre, a previous attack, where the Security Council decided, and I again quote the decision of the Security Council "to call upon Israel to take effective measures to prevent all such actions in the future".

Israel has been condemned in the past and has been called upon again and again not to commit any such action. The Security Council is therefore duty-bound to take deterrent measures in addition to the measures that have so far proved to be in vain.

I must at this stage, however, remind the Security Council that its deliberations on the Gaza case were about to end in preventive measures against Israel. It seems to us that the Council wished to give Israel a chance to conduct itself in accordance with international decency.

The representative of Iran, in his able statement to the Security Council on the Gaza case, said:

"Indeed, mere condemnation is not enough when aggression has caused so many deaths. The Security Council must shoulder its responsibilities and act accordingly."

The representative of France with great eloquence and ability placed the matter in its proper context. He declared: "From the bottom of our hearts we hope that Israel will appreciate the Council's decision at its full value, as a final warning." I invite the attention of this honourable Council to the last phrase of the statement of the representative of France -- that the Council's decision on the Gaza case was a final warning to Israel.

It becomes crystal clear that Israel was given a final warning. Israel now stands before the Security Council in total disregard of that warning with all its finality. For these reasons, it is evident that Israel has persistently violated the principles contained in the Charter. Article 6 of the Charter reads:

"A Member of the United Nations which has persistently violated the Principles contained in the present Charter may be expelled from the Organization by the General Assembly upon the recommendation of the Security Council."

(Mr. Shukairy, Syria)

Israel's membership in the United Nations is thus in question. The best I can do is to remind the Security Council of its competence to apply its authority in this matter.

Alternatively and on the same grounds, we respectfully urge the Security Council to decide economic sanctions, as provided for in the Charter. This becomes more imperative since Israel is receiving loans, financial assistance and grants-in-aid from national and international sources. Israel is further receiving contributions through its agents abroad in fabulous amounts. Whether directly or indirectly, this economic support is actually enabling Israel to commit these aggressions. Israel is duty-bound to make account to the world, for it is through this stream of financial assistance that Israel is able to make a budget of its own.

Israel cannot have it both ways. Israel cannot continue to be financed by the international community and, at the same time, ignore the wishes of the international community. Israel has chosen to ignore the standards of morality, the basic principles of international decency, the provisions of the Charter, the terms of the Armistice Agreement and, finally, which is most important, the condemnations of the Security Council. It is therefore high time to apply economic sanctions against Israel.

I have intentionally limited my statement to the subject matter of this complaint. I have refrained from referring to any aspect of the Palestine question, political or otherwise. Israel may choose, however, to unfold matters of no relevance, in an attempt to becloud the present issue or plunge it in a manufactured controversy. To us the matter is different. This outrage committed by Israel places a sacred duty upon the Security Council. No matter what difference obtains in the Council on international matters, the voice of the Council must be unanimous on this question.

The time and place of this tragic event must inspire the Council for action and effective action. The commission of this international offence took place around Lake Tiberias and the River Jordan where the Messenger of Peace uttered his eternal sermons. We need hardly recall that those areas have been consecrated by the prayers of millions of believers all over the world. The

(Mr. Shukairy, Syria)

time is inspiring too. The time is almost Christmas, the birthday of the Great Master in the land of peace -- the holy land which was made unholy by the terror and horror of Israel.

I cannot conclude my statement without inviting the Council's attention to a letter dated 15 December 1955, addressed by Premier Gamal Abdel Nasser to the Secretary-General of the United Nations. I request the members of the Council to read the text of that letter for themselves. The head of the Egyptian Government has made special reference to the attack now under consideration. The last paragraph of the letter reads as follows:

"I should like to inform you that the Egyptian Government is bound to deal with the situation herself including the use of her armed forces, land, air and navy with a view to ensuring her safety and maintaining peace in the area. That being the only natural action, since the Security Council has not prevented the recurrence of such attacks."

This statement is highly significant. It conveys a message that could not escape the attention of the Council. Frank, sincere and bold, the letter of Premier Nasser places the whole question before the Council in its proper context. The letter states that the Security Council has not prevented the recurrence of the attacks of Israel. This is a fact which no one can possibly deny.

The Egyptian Government has declared itself bound to deal with the situation itself including the use of its armed forces to maintain peace and safety in the area. The issue, therefore, is crystal clear. It is war or no war. And it is Israel's conduct that will finally decide the issue and that will finally answer the question.

The Security Council is now seized with the facts, with the conclusions, and with the future consequences, and now it is for the Security Council to decide.

Mr. EBAN (Israel): The clash of forces on the shores and borders of Lake Tiberias is both an index and a result of the tensions which have long prevailed between Syria and Israel.

Syria took a leading part in the invasion of Israel by Arab forces in 1948. Its special role in the total pattern of that aggression was to establish a dominating stranglehold on Israel's only source of water for irrigation and power. At that time and ever since, the upper Jordan, the Huleh region and the waters of Lake Tiberias have been the main targets of Syrian encroachments and assaults.

In July 1949 Syria belatedly followed the example of other Middle Eastern Governments and concluded an armistice agreement with Israel. The terms of this agreement included the removal of Syrian troops from all the areas which they had aggressively occupied beyond the established international frontier. Thus the whole of Lake Tiberias, with a narrow strip of land on its eastern shore, lies within the territory of Israel, and Syria has no political or geographical status on the lake. Owing to the presence of subterranean hot springs, activity in the lake during the winter months is concentrated mainly in its northeastern corner. These Israeli fishermen and others carrying out their pursuits in this Israeli lake are at all times within close view and range of Syrian military positions from which artillery and machine-gun fire can be directed against them at will. In such conditions of proximity, the avoidance of conflict largely depends upon the character of Syrian policy toward Israel, both in its general and in its local aspect. The Security Council is aware from its own intimate experience of the acute tension prevailing between the two countries which face each other across the shores of Lake Tiberias. The central fact is the implacable hostility of Syria towards Israel, accompanied by a determined resolve to prevent any crystallization of peaceful attitudes or practices. This hostility has not always fallen short even of the eruption of Syrian forces on to Israeli soil, as in the Syrian attack at Tel el Mutilla, which cost so many Israeli lives.

The Security Council will recall from its own records how the Syrian Government conferred a military honour on the commander of that invasion and how United Nations authorities certified that action as an overt act of Syrian aggression.

But throughout the whole of the armistice period Syrian authorities have continued their aim of attempting to reduce Israel to a wilderness by denying it the use of water resources which are exposed with special vulnerability to Syrian

encroachment. The Council itself was seized for several weeks of the Syrian attempt under the pressure of armed violence to prevent the drainage of the Huleh marshes. This Syrian claim collapsed under the weight of its own frivolity, and this beneficent work went forward. But later a new campaign of interference and intimidation was launched by Syria against Israel's electric power project, which was temporarily postponed two years ago pending its urgent consideration by the Security Council at that time. In the meantime a central concern of the Syrian Government has been to obstruct any plan for the co-ordinated use of Jordan waters, for fear lest an agreement might remove the main potential source of a conflict which Syria desires at all costs to keep alive.

These attacks and intrusions in Lake Tiberias and elsewhere must be viewed against the wider background of Syrian policy. Authentic expressions of that policy which have a direct effect upon the situation now being discussed have come from Syrian leaders in clear and ominous terms. On 22 August 1955, the Syrian Prime Minister opened the conference of Arab representatives of the Mixed Armistice Commission with this pronouncement:

"The Palestine problem will not find its solution until the Arab flag will be hoisted over Palestine, after its conquest by the Arab armies.

"There can be no doubt," said the Prime Minister of Syria, "that your conference" -- that is, the conference of members of the Mixed Armistice Commission -- "is the most fitting institution to deal with this Syrian question, and I can assure you that the Arab Governments appreciate your contributions and decisions. It is my hope that your decisions will be the beginning of salvation."

On 20 September of this year, the Syrian Prime Minister made a radio broadcast to his people in the following terms:

"Israel is Syria's avowed enemy. We shall not rest as long as this thieving enemy still dwells on the holy soil of the Arab world. My Government will therefore reject all peace proposals and decline all forms of contact with the enemy. My Government will keep before her the task of strengthening the blockade against Israel with effective means in order to continue the struggle against her."

More recently, on 20 October 1955, this aggressive design was expressed in terms of an alliance with Egypt which was candidly interpreted in Syria as follows:

"It is not logical that Egypt and Syria will stand idle and merely look upon the problem of Palestine; after signing the pact, without hesitation, they intend to help the sons of their people when the hour arrives for the second round. Woe unto Israel when the Arab peoples are ready for a war of vengeance. Then will Israel be visited by terrible happenings."

In yet another statement, the Syrian spokesman referred to Egypt and Syria as having surrounded Israel with two sides of a pair of scissors.

These are illustrations of the general background of relationships against which life is pursued on the frontier between these two States. I have often had occasion to tell the Security Council how a generalized hostility and hatred directed against Israel by an Arab State has its direct and inevitable impact on the frontier where the two countries meet. Successive reports of the United Nations Chief of Staff have also explained how a fundamental condition of tension finds its particular point of explosion in conflicts which at first sight bear a purely localized aspect. The frontier between the two countries cannot be isolated from the relations between them. Indeed, if there is hostility, it is at the frontier that it assumes its most perilous aspects.

I cannot, therefore, emphasize too strongly to the Security Council that the exercise of hostility, of non-recognition, of belligerency and of covetous territorial claims against a neighbour, accompanied by frequent acts of violence, is unlikely to co-exist for long periods with the peaceful frontier between the author of that hostility and its target. The danger of local clashes emerging out of general hostility is bound to be especially frequent in a case such as this.

Geography dictates that life in the greater part of Israel, and especially in the area we are now discussing, is lived within close range and view of a hostile Arab border. In such circumstances a minimal condition of stability is a readiness by Arab States to leave Israel alone, to let our economic, agrarian and industrial development proceed unhindered, to abstain from any perverse temptation to use the geographical advantage for constant harassment and violent assault. So long as Arab policy is directed to the disruption of Israeli life, often by armed force, Israeli policy must be partially directed towards the prevention of such disruption.

Nowhere is this general dilemma more acute than in Israel's northern lake region, where much of the country's vital development work is intensively pursued. In our conception and desire, Lake Tiberias, the Hulehmarshes and the upper Jordan are the domain of farmers, workers and fishermen who seek nothing but the opportunity to follow their pursuits in peace. Israel's defence forces have no other objectives in that region but to ensure a minimal tranquillity for these innocent and fruitful enterprises while safeguarding the established territorial integrity of the State. The armistice agreement confers upon Israel the right to this tranquillity, and upon Syria the duty of helping to ensure it.

The observations of the parties in the Lake Tiberias region are fully defined in the armistice agreement itself and the key resolution adopted by the Mixed Armistice Commission on 15 March 1954. This important verdict covers a specific incident in which Syria at that time elicited the Commission's censure; but, more importantly, it defines the general system of rights and obligations on which the Commission hoped to establish tranquillity in this region. The resolution reads as follows:

"The Mixed Armistice Commission

"(1) Finds that, on 15 March 1954, the Syrian army positions near Kafr Aqab directed fire with anti-tank guns, machine-guns and rifles at two Israeli police boats;

"(2) Decides that the above warlike act by the Syrian army constitutes another serious violation of article 1, paragraphs 1 and 2, and article 3, paragraphs 2 and 3, of the General Armistice Agreement by Syria.

"Notes with great anxiety the repetition of these serious incidents on the eastern shore of Lake Tiberias;

"Further notes with great concern the repeated violations by Syria of the General Armistice Agreement, and calls upon the Syrian authorities to implement fully all their obligations under the General Armistice Agreement, and especially the Mixed Armistice Commission's resolution that calls upon them to ensure no interference whatsoever within Israeli territory."

(Mr. Eban, Israel)

It will be noted that the Mixed Armistice Commission has thus established the Israeli character of the Lake as Israel territory and has rejected any right of Syria to intrude upon activity therein. This applies both to fishing and to the use of the ten-metre strip on the eastern shore. It is, moreover, laid down that the Syrians have no right to interfere with any Israeli activity on the Lake where Syria has no political or legal status.

In discussing that resolution, which is the juridical basis of the present position in the area, the Israel representatives suggested negotiations for the renewal of the 1923 agreement which provided for fishing by Syrians in the Sea of Galilee. Syria, however, refused to enter such discussion and also rejected Israel's suggestion that individual Syrians, on personal application to the responsible authorities, be granted special fishing permits.

Now, the majority of the Mixed Armistice Commission no doubt sincerely hoped that the adoption of this clear ruling on jurisdiction would eliminate any further tensions in this area and would perhaps lay the foundations of an improved local relationship between the two countries. But the Syrian Government, which had vehemently opposed the Commission's ruling, now embarked upon a steady course of frustrating its purposes. Syrian artillery was established close to the frontier, dominating Israeli territory on the eastern shore as well as hundreds of metres of the Lake's surface. Exploiting this formidable advantage, Syrian forces have, as we shall see, attempted to banish Israel from its own Lake by surrounding activity on its waters with an constant sense of peril. Fire has been repeatedly opened on fishermen on the northern corner of the Lake. This has made it necessary for this activity to be accompanied by police launches; but these have come under repeated fire, with loss both of life and of property. I would add that the use of police launches, which had previously been challenged, was agreed between General Burns and the Israel Chief of Staff on 8 September 1955.

After its central resolution of 15 March 1954, the Mixed Armistice Commission has since twice felt itself called upon to adopt resolutions calling on Syria to honour the General Armistice Agreement and to implement the ruling of 15 March. One of these resolutions was adopted in response to an assault by a Syrian outpost on an Israeli police launch, killing two policemen and wounding five.

(Mr. Eban, Israel)

Thus, the basic difficulty has been and continues to be Syria's refusal to accept the ruling of 15 March 1954, under which Syria has no right to exercise any intervention, and least of all, intervention by armed force, against Israeli activity on the Lake. This verdict was assailed so violently by Syria, both in words and in deed of violence, that the Commission felt obliged to repeat the substance of its position only a few months later. Thus, in its resolution of 29 July the Commission ruled:

"The Mixed Armistice Commission notes the existing serious situation on the eastern shores of Lake Tiberias and resolves:

"(1) Syria and Israel are bound by article 4, paragraph 3 of the General Armistice Agreement, confirmed by various undertakings made by their representatives during the official Mixed Armistice Commission meetings, which have the same binding force as the Armistice Agreement, to ensure respectively that no crossings from Syria into Israeli territory and from Israel into Syrian territory will take place;

"(2) Any crossing from Syria into the ten-metre strip on the eastern shore of Lake Tiberias, as well as from Israel into Syrian territory, is a violation of article 4, paragraph 3 and of the above-mentioned undertakings;

"(3) Syria and Israel are bound by articles of the General Armistice Agreement, confirmed by various undertakings made by their representatives, to ensure that no interference whatsoever with activities within the territory of the other party would occur;

"(4) The Mixed Armistice Commission calls upon the Syrian and Israeli authorities to ensure the full implementation of the General Armistice Agreement and their undertakings; and, finally, the Mixed Armistice Commission calls upon the Syrian authorities to ensure no interference whatsoever with any Israeli activities in Lake Tiberias and on the ten-metre strip, and/or no crossing whatsoever into Israel."

(Mr. Eban, Israel)

This resolution, then, again established the doctrine of Syrian non-interference with any Israeli activity on the Lake. But this verdict, too, has been held up to persistent violation. The year now drawing to its end has seen a persistent record of Syrian attacks. A situation had manifestly arisen in which a crucial choice presented itself; either peaceful activity on the Lake would have to be stopped in deference to Syrian guns, or Syrian guns would become silent in order that the conditions for work and development might be restored.

It was against this background, following the unprovoked attack by Syrian batteries on 10 December, that Israeli forces undertook the operation of 11 December. A communique published in Jerusalem that night clearly and frankly defined the purposes of the operation. It read as follows:

"Tonight Israeli forces advanced against Syrian positions to silence the batteries responsible for this attack, in order to avert further Syrian aggression and to ensure the security of Israeli citizens engaged in their lawful occupations. Syria has been repeatedly called upon by the Mixed Armistice Commission to put an end to interference with Israeli activities inside Israeli territory, particularly with fishing in the Lake. The Mixed Armistice Commission's decisions have, however, proved of no avail and all efforts by United Nations representatives to bring about their **implementation** have failed. Syrian batteries of the Lake have, on repeated occasions, attacked Israeli fishermen and police boats. The season in the Lake has turned into unabated Syrian aggression against Israel, during which considerable damage and casualties have been inflicted."

These are the words of the communique published on 11 December.

As background for its central theme, I would point out that, during the first eleven months of 1955, there have been recorded 108 violations by Syria of the General Armistice Agreement; in other words, an average of one every three days, over a border extending to only about twenty-two miles in length. The majority of these border incidents have occurred in the area of the Huleh Lake, in the demilitarized zone to the south, and in the northern corner of Lake Tiberias. They have included firing on farm workers, firing on Israeli police patrols, harrassment of fishermen on Lake Huleh, penetration of Israeli territory in the demilitarized zone and elsewhere, and armed interference with fishing in the Sea of Galilee. During that period there were twenty cases of firing from Syrian

(Mr. Eban, Israel)

Army Posts on Israeli boats or on police launches in the northern corner of the Lake, eleven cases of illegal incursion by Syrians on to the Lake, frequently under the cover of Syrian armed fire, forty-four cases of firing from Syrian Army Posts on villages, farm workers and on civilian activities, eleven cases of firing from Syrian Posts on Israeli police patrols, nine cases of armed incursions by troops into the territory of Israel, five cases of incursion for the purpose of theft, one abduction, three attempted abductions and one sabotage of the water installations.

We cannot doubt that it is Syria's purpose and desire to paralyse Israel's use of Lake Tiberias, just as it has been Egypt's policy to deny Israel the use of international waterways leading to Israeli ports.

The Syrian attack on the Lake on 10 December showed clearly that the resumption of seasonal activity would again be attended by new harrassments.

The profound underlying issue of Arab-Israel relations under the armistice system is whether the peaceful exercise of legitimate rights must be suspended whenever there is an Arab threat of force, whether the Arab Governments have a right to practise belligerency and hostility against Israel, and themselves enjoy complete immunity against any responsibility. This is the very text and theme of our discussion today. For what does Mr. Shukairy's selective history of the Armistice really amount to? It says nothing more than that the people of Israel have become progressively more reluctant to sit back and suffer the consequences of a unilateral Arab belligerency. That is absolutely the only thing which he has proved. Now, this reluctance to be the passive victim of a regulated siege is an increasingly conspicuous element in the sentiment and policy of Israel. We envisage these armistice agreements in terms of absolute reciprocity both in rights and in obligations. We do not believe that Arab forces have a right to send their agents and their commando units to kill and plunder in Israel and then seek the shelter of the armistice agreements as a barrier against defensive reaction. We do not hold that the Arab Governments have a right to sail the seas and international waterways of our region in peace and forcibly deny that freedom to Israel. We do not think that whenever an Arab gun is levelled against an Israeli development project, the gun must prevail and the development project be halted. We do not consider that an Egyptian invading

(Mr. Eban, Israel)

force should be allowed to go beyond its frontiers into a demilitarized zone, or anywhere else, and entrench itself on Israeli soil. We do not consider that we should be called upon to reconcile ourselves, on the Israeli Lake of Tiberias, to a choice between abandoning our rights or exercising them in constant peril to life.

It might have been more congenial to Arab purposes if these infiltrations, maraudings, commando raids, blockades and intimidations had been passively endured by Israel. There are others, more disinterested, who counsel such a course, but we must tell the Security Council that if Israel did not defend itself from time to time against attempts to paralyse its activity in various parts of the country, then these attempts would have become even more frequent and more persistent and would have gone far beyond any possibility of localized repulse. We should then have faced, or now be facing, even graver issues than those which we now confront. In any case, the dictates of prudence and self-preservation, indeed the very nature which all men, including Israelis and Syrians, hold in common make it impossible to conceive that Arab belligerency against Israel can always be a one-way process surrounded by complete immunity. The first task of statesmanship is to remove the acts which give rise to the responsibility rather than to consider the responsibility alone in isolation from its origins.

(Mr. Eban, Israel)

To find a solution to the crisis lies in the expansion of the Armistice Agreement into a final settlement. Here I have quoted the standing policy of the Security Council and the General Assembly. A more superficial but no less valuable approach would be a minute examination of every word and line of the Armistice Agreements in an effort to ensure their precise fulfilment. But we mean fulfilment of the Agreements as they were signed, without blockades and maritime interceptions, without a doctrine of a state of war, without shooting on men and boats on Lake Tiberias, without the activities of fellahin units, and without Egyptian incursions into Nitsana. Such an agreement, restored to its full integrity, we are ready to implement as a prelude to the conclusion of a more lasting settlement.

In this connexion, my Government has studied the communication from Prime Minister Nasser asserting Egypt's right to use its armed forces, land, air and navy, to deal with the situation itself. It is, in our view, a sinister and illicit communication. It would not be in Prime Minister Nasser's interests, or in the interests of the Middle East, for him to act on the basis of this communication, on which I am instructed to comment as follows.

Prime Minister Nasser's communication to the Secretary-General of the United Nations is reminiscent of the letter addressed by the Secretary-General of the Arab League to the Secretary-General of the United Nations on 5 May 1948, which, in almost identical terms to those of the present communication, heralded the inauguration of open aggression by the countries of the Arab League against Israel. Notwithstanding the Armistice Agreement which requires the cessation of all hostile acts and the transition to permanent peace, Egypt and its leaders continue to carry out aggressive operations and acts against Israel. Notwithstanding the agreement of the parties on many occasions to honour the obligations of a complete cease-fire, most recently renewed on 2 September 1955, Egypt continues to ignore this obligation.

My Government now recalls that on three occasions since the beginning of November, the Prime Minister of Israel has requested General Burns to obtain Prime Minister Nasser's consent and commitment in the meticulous implementation of a total cease-fire which would include the activities of fellahin units organized by Egypt in Jordan and neighbouring countries, and up to this time no affirmative reply or binding commitment has been received from Egypt.

(Mr. Eban, Israel)

The operations of Israeli forces which are mentioned in Prime Minister Nasser's communication were nothing but acts of response to an uninterrupted succession of aggressive acts which preceded every single reaction carried out by Israel. It is true of the past, as it is true of the present and will be true of the future, that if Egypt maintains calm from its side of the Armistice demarcation line, it can count on complete immunity from any trouble from the other side. The pact between Egypt and Syria, to which Prime Minister Nasser refers in his communication to the Secretary-General, has no status or authority whatever within the system of the United Nations. It was conceived outside the Charter and in violation of its principles. It is, in fact, nothing but an overt conspiracy directed against Israel. It confers upon Egypt no rights of intervention in this or in any other dispute. Conspiracy for attack upon Israel is, indeed, the very purpose which the leaders of Egypt and Syria have both ascribed to this pact.

The very conclusion of this pact was a contribution to the sense of tension and insecurity which prevails in Syria and which has been increased by the recent disturbance in the balance of armaments. In this connexion, the present communication by Prime Minister Nasser is itself a link in a long chain of aggressive threats and declarations on the part of Egypt's leaders.

The Government of Israel cannot ascribe any sincerity to Prime Minister Nasser's reference to the alleged failure of the Security Council to prevent hostilities in the Middle East. For over four years, since 1 September 1951, Egypt has been in constant violation of the Security Council's basic decision against belligerency and blockade. This act of defiance, as much as any other single cause, lies at the root of the tension prevailing between Egypt and Israel. Israel has no aggressive intentions against neighbouring countries. It is prepared to carry out the Armistice Agreements in every detail, including all the obligations arising therefrom, on the understanding that the other side is also prepared to observe such a policy. Israel is also prepared to contribute to any attempt to bring about a reduction of tension, compatible with its sovereignty and with its rights under the Armistice Agreements. But Prime Minister Nasser's letter, indicating the threat of the use of his armed forces against Israel, makes it necessary for us to declare to the Government

(Mr. Eban, Israel)

of Egypt, from the table of the Security Council, that if Israel is attacked it will defend itself with every ounce of its strength in accordance with its inherent rights.

My Government does not believe that this acute crisis will be alleviated by the moods and attitudes expressed in Prime Minister Nasser's letter, and certainly not by Mr. Shukairy's invective or by his careful invocation of religious prejudice. This crisis will find its solution in a purposeful attempt by Arab States to join us in understanding that they have a simple duty and interest in leaving Israel alone. Leave us alone on land and on sea, on the frontiers and in the hinterland, in the Gulf of Akaba, on Lake Tiberias and on its shores, in the pursuit of our commerce and in the cultivation of our land. If you will not yet advance towards a constructive relationship, then at the very least accept a situation in which we leave each other alone. Perhaps out of such a negative reciprocity a more positive stability may one day arise.

The PRESIDENT: The members of the Council have heard the observations of the Secretary-General upon the likely day on which we shall receive General Burns' report. Much as I should have liked to have held a meeting on this question on Tuesday afternoon, it seems perfectly clear to me that this report will have to be examined with care. Under those circumstances, I feel that we cannot hold another meeting until Thursday next at 3 p.m. If, however, it proves possible to hold a meeting before that day, I will endeavour to call it, but, of course, only after consultation with the members of the Council and after speaking to the parties concerned.

I think that on the whole it would be better if the date of the next meeting of the Council on this item were left in my hands, on the understanding that in any case it would not be called before Wednesday. The Council will recall that we are to have a meeting on Wednesday morning, and I think it can be assumed that the most likely time for our next meeting on this item is Thursday. What I would propose is that the Council, having dealt so far as it can with the first item on its agenda, should now proceed to the second item.

Mr. Eban and Mr. Shukairy withdrew.

PROPOSAL TO CALL A GENERAL CONFERENCE OF THE MEMBERS OF THE UNITED NATIONS FOR THE PURPOSE OF REVIEWING THE CHARTER (ARTICLE 109 OF THE CHARTER):
LETTER DATED 12 DECEMBER 1955 FROM THE SECRETARY-GENERAL ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL (S/3503).

The PRESIDENT: The Council has before it the joint draft resolution contained in document S/3504. The document is self-explanatory and is familiar to members.

Mr. CROSTHWAITE (United Kingdom): Under paragraph 3 of Article 109 of the Charter, the holding of a review conference is made dependent upon a decision both by the General Assembly and by the Security Council. That Article specifies that the Council's decision shall be made by a vote of any seven members. It was with this in mind that the sponsors of the resolution in the General Assembly included the last paragraph of the resolution adopted on 2 November, contained in document A/RES/324. That paragraph read: "Transmits the present resolution to the Security Council".

It was with paragraph 3 of Article 109 in mind that my delegation joined with those of Brazil, Iran and the United States in sponsoring the draft resolution now before the Security Council. The purpose of this draft resolution is that the Security Council should endorse the General Assembly's decision that a review conference shall be held at an appropriate time. A valid decision will then have been taken under paragraph 3 of Article 109.

I need not repeat here the arguments in favour of the resolution passed by the General Assembly. My Government's views were fully explained there in speeches made by members of my delegation on 17 and 21 November. The General Assembly has set up a committee which will consider the question of fixing a time and place for the conference. As Sir Pierson Dixon said in the General Assembly, that committee will be free to report in 1957 that the time has not yet come to hold a conference. There is no danger of the United Nations being rushed into holding a conference before it would be wise to hold one. I hope, therefore, that there will be a wide measure of agreement that the Council should endorse the Assembly's decision and that it should pass the draft resolution now before it.

Mr. SOBOLEV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (translated from Russian): The Security Council's agenda for today includes an item relating to the question of calling a General Conference of the Members of the United Nations for the purpose of reviewing the Charter.

In connexion with this item, the Council has before it a draft resolution, introduced by the United States, the United Kingdom, Brazil and Iran, which is in fact an endorsement of the General Assembly resolution of 21 November 1955 aiming at the review of the Charter.

As the USSR delegation stated in the General Assembly, the Charter is entirely adequate in its present form to the purposes of strengthening universal peace and developing international co-operation in the political, economic and other fields. A review of the Charter aiming at the revision of its fundamental principles would in no way help to strengthen confidence in relations among States; on the contrary it would hinder the attainment of that goal. For these reasons, the USSR delegation opposed the General Assembly resolution of 21 November and voted against it.

We held then and we hold now that the United Nations Charter sets forth the main purposes and the fundamental principles of the United Nations, whose vitality and significance have been fully confirmed by the ten years of existence and practical experience of the United Nations. The United Nations Charter proclaims that the main purposes of the United Nations are: to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war; to maintain international peace and security; to develop friendly relations among nations based on respect for the principle of equal rights and self-determination of peoples; to achieve international co-operation in the economic, social, humanitarian and cultural fields; and to promote the realization of human rights and fundamental freedoms for all without distinction as to race, sex, language or religion.

The Charter determines the main obligations assumed by States Members of the United Nations: the obligation to settle their international disputes by peaceful means in such a manner that international peace and security are not endangered; the obligation to refrain in international relations from the threat or use of force; and the obligation not to intervene in the domestic affairs of other States.

In addition, the Charter embodies the principle of the unanimity of the five Powers which are permanent members of the Security Council and which bear the main responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security. This principle is the cornerstone of the activity of the United Nations, and objectively reflects the fact of peaceful coexistence and co-operation between States having the different social and economic systems to be found in the present-day world.

All these principles and purposes which are written into the Charter form a sound foundation for fruitful international co-operation; they form the basis on which relations between States must be built.

The Soviet Union therefore firmly holds that the United Nations Charter now in force has lost absolutely none of its importance and international significance; that it is an entirely satisfactory document which meets the demands made on it and needs no alteration of any kind.

We consider that a review of the United Nations Charter and the calling for that purpose of a General Conference of Members of the United Nations can in no way help to strengthen confidence in relations among States, to further the relaxation of international tension or to make the work of the United Nations more effective.

For these reasons, the USSR delegation opposes and will vote against the joint draft resolution presented to the Security Council by the United States of America, the United Kingdom, Brazil and Iran, the purpose of which is identical with that of the General Assembly resolution of 21 November 1955, namely, to subvert the Charter of our Organization.

The USSR delegation wishes to state once again that if the Security Council adopts this resolution, thereby giving effect to the General Assembly resolution of 21 November, the Soviet Union will not take part in the work of the Committee to be set up under the resolution to consider the question of fixing a time and place for the General Conference and its organization and procedures.

Mr. WADSWORTH (United States of America): After careful consideration in five plenary sessions and an expression of views in the debate by thirty-eight Member States, the General Assembly, by a very substantial majority, has decided that a conference to review the Charter shall be held at an appropriate time.

Since this action constitutes a decision in principle to hold such a conference, the Assembly has transmitted its resolution to the Security Council for the parallel action required by the Charter.

My delegation believes that this decision of the Assembly should be concurred in by the Council, and the draft resolution submitted here by Brazil, Iran, the United Kingdom and the United States, seeks to accomplish this purpose. It would reaffirm the judgement of our founders, who looked ahead to a United Nations system growing in effectiveness with growing experience and changing with changing needs, if such there might be.

(Mr. Wadsworth, United States)

A wide range of views is apparent on this subject: all the way from a desire to hold such a review conference soon to a determination recently expressed by the representative of the Soviet Union that no such conference should be held. General Assembly discussions, however, indicate that neither of these views is generally held and that a third view represents the true consensus of the membership. This view favours a decision in principle that a review conference shall be held, but at a time when circumstances are favourable.

The resolution of the General Assembly explicitly recognizes that such a review should be conducted under auspicious international circumstances, and the resolution provides for a committee consisting of all the Members of the United Nations to consider, in consultation with the Secretary-General, the question of fixing a time and place for the conference, and its organization and procedures. As a further aid to careful preparation, the resolution requests the Secretary-General to complete the publication programme already undertaken and to continue to prepare and circulate supplements, as appropriate, to the Repertory of Practice of United Nations Organs, which all of us have found so useful.

Now let me say that my delegation regrets that the representative of the Soviet Union has repeated his statement that the Soviet delegation will not participate in the work of this committee of the whole. It does not seem to us to coincide with their oft-repeated assertions that they seek international co-operation in all matters.

Actually, the Soviet argument seems to confuse the words "review" and "revision". If this committee which is contemplated by the resolution had been authorized by the Assembly to go immediately into the question of revision, with some of the controversial questions that might arise, then it might seem somewhat justifiable for the Soviet delegation to announce its refusal to participate. However, this is not a fact. Let me reaffirm that this is not a decision to revise the Charter in any respect. Nor, in fact, is it a decision that the Charter needs revision, either generally or specifically. This resolution in which we are asked to concur is a decision that all the Members of the General Assembly, including the newly-elected Members, should consider all the aspects of the matter and then make recommendations to the twelfth session of the General Assembly as to the time and place that such a review conference might fruitfully be held.

In the light of this and in the light of the fact that we are not here called upon to make a decision that the Charter must be revised, that the Charter must be changed or, in the words of the Soviet delegation, must be subverted. We firmly believe that this Council should express its concurrence in the decision taken by the General Assembly, and such positive Council action will constitute an affirmative response, as my colleague from the United Kingdom has pointed out, to the special obligations placed upon us by the terms of Article 109 of the Charter.

Mr. van LANGENHOVE (Belgium) (translated from French): As has just been said, the General Assembly decided in its resolution of 21 November 1955 that a General Conference to review the Charter should be held at an appropriate time.

My delegation stated its views on that subject when the resolution was adopted.

Brazil, Iran, the United Kingdom and the United States of America, have now submitted a draft resolution proposing that the Security Council should approve the Assembly resolution. My delegation has **no objection** to voting in favour of the draft resolution, despite its abstract nature. Our vote for the resolution, however, will be without prejudice to Article 109 of the Charter. It may indeed be wondered whether, a further decision of the Security Council will not be required under Article 109 when the question arises of actually convening the conference following the recommendations to be made by the Committee appointed by the General Assembly.

The PRESIDENT: I shall now put to the vote the draft resolution in document S/3504.

A vote was taken by show of hands.

In favour: Belgium, Brazil, China, Iran, New Zealand, Peru, Turkey, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, the United States of America

Against: Union of Soviet Socialist Republics

Abstaining: France

The PRESIDENT: The result of the vote is nine in favour, one against, and one abstention. The draft resolution is, therefore, adopted. I take it that there are no explanations of vote.

The meeting rose at 6.05 p.m.