

# Trips: Trips - 3

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Dag Hammarskjöld's saml.

Sec. Gen.'s trip to Syria 1956

Jan. 5

Sec. Gen. — to the Permanent Representative  
of Syria to the UN

5 January 1956

Sir,

I have the honour to invite your attention to a problem regarding the operations of an organ of the United Nations in Syria which is of far reaching consequences to the United Nations.

The Director of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency has informed me that certain Syrian authorities have taken the position that it will be their decision not to renew the visa of the head field nurse of UNRWA, a Netherlandsnational, after the expiration in a few weeks' time of her current visa. Informal advice received here at Headquarters indicates that the Syrian authorities have decided that the UNRWA nursing service does not require an international post for the supervisor and that on these grounds they will neither renew the present incumbent's visa nor issue another to a successor.

I feel it necessary to request you to draw the attention of your Government in most urgent terms to the grave repercussions that must inevitably follow if the views attributed to the authorities in question were to be confirmed.

It is beyond question that any device by which a Member Government interposed its unilateral decision as to the continuance in a United Nations post of an international official would be in express contradiction to Article 100 and 101 of the Charter. Likewise, the right of a Member Government to place its visa on the national passport or the United Nations laissez-passer of a member of the staff does not entail the exercise of any power of decision as to the acceptability of the international official; the right of entering to take up a post of duty, and the right to remain at that post for as long as the responsible authority considers necessary, are fully established by the

The Permanent Representative of Syria  
to the United Nations  
Apartment 6  
515 Park Avenue  
New York 21, N.Y.

Charter and, under Section 18(d) and 24 and 25 of the Convention on the Privileges and Immunities of the United Nations, and further confirmed by resolution 302 (IV) establishing the Agency.

As you know, the Director of UNRWA is most anxious to take into consideration the suggestions of host governments as to the availability of suitable and competent applicants from that area, and likewise to receive any evidence from governments that any appointee has proved objectionable. Nevertheless, under the Charter and the Convention on Privileges and Immunities, the final determination of all appointments rests with the Agency and its Director.

In view of the serious consequences that any contrary result might have for the Organization as a whole, I shall be grateful if you would communicate these observations to your Government.

Accept, Sir, the assurances of my highest consideration.

/s/

Dag Hammarskjold  
Secretary-General

5 January 1956

*Leg 240/01(4) UNRWA*

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