

# Trips: Trips - 43

*HS L 179:70*



Dag Hammarskjöld's samml.

D. H. trips 1956 May 2 (corrected on 3 May)

Sec. Gen. — to President of Security Council  
(at Jerusalem) (Sec. Gen.'s interim report)

✓  
Transmitted to my  
as 50 + 51 pages.

Corrected 3 May.  
incl. retyped p. 3

At Jerusalem, ~~xxxxxx~~

2 May 1956

Mr. President,

The Security Council resolution of 4 April 1956 on the Palestine Question requested the Secretary-General to report to the Council in his discretion but not later than one month from the date of the resolution on the implementation given to the resolution.

On 6 April I left for the Middle East for consultations with the Governments concerned on the questions raised in the Security Council resolution. My discussions have been going on since arrival in the region and will not be concluded until 2 or 3 May. As under such circumstances it is not possible for me to complete my report by the date set, I would ask you to circulate to the Members of the Security Council this letter as a progress report explaining my approach to the assignment and giving the reasons for the delay in my final report, which I hope to submit in the course of next week.

The Security Council requested the Secretary-General to undertake a survey of the various aspects of the enforcement of and compliance with the four General Armistice Agreements and the Council's resolutions under reference in the resolution of

4 April. The Council further requested the Secretary-General to arrange with the Parties for the adoption of any measures which, after discussions with the Parties and the Chief of Staff, he considered would reduce existing tensions along the Armistice Demarcation Lines. Thus, the scope of the Security Council resolution was set by the General Armistice Agreements and certain previous resolutions under reference. The aim of the Security Council action was, on the one side, to get a picture of the state of compliance, and on the other side, to further the adoption of certain local arrangements in support of compliance.

In carrying out my mandate, I have stayed strictly within the scope set by the Security Council resolution. I have considered it appropriate to give the aim of the resolution an interpretation according to which I should not merely survey and report on the state of compliance which existed at the time of my arrival in the region, but also try to get the parties to re-establish compliance to the greatest extent possible. Thus I have felt free to read into the Security Council resolution a mandate to negotiate for such re-establishment of compliance. In that spirit, I have regarded the question of local arrangements as subordinate to the general effort. I have submitted proposals for such specific arrangements as could serve to support and protect the degree of compliance achieved.

I have considered the basic clauses of the General Armistice Agreements to be those which establish a general cease-fire. It

has, to me, been obvious that no measures for establishing full compliance with procedural or substantive clauses of the General Armistice Agreements would be fruitful and lasting unless firmly anchored in a reaffirmation of the duty of all Parties concerned to observe a cease-fire.

You have already circulated documents indicating that, at an early stage, I received such assurances from the Governments of Egypt and Israel. These reciprocal assurances served to relieve the threatening situation in the Gaza area, where conditions have since considerably improved as a result of strict orders issued by the two Governments. I have already informed you that I received notification that such orders were in force as of 6 p.m., 18 April 1956, and from that time on.

Negotiations for similar reciprocal assurances unconditionally to observe a cease-fire, with a reservation as to self-defense, have been conducted with the Parties to the other three Armistice Agreements. The negotiations have in all cases been concluded with positive result. The texts of the messages exchanged will be annexed to my final report.

I wish to draw attention to the difference in character between previous cease-fires, which have been established locally, or between military commanders, and a cease-fire of the character

in my negotiations. The cease-fire I have aimed at under my mandate from the Security Council is one governed by a re-affirmation by the Governments, given to the United Nations, to comply unconditionally with the fundamental clause of the various Armistice Agreements and establishes anew the legal situation on which the Armistice regime was to be founded. It furthermore expresses a recognition in this particular situation of the obligation to observe a fundamental principle of the Charter.

With the intended background of such reaffirmations of a cease-fire covering the whole region, I have studied with the Governments concerned the possibility of re-establishing full compliance with the various other clauses of the General Armistice Agreements. The wish to reach such full compliance has been shared by all Parties. The problems presenting themselves have been of three main kinds. One is the difficulty of maintaining a balance between the remedial action required of one Party and that required of the other in a gradual approach to full compliance. Another difficulty arises from the necessary and natural relation in time between the re-establishment of compliance with the several clauses. Other difficulties have their origin in differences of opinion as to the interpretation of various obligations, or their mutual relationship.

As a third stage in the approach to the task set by the Council for the Secretary-General, I have, together with the Chief

of Staff, Major-General Burns, put before the Governments proposals for local arrangements within the framework of the Armistice Agreements and the relevant Security Council resolutions. In important cases agreement has been reached with the Parties concerned. In other cases negotiations are still continuing. In still other cases the final decisions should be postponed.

Finally, I have considered the problem of possible procedural measures aiming at the strengthening of the legal framework for the Armistice regime established by the four Agreements.

The wide field of study and consultation resulting from my interpretation of the aim of the Security Council mandate, and the difficulties of several of the problems, together with the fact that no less than five Member Nations are party to the consultations, explain why these have been more time-consuming than anticipated. A further reason why it has proved impossible fully to observe the time-limit set by the Security Council has been the need first of all to try to stop the dangerous developments which dominated the situation in the region on my arrival.

At Jerusalem, 2 May 1956

Recognizing that crossings of the Armistice Demarcation Line, and acts of violence in connection therewith, if not covered by Article II, paragraph 2, are prohibited in consequence of Article V, paragraph 4, and represent a serious risk for the maintenance of calm along the line, the Government ~~of~~ gives its assurance that it will, in support of the cease-fire arrangement, take active measures to stop such crossings and will take appropriate action against transgressors and those who are guilty of acts of violence in contravention of the spirit of the Armistice Agreement.