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Report of the Special Committee to Investigate Israeli
Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Palestinian
People and Other Arabs of the Occupied Territories

The occupied Syrian Golan

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

The report has been prepared by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights pursuant to General Assembly resolution [67/122](#), in which the Secretary-General was requested to report to the Assembly at its sixty-eighth session on the implementation of the resolution.

* [A/68/150](#).

1. The present report is submitted pursuant to General Assembly resolution [67/122](#).
2. On 8 May 2013, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), on behalf of the Secretary-General, addressed a note verbale to the Government of Israel, asking the Government to provide information on any steps that it had taken or envisaged taking concerning the implementation of the relevant provisions of the resolution. No reply had been received at the time of the preparation of the present report.
3. Also on 8 May 2013, OHCHR, on behalf of the Secretary-General, sent a note verbale to the Permanent Mission of the Syrian Arab Republic and to all Permanent Missions to the United Nations in Geneva, asking the Governments of Member States to provide information on any steps they had taken or envisaged taking concerning the implementation of the relevant provisions of the resolution. In addition to the response from the Permanent Mission of the Syrian Arab Republic, replies were received from the Permanent Missions of Colombia, Cuba and Burkina Faso.
4. On 31 May 2013, the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic replied to the note verbale and noted that, in its resolution, the General Assembly had renewed its deep concern over the Israeli occupation of the Golan since 1967 and condemned it. The Syrian Arab Republic stated that the General Assembly confirmed that the decision of the Israeli Government to impose Israeli laws, jurisdiction and administration on the Syrian Golan since 14 December 1981 was unlawful.
5. The Syrian Arab Republic recalled that, after 46 years of occupation and despite repeated international calls on Israel to withdraw from the occupied Syrian Golan, Israel continued to occupy this territory in impunity and in flagrant violation of international law and norms.
6. The Syrian Arab Republic affirmed that the achievement of a just and comprehensive peace in the Middle East requires the implementation of the United Nations resolutions that aim at ending the Israeli occupation of the Syrian Golan and other Arab territories. In its note verbale it stated that President Bashar al-Assad had shown on more than one occasion his willingness to resume peace negotiations on the same basis on which the Madrid peace process was started in 1991. It also noted that the Syrian Arab Republic had declared in all international forums its full commitment to relevant international resolutions and called for their implementation, in particular Security Council resolutions [242 \(1967\)](#), [338 \(1973\)](#) and [497 \(1981\)](#). The Syrian Arab Republic also called for the implementation of the principle of land for peace, in order to ensure the full withdrawal by Israel from all of the occupied Syrian Golan to the line of 4 June 1967.
7. The Government of the Syrian Arab Republic strongly condemned the continued Israeli practices that affect the rights of Syrians, including the decision taken by Israel in June 2011 to build a separation wall to the east of Majdal al-Shams in the occupied Syrian Golan under the pretext that it will prevent Palestinians and Syrians from crossing the ceasefire line to access the occupied town of Majdal al-Shams. The Syrian Arab Republic noted that the construction of the wall (8 m high) started in July 2011.

8. In its note verbale, the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic condemns the Israeli settlement policy in the occupied Syrian Golan, noting that Israel continues to disregard the resolutions of the Security Council and the General Assembly on the matter, more specifically resolution [67/25](#) , in which, it is noted, the Assembly confirmed the illegality of the settlements and other Israeli activities in the occupied Syrian Golan, and resolution [67/122](#) , in which the Assembly reiterated its call on Israel to desist from changing the physical character, demographic composition, institutional structure and legal status of the occupied Syrian Golan. The Syrian Arab Republic condemns the European Union's funding of a survey aimed at promoting alternative tourism in the Israeli settlements in the occupied Syrian Golan. It also condemns Israeli practices and conduct which control and loot resources in the occupied Syrian Golan in flagrant violation of Security Council resolution [497 \(1981\)](#) and General Assembly resolution [67/229](#) on the permanent sovereignty of the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and of the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan over their natural resources.

9. The Syrian Arab Republic calls upon the States Members of the United Nations to refuse, in accordance with their obligations under international law, the importation of natural or manufactured products from the occupied territories, and to remind Israel about its obligations under international law. The Syrian Arab Republic notes that it sent a letter to the Security Council on 28 February 2013 ([A/67/771-S/2013/122](#)) requesting Israel to stop oil exploration in the occupied Syrian Golan. The Syrian Arab Republic condemns the extraction of water by Israel from the Masada Lake in 2010 in order to establish a settlers' farm, considering that it constitutes a violation of the Fourth Geneva Convention of 1949 and had led to an economic and environmental disaster for the occupied Syrian Golan, estimated at US\$ 20 million.

10. The Syrian Arab Republic rejects the decision by the Knesset, on 22 November 2010, to organize a general referendum on the withdrawal of Israel from the Syrian Golan and East Jerusalem. According to the Syrian Arab Republic, this decision is a violation of international law, which stipulates that a territory shall not be acquired by force. The Syrian Arab Republic considers that the decision is incompatible with Security Council resolution [497 \(1981\)](#) .

11. The Syrian Arab Republic reiterates its request to the Secretary-General, the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, the President of the Human Rights Council and the President of the International Committee of the Red Cross to bring pressure on Israel to ensure that Syrian prisoners detained in its jails are kept in more humane health conditions, recalling the cases of Syrian nationals Majed Shaer and his son Fidaa (see [A/66/400](#), para 10). The Syrian Arab Republic condemned Israel for arresting a number of young people, including former prisoner Bishr al-Maqt and Zaher Batich, the President of the Golan Sports Union, because they refused to hold a match in the Majdal al-Shams stadium under the supervision of the Israeli Football Association. Consequently, the young men were sentenced to home confinement. In this context, the Syrian Arab Republic recalls that in 1981 the people of the Golan issued a national document forbidding any activity with or in association with the occupying Power.

12. As in previous notes verbales, the Syrian Arab Republic calls for international pressure on Israel to allow the Syrian population of the occupied Syrian Golan to visit their families in the Syrian Arab Republic through Quneitra. According to the Syrian Arab Republic, Israeli practices in the occupied Syrian Golan, which lead to the suffering of Syrians, are in violation of the Geneva Conventions and customary international humanitarian law.

13. The Syrian Arab Republic concluded by stating that reaching sustainable peace and stability in the Middle East requires the adoption of measures ensuring the enforcement of all relevant international resolutions, including the Geneva Conventions, without discrimination or selectivity.

14. On 27 May 2013, the Permanent Mission of Colombia replied to the note verbale stating that it had not taken measures that are detrimental to General Assembly resolutions. Colombia affirmed that the use of force to obtain territories is inadmissible and reiterated its support to the achievement of durable peace in the region through dialogue.

15. On 4 June 2013, the Permanent Mission of Cuba replied to the note verbale. Cuba noted that the decision taken by Israel on 14 December 1981 to impose its legislation, jurisdiction and administration in the occupied Syrian Golan, and to construct Israeli settlements on this territory since 1967, constitute a flagrant violation of international law, international conventions, the Charter of the United Nations and relevant resolutions of the United Nations, in particular Security Council resolution [497 \(1981\)](#) and the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War, of 12 August 1949.

16. Cuba calls upon Israel to withdraw from all of the occupied Syrian Golan to the line of 4 June 1967 and condemns the brutal Israeli practices in the prisons created during the Israeli occupation, reiterating its serious concerns over the inhuman conditions of those detained in the occupied Syrian Golan. Cuba demanded that Israel immediately and unconditionally fulfil the requirements of the Fourth Geneva Convention and its application to the Syrians detained in the occupied Syrian Golan.

17. Cuba notes that, in line with the Arab Peace Initiative and the Madrid peace process, and in conformity with relevant Security Council resolutions, the 120 nations that are members of the Non-Aligned Movement have expressed their unconditional support and solidarity with the just and right demand of the Syrian Arab Republic to reinstate its full sovereignty over the occupied Syrian Golan. As in previous notes verbales, Cuba considers that the occupation of the Syrian Golan and its de facto annexation by Israel constitute an obstacle to the achievement of just, complete and durable peace in the region.

18. On 6 August 2013, the Permanent Mission of Burkina Faso replied to the note verbale condemning all forms of occupation and recalling its commitment to the Charter of the United Nations and other international conventions. Burkina Faso called upon the Member States involved in the Golan situation to respect Security Council resolution [497 \(1981\)](#) and the General Assembly resolution. Burkina Faso stressed that peace in the Middle East should be achieved through dialogue.
