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UNITED NATIONS CONCILIATION COMMISSION FOR PALESTINE

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Letter dated 13 June 1949 from the Representative of Israel
to the President of the Security Council concerning the
Renewal of Arms supplies to Arab States, transmitted
for the information of the Conciliation Commission

New York, 13 June 1949

The attention of the Government of Israel has been drawn to statements by official representatives of the United Kingdom to the effect that that Government proposes to renew the supply of certain arms and ammunition to Arab States. My delegation has been gratified to learn that this intention has in no way been endorsed or supported by the Acting United Nations Mediator or by any other organ or representative of the United Nations.

In this connection I am directed to make the following observations on behalf of my Government:

1. By virtue of its successive resolutions on the Palestine question, the Security Council has undertaken special responsibilities for the maintenance of peace and security in the Middle East. These responsibilities have on several occasions specifically affected the question of arms supplies. In the light of these facts and of Article 103 of the Charter, my Government cannot believe that an individual member of the Security Council possesses a unilateral right to modify an established United Nations policy.

2. The Arab States, to which the renewal of arms supplies is thus contemplated, have so far refused to comply with the basic principle of the General Assembly's resolution of December 11th which calls upon the Governments concerned "to seek agreement by negotiations conducted either with the Conciliation Commission or directly, with a view to the final settlement of all questions outstanding between them".

Despite this clear injunction the Arab States have so far not agreed even to meet the delegation of Israel under the Commission's auspices. In the six months which have elapsed since the General Assembly's resolution none of them has made a declaration of willingness to establish relations of peace with Israel. My Government sincerely hopes that this

attitude will soon change and that the conclusion of agreements in accordance with paragraph 5 of the aforesaid resolution of the General Assembly will become a serious objective of Arab policy, in accordance with the terms of the Charter which clearly defines the duties of Member States towards each other. Until such conditions prevail, however, it will be clearly impossible to regard the supply of arms to Arab States as compatible with the purposes and objectives of the Security Council in the Middle East. Furthermore, it cannot be ignored that responsible leaders of some of the Arab Governments which are now to receive arms from the United Kingdom have made frequent statements in recent weeks expressing not a desire for peaceful relations with Israel, but a resolve to resume war as soon as conditions permit.

3. My Government is deeply convinced that in such circumstances as these the promise of renewed arms supplies to these Arab States may be a blow to the prospects of peace and a gratuitous obstacle to the success of the Lausanne talks at a peculiarly delicate stage.

4. In taking this view my Government cannot be influenced by the assurances that the dispatch of these arms is intended to assist Arab Governments to maintain their internal security, and not to renew hostilities against Israel. The invasion and warfare launched by Arab States in an attempt to destroy Israel last year were not conducted with armaments supplied specifically for that purpose. My Government hopes that the need for direct and unprejudiced negotiations between Israel and the Arab States will be regarded by all other Governments as a compelling reason for objectivity and restraint.

I am directed to request that the views expressed by the Government of Israel in this letter be communicated to members of the Security Council.

(Signed) Aubrey S. Eban
Permanent Representative
of Israel to the United Nations