



Statement by Ambassador

Dr. Bashar Al-Ja'afari

Permanent Representative of the Syrian Arab
Republic to the United Nations

At

The Second Committee

Under Agenda Item 41: *“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”*.

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Madam President,

At the outset I would like to thank Mr. Badr Aldafa Under-Secretary-General and Executive Secretary of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) for presenting the Committee's report and for the efforts made to prepare this report.

Madam President,

Although we are now in the twentieth century, we still witness one of the agilest forms of foreign occupation, which demonstrate that the practitioners of this occupation still insisting on the approach of occupying people, and lands of others. They still refuse to read the history and recognize the fact that no matter how long the occupation lasts, it must come to an end.

So far, the ugliest, the longest, and the most brutal forms of occupation, which we bitterly still witnessing is the Israeli occupation of Palestinian territories and the Syrian Golan.

Madam President,

The report, under consideration, which was prepared by the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA), highlights, once again, important aspects of the unbearable suffering of the Palestinians and Syrians under Israeli occupation. The facts and figures demonstrated in the report are bloodcurdling and reflect the barbarism of this occupation and its violations of Geneva Conventions of 1948.

The ESCWA report refers to the martyrdom of 697 Palestinians and the injury of 3558, and further refers to the death of 132 Palestinian children and wounding 515 others as a result of the Israeli military operations in the occupied Palestinian territories during the period from January 2006 to February 2007. These figures leave no room for doubt that the Israeli army and its leaders and members had committed massacres against humanity without being held accountable.

The report also points out that Israel, the occupying Power, continues the policy of arbitrary arrests and detentions that reaches to men, women, children, Government officials, members of parliament, and United Nations officials. Furthermore, it pursues a policy of destroying and confiscating the Palestinian property including their homes, shops and agricultural farms. In addition, it imposes closures on Palestinian cities, and severe restrictions on the movements of Palestinians. It even impedes humanitarian access to the Palestinians in need under siege.

The ESCWA report demonstrates that the construction of the apartheid wall prevents Palestinians from accessing to 95% of their water resources. It also indicates that the Israeli settlements and the behavior of Israeli settlers leading to pressure on the environment, as apparent in the destruction of hundreds of fruit trees in 2006 through burning, cutting or uprooting them. Not to mention that the Israeli settlements' sewage is directed to flow on the agricultural lands owned by Palestinian farmers. Moreover, Israel still deprives the Palestinian people of its financial resources through the detention of customs revenues and the Palestinian tax revenues, which hinders and stops the functioning of the Palestinian institutions that provide basic public services, and has led to food insecurity and the spread of diseases. One can say that Israeli continuing construction of the wall and settlements clarifies the nature of racial and aggressive mentality of the Israeli leaders who do not deter by any moral or humane reason.

Madam President,

To have a complete picture of the brutal Israeli practices you and member states should familiarize themselves with the report of John Dugard, Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the Palestinian territories occupied since 1967, contained in document A/62/275. In the last chapter of the report Dugard criticizes the current role of the United Nations and the Quartet on the Palestinian issue. Therefore, Dugard recommends the withdrawal of the United Nations from the Quartet if the Secretary-General was unable to persuade the Quartet to carry out a number of actions that are compatible with the role of the United Nations as guardian of the international legitimacy. Dugard also urges the General Assembly to further ask the International Court of Justice for an advisory opinion on the legal consequences for the occupied people, the occupying Power and third States of prolonged occupation.

Madam President,

ESCWA report indicates that the occupied Syrian Golan is not in better conditions than the occupied Palestinian territories in terms of suffering from the Israeli occupation. You can find out the savage Israeli policies and practices in the letter addressed by the Permanent Representative of Syria to the UN Secretary General on ESCWA report contained in document No. A/C.2 /62/6. Hereafter, I would like to mention the following ones:

First: the Syrian Golan is still under the Israeli occupation since 1967, and Israel prevents the population of the occupied Syrian Golan who were expelled that year from returning to Golan. Yet Israel pursues a provocative policy, by which it has considered the occupied Syrian Golan an "Israeli territory" since December 14, 1981, following its decision to annex the Golan, in flagrant violation of the provisions of international law and dozens of relevant United Nations resolutions, including Security Council resolution 497 (1981).

Second: Israel continues its policy of building settlements. In April of 2006, Israel has began the construction of three new tourist settlements on occupied depressions of Tabaraya Lake. Moreover, it intends to accelerate the building of settlements near the ceasefire line. In addition to the expansion of settlements, which were already built on the ruins of Syrian villages, farms and orchards in Golan, challenging the international will and blatantly breaching the Fourth Geneva Convention.

Third: Since 1967, Israel has replaced Syrian curricula by Israeli ones that are alien to Arab culture. In addition, Israel still imposes such curricula on the Syrian citizens and manages the entire educational process in the occupied Syrian Golan.

Fourth: Israel controls and steals the water resources of occupied Syrian Golan. It deprives Syrian citizens from them. In addition to possessing full Baniyas River water, it has dominated the Lake Ran near to the Syrian village of Masada, such water was used by Syrians for agriculture and livestock watering. Furthermore, It currently sells the lake water to the Syrians in prices that exceed the price paid by Israeli settlers. In addition, Israel continues to dig wells for drinking and agriculture in populated territories and properties of Syrian villages, sells their water to the Syrians at higher prices, and prevents the Syrians from digging wells.

Fifth: Israel has imposed heavy taxes on agricultural production of Syrian citizens, which reach up to 50% of the value of their crops to make Syrians farmers unable to sell their crops competitively with Israeli settlers of the occupied Golan. It even continues to destroy fruit trees owned by Syrians. On 27 September 2007, the occupation authorities uprooted 150 cherry trees owned by the Syrian farmer, Saleem Owedat, destroyed the irrigation system of his farm and dug military trenches around it. This is part of the Israeli policy to force Syrian citizens to leave their lands and consequently confiscate their lands to build Israeli military camps and bases.

Sixth: Israel continues to bury nuclear waste in the occupied Syrian territories indifferent to endanger the Golan environment and its inhabitants, and on the people of the Middle East as a whole.

Seventh: The lives of Syrian citizens the occupied Golan the lives of their children are under permanent threat because of the Israeli mines planted in the vicinity of their villages, fields and pastures, which led to the death of more than 16 people so far.

Madam President,

The continuation of Israeli occupation since 1967, is a mark of shame on the conscience of the United Nations and on its Member States who overlook the necessity to hold this occupation accountable for its crimes in the occupies Arab lands. To provide financial and economic assistance to the Palestinian people can not be a justification to relief conscience. What benefit can financial assistance offer people who are deprived by the Israeli army from one of their basic rights: the right to live?

The Palestinian and Syrian peoples deserve all forms of support by United Nations Member States, as they fight in defense of the common human values of civilized societies: the values of freedom, peace, equality and democracy. And they offer sacrifices to fight against the distorted and non-humane values which Israel is trying to promote; against the values of intolerance, violence, war, racism, ethnic cleansing, terrorism of the state, occupying the lands of others and confiscating their property and sanctities, killing children, women and elderly. My delegation calls upon representatives of Member States to vote in favor of the resolution to be issued under this item as simple expression of anti-occupation as principle position whoever the occupying Power is.

Thank you.