



Security Council

Distr.: General
1 June 2022

Original: English

United Nations Disengagement Observer Force

Report of the Secretary-General

I. Introduction

1. The present report provides an account of the activities of the United Nations Disengagement Observer Force (UNDOF) from 21 February to 20 May 2022, pursuant to the mandate set out in Security Council resolution [350 \(1974\)](#) and extended in subsequent Council resolutions, most recently resolution [2613 \(2021\)](#).

II. Situation in the area of operations and activities of the Force

2. During the reporting period, the ceasefire between Israel and the Syrian Arab Republic was generally maintained despite several violations of the Agreement on Disengagement between Israeli and Syrian Forces of 1974. The overall security situation in the UNDOF area of operations remained volatile, with continued military activity in the areas of separation and limitation, in violation of relevant Security Council resolutions, including resolution [2613 \(2021\)](#).

3. In employing its best efforts to maintain the ceasefire and ensure that it is scrupulously observed, as prescribed in the Disengagement of Forces Agreement, UNDOF reports all breaches of the ceasefire line that it observes. All incidents of firing across the ceasefire line, as well as the crossing of the ceasefire line by aircraft, drones, military vehicles and personnel, as well as other individuals, constitute violations of the Agreement. In its regular interactions with both sides, the leadership of UNDOF continued to call upon the parties to exercise restraint and avoid any activities that might lead to an escalation of the situation.

4. Late on 22 February, United Nations personnel at observation post 73 observed an Israel Defense Forces patrol comprising three main battle tanks and one excavator crossing the ceasefire line and patrol inside the area of separation, 1 kilometre south-east of the observation post. Two of the tanks subsequently moved in a north-westerly direction. The third tank drove towards the north-west in the early hours of the morning. On 23 February, United Nations personnel at observation post 73 noticed two Israel Defense Forces main battle tanks patrol inside the area of separation. The tanks subsequently left the area in a north-westerly direction. Late on 12 April, United Nations personnel at observation post 73 observed two Israel Defense Forces main battle tanks crossing the ceasefire line and patrol momentarily inside the area of separation, 3 kilometres from the village of Jubbata al-Khashab.



5. Early on 23 February, United Nations personnel at positions 10A, 27, 32 and 60, Camp Ziouani and observation posts 73 and 51 observed seven projectiles fired from the Alpha side (Israeli-occupied Golan), approximately 2 kilometres west of Camp Ziouani, impacting the vicinity of Qunaytirah in the area of separation. Immediately thereafter, United Nations personnel at positions 10A, 27, 60 and 68, the Charlie gate and observation posts 51 and 73 noticed four rockets fired from the Alpha side, approximately 1 kilometre south-west of United Nations observation post 73, impacting the vicinity of Ruwayhinah in the area of limitation on the Bravo side, approximately 150 metres from United Nations position 68. United Nations personnel at the position went into shelter, where they remained for nearly two hours.

6. On 24 February, United Nations personnel at position 80 observed two unidentified aircraft from the Alpha side flying across the ceasefire line over the position and subsequently flying back towards the Alpha side. At around the same time, United Nations personnel noticed two missiles in flight in the vicinity of Tall al-Ahmar Gharbi in the area of limitation on the Bravo side. UNDOF was not able to determine the point of origin of the missiles. United Nations personnel at position 80 also noticed two missiles, approximately 5 kilometres east of the position, intercepting the two missiles that had been observed in flight by United Nations personnel at position 80. On the same day, United Nations personnel at position 68 noticed a missile fired from an aircraft from the Alpha side at a distance of 3 kilometres west of the position towards the Bravo side.

7. On six separate occasions, 25 February, 8, 16, 19 and 21 March and 29 April, United Nations personnel at observation posts 54, 51 and 73 observed an Israel Defense Forces patrol firing rounds of small arms shots into the area of separation to ward off shepherds from the vicinity of the Israeli technical fence.

8. Late on 30 March, United Nations personnel at position 27 observed three armed Syrian security forces personnel moving from an observation point at the “old” hospital in Qunaytirah in the area of separation towards the Israeli technical fence. Thereafter, United Nations personnel at position 27 heard at least 15 bursts of small arms fire from the observation point of Syrian security forces. Subsequently, the Israel Defense Forces informed UNDOF that unidentified individuals on the Bravo side had fired small arms shots at an Israel Defense Forces drone operating on the Alpha side. Syrian authorities informed UNDOF that the Syrian security forces personnel had fired shots at drones that had crossed the ceasefire line into the area of separation. UNDOF liaised with both parties to prevent an escalation of the situation.

9. On 14 March and 3 April, United Nations personnel at position 80 observed a drone flying from the Alpha side across the ceasefire line. During the reporting period, United Nations personnel at various positions observed, on several occasions, drones flying over the area of separation. UNDOF was unable to determine the points of origin of the drones.

10. On 11 May, United Nations personnel at position 10A and observation position 71 observed and heard the impact of seven high explosives at a post of Syrian security forces in the area of separation approximately 300 metres north of the United Nations position. At around the same time, United Nations personnel at observation post 73 noticed five projectiles fired from the Alpha side impacting the Syrian security forces post. Owing to the close proximity of the points of impact of the projectiles, United Nations personnel at position 10A and observation post 71 moved into shelter, where they remained for approximately two hours. UNDOF engaged with the parties to de-escalate the situation.

11. Early on 11 May, United Nations personnel on the Alpha side observed five projectiles fired from that side towards Jubbata al-Khashab in the area of separation. At around the same time, United Nations personnel at position 37 observed smoke

near Jubbata al-Khashab. A UNDOF patrol dispatched to the village was unable to find any impact of projectiles.

12. Sporadic heavy explosions and bursts of heavy machine gun and small arms fire persisted in the area of separation and the area of limitation on the Bravo side. UNDOF assessed that the military activity was the result of controlled detonation of unexploded ordnance as part of clearance and training by Syrian armed forces personnel. UNDOF observed the continued presence of Syrian armed forces, some of whom were armed, staffing several checkpoints within the area of separation, in violation of the Disengagement of Forces Agreement.

13. The continued presence of Iron Dome systems, artillery systems and multi-launch rocket systems in the area of limitation on the Alpha side constitutes a violation in each case. Pursuant to the Disengagement of Forces Agreement, the presence of any unauthorized military equipment or personnel in the areas of separation and limitation is a violation.

14. UNDOF protested to the parties with regard to all violations of the Disengagement of Forces Agreement that it had observed, including the firing into and across the area of separation as well as across the ceasefire line, the presence of unauthorized equipment and personnel in the areas of separation and limitation, and the crossings of the ceasefire line by the Israel Defense Forces and by drones, as well as by civilians from the Bravo side. UNDOF closely liaised with the parties to de-escalate the situation, including during periods of heightened tension.

15. In a letter dated 27 April addressed to the President of the Security Council and me ([S/2022/355](#)), the Permanent Representative of the Syrian Arab Republic to the United Nations, Bassam Sabbagh, conveyed that “on Wednesday, 27 April 2022, at 0041 hours, the Israeli occupation army launched a missile attack against certain points around the capital Damascus. Rocket bursts were fired from the direction of occupied Tiberias, killing four soldiers, injuring three others and causing some material losses.” In a letter dated 10 April addressed to me ([A/76/795-S/2022/304](#)), the Minister of Foreign Affairs and Expatriates of the Syrian Arab Republic, Fayssal Mekdad, relayed information “regarding the military attack carried out at around 1845 hours yesterday, Saturday 9 April 2022, by Israeli fighter aircraft which arrived from northern Lebanon and targeted parts of the central region of Syria before being confronted by the Syrian air defence.” In a letter dated 16 May addressed to the President of the Security Council and me ([S/2022/396](#)), the Permanent Representative of the Syrian Arab Republic reported that “on Friday, 13 May 2022, at approximately 2020 hours, the Israeli occupation army perpetrated an air attack by firing rocket bursts from the direction of the Mediterranean Sea west of Banyas at certain points in the central region”.

16. UNDOF continued to observe daily crossings of the ceasefire line by unidentified individuals from the Bravo side and assessed that the individuals were shepherds and farmers from surrounding areas tending livestock, as well as hunters carrying weapons. The Israel Defense Forces continued to express deep concern about the crossings, which they stated were a threat to the safety and security of their personnel operating in proximity to the ceasefire line. In March, Syrian authorities issued identity cards to shepherds in some local communities in Qunaytirah and Rafid in order to enable them to move within the vicinity of the ceasefire line and to prevent the recurrence of incidents of firing of shots. This activity was coordinated by UNDOF with both parties. UNDOF continued to coordinate with both parties regarding the issuance of similar identity cards to shepherds in Jubbata al-Khashab, which is located in the vicinity of the ceasefire line.

17. On three separate occasions, 16, 17 and 19 March, UNDOF patrols were dispatched to investigate incidents reported by the Israel Defense Forces of alleged damage to the Israeli technical fence by individuals from the Bravo side. The UNDOF

patrols were not able to confirm the incidents. UNDOF increased its patrolling in the vicinity of the alleged locations of the incidents to prevent any escalation of the situation.

18. On 8 March, UNDOF, at the request of the parties, supported the International Committee of the Red Cross in facilitating the return of two students from the Bravo side to the Alpha side through the Qunaytirah crossing.

19. UNDOF assessed that the security situation in the northern and central parts of its area of operations on the Bravo side had generally improved, but remained volatile in the southern part, with security incidents reportedly occurring in locations in the area of limitation, including along UNDOF patrol routes in Dar'a Governorate. Open sources reported the detonation of improvised explosive devices in Nafi'ah on 28 February, killing a member of the Syrian security forces, and in Inkhil on 1 March, injuring four civilians. On 23 April, open sources reported the explosion of an explosive remnant of war in Tasil, injuring one child. There were media reports of detonations of vehicle-borne improvised explosive devices in Kafr Shams on 1 May and in Rafid on 4 May, as well as assassinations by unknown armed elements of a reconciled former member of an armed group in Nawa on 19 February and of two individuals between Jasim and Nawa on 30 March.

20. UNDOF continued to implement its mandate in the context of measures adopted by the authorities of Israel and the Syrian Arab Republic to control the spread of coronavirus disease (COVID-19). The measures continued to include limitations on the movement of United Nations personnel, as well as their mandatory testing and quarantine after any crossing between the two sides and any cross-border movement between Lebanon and the Syrian Arab Republic. UNDOF continued to vaccinate its military and civilian personnel. Six UNDOF personnel tested positive for COVID-19 and have since recovered.

21. Since early March 2020, the Israel Defense Forces have been restricting the movement of UNDOF and Observer Group Golan personnel through the Alpha gate at the Qunaytirah crossing, opening it on a case-by-case basis only, which has continued to affect the operational and administrative activities of the mission. UNDOF continued to liaise with the Israel Defense Forces on their facilitation of the crossing of UNDOF and Observer Group Golan personnel at the Qunaytirah crossing and, in particular, on the need for United Nations personnel to cross using only documents issued by UNDOF at the Alpha gate and to return to the established crossing procedures. In October 2021, the Syrian authorities informed UNDOF that they had decided to return to the procedures established to facilitate the movement of Force personnel and supplies through the Bravo gate at the Qunaytirah crossing.

22. UNDOF continued to engage with the Israel Defense Forces with a view to addressing restrictions on movement and access from the Alpha side, through the Israeli technical fence, to United Nations observation posts in the area of separation.

23. On 18 May, the Israel Defense Forces facilitated the first UNDOF inspection, carried out through Observer Group Golan, of military positions in the area of limitation on the Alpha side since March 2020. UNDOF continued to engage with the Syrian authorities to facilitate the resumption of inspections on the Bravo side in the near future, following the most recent inspection, which was carried out on 9 August 2021 on the positions of Syrian armed forces in the northern part of the area of limitation.

24. As part of the return to full mandate implementation, UNDOF continued with the restoration, repainting and refurbishment of the barrels marking the ceasefire line and the Bravo line, which delineate the area of separation, with 34 barrels restored along the ceasefire line and 93 barrels along the Bravo line. UNDOF continued to consult the parties on the barrel restoration activity.

25. Progress in the incremental return of UNDOF to the Bravo side continued despite restrictions on construction owing to COVID-19 control measures. The refurbishment of observation post 58 is continuing, with its reoccupation by Observer Group Golan military observers scheduled for June 2022.

26. UNDOF operations continued to be supported by the military observers of the United Nations Truce Supervision Organization in Observer Group Golan, who are under the operational control of UNDOF and maintain nine fixed observation posts within the UNDOF area of operations and one temporary observation post along the ceasefire line. The focus of Observer Group Golan remained continuous static observation and situational awareness. The military observers are also tasked to carry out investigations of incidents within the UNDOF area of operations.

27. UNDOF monthly operational patrols continued on routes in the areas of separation and limitation, with 1,377 operational activities carried out in February, 1,529 in March and 1,419 in April. UNDOF patrol routes cover the full breadth of the area of separation and 70 per cent of the area of limitation. The security situation in the central part of the area of operations and the volatile security situation in the southern sector continued to slow progress in opening new patrol routes in the area of limitation on the Bravo side.

28. The movement of UNDOF personnel through Lebanon has been restricted owing to measures related to COVID-19 and Lebanese administrative requirements. The route between Beirut and Damascus, through the Judaydah and Masna' border crossing, which is a primary resupply route for UNDOF, remained open for the commercial movement of goods during the period, with intermittent closures owing to inclement weather. It also recently became the main route for UNDOF troops rotating through Beirut.

29. UNDOF continued to assess that there remained a significant threat to United Nations personnel in its area of operations from explosive remnants of war, including unexploded ordnance and mines, as well as a probable threat from the possible presence of sleeper cells of armed groups.

30. UNDOF continued to conduct and update its contingency planning for the reinforcement and evacuation of positions and observation posts on both the Alpha and Bravo sides, in addition to conducting regular rehearsals, exercises and training for identified contingencies. Risk mitigation measures, including force protection measures, continued to be developed at positions and observation posts and at the operational base at Camp Ziouani and headquarters at Camp Faouar.

31. UNDOF reported no cases of misconduct. The mission continued to implement activities, including the regular training of personnel related to prevention, enforcement and remedial actions, regarding misconduct.

32. As at 20 May, UNDOF comprised 1,117 troops, including 76 women peacekeepers. Troops were deployed from Bhutan (3), Czechia (4), Fiji (150), Ghana (6), India (200), Ireland (132), Nepal (409), the Netherlands (1) and Uruguay (217). In addition, 79 military observers from Observer Group Golan, including 11 women, assisted UNDOF in carrying out its tasks.

III. Implementation of Security Council resolution 338 (1973)

33. In its resolution 2613 (2021), the Security Council called upon the parties concerned to implement immediately its resolution 338 (1973). It decided to renew the mandate of UNDOF for a period of six months, until 30 June 2022, and requested the Secretary-General to report every 90 days on developments in the situation and

the measures taken to implement resolution 338 (1973). The search for a peaceful settlement of the conflict in the Middle East, in particular the efforts made at various levels to implement resolution 338 (1973), was addressed in my report on the situation in the Middle East (A/76/194), submitted pursuant to General Assembly resolution 75/24 on the Syrian Golan.

34. Since the discontinuation of indirect peace talks, in December 2008, no negotiations have been held between the parties. I look forward to a peaceful resolution of the conflict between Israel and the Syrian Arab Republic and the resumption of efforts towards a comprehensive, just and durable peace settlement, as called for by the Security Council in its resolution 338 (1973) and other relevant resolutions.

IV. Financial aspects

35. The General Assembly, by its resolution 75/303, appropriated the amount of \$61.2 million for the maintenance of the mission for the period from 1 July 2021 to 30 June 2022.

36. As at 12 May 2022, unpaid assessed contributions to the Special Account for UNDOF amounted to \$26.9 million. The total outstanding assessed contributions for all peacekeeping operations as at that date amounted to \$2,821.6 million.

37. Reimbursement of troop costs and of the costs of contingent-owned equipment have been made for the period up to 31 December 2021, in accordance with the quarterly payment schedule.

V. Observations

38. At a particularly volatile time for the region, I remain concerned about the continued violations of the Disengagement of Forces Agreement during the reporting period, including breaches of the ceasefire on 23 and 24 February and 11 May, which also posed a risk to United Nations personnel. The Israel Defense Forces should refrain from firing into the area of separation and across the ceasefire line, as well as crossing the ceasefire line. I also remain concerned by the continued presence of the Syrian armed forces in the area of separation. There should be no military forces or activities in the area of separation other than those of UNDOF. The continued presence of unauthorized weapons and equipment in the area of limitation on both the Alpha and the Bravo sides, as well as the flying of drones across the ceasefire line, is in violation of the Agreement. I urge the parties to the Agreement to exercise utmost restraint and comply with the Agreement. I continue to encourage members of the Security Council to support efforts to raise the awareness of both parties of the risk of escalation and the need to preserve the ceasefire between Israel and the Syrian Arab Republic.

39. It remains critical that the parties maintain their liaison with UNDOF. All violations of the ceasefire line increase tensions between the signatories to the Disengagement of Forces Agreement and undermine stability in the area. The continued liaison by UNDOF with the parties has contributed to de-escalation during times of heightened tension.

40. The continued commitment of both Israel and the Syrian Arab Republic to the Disengagement of Forces Agreement and support for the presence of UNDOF remain essential. The full return of UNDOF to the area of separation continues to be a priority for the Force. I count on the continued cooperation of both parties to facilitate the advancement of the Force's plans for an incremental return to operations and positions

in the area of separation and to ensure that the Force can implement its mandate fully, including inspections on both sides. At the same time, the parties must continue to support the enhancement of the liaison function of UNDOF.

41. Given the worrying trend of continued violations of the Disengagement of Forces Agreement and the volatile security situation in the southern part of the area of limitation on the Bravo side, the safety and security of military and civilian personnel in UNDOF and Observer Group Golan are of particular concern. It is therefore of particular importance that the Security Council continue to bring its influence to bear on the parties concerned to ensure that UNDOF is accorded the ability to operate in a safe and secure manner and is allowed to operate freely in accordance with the Agreement. It also remains important that the parties continue to facilitate the deployment of all personnel to UNDOF for effective mandate implementation.

42. The continued support of Member States, and in particular the confidence of troop-contributing countries in UNDOF and their commitment to it, remain key factors in the Force's ability to carry out its mandate. I am grateful to the Governments of Bhutan, Czechia, Fiji, Ghana, India, Ireland, Nepal, the Netherlands and Uruguay for their contributions and the commitment, resolve and consummate professionalism of their military personnel in UNDOF. I am also thankful to those Member States that have contributed military observers to the United Nations Truce Supervision Organization.

43. I consider the continued presence of UNDOF in the area essential. I therefore recommend that the Security Council extend the mandate of the Force for six months, until 31 December 2022. The Government of the Syrian Arab Republic has given its assent to the proposed extension. The Government of Israel has also expressed its agreement.

44. In conclusion, I wish to express my appreciation to the Head of Mission and Force Commander, Lieutenant General Ishwar Hamal, and to the military and civilian personnel serving under his leadership in UNDOF and the military observers in Observer Group Golan, who continue to perform the important tasks assigned to them by the Security Council with efficiency and commitment under extremely challenging circumstances.

Map

