



Security Council

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Identical letters dated 16 May 2011 from the Permanent Representative of Israel to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

I write regarding a very troubling incident that took place yesterday on the disengagement line between Israel and Syria, which threatens peace and stability in our region.

Yesterday, at approximately 11.30 a.m. local time, a group of hundreds of individuals in Syria tore down the Alpha Fence, in breach of the agreed disengagement line between Israel and Syria. These infiltrators entered the village of Majdal Shams and carried out a violent demonstration against Israel Defense Forces, throwing large objects and using other dangerous means.

The Israel Defense Forces acted according to its instructions to operate with maximum restraint in confronting the significant threat of violence facing it. Any harm caused to the individuals involved in these violent demonstrations lies clearly with the Government of Syria, which is responsible for preventing infiltration of the agreed disengagement line between Israel and Syria.

In the days leading up to yesterday's incident, Israel alerted a number of parties about the explosive potential of plans for violent incidents on the so-called "Nakba Day". Despite these warnings from Israel, violent demonstrators broke down fences and crossed over the agreed disengagement line from Syrian side.

All signs indicate that this incident could not have taken place or been organized without the knowledge of the Syrian authorities, who in previous years have helped to ensure that protests on the so-called "Nakba Day" occurred peacefully. This breach of the disengagement line between Israel and Syria from the Syrian side raises disturbing questions about whether certain actors in our region are seeking to use such provocations as a cynical distraction from other issues.

We expect the Government of Syria to take the appropriate measures to prevent such dangerous incidents and provocations from reoccurring in the future. The United Nations Disengagement Observer Force, as the force on the ground, should also take appropriate measures in this regard.

We also expect the international community to take action to prevent further provocations, delivering clear messages to countries from where provocations against Israel are launched — whether by land or sea — that such actions carry with them the serious potential for escalation.



It is obvious that those behind these incidents are seeking to advance a radical and destructive agenda. Like many in our region, the leaders of these violent demonstrations have stated clearly and repeatedly that they do not accept Israel's right to exist — and their goal is to destroy it. Yesterday's events are part of a disturbing pattern of action taken by extremist forces that seek to spark provocation with Israel.

Israel is fully committed to the principle of freedom of speech, including the rights of individuals to protest. However, we are resolute in our determination to protect our borders, civilians and soldiers from provocations such as the one that took place yesterday in Majdal Shams.

Israel will continue to take great efforts to maintain regional peace and security — and hopes that our neighbours will act in the same way.

I should be grateful if you would have the present letter distributed as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) **Meron Reuben**
Ambassador
Permanent Mission of Israel to the United Nations
