



Security Council

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Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Disengagement Observer Force for the period from 4 September to 19 November 2014

I. Introduction

1. The present report gives an account of the activities of the United Nations Disengagement Observer Force (UNDOF) during the past three months, pursuant to the mandate contained in Security Council resolution 350 (1974) and extended by subsequent resolutions, most recently resolution 2163 (2014).

II. Situation in the area and activities of the Force

2. During the reporting period, the ceasefire between Israel and the Syrian Arab Republic generally was maintained, albeit in an increasingly volatile and deteriorating security environment attributable to the ongoing conflict in the Syrian Arab Republic and despite a number of significant violations of the Disengagement of Forces Agreement of 1974 by Israeli and Syrian forces, which are set out below. The heavy fighting in the area of limitation and in the area of separation between the Syrian Arab armed forces and armed members of various armed groups, including the Nusra Front — which had started late in August as detailed in my last report (S/2014/665) — intensified during the reporting period. The significant deterioration of the security situation necessitated the temporary relocation, between 13 and 15 September, of UNDOF personnel and military observers and equipment of Observer Group Golan of the United Nations Truce Supervision Organization (UNTSO) from a number of the remaining positions in the area of separation to the Alpha side. The Syrian armed forces carried out military activities and security operations against armed groups, often in response to offensives carried out by the armed groups. Inside the area of separation, the presence of the Syrian armed forces and military equipment, as well as any other armed personnel and military equipment, is in violation of the Disengagement of Forces Agreement. As underscored by the Security Council in its resolution 2163 (2014), there should be no military activity of any kind in the area of separation.

3. In the context of the clashes between the Syrian armed forces and armed groups, there were several incidents of firing from the Bravo side across the ceasefire line. On 4 September, United Nations personnel at a temporary observation post on the Alpha side observed several impacts on the Alpha side; the



point of origin was not observed. The Israel Defense Forces (IDF) informed UNDOF that two rounds had impacted on the Alpha side. On 14 September, personnel at United Nations position 22 reported fire, which was assumed to have been a tank round originating from the Bravo side, landing north-west of their position on the Alpha side. On 23 September, in the morning, IDF informed UNDOF that it had shot down a Syrian air force aircraft, alleging that it had crossed the ceasefire line. United Nations personnel did not observe the fighter aircraft over the area of separation or crossing the ceasefire line but saw a mid-air explosion followed by debris falling to the ground in an area east of Jaba in the area of limitation on the Bravo side. On 3 October, UNDOF observed an explosion two to three kilometres from United Nations observation post 73 close to the technical fence, at the time that an IDF patrol was moving nearby on the patrol path. IDF did not report any casualties or damage to the vehicle.

4. On 11 September, 45 UNDOF peacekeepers, who had been detained since 28 August, were released unharmed to UNDOF at United Nations position 80 near Al Rafid village. However, the intense fighting between the Syrian armed forces and members of various armed groups that began late in August in the central part of the area of separation continued into the current reporting period, with significant consequences for UNDOF operations. On 4 September, armed groups launched coordinated heavy attacks in the towns of Majdotiyah, Masharah, Muraba'at and Nab'as Sakhr in the area of limitation. The attacks were supported by tanks, artillery, mortar and rocket fire. In an effort to ensure the safety and security of United Nations personnel in the face of the deteriorating security situation, on 10 September, UNDOF consolidated United Nations personnel and equipment from position 32A to positions 30 and 37.

5. In view of the heavy fighting, which was approaching close to the UNDOF headquarters at Camp Faouar and the mission's positions in the central part of the area of separation, the Force Commander briefed both parties early in September on the Force's plans to relocate its personnel and assets should the Nusra Front or other extremist fighters who posed a clear threat to the mission endanger the safety and security of the United Nations personnel. It should be noted here that from information posted on social media as well as in the course of its efforts to secure the release of the peacekeepers, the United Nations learned that its personnel had been taken and held by members of the Nusra Front. There were indications that the Nusra Front intended to detain additional UNDOF personnel and take from UNDOF more weapons and vehicles as opportunities arose.

6. On 12 September, armed groups, including members of the Nusra Front, using two tanks, artillery and heavy mortars, launched an attack against Syrian Arab armed forces positions along the main road connecting Camp Faouar and Camp Ziouani, inside the area of separation as well as in New Hamidiyeh. The Syrian armed forces retreated from their positions towards Al Baath, heavily bombarding the positions they vacated. The armed groups in turn took control of the area up to the western outskirts of Al Baath. At this stage, UNDOF activated its temporary relocation plan for the Force's personnel and assets. The plan foresaw that all military and civilian personnel and essential assets would be relocated in a phased manner, from 12 to 17 September, to the Alpha side. As a first step in the relocation, UNDOF temporarily relocated personnel from United Nations positions 25, 32 and 62 and observation post 72 to Camp Faouar; the following morning, the personnel relocated to Camp Ziouani. On 15 September, heavy fighting broke out between the

Syrian Arab armed forces and armed groups north of the main supply road in the area of separation. During the course of the day, the Syrian armed forces conducted a number of airstrikes in the areas of Jabbata, Ufaniyah and Tal al-Kurum in the area of separation. During the morning of that day, the armed groups took control of observation post 72 and attacked Terese Hill, to which the Syrian armed forces responded with heavy artillery, mortar and tank fire. As the fighting threatened to isolate Camp Faouar, UNDOF decided to advance the final stage of its relocation plan by two days and vacate Camp Faouar that day. During the relocation on 15 September, all personnel from Camp Faouar as well as United Nations positions 10, 16, 31 and 37 and observation post 71 were relocated temporarily to the Alpha side. One day prior, the Force Commander had briefed the Senior Syrian Arab Delegate about the UNDOF plans to vacate Camp Faouar. The relocation took place without incident and all UNDOF personnel safely reached the Alpha side.

7. Armed groups had seized a number of vehicles during the incidents involving the detention of the 45 peacekeepers from United Nations position 27 and the confinement of others at positions 68 and 69 late in August. While UNDOF hurriedly moved personnel and most United Nations assets, including vehicles, from Camp Faouar and other United Nations positions were temporarily vacated, unfortunately some assets and equipment were left behind. UNDOF commenced the necessary administrative processes in relation to all United Nations assets that were seized by armed groups and those left at Camp Faouar or at United Nations positions temporarily vacated.

8. Throughout the period of the heavy fighting and the lead-up to the temporary relocation of UNDOF, the Force Commander remained in regular close contact with the Senior Syrian Arab Delegate and IDF. Both parties provided full support to UNDOF in ensuring the safe evacuation of peacekeepers from positions that had to be vacated as well as their safe relocation.

9. Since mid-September, intermittent heavy fighting between the Syrian Arab armed forces and armed groups continued in the central part of the area of separation, as well as in the area of limitation. The Syrian armed forces carried out more than 40 airstrikes in the days immediately following the UNDOF relocation, targeting areas including Jabbata al-Khashab, Ufaniyah, New Hamadiyah, Ruihinah and Braika in the area of separation, as well as the general area of Tal al-Mashara, Tal al-Mal and Kafar Nasej in the area of limitation. The local truce arrangement between the Syrian armed forces and armed groups covering Jabbata, Trunje and Ufaniyah, which had been in place since the early part of the year, ended late in August as extremist armed groups from the southern part of the area of separation linked up with armed members of the opposition in Jabbata. This in turn raised fears among the local population in Hadar, where a number of families were seen leaving the village. Subsequent to the link-up of the armed groups from the south with those in the north, no further northwards movement of the Nusra Front was observed in the area of separation.

10. The Syrian armed forces continued firing on locations controlled by armed groups in the central part of the area of separation throughout the reporting period in order to restrict their movement. Armed groups shifted the main focus of their attacks to the area of limitation, where, early in October, they captured the large Syrian armed forces position on Tal al-Harrah and a number of the surrounding towns and villages. The Syrian armed forces responded with dozens of airstrikes. The capture of

Tal al-Harrah by armed groups allowed them to move largely unimpeded between the southern and central parts of the area of operations, and in particular in the areas between the two main highways linking Damascus with Quneitra and Dara'a. Following the capture of Tal al-Harrah, there was heavy fighting between the Syrian armed forces and armed groups in the areas of Al Baath, Tal al-Kurum and Tal al-Shaar in the vicinity of Jaba. On a few occasions, the Syrian armed forces unsuccessfully attempted to regain ground in the area of New Hamadiyah.

11. In the course of fighting and clashes between the Syrian armed forces and armed groups on 4 September, seven mortar rounds, fired from areas known to be strongholds of the armed groups, landed in and near United Nations observation post 56. Peacekeepers went into shelter. On 6 September, two individuals approached observation post 54 and made gestures of cutting throats towards the United Nations personnel at the post. The same was reported by United Nations position 80 on 18 October. UNDOF deployed peacekeepers at observation post 54 to enhance protection of the military observers. On 16 September, 11 armed individuals approached the gate of United Nations position Hermon South. They attempted to gain information about the personnel strength of the position and if or when United Nations personnel would vacate it. In addition, they were understood to be seeking refuge in the position, which was denied. The individuals stayed for about 40 minutes and thereafter left the area. On 4 October, two rounds, possibly fired by a tank from a north-eastern direction, landed 50 m south of United Nations observation post 51. The United Nations personnel at the post went into shelter immediately and heard a similar type of round land nearby.

12. Crossing of the ceasefire line by civilians, primarily shepherds, was observed on an almost daily basis. On 24 October, United Nations observation post 73 observed 12 IDF soldiers who detained one civilian between the Alpha line and the Israeli technical fence south-east of the observation post and subsequently took him away. IDF informed UNDOF that they released the person within one hour at the same location. On 27 October, position 80 observed two IDF soldiers east of the technical fence returning from the direction of the Alpha line towards the technical fence. UNDOF observed IDF opening the technical fence gate and letting two individuals pass from the Bravo to the Alpha side. Following the evacuation of UNDOF personnel from position 85 on 28 August, UNDOF sporadically observed armed members of the opposition interacting with IDF across the ceasefire line in the vicinity of United Nations position 85.

13. UNDOF protested about all firing across the ceasefire line to the Senior Syrian Arab Delegate and IDF. All incidents of firing into the area of separation and across the ceasefire line, as well as the crossing by individuals of the ceasefire line, are violations of the Disengagement of Forces Agreement.

14. In employing its best efforts to maintain the ceasefire and see that it is scrupulously observed, as prescribed by the Disengagement of Forces Agreement, UNDOF reports all breaches of the ceasefire line. During periods of heightened tension, as well as during and in the immediate aftermath of firing incidents across the ceasefire line, the Force Commander was in ongoing close contact with both parties to the Disengagement Agreement to prevent an escalation of the situation across the ceasefire line.

15. Over the course of the reporting period, the Syrian armed forces withdrew from additional positions and checkpoints in the areas of separation and limitation,

leaving armed groups in control of more territory in the UNDOF area of operations. The Syrian armed forces maintained a strong presence in the urban centres of Al Baath and Khan Arnabeh and some areas immediately to the north and south, including the position it established on Tal al-Kurum in the area of separation, surrounding United Nations observation post 56, in addition to locations in the area of limitation. The Syrian armed forces maintain at least three tanks in the area of separation, including at their position at Tal al-Kurum, and several others in locations in the area of limitation adjacent to the area of separation. On various occasions, UNDOF observed up to four tanks in locations controlled by armed groups in the area of separation in addition to armoured personnel carriers, infantry fighting vehicles and heavy artillery pieces.

16. UNDOF protested about the presence of Syrian armed forces and equipment in the area of separation, and the firing into and inside the area of separation. The Force Commander reiterated to the Syrian authorities the obligation of the armed forces to halt military operations in the area of separation and to cease firing from the area of limitation, stressing the importance of abiding by the terms of the Disengagement of Forces Agreement and ensuring the safety and security of United Nations personnel on the ground. Senior United Nations officials have conveyed similar messages to the Permanent Representative of the Syrian Arab Republic to the United Nations.

17. During the reporting period, UNDOF observed two tented camps housing internally displaced persons in the vicinity of United Nations position 80. The number of tents has varied over the period. At the time of reporting, approximately 40 large and medium-sized tents were seen in the vicinity of Al Aishah village, north of position 80, and two tents placed approximately 300 m south of position 80. UNDOF estimates that from 60 to 70 families live in the camps. On 23 September, position 80 observed armed individuals gathered in Al Aishah village unloading weapons from a truck. Some individuals were in civilian attire and others in camouflage uniforms. A vehicle with a mounted anti-aircraft gun was observed in proximity to the place of unloading. Late in September, the Senior Syrian Arab Delegate sent a letter to the UNDOF Force Commander stating that the camps for internally displaced persons were not used for humanitarian reasons but as a base for “armed terrorist” groups who also crossed to the Alpha side. The Delegate requested that UNDOF remove the camps within a period of 15 days, after which the camps would be considered a legitimate target for the Syrian armed forces. He requested that UNDOF transfer the civilians out of the camps to prevent them from being used as human shields by “armed terrorist” groups. The Force Commander informed the Delegate that it was not within the mandate of UNDOF to relocate Syrian civilians who had been displaced as a result of the Syrian conflict. He also strongly urged that no attack be carried out against the camps. In addition, UNDOF conveyed to the Delegate that it had informed the International Committee of the Red Cross and other United Nations entities in Damascus of the request.

18. Since its temporary relocation in mid-September, UNDOF has continued to maintain visibility of the area of separation and the ceasefire line, albeit limited, from a number of positions it continues to hold in the area of separation. The Force continued to maintain four positions on Mount Hermon in the northern part of the area of separation and position 80 in the southern part, as well as position 22 on the Alpha side. The UNDOF operations continued to be supported by the UNTSO military observers in Observer Group Golan, who maintained five fixed and four

temporary observation posts on the Alpha side. The focus of Observer Group Golan activities remained on around-the-clock static observation, investigations and situational analysis. Through Observer Group Golan, UNDOF continued to carry out fortnightly inspections of equipment and force levels in the area of limitation on the Alpha side. On one occasion, Observer Group Golan observed five 155-mm artillery weapons deployed in the 10-km zone. Liaison officers from the Alpha side accompanied Observer Group Golan inspection teams. Inspections and mobile operations in the area of limitation on the Bravo side remained suspended because of the security situation. As in the past, the Force faced restrictions on freedom of movement and its inspection teams were denied access to some positions on the Alpha side. Observer Group Golan members continued to experience restrictions of movement on the Alpha side when entering and exiting United Nations observation post 73, which is located east of the Israeli technical fence.

19. Further to the Security Council presidential statement of 19 September 2014, the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, in coordination with UNDOF, held consultations with the parties to the Disengagement of Forces Agreement on the necessary steps to maintain the ability of UNDOF to carry out its mandate. The consultations included options for monitoring the ceasefire and the separation of forces even under circumstances when security conditions constrain UNDOF from fully operating on the Bravo side. The Department held consultations with the Permanent Missions of Israel and the Syrian Arab Republic in New York on the reconfiguration and activities of UNDOF. A senior delegation from the Department visited the Syrian Arab Republic and Israel from 28 September to 4 October to undertake further consultations with respective officials. In addition, a planning team comprising officials from the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and the Department of Field Support visited the UNDOF base on the Alpha side, Camp Ziouani, in support of these efforts. Troop-contributing countries were kept informed of these consultations.

20. Both Israel and the Syrian Arab Republic expressed their strong commitment to the Disengagement of Forces Agreement and the continuation of UNDOF with its present mandate. The parties regarded the relocation of UNDOF from Camp Faouar and a number of its positions in the area of separation to the Alpha side as a temporary measure and expressed a strong desire to see the full return of UNDOF to the area of separation, when the security conditions allow. In this connection, the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and UNDOF agreed with the Syrian Government that Syrian authorities and UNDOF would review, every three months, the situation in the area of separation. The Department and UNDOF also agreed with the parties that, in the interim, the headquarters of UNDOF would be established in Damascus, with its configuration and size to be determined. The UNDOF positions on Mount Hermon will continue to be resupplied from the Bravo side as long as the security situation permits.

21. UNDOF has continued discussions with the parties on some of the practical arrangements to be put in place, including the establishment of the mission headquarters in Damascus, crossing procedures between the Alpha and the Bravo sides in the absence of the established crossing at Quneitra, and the use of technology to offset the loss of situational awareness in the area of separation, as well as additional locations required, including a logistics hub on the Bravo side and positions for observing the ceasefire line on the Alpha side.

22. In considering the way forward, the Department and UNDOF were informed by the situation on the ground as well as consultations with the parties. With the ultimate aim of returning to the area of separation when the security situation allows and based on the key assumption that the security situation on the Bravo side, in the foreseeable future, would continue not to permit UNDOF to return fully to the area of separation, the option being pursued would entail a short-term temporary reduction of the UNDOF troop strength to 750 military personnel and redeployment of up to 200 personnel. In addition, further to the currently manned positions of UNDOF and Observer Group Golan, there would be a requirement to establish new United Nations positions west of the ceasefire line. This interim configuration would allow UNDOF to continue to monitor, verify and report on violations of the Disengagement Agreement and exercise its critical liaison functions with the parties, particularly in preventing escalation of incidents. The UNDOF headquarters would be established in Damascus and the operational base in Camp Ziouani. A Force reserve company, four UNDOF positions on Mount Hermon and position 80 in the southern part of the area of separation and position 22 on the Alpha side would be maintained. In addition, Observer Group Golan observation posts along the ceasefire line and in its vicinity would be maintained, and the functions of the military observers optimized. The establishment of an UNDOF logistics hub on the Bravo side is under consideration.

23. As at 12 November, UNDOF comprised 929 troops, including 30 women, from Fiji (445), India (190), Ireland (138), Nepal (154) and the Netherlands (2). In addition, 80 military observers from UNTSO, including one woman, assisted the Force in carrying out its tasks. Following the decision by the Government of the Philippines to withdraw its contingent from UNDOF, 344 Philippine peacekeepers left the mission between 18 and 27 September.

24. Since the temporary relocation of the Force on 15 September, movements of UNDOF personnel on the Bravo side have been limited. On Mount Hermon, UNDOF conducts foot and vehicle patrols twice daily. Convoys between Damascus and the Mount Hermon positions to ensure the resupply as well as maintenance of the positions are conducted in armoured vehicles and with UNDOF security escort. National staff report to work at the UNDOF office in Damascus. As a result of the heavy fighting that commenced late in August, the movement of United Nations personnel along the UNDOF main supply route between Camp Faoaur and Camp Ziouani was suspended. From 4 to 15 September, UNDOF, in consultation with the parties, utilized a crossing point between the Alpha and Bravo sides in the vicinity of United Nations position 37B. At the time of reporting, UNDOF continues to engage the Syrian authorities regarding an alternate crossing route, in the Mount Hermon region, between the Alpha and Bravo sides. Owing to the closure of the established crossing between the Alpha and Bravo sides late in August, UNDOF is currently not in a position to facilitate, in cooperation with the International Committee of the Red Cross, humanitarian crossings, including for students.

III. Financial aspects

25. By its resolution 68/260 B of 30 June 2014, the General Assembly appropriated the amount of \$64.1 million for the maintenance of the Force for the period from 1 July 2014 to 30 June 2015.

26. As at 10 November 2014, unpaid assessed contributions to the UNDOF Special Account amounted to \$14.7 million. Total outstanding assessed contributions for all peacekeeping operations at the same date amounted to \$2,620.0 million.

27. As at 10 November 2014, amounts owed to contributors for troop costs totalled \$2.7 million. Reimbursements for troop costs and for equipment and self-sustainment have been made for the periods up to 31 August 2014 and 30 June 2014 respectively, in accordance with the quarterly payment schedule.

IV. Implementation of Security Council resolution 338 (1973)

28. The Security Council, when deciding in its resolution 2131 (2013) to renew the mandate of UNDOF for a further period of six months, until 30 June 2014, called upon the parties concerned to immediately implement its resolution 338 (1973) and requested the Secretary-General to submit, at the end of the period, a report on developments in the situation and the measures taken to implement that resolution. The search for a peaceful settlement in the Middle East, in particular the efforts made at various levels to implement resolution 338 (1973), was dealt with in my report on the situation in the Middle East ([A/69/341](#)), submitted pursuant to General Assembly resolutions 68/16 on Jerusalem and 68/17 on the Syrian Golan.

29. Since the discontinuation of indirect peace talks in December 2008, there have been no negotiations between the parties. The Syrian conflict is further reducing the prospects for their resumption and progress towards peace between Israel and the Syrian Arab Republic. I look forward to a peaceful resolution of the conflict in 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.

V. Observations

30. I am gravely concerned about the developments in the area of separation that forced UNDOF to take the decision to temporarily relocate from the Bravo to the Alpha side. As reported in my last report to the Security Council ([S/2014/665](#)) these developments saw armed groups, including members of the listed terrorist organization, the Nusra Front, enter into direct confrontation with UNDOF, abducting 45 of its peacekeepers and confining 72 others in two United Nations positions. In the two weeks following those events, sustained heavy fighting between the Syrian armed forces and armed groups came so close to the UNDOF headquarters in Camp Faouar and other positions in the central area of separation that UNDOF had to relocate its personnel, thereby significantly reducing its ability to carry out its mandate as agreed by the parties to the 1974 Disengagement of Forces Agreement. Any hostile act against United Nations personnel on the ground, including threatening their physical safety and restricting their movement and the direct and indirect firing at United Nations personnel and facilities by anyone, is unacceptable.

31. Armed opposition groups and other armed groups have expanded the area under their control in the area of separation, and remain present along the section of the main road connecting the two UNDOF camps. The crossing between the Alpha

and the Bravo sides remains closed. It is critical that countries with influence continue to strongly convey to the armed groups in the UNDOF area of operations the need to cease any actions that jeopardize the safety and security of United Nations personnel on the ground, including firing at peacekeepers, threatening and detaining them, and to accord United Nations personnel the freedom to carry out their mandate safely and securely.

32. The primary responsibility for the safety and security of United Nations personnel in the areas of separation and limitation on the Bravo side rests with the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic. I welcome the assistance provided by both parties in the safe and successful temporary relocation of UNDOF personnel. I note the assistance provided by the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic in facilitating the provision of essential supplies in support of the Force to ensure that it continues implementing its mandate safely and securely. It is imperative that respect for the privileges and immunities of UNDOF and its freedom of movement be preserved. The safety and security of UNDOF personnel and Observer Group Golan military observers must be ensured.

33. I remain deeply concerned about the continuing deterioration of the security situation in the Syrian Arab Republic, its impact on the Syrian population and potential implications for the stability of the region. The ongoing military activities in the area of operations and incidents across the ceasefire line continue to escalate the situation and heighten tension between Israel and the Syrian Arab Republic. The increased use of heavy weapons by both the Syrian armed forces and armed groups in the continuing Syrian conflict, including air power by Government forces in the area of limitation on the Bravo side, is disturbing. There should be no military forces in the area of separation other than those of UNDOF. I note with concern the presence and use of tanks by both the Syrian armed forces and armed groups, and in increasing number by the armed groups in the area of separation. I call upon all parties to the Syrian conflict to cease military actions throughout the country, including in the UNDOF area of operations. I call on the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic to stop the use of airstrikes, which cause suffering to the civilian population and destroy its livelihoods. I reiterate that all military activities in the area of separation conducted by any actor pose a risk to the ceasefire and to the local civilian population, in addition to the United Nations personnel on the ground.

34. The presence of the Syrian armed forces and unauthorized military equipment in the area of separation, in addition to the firing from the Bravo side across the ceasefire line, are grave violations of the Disengagement of Forces Agreement. All incidents of firing into the area of separation and across the ceasefire line by either party are also grave violations of the Agreement. I stress that it is important for all parties to liaise with UNDOF in the first instance to prevent any escalation of the situation. I call upon all parties to take all necessary measures to protect civilians and ensure respect for the safety and security of United Nations personnel, in addition to the freedom of movement for UNDOF throughout its area of operation. For its part, the United Nations will spare no effort in ensuring that the long-held ceasefire between Israel and the Syrian Arab Republic continues to hold.

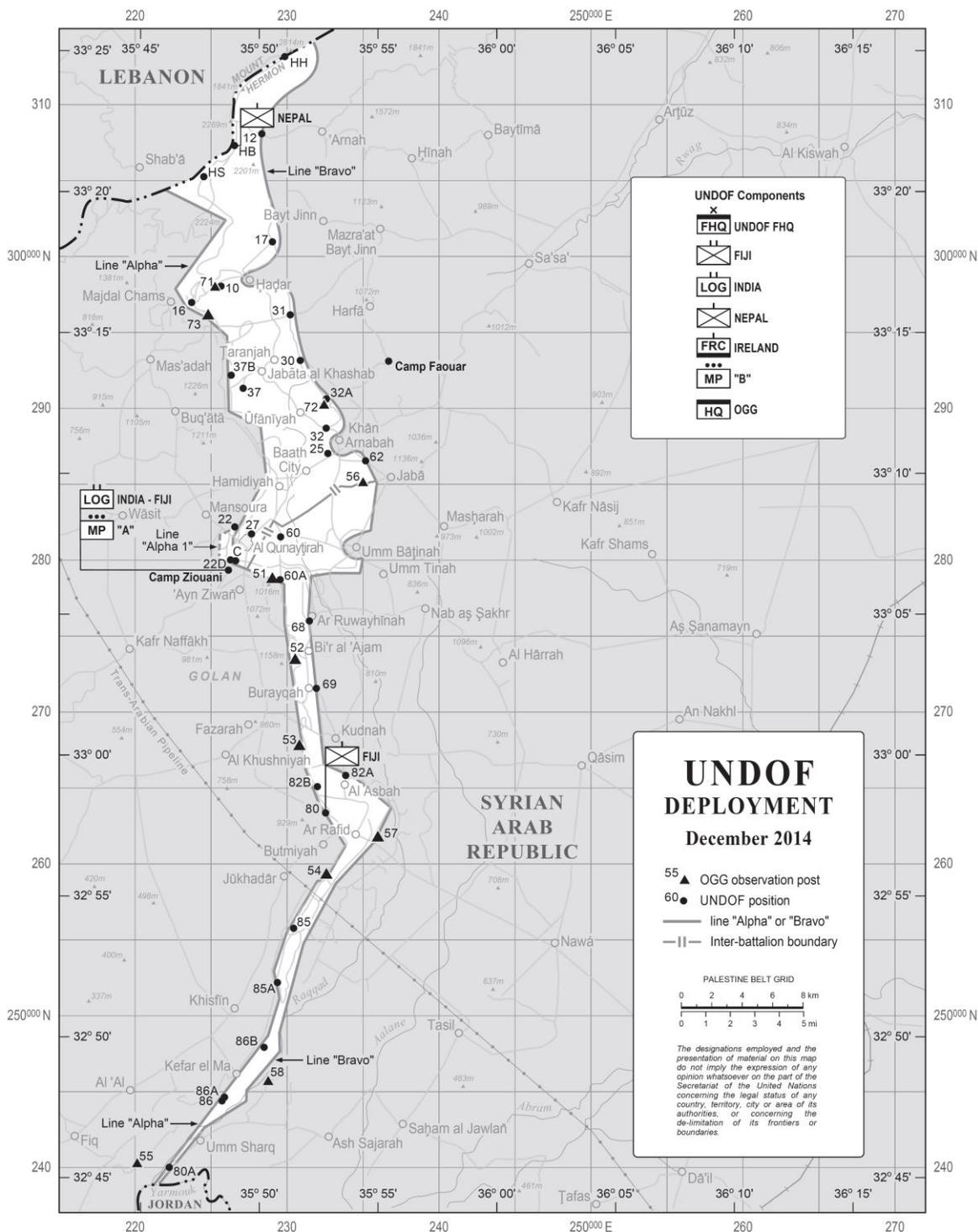
35. Both parties have stated their continued commitment to the Disengagement of Forces Agreement and the presence of UNDOF. It remains critical that both sides work through UNDOF to contain any incidents that occur along or across the ceasefire line. The mandate of UNDOF remains an important element in ensuring

the stability of the region. UNDOF is undergoing a reconfiguration to adjust the structure and size of the mission as necessary to the current circumstances while at the same time maintaining the required strength and capabilities to return to vacated positions when the security situation allows. In accordance with its mandate, UNDOF will continue to use its best efforts to monitor the ceasefire between Syrian and Israeli forces and see that it is observed, albeit in increasingly challenging and difficult circumstances.

36. The support of the parties and the Security Council is critical as UNDOF continues to adapt to the evolving situation. It is equally critical that the Council continue to bring its influence to bear on the parties concerned to ensure that UNDOF is accorded the ability to operate freely and securely within its area of operations and to carry out its important mandate. It is essential that UNDOF continues to have at its disposal all necessary means and resources that will allow it to return to the area of separation as the situation permits. UNDOF also needs to retain the confidence and commitment of troop-contributing countries. I am grateful to the Governments of Fiji, India, Ireland, Nepal and the Netherlands for their contributions to UNDOF and for staying the course under these extremely trying circumstances. I am also grateful for the contribution of the Philippines to UNDOF during exceptionally challenging times. In addition, I am grateful to the Member States contributing military observers to the United Nations Truce Supervision Organization. The continued credible presence of UNDOF remains an important element in ensuring stability on the Golan and in the region.

37. Under the prevailing circumstances, I consider the continued presence of UNDOF in the area to be essential. I therefore recommend that the Security Council extend the mandate of the Force for a further period of six months, until 30 June 2015. The Government of the Syrian Arab Republic has given its assent to the proposed extension. The Government of Israel, too, has expressed its agreement.

38. In conclusion, I wish to express my appreciation to the UNDOF Head of Mission and Force Commander, Lieutenant General Iqbal Singh Singha, and to the military and civilian personnel serving under his leadership, who continue to perform with efficiency and commitment, under extremely challenging circumstances, the important tasks assigned to them by the Security Council. I have full confidence that UNDOF will continue to use its best efforts to carry out its mandate.



Map No. 2916 Rev. 86 UNITED NATIONS
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Department of Field Support
Cartographic Section