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REPORT BY THE SECRETARY-GENERAL CONCERNING RECENT INCIDENTS IN  
AND NEAR THE DEMILITARIZED ZONE CREATED BY ARTICLE V, PARAGRAPH 5,  
OF THE ISRAEL-SYRIAN GENERAL ARMISTICE AGREEMENT

ANNEX IV

FULL TEXT OF REPORTS TO THE CHAIRMAN OF THE ISRAEL-SYRIAN MIXED  
ARMISTICE COMMISSION FROM THE UNITED NATIONS MILITARY OBSERVERS  
CONCERNING THEIR INVESTIGATIONS OF THE SYRIAN COMPLAINT DATED  
20 AUGUST 1963 (NO. 4926) AND THE ISRAEL COMPLAINT DATED  
20 AUGUST 1963 (NO. 4929)

Note by the Secretary-General: These complaints are referred to  
in the Report by the Chief of Staff of UNTSO (S/5401) in Part C,  
paragraphs 20 through 30. As mentioned in paragraph 32, the full  
texts of the investigation reports on these incidents had not been  
received by the Chief of Staff when his report was transmitted to  
the Secretary-General.

A

To: Chairman ISMAC

From: Major G.D.E. Warner, Canadian Army, United Nations Military Observer  
Major L. Borjeson, Swedish Army, United Nations Military Observer

Subject: Investigation of Syrian Complaint No. ISMAC-1963-4926 carried out  
on 21 August 1963

1. Summary of Complaint: At 1205Z on 20 August 1963, the Senior Syrian Delegate  
submitted a verbal complaint, assigned ISMAC-1963-4926 and translated as follows:  
"Israelis opened fire without warning at approximately 1030Z in the central  
demilitarized zone. Fire was from 15 tanks located between (map parallels) 271  
and 277 using machine guns and tank guns. Syrians were forced to reply with  
some shots but no heavy weapons. Investigation requested."

2. Present: Syria, Aspirant Officer Zelfow Zaza; United Nations,  
Major G.D.E. Warner, Major L. Borjeson, Military Observers.

3. Map used: Lake Hula 1:25,000.

4. Preamble

(a) The ground concerned lay between the 271 and 277 latitudinal lines on the Lake Hula 1:25,000 map. Between these two parallels the defensive area on the west consists mainly of the drained bed of Lake Hula, the demilitarized zone is a strip of flat land one half to three quarters of a kilometre wide to the east of Lake Hula, and to the east the defensive area rises from the flat land to a height of 400 metres above sea level within one kilometre. The investigation took place along a road half-way up this slope, 200 metres above sea level, which afforded a good view of the demilitarized zone to the west, as well as the slopes in the eastern defensive area.

(b) At approximately 0640Z on 21 August 1963, the investigating UNMOs, accompanied by the Syrian Liaison Officer, arrived at OP Bravo, MR 21075-27520, and proceeded to take evidence. The first witness gave his statement at OP Bravo and pointed out the area along the east canal (see sketch) from where he alleged Israel APCs (armoured personnel carriers) had fired towards El Sayyadi village. When asked if he also saw any Israel tanks at the time of the alleged incident, the first witness said that there was one in position in the trees along the east canal and that it was still there. It was not visible to the investigating UNMOs but the witness claimed that the Syrians could see it from their military positions.

(c) Next the investigating UNMOs proceeded to El Sayyadi village, MR 2110-2770, took evidence from a second witness concerning damage to his crops and building, saw and took photographs of damage to fields and crops and bullet marks in buildings. The villagers presented samples of spent bullets, of .50 calibre, and the corresponding size of the holes in the buildings seemed to indicate that the fire came from heavy machine guns. The bullets appeared to be an armour-piercing type with a hard inner core and soft outer copper jacket. Although the bullets were collected by the Syrian Liaison Officer from villagers, the investigating officers found the copper jacket of one newly-embedded in a door. The bullet holes in wooden doors and window frames indicated that the damage was done recently and that the bullets came from the west. Also a wadi, which was alleged to have been set alight by bullets, was still smouldering, indicating recent damage.

(d) Then the investigating UNMOs proceeded to MR 2113-2770 where a statement was taken from a third witness and further evidence of burnt fields was seen.

(e) Finally the investigating UNMOs proceeded to OP Charlie where a fourth witness made a statement and indicated where Israel fire was alleged to have come from APC's along the east canal and weapon pits in the Dardara farm. The investigation was completed at OP Charlie at 1330Z on 21 August 1963.

5. Statements of Witnesses

First Witness, Private Asaad Assiss, 26, Syrian Army, gave his evidence in Arabic at OP Bravo. This was translated into English by Aspirant Officer Zalfow Zaza, as follows:

"At approximately 1010Z on 20 August 1963 I heard shooting coming towards our village, El Sayyadi, from the east canal road, which is covered by trees. The shots were scattered all around the village, and caused fire amongst the harvest of a farmer and in the hills east of the village. The shooting was coming from Israel APCs and from certain positions between the trees. The Israelis stopped shooting at 1315Z, commenced again at 1330Z and carried on intermittently until 1530Z. At 1525Z two Israel APCs came into view on the road between trees at MR 2100-2762. One remained at this opening between the trees and the other proceeded to join a bulldozer by the big lone (Dardara lone) tree MR 2099-2748. As it reached the lone tree the second APC opened fire on the village, and the first APC joined it. The fire on the village caused the harvest to burn, and we returned the fire. Then the fire was stopped by both sides by 1545Z."

Questions by UNMOs:

Q.1.- "Did you see any Israel tanks?"

A.1.- "Yes, I saw one tank amongst trees behind the patch of white sand at MR 2099-2748 at 1400Z before the APCs started shooting, and this is still amongst the trees at this spot."

Q.2.- "Who started firing first, Israel or Syrian soldiers?"

A.2.- "The firing in this area was started by two Israel APCs."

Q.3.- "Do you have any physical evidence?"

A.3.- "Yes, here is a bullet from a machine gun and I will show you damage to houses and fields in the village."

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Q.4.- "What was the cause of this incident?"

A.4.- "I do not know, as firing started without warning."

Q.5.- "Was there any previous firing or other interference with the Israel tractor?"

A.5.- "No."

Q.6.- "Were there any casualties?"

A.6.- "No Syrian - but one of the APCs was burnt at the road entrance (MR 2099-2748) at 1700Z, and was towed away by a bulldozer during the night."

(Note: The witness then accompanied the investigating party to El Sayyadi and pointed out a burnt wadi, burnt field and damage to various houses.)

Second witness, Julian Hamdan, 37, Palestinian, who has lived in El Sayyadi village since 1948, gave his evidence in Arabic, which was translated into English by Aspirant Officer Zelfow Zaza, as follows: "When I was working in my field on 20 August 1963, I saw an APC going from south to north and it was shooting in the direction of our village, El Sayyadi, causing people to run away. I went to my home. During the shooting smoke started to come from the field where I was working and it caught fire. The field was not being used for cultivation, but as a place for gathering and harvesting grain for the village, and the grain which I was threshing was burnt. Also my house was hit leaving five holes in the west wall."

Questions by UNMOs:

Q.1.- "What evidence do you have to indicate the amount of grain destroyed?"

A.1.- "Here are piles of burnt wheat and more was spread upon the ground for threshing." (The investigating party noted three piles of wheat in the field, two of which had been burnt. It was estimated that the remaining pile of wheat would yield 500 kilogrammes of grain. Thus the two burnt piles plus one that was being threshed on the ground could have yielded fifteen 100-kilogramme sacks of grain.)

Third witness, Private Eli Sulaiman, 25, Syrian Army, gave his evidence from MR 21113-27680 in Arabic, which was translated by Aspirant Officer Zelfow Zaza into English, as follows: "At 1010Z on 20 August 1963, I was at MR 2110-2768 when I heard shooting to the south. Therefore I climbed the hill to my military position, east of where I had been, and watched the area. I saw APCs in the line of trees along the east canal, shooting towards El Sayyadi village, and the shooting

continued intermittently until 1300Z. At exactly 1530Z two APCs came from El Mallacha kibbutz to the line of trees at MR 2100-2762. One of them entered the area to the lone tree at MR 2099-2748 where a bulldozer was parked. When the APC reached the tree it stopped and began shooting at El Sayyadi village. At the same time the other APC started shooting in this direction and another APC, which was behind Tel Samadi, started shooting on El Darbashiya village. After the Israel APCs started shooting we returned their fire with machine guns. Both sides stopped firing at 1545Z."

Questions by UNMOs:

Q.1.- "Was there any damage seen to the Israel APC?"

A.1.- "The APC which was returning from the lone tree was hit in the wheels and stopped by the entrance through the tree line at MR 2100-2762. It remained there until towed away by a tractor at 1700Z."

Q.2.- "Did you see any other damage?"

A.2.- "Only grass burning on the hill to our right." (MR 2105-2770 to MR 2110-2770).

Q.3.- "Did you see any Israel tanks?"

A.3.- "I saw one on the way to Notarra kibbutz."

Q.4.- "Was it firing?"

A.4.- "No."

Fourth witness, Cpl. Tarek Tahe, 28, Syrian Army, gave his evidence from OP Charlie area at MR 2108-2731/and MR 2103-2719, in Arabic, which was translated into English by Aspirant Officer Zelfow Zaza, as follows: "On 20 August 1963 at 0630Z, I saw three armed Israel soldiers enter Parcel 4 at approximately MR 210200-273475. At 1010Z these three Israel soldiers started firing towards Tel Hilal with light machine guns and shortly after they were joined by heavy machine gun fire from APCs in the line of trees along the east canal. Also heavy machine gun fire came from four concrete blockhouses north of Dardara farm (MR 2108-2731) and from APCs south of east bridge (MR 2098-2732). Fire was coming from an area bounded on the east by the south bridge, MR 2092-2718, and the lone tree, MR 2099-2748, and ceased at 1100Z. This firing was not returned at that time. From 1115Z until 1300Z there was intermittent shooting by Israel heavy machine guns, returned by light bursts of Syrian small arms fire. The firing

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continued from 1310Z until 1345Z when it stopped again. From 1410Z until 1445Z shooting was intermittent. From 1530Z firing was started towards El Sayyadi village from an APC which was beside the lone tree MR 2099-2748, having entered the area from the north road at MR 2100-2762. The firing was stopped at 1545Z. Tracer bullets from Israel weapons caused a fire to crops at wadi El Jalabina from 1045Z until 1700Z."

Questions by UNMOs:

Q.1.- "Did you see any Israel tanks?"

A.1.- "Yes, north of Parcel 4 inside the line of trees along the east canal and opposite the seven trees at MR 2101-2743, I saw a tank. It joined the other weapons in the shooting."

Q.2.- "Who started the firing?"

A.2.- "Israel soldiers."

Q.3.- "Why do you think that they would start the shooting? Were they provoked by Syrians?"

A.3.- "For no apparent reason as we had not molested them in any way."

Q.4.- "Are you familiar with this area?"

A.4.- "Yes, I have been here four years."

Q.5.- "Were there any casualties to either side?"

A.5.- "From this side I did not see any."

6. Physical evidence

(a) The area was observed from these positions: OP Bravo, MR 21075-27520; El Sayyadi village, MR 2110-2770; El Darbashiya MR 2113-2770; Point east of Dardara farm at MR 2108-2731, and OP Charlie MR 2103-2719. The following physical evidence was observed: (i) burnt fields at El Darbashiya (MR 2105-2770 to MR. 2110-2770), El Sayyadi village (MR 2110-2770), wadi El Fajir (MR 2110-2748), wadi El Jalabina (MR 2105-2724 to MR 2120-2717); (ii) damage to buildings, from small arms fire, in El Sayyadi village (MR 2110-2770); (iii) spent machine gun bullets which were handed to the Syrian Liaison Officer from villagers of El Sayyadi village.

(b) Photographs were taken of the following damage in El Sayyadi village:

(i) upper half of burnt out threshing field, (ii) lower half of burnt out threshing field, (iii) wadi in which grass and three fig trees have been burnt, (iv) one of

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five holes in west wall of a house, (v) bullet hole through casement of a window, (vi) a ricochet hit on a door with part of the bullet still embedded in it.

7. Summary of Investigation

(a) The investigation commenced at 0640Z on 21 August 1963. (b) The investigation was completed at 1325Z the same date. (c) The UNMOs interrogated four witnesses. (d) Physical evidence was seen as in paragraph 6.

(e) Photographs were taken and a sketch drawn.<sup>1/</sup> The investigating UNMOs did not enter the demilitarized zone.

(Signed) G.D.E. Warner, Major, Canadian Army,  
United Nations Military Observer

(Signed) L.E.V. Borjeson, Major, Swedish Army,  
United Nations Military Observer

Noted by Chairman.

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<sup>1/</sup> Map sketches and photographs referred to in this Annex IV (S/5401/Add.2) will be circulated in an addendum (S/5401/Add.3).

B

To: Chairman ISMAC

From: Major E.E.T. Dulfer, Netherlands Marine Corps, UN Military Observer  
Captain J.J. Kelly, Irish Army, UN Military Observer

Subject: Investigation carried out on 21 August 1963 of Israel verbal complaint 1963-4929.

1. Summary of Complaint

The following verbal complaint was received from the Senior Israel Delegate at 1720Z on 20 August 1963 and was assigned ISMAC No. 1963-4929:

"On 20 August 1963 between approximately 1015Z and 1600Z, Syrian military position located between Darbashiya and the customs house area fired from heavy machine guns at Ashmora farm, Leery bridge area and the track leading south from OP-4. Fire was returned intermittently until 1300Z. Four cease-fires suggested by Chairman were not observed and violated by Syrians. Investigation requested."

2. Present

Israel: Major S. Gat, Senior Israel Delegate; Lieutenant Ronn,  
Junior Israel Delegate.

United Nations: Major E.E.T. Dulfer, UN Military Observer; Captain J.J. Kelly,  
UN Military Observer.

3. Map Used

Levant 50.J.19 Houle - Scale 1:50,000.

4. Preamble

On 21 August 1963, the investigating officers, accompanied by the Senior Israel Delegate and the Junior Israel Delegate, proceeded to a point near East Bridge, approximate MR 2098-2731, where the investigation started at 1217Z with the interrogation of witnesses. Upon completion of the interrogation the investigating officers proceeded through the Ashmora field, subject of investigation

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ISMAC 1963-4813 and 4814 on 19 August 1963, and along the track running west of the central demilitarized zone from approximate MR 2101-2742 to MR 2097-2765. In the neighbourhood of the last mentioned map reference, physical evidence was produced, i.e. the bulldozer, under fire on 20 August, on which two hits were visible. Photographs were taken. The investigation was concluded at 1443Z.

5. Statements of Witnesses

The first witness gave his statement in Hebrew, which was translated into English by Major S. Gat, Senior Israel Delegate. The witness, Joseph Amat, age 23, farmer from Ashmora, stated as follows:

"Yesterday, 20 August, we started as usual at 0600 LT baling hay. We worked without any interruptions in the field when suddenly at approximately 1210Z on Tuesday, 20 August 1963, heavy machine gun fire was opened at me from the Syrian military position at Tel Hilal. I jumped off the tractor, took cover behind a mound of earth and later I changed my position to a better one, in a ditch at the northern limit of the field. While I was lying there I saw that Syrian fire was also directed at Ashmora farm. The police section that was in the vicinity had returned the fire. At approximately 1500 LT, during a lull in the shooting, I left the area."

Question by the investigating officers:

Q.1- "Were there any hits on your tractor?"

A.1- "No."

The second witness gave his statement in Hebrew which was translated into English by Major S. Gat, Senior Israel Delegate. The witness, Hiam Tzviely, age 21, Corporal, Border Police, stated as follows:

"I was in charge of a section of Border Police deployed on 20 August on guard duty in the area of the field where the tractors were working. At approximately 1210 LT heavy machine gun fire was opened from Tel Hilal at the two tractors in the field and at my position. After about five minutes when I realized that the Syrian fire was getting very intensive, I ordered my men to return the fire. After a short while, the fire subsided and I ordered one of the tractor drivers to remove his tractor from the area. During this operation, the

Syrian firing was resumed and we again returned the fire. Then I personally embarked on the tractor and removed it and later the other one, all this under Syrian fire with covering fire from my section. This went on until approximately 1400 LT. Then I had my men removed from the immediate area westwards, where we stayed behind a mound until approximately 1600 LT. The Syrians kept on firing at us until approximately 1800 LT, while we had fired our last shot at approximately 1500 LT and did not fire a single shot afterwards."

Questions by the investigating officers:

Q.1 - "Where exactly was your section deployed?"

A.1 - "At approximate MR 2099-2742 along western limits of field."

Q.2 - "Did you observe fire being directed by Syrians at any other target?"

A.2 - "Yes, I saw that the Syrian fire was also directed at Ashmora farm and I also heard an exchange of firing both north and south of my position."

Q.3 - "Was firing coming from Tel Hilal only?"

A.3 - "No, in addition it was coming from the Syrian ruin called Dardara (21068-27250) and from the northern part of Jalabina (21070-27210)."

Q.4 - "What type of fire was directed at you?"

A.4 - "Heavy and light machine gun fire and rifle fire."

Q.5 - "What type of fire did you return?"

A.5 - "Light machine gun and rifle fire."

The third witness gave his statement in Hebrew which was translated into English by Major S. Gat, Senior Israel Delegate. The witness, Tsurriel Uzi, age 24, bulldozer driver from Kibbutz Shamir, stated as follows:

"On 20 August at approximately 0500 LT, I started repair work with the dozer of my tractor on the track running parallel and west of the ditch, opposite UN Observation Post (OP Bravo). Some minutes after 1200 LT, the police section that was guarding me, told me that there was firing to the south. I continued my work without any disturbance until approximately at 1230 LT when we came under Syrian fire from Ein Tina (approximate MR 21080-27560). I jumped off and took cover while the police returned the fire. After a while, I left the area, leaving my tractor and at approximately 1700 LT, I returned in order to remove the tractor from the area. Immediately when I started moving it, heavy Syrian fire was directed at me and under fire I kept on moving my tractor, until I succeeded in taking it from the area. At this stage, no fire was returned by guard detachment accompanying me."

Questions by the investigating officers:

Q.1- "Was your tractor hit at any stage?"

A.1- "While driving from the area, I raised my dozer blade for protection and, in spite of that, there are two hits visible on the tractor."

Q.2- "In what direction did you retire from the area?"

A.2- "I drove forward in a northern direction, slightly west of tract on which I was working."

The fourth witness gave his statement in Hebrew which was translated into English by Major S. Gat, Senior Israel Delegate. The witness, Joseph Shmron, age 21, Corporal, Border Police, stated as follows:

"On 20 August I was on guard duty with the tractor repairing the track west of demilitarized zone. About 1210 LT I heard shooting from a southerly direction. As it was not directed at us, we kept working, but at approximately 1225-1230 LT, Syrian fire was directed at us. I saw the strikes in close vicinity. I ran up to the tractor driver, told him to take cover and after that I ordered my men to return fire. The shooting went on intermittently back and forth until approximately 1500 LT, when I was ordered to cease fire, which I did. I stayed on in my position while sporadic Syrian fire went on until 1600 LT. Then, the driver had returned with orders to have the tractor removed, which he did, and while doing so heavy Syrian fire was resumed. We did not return this fire and we accompanied the tractor from the scene."

Questions by the investigating officers:

Q.1 - "Were you in charge of the police section?"

A.1 - "Yes."

Q.2 - "What was the origin of the fire directed against you?"

A.2 - "From Ein Tina and Darbashiya."

Q.3 - "What was the type of fire directed against you?"

A.3 - "Machine gun and rifle fire."

Q.4 - "Were there any hits on the tractor?"

A.4 - "Yes."

Q.5 - "How many?"

A.5 - "I just had a glimpse at the tractor and I saw about 2 or 3 bullet holes."

The fifth witness gave his statement in Hebrew which was translated into English by Major S. Gat, Senior Israel Delegate. The witness, Itzhak Said, age 23, Corporal, Border Police, stated as follows:

"On 20 August I was on observation duty in the area of Leery Bridge. Between 1210 LT and 1300 LT I heard intermittent firing going on north of me. At approximately 1345 LT a truck with brushwood load crossed the bridge from east to west. When it was approximately 100 metres west of the bridge, heavy machine gun fire was directed at it and at my position from Durijat (MR 2098-2705). I immediately returned fire, while the truck had stopped. I told one of my men to run to the truck and see if the driver was hit and to remove the truck from the immediate vicinity. As he was running to the truck, the Syrian fire was concentrated on him. I gave him covering fire. At that time two mortar shells, 81 mm, fired from same position, exploded approximately 100 metres east of my position, east of the Jordan in parcel 4, block 13031. By that time, the truck was removed and I was ordered to cease the fire at 1500 LT, which I did. The Syrian firing went on intermittently in my direction until about 1545 LT, when it finished."

Questions by the investigating officers:

Q.1- "Was the driver or the tractor hit?"

A.1- "The driver was not hit and I do not know if the truck was hit."

Q.2- "What was your position in relation to the bridge?"

A.2- "South west of the bridge."

The sixth witness gave his statement in Hebrew which was translated into English by Major S. Gat, Senior Israel Delegate. The witness, Zeev Ben Moshe, age 25, Lieutenant, Border Police, stated as follows:

"On 20 August, I was officer-in-charge of the guard detachment deployed in the area north of Mishmar Hayarden. I was in constant radio communication with my sub-units and at approximately 1210 LT, I got a report that the party working north and west of Ashmora was under Syrian fire. I told them to take cover and return the fire. At approximately 1230 LT, I got a report that the Syrians opened fire on the second working party opposite the UN Post. Again, I ordered them to return the fire and stop the work. As I realized that this was getting more serious than an ordinary incident, and the lives of the people in the area

were endangered, I brought in a patrol truck to give cover to the men in the field. With this truck I aided by fire the removal of the two tractors west of Ashmora and then I deployed it according to necessity as occasion arose. At approximately 1345 LT, I got a report about the shooting near Leery Bridge and I told them to try to remove the truck from the area which was reported to me as done. I got word that a cease-fire was to be declared, effective as of 1525 LT, and therefore I ordered my sub-units to cease all firing and observe the cease-fire, which they did. Between 1525 LT and 1800 LT, the Syrian firing went on from all their positions, although I was informed three times more that cease-fires were declared, but apparently they were not observed by the Syrians who went on firing. My men strictly observed the first cease-fire and since about 1500 LT, not a single shot was fired by us."

6. Physical Evidence:

As physical evidence, the bulldozer, which was under fire on 20 August, was produced. On the bulldozer, two hits were visible, of which photographs were taken.

7. Summary of Investigation

- A. Investigation commenced at 1217Z on 21 August 1963 and concluded at 1443Z on 21 August 1963.
- B. Demilitarized zone was not entered.
- C. Area of alleged incident was physically examined by the investigating officers between MR 2098-2731 and MR 2097-2765.
- D. Six witnesses were interrogated.
- E. Five photographs were taken of the physical evidence produced.<sup>1/</sup>
- F. Sketch of area attached.<sup>1/</sup>

(Signed) J.J. Kelly, Captain, Irish Army,  
UN Military Observer.

E.E.T. Dulfer, Major, Netherlands  
Marine Corps, UN Military Observer

<sup>1/</sup> Map sketches and photographs referred to in this annex IV (S/5401/Add.2) will be circulated in an addendum (S/5401/Add.3).

