



# Security Council

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## 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 19 November 2024 to 18 February 2025, pursuant to the mandate set out in Security Council resolution [350 \(1974\)](#) and extended in subsequent Council resolutions, most recently resolution [2766 \(2024\)](#).

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

2. The ceasefire between Israel and the Syrian Arab Republic was generally still maintained, notwithstanding multiple significant 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. Following the fall of the Government of Bashar Al-Assad in the Syrian Arab Republic on 8 December and the entry of the Israel Defense Forces into the area of separation the same day, the situation was altered significantly, and the operations of UNDOF were affected, in violation of the relevant Security Council resolutions, including resolution [2766 \(2024\)](#).

3. In employing its best efforts to maintain the ceasefire and to see 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 military presence and activity in the area of separation, other than by UNDOF, incidents of firing across the ceasefire line, and the crossing of the ceasefire line by military aircraft, drones, vehicles, equipment and personnel, as well as other individuals, constitute violations of the Agreement. In its constant interactions with both sides, the leadership of UNDOF continued to call upon the Parties to uphold their obligations under the terms of the Agreement, to exercise restraint and to avoid any activities that might lead to a further escalation of tensions in the region.

4. Late on 7 December, more than 20 armed individuals scaled the perimeter fence of United Nations position 10A. During the incident, at least 70 armed individuals gathered outside the position's main gate. As the position and peacekeepers were threatened, the gate sentry fired shots to scare away the individuals who had climbed the fence and entered the position. The armed individuals responded by firing upon the United Nations personnel, who went into their bunkers. The individuals also



ransacked United Nations observation post 71, which is close to position 10A and is connected by a path to that position. UNDOF leadership subsequently engaged with the leaders of the community in the area on the incidents and recovered most of the looted United Nations assets.

5. On the same day, 7 December, UNDOF observed unidentified armed individuals staffing checkpoints in the southern part of the area of separation and at abandoned Syrian armed forces positions in the vicinity of the area of operations.

6. Following the developments in the Syrian Arab Republic on 7 and 8 December, United Nations personnel in the area of separation observed a significant increase in Israel Defense Forces movements in the area of separation, and along the ceasefire line. Earlier on 7 December, United Nations personnel observed Israel Defense Forces main battle tanks and soldiers in the town of Qunaytirah in the central part of the area of separation. Around mid-morning, United Nations personnel on Mount Hermon observed more Israel Defense Forces and their vehicles in the area. From 8 December, United Nations personnel noticed that the Israel Defense Forces had begun establishing checkpoints and roadblocks and constructing positions in multiple locations in the area of separation and had occupied some houses in the area of limitation. On that day, personnel at a United Nations observation post also observed two explosions in the vicinity of Tall al-Sha'r near the village of Jaba, which they assessed to have been a result of firing from an Israel Defense Forces fighter aircraft.

7. As at 18 February, the Israel Defense Forces had constructed 10 positions in the area of separation and occupied two houses in the area of limitation. On 8 December, they informed UNDOF that their personnel would enter the area of separation as a temporary defensive measure to prevent it from being occupied by non-State armed groups following the withdrawal of the Syrian authorities, and reiterated that they reserved the right to take action against any threats on the State of Israel. UNDOF informed the Israel Defense Forces that those actions in the area of separation constituted a violation of the Disengagement of Forces Agreement.

8. On 28 January, United Nations personnel observed Israel Defense Forces personnel fire what they assessed to be warning shots towards Syrian civilians who were collecting wood in the vicinity of the ceasefire line. No casualties were reported.

9. Throughout the reporting period, United Nations personnel observed the continued construction by the Israel Defense Forces of counter-mobility obstacles along the ceasefire line, with significant work noticed in four locations and excavators and other heavy construction equipment constructing obstacles along the barrel line encroaching into the area of separation. The Israel Defense Forces informed UNDOF that the constructions were "a defensive measure to prevent any intrusion" onto the Alpha side by "personnel from the area of separation".

10. During the reporting period, United Nations personnel observed a significant increase of incidents of aircraft, including fighter jets and drones, flying from the Alpha side (Israeli-occupied Golan) across the ceasefire line and over the area of separation, and on some occasions across the area of separation towards the Bravo side. Among these incidents, United Nations personnel on Mount Hermon observed Israel Defense Forces utilizing helicopters to transport delegations of senior officials visiting the area and to conduct casualty evacuation exercises, aerial reconnaissance and relief of troops.

11. UNDOF observed some members of the communities in the area of separation and the area of limitation on the Bravo side looting some of the positions abandoned by Syrian armed forces. UNDOF assessed this as an issue of concern given that these positions contained ammunition, mines and unexploded ordnance. On 15 January, following consultation with the Mine Action Service of the Department of Peace

Operations, UNDOF disposed of 1,000 kg of unexploded ordinance at an abandoned Syrian armed forces position south of the village of Arnah.

12. Throughout the reporting period, sporadic heavy explosions and bursts of heavy machine guns and small arms fire persisted in the areas of separation and limitation on the Bravo side. On 19, 24 and 27 November and 8 December, United Nations personnel in the UNDOF area of operation and area of limitation went into shelters due to heavy firing and explosions, including when the Israeli Iron Dome system was activated to intercept rockets fired from Lebanon towards Israel before the ceasefire between Israel and Lebanon went into effect.

13. On 15 occasions (3 in November, 10 in December and 2 in January), the Israel Defense Forces restricted the movement of UNDOF, including through the establishment of eight roadblocks in the area of separation, preventing UNDOF from conducting its planned mandated patrolling.

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

15. UNDOF protested to the Parties with regard to all violations of the Disengagement of Forces Agreement that it had observed, including the presence and activities of the Israel Defense Forces on the Bravo side, 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 Israel Defense Forces personnel and by drones and aircraft, as well as by individuals from the Bravo side. UNDOF liaised closely with the Parties to de-escalate the situation, including during periods of heightened tension. In addition, UNDOF protested all restrictions on the movement of United Nations personnel carrying out their mandated activities.

16. UNDOF continued to observe regular crossings of the ceasefire line by individuals from the Bravo side. While the individuals were unidentified, UNDOF assessed by the nature of their activities in the area that, in most cases, they were shepherds and farmers from the 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. On several occasions, the Israel Defense Forces fired warning shots to discourage individuals from approaching the Israeli technical fence.

17. On 3 December, UNDOF, in cooperation with the Israel Defense Forces, facilitated the return, through the Qunaytirah crossing, of two individuals from the Bravo side, who had been detained by the Israel Defense Forces that day. On 19 December, also in cooperation with the Israel Defense Forces, UNDOF facilitated the return, through the Qunaytirah crossing, of an individual who had been detained on 21 November by the latter for allegedly crossing the ceasefire line.

18. During the reporting period, UNDOF received 18 complaints, with letters and photos attached where possible, from members of the community on the Bravo side seeking UNDOF assistance regarding the presence and activities of Israel Defense Forces in the area of separation. The complaints stated that the Israel Defense Forces were preventing farmers from accessing their agricultural lands in the villages of Rafid and Kudnah and beehives in the Yarmuk valley and the village of Ma'arriyah, and were apprehending community members and livestock from the villages of Annasrieh, Jaba, Harfa and Hadar. It was also stated in the letters that the Israel

Defense Forces were damaging agricultural and forest lands in the village of Jubbata al-Khashab and the Kudnah forest, destroying roads, disrupting electricity, water and Internet services and occupying Qunaytirah Governorate buildings in Qunaytirah and Kudnah. The letters and attachments were shared with the Israel Defense Forces, with whom UNDOF leadership continued to engage for them to address the concerns. UNDOF also regularly engaged with local leaders, including mukhtars, on the concerns raised by the community in the area.

19. The Permanent Representative of the Syrian Arab Republic to the United Nations addressed identical letters to the President of the Security Council and to the Secretary-General regarding developments in the UNDOF area of operations. In a letter dated 9 December (S/2024/888), he stated: “The Syrian Arab Republic condemns this Israeli aggression in the strongest terms. It constitutes a grave violation of the 1974 Disengagement Agreement endorsed by Security Council resolution 350 (1974)”. He also stated that “Syria reiterates its demand for the United Nations and the Security Council to carry out their responsibilities and take firm and immediate measures to compel Israel to ... withdraw immediately from the areas invaded over the past few days, and comply fully with the Disengagement Agreement”. In a letter dated 13 February (A/79/795-S/2025/96), he stated: “The occupation forces ... illegally and without justification or provocation crossed the lines of separation and demarcation and the area of separation. ... They encroached tens of kilometres into Syrian territory to establish control by force over large areas in Qunaytirah Governorate and Jabal al-Shaykh and adjacent areas up to Dar’a and Rif Dimashq Governorates”. He also stated: “The occupation forces attacked the residents of the areas they entered, terrorizing them, confiscating their property, displacing and abducting a number of them, bulldozing large areas of agricultural land, destroying infrastructure, setting up earthen berms and military posts, severely restricting entry and exit to those areas and subjecting the civilian population to hardship and inhumane practices. ... [They] have taken control of most of the dams and water complexes in the south, including Wahdah Dam and Mantarah Dam”. In the same letter, he stated: “Despite claims by the Israeli occupation authorities that their incursion into Syrian territory is ‘limited and temporary’, their forces have penetrated and imposed an illegal military presence on large areas ... of Syrian territory”. In addition, he stated that, “on 28 January 2025, the Minister of Defence of Israel, Israel Katz, stated that the occupation army would remain in Jabal al-Shaykh and the area of separation indefinitely”.

20. The Permanent Representative of Israel to the United Nations also addressed letters to the President of the Security Council and to the Secretary-General regarding developments in the UNDOF area of operations. In identical letters dated 9 January (S/2025/19), he relayed information regarding Syrian violations of the Disengagement of Forces Agreement and breaches of Israeli sovereignty in the months of September to November 2024, stating that “Syrian violations of the Alpha line and armed presence in the area of separation occur daily”. In a letter dated 9 December (S/2024/887), he stated: “In response to this evolving security threat and the danger posed by it to Israel – particularly to the residents of the Golan Heights – Israel has taken limited and temporary measures to counter any further threat to its citizens. [Israel Defense Forces] have deployed temporarily in a few points and in a limited capacity east of Line A, focusing on specific locations where defensive measures are necessary to maintain security and stability and to prevent armed groups from threatening Israeli territory. [Israel Defense Forces] will continue to act as necessary in order to protect the State of Israel and its citizens, in full accordance with international law. ... It is important to emphasize, however, that Israel is not intervening in the ongoing conflict between Syrian armed groups; our actions are solely focused on safeguarding our security. ... The State of Israel remains committed to the framework of the 1974 Disengagement Agreement, including the principles

regarding the area of separation. The measures taken are, as mentioned, limited and temporary”.

21. On 16 January, Syrian caretaker authorities stated, in remarks made by Ahmad Al-Sharaa, that “Syria honours the terms of the 1974 Agreement and is willing to accept [United Nations] peacekeepers and to protect them”. On 28 January, following a visit to Mount Hermon in the area of separation, the Minister of Defence of Israel, Israel Katz, stated that “the [Israel Defense Forces] will remain at the summit of the Hermon and the security zone indefinitely to ensure the security of the communities of the Golan Heights and the north, and all the residents of Israel”. On 23 February, the Prime Minister of Israel, Benjamin Netanyahu, stated: “We will not allow forces of the [Hay’at Tahrir al-Sham] or the new Syrian army to enter the territory south of Damascus. We demand full demilitarization of southern Syria, in the provinces of Quneitra, Daraa and Sweida”.

22. Following UNDOF leadership engagements with Israel Defense Forces on the need for them to vacate Syrian government buildings and homes occupied after 8 December, and regarding the cutting of trees in the area of separation, the Israel Defense Forces vacated the Qunaytirah Governorate buildings on 2 February, and on 6 February began to allow access to some agricultural lands and beehives. However, UNDOF observed that the Kudnah forest was had been significantly.

23. UNDOF assessed that the security situation on the Bravo side remained tense and volatile with open-source reports of increased security incidents, in particular since 7 December. UNDOF attributed this situation mainly to the presence and activities of Israel Defense Forces, armed clashes between Syrian security forces of the so-called “Military Operations Department” and certain opposing factions in the area of limitation, and sporadic protests by various members of the communities. Open sources reported security incidents in Jasim, Nawa, Tafas and Inkhil in the southern part of the area of limitation related to armed attacks and improvised explosive device attacks on mosques and former government authorities. Open sources also reported that a drone strike conducted on 15 January HAD hit three individuals in the vicinity of the village of Ghadir al-Bustan in the area of limitation, including the mukhtar and security personnel affiliated with the caretaker authorities. Both the Israel Defense Forces and the Syrian caretaker authorities who were in the area of limitation confirmed to UNDOF that the drone strike had killed the mukhtar and injured two Syrian caretaker authority policemen.

24. Since early March 2020, the Israel Defense Forces have restricted the movement of UNDOF and Observer Group Golan personnel through the Alpha gate at the Qunaytirah crossing, requiring advance notice of movement, which has continued to adversely affect the operational and administrative activities of the mission. During the reporting period, the Israel Defense Forces maintained two scheduled weekly crossings at the Alpha gate and facilitated 32 operational, one emergency and two humanitarian crossings at the Alpha gate.

25. UNDOF continued to liaise with the Israel Defense Forces on their full facilitation of the crossing of UNDOF and Observer Group Golan personnel at the Qunaytirah crossing and on the need for United Nations personnel to cross using only documents issued by UNDOF at the crossing and to return to the established crossing procedures.

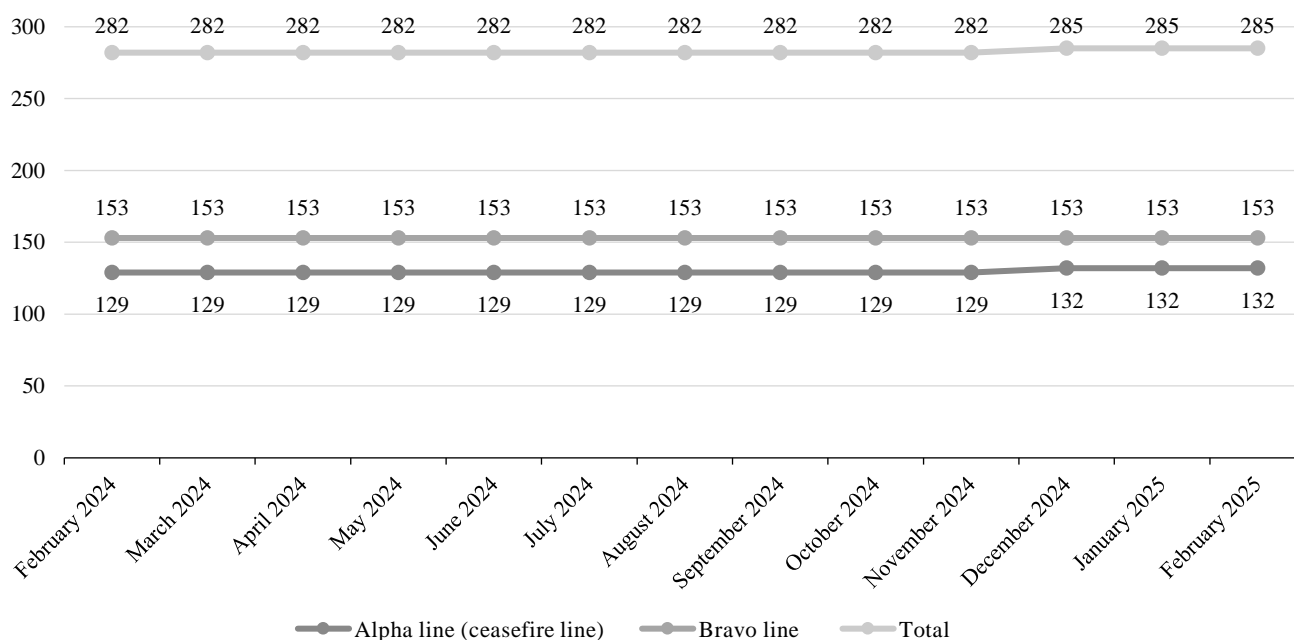
26. UNDOF continued to engage with the Israel Defense Forces with a view to addressing restrictions on the movement and access of United Nations personnel from the Alpha side, through the Israeli technical fence gates, to United Nations observation posts in the area of separation.

27. Since 8 December, authorities on both the Alpha and Bravo sides have not facilitated the conduct of the fortnightly inspections, carried out through Observer Group Golan, of the military positions of the Israel Defense Forces and the Syrian security forces in select parts of the respective areas of limitation.

28. As part of the return to full mandate implementation on the Bravo side, 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 132 barrels restored along the ceasefire line and 153 barrels along the Bravo line (see figure I). UNDOF continued to consult with the Parties on the barrel refurbishment and, in some instances, replacement activity.

Figure I

**Number of barrels restored, repainted and refurbished along the ceasefire line and the Bravo line**



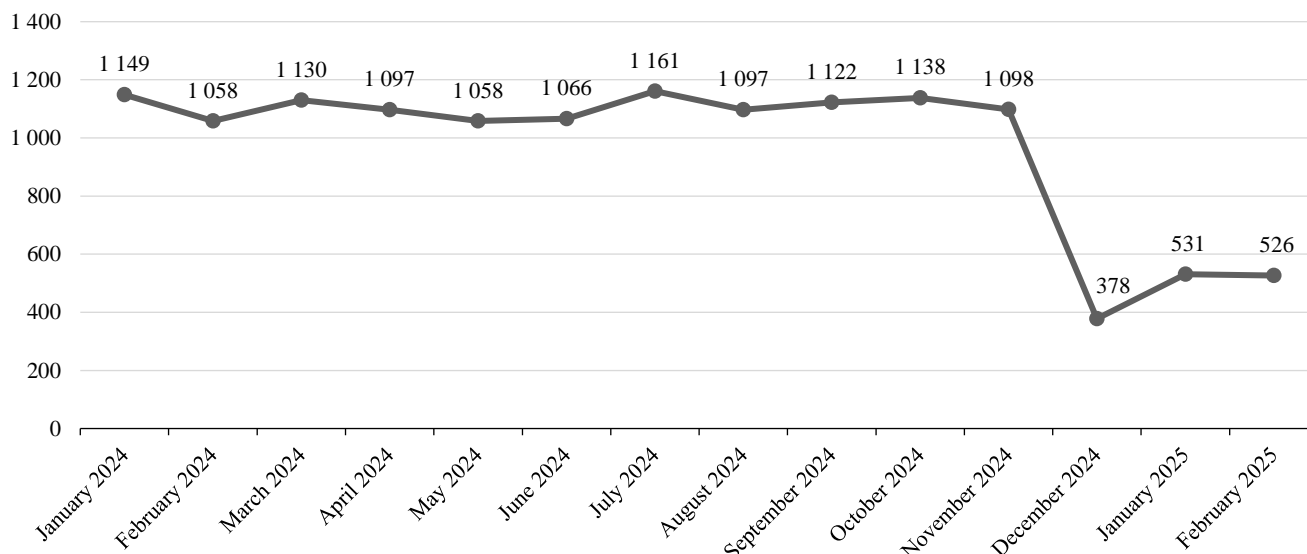
29. The restrictions on access through the technical fence gate imposed by the Israel Defense Forces has slowed the progress on the reconstruction of United Nations observation post 52, in particular following the events of 7 October 2023 and 8 December 2024. The reconstruction of this observation post has commenced. The reoccupation of the observation post will complete the return of Observer Group Golan to all observation posts that the military observers temporarily vacated in 2014 owing to the deterioration in the security situation.

30. UNDOF operations continued to be supported by the military observers of the United Nations Truce Supervision Organization (UNTSO) in Observer Group Golan, who are under the operational control of the UNDOF Force Commander and maintain 10 fixed observation posts within the UNDOF area of operations. The focus of Observer Group Golan remained on continuous static observation and situational awareness. In addition, the military observers are tasked with carrying out investigations of incidents within the UNDOF area of operations.

31. UNDOF monthly operational patrols continued in the areas of separation and limitation, with 1,098 operational activities carried out in November, 378 in December and 531 in January (see figure II). The full operational movements of United Nations personnel in the area of separation, including patrolling and logistics

movement, have been affected by the Israel Defense Forces presence and roadblocks in that area. During the reporting period, UNDOF was restricted to five critical support activities per day in the area of separation. The volatile security situation in the southern part of the area of operations continued to hinder progress in opening new patrol routes in the area of limitation on the Bravo side.

Figure II  
Number of Force patrols carried out per month



32. Security developments in Lebanon have affected the primary route for supplies and troop rotations of UNDOF between Beirut and Damascus, through the Judaydah and Masna' border crossing. The Israeli air strike of 4 October in the vicinity of the border crossing had made the supply route temporarily inaccessible for UNDOF fuel supply and troop rotations. As at 15 January, the route was being used again for supplies, including fuel. UNDOF has also arranged to utilize alternative routes between the Syrian Arab Republic and Lebanon, and between the Syrian Arab Republic and Jordan. On 15 and 18 February, UNDOF utilized the international airport in Damascus, which is now operational for troop rotations.

33. 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 possible threat as a result of localized violence, including the possible presence of sleeper cells of armed groups.

34. UNDOF continually conducts assessments of and updates contingency plans for the reinforcement, extraction and evacuation of positions and observation posts on both the Alpha and Bravo sides, in addition to regular rehearsals, exercises and training for various contingencies. Risk mitigation measures, including force protection measures, continue to be developed at positions, observation posts and the operational base at Camp Ziouani and headquarters at Camp Faouar.

35. UNDOF recorded no allegations of misconduct during the reporting period. The mission continued to implement activities, including regular personnel training related to prevention, enforcement and remedial actions regarding misconduct.

36. As at 11 February, UNDOF had conducted all its planned evaluations for 2024, achieving 100 per cent compliance in the implementation of the Action for Peacekeeping commitment and Security Council resolution [2436 \(2018\)](#). A few

shortfalls were identified regarding the well-being and contribution of women among contingents, ammunition management, the serviceability of contingent-owned equipment and the non-availability of a separate evaluation cell. These shortfalls did not affect the overall performance of UNDOF units and are being addressed with the relevant troop-contributing countries.

37. As at 11 February, UNDOF comprised 1,125 troops, including 90 women peacekeepers. Troops are deployed from Argentina (1), Australia (2), Bhutan (3), Czechia (4), Fiji (146), Ghana (5), India (187), Ireland (4), Kazakhstan (139), Nepal (445), the Republic of Korea (1), Uruguay (213) and Zambia (4). In addition, 92 military observers from Observer Group Golan, including 12 women, assisted UNDOF in carrying out its tasks.

### III. Implementation of Security Council resolution 338 (1973)

38. In its resolution 2737 (2024), the Security Council called upon the Parties concerned to immediately implement its resolution 338 (1973). It decided to renew the mandate of UNDOF for a period of six months, until 31 December 2024 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 the report of the Secretary-General on the situation in the Middle East (A/79/194), submitted pursuant to General Assembly resolution 79/83, entitled “The Syrian Golan”.

39. Since the discontinuation of indirect peace talks in December 2008, there have been no negotiations 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. Observations

40. I remain deeply concerned about the continued violations of the Disengagement of Forces Agreement, including the continued presence of the Israel Defense Forces in the area of separation. All actions that are inconsistent with the Agreement are unacceptable and must cease. I call on the Parties to uphold their obligations under the Agreement, including by ending all unauthorized presence in the areas of separation and limitation, as well as refraining from any action that would undermine the ceasefire and stability in the Syrian Golan. There should be no military forces and activities in the area of separation other than those of UNDOF.

41. Any crossing of and firing across the ceasefire line is in violation of the Agreement and must cease immediately. The continued presence of unauthorized weapons and equipment in the areas of limitation on both the Alpha and the Bravo sides, as well as the flying of aircraft and drones across the ceasefire line and over the area of separation, violate the Agreement. I continue to encourage members of the Security Council to support efforts to raise awareness of the risk of escalation and the need to preserve the ceasefire between Israel and the Syrian Arab Republic.

42. I note that both Parties to the Agreement continue to express commitment to the terms of the Agreement and welcome the announcement by the Syrian caretaker authorities in this regard. It remains critical that the Parties maintain and enhance their liaison with UNDOF. All violations of the ceasefire line increase tensions between the signatories to the Agreement and undermine stability in the area. The



continued liaison by UNDOF with the Parties has contributed to de-escalation during times of heightened tensions in the region.

43. The continued commitment of both Israel and the Syrian Arab Republic to the Agreement and support for the presence of UNDOF remain essential. I count on the continued cooperation of both Parties to ensure that the Force can implement its mandate fully, including the resumption of inspections on both sides. I remain concerned by the restrictions on the movement of UNDOF in its area of operations, including in the area of separation and at the Alpha gate at the Qunaytirah crossing. UNDOF must have freedom of movement to carry out its mandated tasks.

44. Given the worrying trend of continued violations of the Agreement and the volatile security situation on the Bravo side, the safety and security of military and civilian personnel in UNDOF and Observer Group Golan are of particular concern. The Parties must refrain from any activity that may risk the safety of the peacekeepers. It is therefore of particular importance that the Security Council continue to bring to bear its influence on the Parties concerned to ensure that UNDOF is accorded the ability to operate safely and securely 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.

45. 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 Argentina, Australia, Bhutan, Czechia, Fiji, Ghana, India, Ireland, Kazakhstan, Nepal, the Republic of Korea, Uruguay and Zambia for their contributions and the commitment, resolve and consummate professionalism of their military personnel in UNDOF. I am also thankful to the Member States that have contributed military observers to UNTSO.

46. In conclusion, I wish to express my appreciation to Lieutenant General Nirmal Kumar Thapa, who ended his tenure as Head of Mission and Force Commander of UNDOF on 14 December, and to Major General Patrick Gauchat, who in addition to his responsibilities as UNTSO Head of Mission and Chief of Staff, was acting Head of Mission and Force Commander of UNDOF from 26 December to 4 February, during a most difficult time. I also wish to express my gratitude to the new Head of Mission and Force Commander, Major General Anita Asmah, the military and civilian personnel in UNDOF and the military observers in Observer Group Golan serving under her leadership, who continue to perform the important tasks assigned to them by the Security Council with efficiency and commitment, under extremely challenging circumstances.

## Map

