

the cessation of hostilities that has already been brought about by United Nations action. In so doing it would facilitate the compliance of the parties concerned with other relevant U.N. recommendations which have been or may be passed.

The Secretary-General notes that the withdrawal of the Israeli forces has not yet extended to those forces in the Gaza Strip. There, as we know, the situation regarding territorial sovereignty, density of population, and refugees differs from that in the areas of Egypt from which withdrawal has taken place.

Perhaps in his next report the Secretary-General might also indicate his views as to how the United Nations might assist in stabilizing this area and ensuring that it will not be used as a base for attacks and incidents, or as a target for retaliation. In this way also United Nations action might help to prevent a recurrence of hostilities.

The Secretary-General has also raised the question of "international significance of the Gulf of Aqaba, which he thinks "may be considered to justify the right of innocent passage from the Straits of Tiran and the Gulf, in accordance with recognized rules of international law". The uncertainty of the situation here and the unrest and fears arising from it have been and remain very disturbing factors. Therefore, this situation should, I think, also be considered by the Assembly and action taken to avoid trouble in the future. The withdrawal of Israeli forces from Sharm al Shaikh, which is a strategic and important position for controlling the Straits leading to the Gulf of Aqaba and navigation through them, might be followed by the posting of observers from UNEF at that point to assist in securing the peace and keeping navigation open, pending the determination of the legal and other issues involved.

In short, our view is that this Assembly, in its efforts to achieve complete withdrawal of Israeli military forces behind the demarcation line, as a matter of priority, has also an obligation to deal urgently and immediately with these other matters. The Secretary-General points out in his report that there is such an obligation.

"The Assembly, in taking this position, in no way disregarded all the other aims which must be achieved in order to create more satisfactory conditions than those prevailing during the period preceding the crisis. Some of these aims were mentioned by the Assembly. Others are to be found in previous decisions of the United Nations. All of them call for urgent attention. The basic function of the United Nations Emergency Force, "to help maintain quiet", gives the Force great value as a background for efforts toward resolving such pending problems, although it is not in itself a means to that end.