

For the time being the Assembly did not discuss the matter, but the Secretary-General had a series of conversations with the Permanent Representative of Israel, while in Washington the United States Government sought to end the deadlock through bilateral discussions with the Israelis.

The result of the Secretary-General's explorations was described in a report to the General Assembly dated February 11 (A/3527). Portions of this are quoted below:

2. The Secretary-General on 3 February transmitted the two resolutions to the representatives of Egypt and Israel. He asked the representative of Israel to meet with him on 4 February, at which time he hoped to learn the position of the Government of Israel, particularly, as a matter of special urgency, on resolution I concerning withdrawal. On 4 February the representative of Israel, in reply to this request, presented an *aide-mémoire*, which is annexed to this report (Annex I).^ω

3. In the *aide-mémoire* the Government of Israel "request the Secretary-General to ask the Government of Egypt whether Egypt agrees to a mutual and full abstention from belligerent acts, by land, air and sea, on withdrawal of Israel troops". In another point in the *aide-mémoire* clarification is sought by Israel as to whether, "immediately on the withdrawal of Israel forces from the Sharm al-Shaikh area, units of the United Nations Emergency Force will be stationed along the western shore of the Gulf of Aqaba in order to act as a restraint against hostile acts, and will remain so deployed until another effective means is agreed upon between the parties concerned for ensuring permanent freedom of navigation and the absence of belligerent acts in the Straits of Tiran and the Gulf of Aqaba".

4. The first of these two points in the Israel *aide-mémoire* must be understood as a request for action in implementation of resolution II, while the wording of the request leaves open the question whether it involves a willingness to comply with the demand for withdrawal in resolution I, even given a positive response by Egypt. The Secretary-General, at the meeting with the representative of Israel, asked whether, with regard to Gaza, it is understood by the Government of Israel that the withdrawal must cover elements of administration as well as military troops, forces and units. A clarification on this point appeared to be a prerequisite to further consideration of the Israel *aide-mémoire*. This point and the following one are related, as there is an unavoidable connection between Israel's willingness to comply fully with resolution I as concerns the Gaza strip and what may be done toward maintaining quiet in the Sharm al-Shaikh area. It is unrealistic to assume that the latter question could be solved while Israel remains in Gaza.

5. The second of the points in the Israel *aide-mémoire* requests a "clarification" which, in view of the position of the General Assembly, could go beyond what was stated in the last report only after negotiation with Egypt. This follows from the statements in the debate in the General Assembly, and the report on which it was based, which made it clear that the stationing of the Force at Sharm al-Shaikh, under such terms as those mentioned in the question posed by Israel, would require Egyptian consent. In the light of this implication of Israel's question, the Secretary-General considered it important, as a basis for his consideration of the *aide-mémoire*, to learn whether Israel itself, in principle, consents to a stationing of UNEF units on its territory in implementation of the functions established for the Force in the basic decisions and noted in resolution II of the General Assembly of 4 February, where it was indicated that the Force should be placed "on the Egyptian-Israeli armistice demarcation line".

6. Concerning his two questions, the Secretary-General received on 5 February a letter from the Permanent Representative of Israel. The letter is annexed to this report (Annex II).^ω The answer of the Secretary-General to this communication was transmitted by his letter of 6 February (Annex III).^ω

^ωNot reproduced here.