

Syria asks UN Security Council to halt Israeli occupation of Golan Heights



An Israeli flag flutters above the wreckage of a tank on a hill in occupied Golan Heights overlooking the border with Syria. (Photo: AFP)

United Nations, January 15 (RHC)-- Syria has called on the United Nations Security Council to pressure Israel to end its decades-long occupation of the Golan Heights, affirming that the region is an “inseparable” part of the Arab country and will remain so.

In a letter to the head of the council and UN chief Antonio Guterres on Thursday, Syria’s Permanent Representative to the UN Bashar al-Ja’afari asked the UN to urgently move to implement Resolution No. 497, which declares Israel’s annexation of the Golan Heights “null and void and without international legal effect.”

The resolution, which was adopted by the Security Council in late 1981, further calls on Israel to rescind its settlement activities against the Syrian territory. Ja’afari, who is also Syria’s deputy foreign minister, further called on the world body to oblige the Tel Aviv regime to stop establishing settlements in the occupied Golan Heights, halt its repressive measures against the inhabitants of the Syrian region, and completely withdraw from it.

In 1967, Israel waged a full-scale war against Arab territories during which it occupied a large swathe of Syria’s Golan Heights and annexed it four years later, a move never recognized by the international community. Syria has repeatedly reaffirmed its sovereignty over the Golan Heights, saying the territory must be completely restored to its control.

In March 2019, U.S. President Donald Trump signed a decree recognizing Israeli “sovereignty” over Golan during a meeting with Israeli prime minister Benjamin Netanyahu in Washington. Tel Aviv, in return, established another illegal settlement in Golan and named it after the American president.

Ja’afari, whose letter to the Security Council came after Israel began setting up new facilities at the so-called Trump Settlement in al-Qan’abeh village, vowed that Syria will work on restoring every inch of its land by all possible means.

The letter added that the Tel Aviv regime’s authorities have started to prepare for transferring 20 settler families during the months of December 2020 and January 2021. Ja’afari also pointed out to the Israeli plan to erect colossal wind turbines in the agricultural lands of the Golan inhabitants, a move that will displace the locals and confiscate their lands.

He added that the people of the Israeli-occupied Syrian Golan have stood against the scheme through a popular movement that has been confronted with unprecedented violence by the Israeli forces. The confrontation has so far resulted in a number of injuries and arrests.

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