During all the interviews with witnesses, no Vietnamese officials were present. The Mission provided its own interpreter and took additional care on the spot to make sure that secrecy was observed. The Chairman explained to each witness the purpose of the Mission and its terms of reference. The witnesses were also assured that their testimony would be kept confidential in the sense that the mission would not identify the witnesses in its report when reviewing the evidence that it had gathered.

On the afternoon of 1 November, the Mission was advised to stay at its headquarters since firing had broken out in various parts of Saigon. Early the next morning, the Mission received a message from the Military Revolutionary Council asking it to stay in the country as long as it wished. However, the Mission considered that it had completed its investigations as contemplated by its terms of reference and left Viet-Nam, as had already been decided, on 3 November.

On its return to New York, the Mission unanimously adopted its report, which was issued on 7 December and which consisted of four chapters, as follows: I. Chronological account of the Mission's activities; II. Allegations of violations of human rights in the Republic of Viet-Nam brought before the General Assembly; III. Position of the Government; and IV. Examination of witnesses and communications received by the Mission. The report also contained 16 annexes.

At a plenary meeting of the General Assembly on 13 December, the President thanked the Mission for its thorough and detailed report and said that, in the light of recent events in Viet-Nam, the sponsors of the item had informed him that they did not believe it would be useful to undertake a discussion of the question at that time. The General Assembly decided that it was not necessary to continue consideration of the item, and the President declared that its consideration was concluded.

DOCUMENTARY REFERENCES

GENERAL ASSEMBLY—18TH SESSION

Plenary Meetings 1232, 1234, 1239, 1280.

A/5489 and Add.1-3. Letter of 4 September 1963 from Afghanistan, Algeria, Cambodia, Ceylon, Guinea, India, Indonesia, Mali, Mongolia, Nepal, Nigeria, Pakistan, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, Somalia and Trinidad and Tobago.

A/5542. Exchange of communications between Secretary-General and President of Republic of Viet-Nam.


CHAPTER IV

THE QUESTION OF CYPRUS

On 26 December 1963, Cyprus requested an urgent meeting of the Security Council to consider its complaint against Turkey for acts of aggression and intervention in the internal affairs of Cyprus. In its letter, Cyprus maintained that Turkey had committed the following acts on 25 December: the violation of the airspace of Cyprus by Turkish military aircraft and of the territorial waters of Cyprus by Turkish warships; threats of the use of force by the Prime Minister of Turkey made before the Turkish Parliament; and the movement of Turkish troops into Nicosia, there joining Turkish Cypriot insurgents in their fights against the police and in their efforts to attack the Greek sector.

As a result of these actions, the letter went on, Greek troops had had to move into Nicosia "in order to stem the tide of joint attacks" by Turkish Cypriots and Turkish units. Such a confrontation of Greek and Turkish units posed a grave threat to international peace. Cyprus further asserted that disturbances and communal fighting had erupted in Nicosia on 21
December as a result of an attack by a Turkish mob against a Cypriot police patrol unit.

In view of the gravity of the situation, the letter concluded, Cyprus considered it necessary, in the interests of the people of Cyprus as a whole, to inform the Security Council of these grave violations of the territorial integrity, sovereignty and independence of Cyprus and to ask that the Council take appropriate measures to remedy the situation.

On the same day, the President of Cyprus informed the Secretary-General that Zenon Rossides, the Permanent Representative of Cyprus to the United Nations, was authorized to represent the Republic before the Security Council. On 27 December, Dr. Fazil Küçük, the Vice-President of Cyprus, in a cable transmitted by the Permanent Representative of Turkey to the Secretary-General, said that the President of Cyprus, without having obtained a decision by the Cyprus Council of Ministers, had asked Mr. Rossides to present the case before the Security Council. In such a vital matter, he said, the Vice-President, whose concurrence on foreign affairs was necessary, had been denied his right, and any representations by Mr. Rossides should be treated as illegal and unconstitutional.

When the Security Council took up the question on 27 December, the representatives of Cyprus, Turkey and Greece were invited to participate in the debate without the right to vote.

The representative of Cyprus said his delegation had at first been informed from Cyprus that a cease-fire had been agreed upon and that therefore there had been no need to proceed urgently with a meeting of the Security Council. However, on 26 December, aircraft from Turkey had flown so low over Nicosia that the town had been terrorized. On 27 December, he had been informed that Turkish ships had been sighted speeding towards Cyprus and was asked by his Government to press for an immediate meeting of the Security Council. Shortly after he had informed the President of the Council and the Secretary-General, he had been told that the ships were not speeding towards Cyprus but were headed in another direction. He wondered whether this was the result of Cyprus' speedy request for an emergency meeting of the Security Council.

The representative of Cyprus said that this was "gunboat diplomacy" whose effect, even if there was no invasion of the island, was to terrorize the Greek Cypriots and embolden the Turkish Cypriots to attack. Peace would not be possible unless an end was put to violations of the airspace and the territorial waters of Cyprus. Its sovereignty and independence could not be violated by any other Member State or non-Member State on any grounds.

He went on to say that the "root of the trouble" lay with the Constitution of Cyprus—which had been agreed upon hurriedly and in an atmosphere of friction. It provided that the towns, which had never been divided before, were to be divided, thus creating a borderline, frontier concept.

He also noted that the constitutional provisions with regard to fiscal measures were inadequate. One result had been that the island on one occasion had been left without any provision for an income tax because the Turkish Cypriots had refused to vote for it. Another drawback of the Constitution was the division of the courts, which led to injustice because of different judgements applied by Turkish and Greek judges. Then, too, the Constitution provided that it could not be amended even by the consent of all Cypriots—Greeks and Turks—without the consent of powers from outside.

In an effort to remedy the situation, continued the representative of Cyprus, the President of the Republic, Archbishop Makarios, had proposed to meet with Turkish leaders in the island to find an agreed solution. He had sent a letter to the Turkish Vice-President of Cyprus, with copies to the diplomatic representatives of Greece, Turkey and the United Kingdom. However, before the Vice-President had replied, the Turkish Government had advised the Turkish community to reject the proposals, after which the Vice-President had also rejected them.

The representative of Cyprus went on to say that basically there was nothing dividing the Greeks and Turks in Cyprus. Different ethnic origins, religions and languages were no reason for the creation of hostility. This was an artificially created division, fostered by the Constitution, and it should be overcome by understanding and co-operation. He asked the Coun-
The Council asked the parties to consider the matter as urgent with regard to preserving the cease-fire in Cyprus and promoting peace in the island.

In reply, the representative of Turkey denied the allegations made by the representative of Cyprus which, he said, had been dramatized and invented in order to hide the crimes committed against the Turkish community in Cyprus. For more than two years there had been a campaign to repudiate, violate and nullify the rights of the Turkish community. The President of Cyprus himself had recognized the need to recognize those rights after the painful events which had taken place in Cyprus some years ago. The Constitution had been established in consequence and with the agreement of the parties concerned. Now, however, the representative of Cyprus was saying that those rights were excessive.

The Turkish representative added that on the night of 21-22 December, a serious campaign had been undertaken to annihilate the Turkish population of Cyprus. Turkey could not stand aloof in the face of such action. From the beginning, however, it had tried to end the hostilities and bloodshed. Finally, an agreement was arrived at between Turkey, Greece and the United Kingdom whereby joint forces would maintain order in the island under a British commander. The President of Cyprus had himself agreed to this, and it was therefore surprising that, just when Turkey hoped that peace was possible, the representative of Cyprus had come before the Council with accusations against Turkey.

Turkey, he went on, had been patient and had tried to conciliate differences in Cyprus, and it wished the other party would do likewise.

The Turkish representative said he had been instructed categorically and officially to deny that any Turkish ships were heading towards Cyprus and that any ships which might have been seen in the area were sailing from one Turkish port to another.

Greece's spokesman noted that the Government of Cyprus had asked, for the time being, merely for the strict application of the cease-fire, and he thought the Council would do well to encourage the efforts being made in connexion with the cease-fire. He did not wish to comment on the substance of the statements which had been made, but the information available to his Government—as conveyed in a message from the King of Greece to the President of Turkey—clearly proved that the events of the past few days had been provoked by armed groups of Turkish Cypriots. Appeals addressed by Greece, the United Kingdom and Turkey not only had had no response from the Turkish element, but units of the Turkish regiment stationed in the island had left their camp and had occupied positions near the Greek areas of Nicosia. Furthermore, Turkish military aircraft had flown over Nicosia, thus further provoking the Cypriot people.

The Greek representative said that if account was taken of press reports that the military build-up in South Turkey was continuing, he could well understand the apprehensions of the Greek Cypriot population. He expressed satisfaction with the Turkish statement regarding Turkish ships, and said he hoped the Council could come forward with an optimistic message and allay the fears of the Cypriots.

After further statements by the representatives of Cyprus and Turkey, the President of the Council suggested that the meeting be adjourned, to be reconvened when and if it was considered appropriate by the members.

OTHER COMMUNICATIONS

The next day, on 28 December, the representative of Cyprus stated by letter that that morning, even as the Cyprus complaint was being discussed in the Security Council, three Turkish military jet planes had again violated Cyprus airspace by circling low over Nicosia in a manner calculated to terrorize and provoke the population and thereby endanger the cease-fire and the peace effort. This additional violation of the sovereignty of Cyprus was in contradiction to the assurances of the Turkish representative.

On 30 December, the Turkish representative informed the Security Council that the allegation by Cyprus was unfounded.
CHAPTER V

QUESTIONS CONCERNING THE MIDDLE EAST

THE PALESTINE QUESTION

SECURITY COUNCIL CONSIDERATION

OF COMPLAINTS BY ISRAEL AND SYRIA

Following a series of incidents along the Israel-Syria armistice demarcation line on 19 to 20 August 1963, Israel and Syria both complained to the Security Council requesting it to meet urgently.

In its request, in a letter dated 20 August, Israel declared that on 19 August three unarmed members of an Israeli agricultural settlement at Almagor, in Galilee, while returning home from work in their fields, had been ambushed and attacked at close quarters by a group of Syrian soldiers; two of the farmers were shot down and murdered. The third fled, after having been pursued and fired upon. The entire incident, it was alleged, took place well within Israel territory.

The representative of Israel added that this incident was the gravest in a lengthy series of Syrian border attacks. He also cited the abduction, on 13 July, of six civilians from an excursion boat on Lake Tiberias.

On 21 August, Israel also transmitted to the Security Council a list of 98 incidents in which fire was directed from Syria into Israel; these were alleged to have occurred since December 1962.

On 21 August, in its request for a Security Council meeting, Syria declared that on 20 August an Israeli force, estimated at 15 armoured cars, opened fire on advanced Syrian positions from the Israel settlement of Al-Dardara, within the demilitarized zone. Syrian forces returned the fire but the Israel force continued to shell Syrian positions, creating a situation threatening the peace and security of the region.

The complaints were considered by the Security Council at seven meetings held between 23 August and 3 September. The representatives of Israel and Syria, who were not members of the Council, were invited to take part in the Council’s discussion, without the right to vote.

In his opening statement in the debate, on 23 August, the representative of Israel said his Government was calling for action by the Council in the belief that the time had come to condemn Syria’s persistent violation of the Armistice Agreement and the United Nations Charter. He rejected Syria’s charge that 15 Israel military units had been deployed in the demilitarized zone, the firing having been initiated from Syrian positions in the vicinity.

Israel, he went on, was determined to keep the borders quiet, but at the same time it could not abdicate its responsibility for ensuring the integrity of its borders and protecting the lives of its citizens.

The representative of the Syrian Arab Republic denied that the Syrian authorities had been responsible for the alleged killing of Israeli farmers. In view of the nature of the terrain, it was impossible for Syrian soldiers to have come upon the territory mentioned by Israel. The basic reason for the tension in the area, he said, was that Israel had consistently refused to respect the status of the demilitarized zone as defined in the Armistice Agreement; while presenting complaints to the Mixed Armistice