



SC: Security Council

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Issue: The question of Golan Heights

TIMUN '22 
Turkish International Model United Nations





Committee: Security Council (SC)
Issue: The question of Golan Heights
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I. Introduction

Golan Heights is a hilly plateau located in the Middle Eastern region as an area bordering Lebanon, Jordan, Syria and Israel. Being far more complicated than a disputed region, mainly between Israel and the Syrian Arab Republic, the question of Golan Heights has become an issue that has various economic, social, military and diplomatic dimensions as a result of the geography it is located in and its chaotic history.

The area came under the power of Israeli military forces following the occupation of the region after the defeat of Syrian military in the Six-Day War in 1967 and has been a question of territorial dispute ever since. Yet, not much has been done to address the demands of the both sides and the mediated talks have not yielded any successful results either. While the Syrian Arab Republic asks for the return of its initial territories as a redemption for its losses throughout the conflicts they had, the Israeli side has refrained from any compromise, further complicating the matter by the unilateral annexation of the military occupied region in 1981 - an attempt seen as unlawful by the international community.

Golan Heights, a relatively small region of 1,150 square km, stands out with its strategic importance for both sides. The hilly region, while being a prosperous area for touristic and agricultural facilities and commercial fishing, its population exceeds 40,000 residents - more than half of which is composed of the Syrian Druze community alongside more than 30 recently built Israeli settlements (Lubell). Around 25,000 Israeli settlers live in the Golan Heights, along with about 23,000 Druze (Lubell), who remained on the land after Israel seized it. The military occupation in the region, though limited by the present United Nations Peacekeeping mission, is fully under the control of Israeli forces while the region stands out with its geopolitical importance as it stretches as an elevation looking over the capitals of Lebanon, Syria, and Israel.



Picture 1: The map of Golan Heights

With the ongoing Syrian Civil War of more than one decade, the United Nations has persisted in their military and diplomatic presence in the region. However, neither a sustainable solution to the territorial dispute at hand nor a stable environment to ensure such resolution has been achieved. With the recent



unilateral United States (US) recognition of Golan Heights as part of Israel having brought the matter to a dead end, the issue has many unresolved aspects and the peace in the region is still disrupted.

II. Involved Countries and Organizations

United Nations Security Council (UNSC)

The United Nations Security Council has been involved in every aspect of the question of Golan Heights since the first resolution ratified on the issue, United Nations Resolution 242, in 1967 following the Six-Day War and has ratified several different resolutions on the matter ever since regarding different dimensions. Some examples of these may be given as the planned but unsuccessful withdrawal of Israeli military forces, the condemnation of the Israeli Golan Heights Law, the establishment of the peacekeeping mission United Nations Disengagement Observer Force (UNDOF) and the initiation of the yearly mentioning of the unlawful acts of the Israeli side in the United Nations general assembly.

The United Nations Security Council - despite the sudden shift in the political approach of one of the Permanent Member Nations (P5), namely the US - has not changed their perspective on the matter and currently functions through the ongoing UNDOF mission in the buffer border zone between the de facto states. Keeping in mind the end of the consensus in the UNSC with the recent US recognition of the Israeli annexation, the Secretary-General of the time has nevertheless stated that the status of Golan Heights has not changed.

Israel

Throughout history, Israel has been one of the two Member States that were directly involved on the matter of Golan Heights. The state has maintained their military presence in the region since the first occupation in 1967 and has used this to their strategic advantage over the surrounding regions, especially over the unstable Syrian land bordering Golan Heights. In the meanwhile, Israel has been trying to strengthen their grip on the land through various means, the first of which could be given as the measures taken to secure the Quneitra crossing that allows the safe passage through Israeli and Syrian territories through the UNDOF Area of Separation. Also, as a second way of ensuring the long-lasting presence in the region, The former Israeli Prime Minister Naftali Bennet has stated their plan, as approved by the Israeli cabinet meeting on 26 December, as "their goal" being to double the Jewish settlements and population in Golan Heights ("Israel Set To Double Settlements In Golan Heights").

Israel - as the current de facto owner of the Golan lands - claims the economic, social, military, and political possession in the region despite this attempt has been seen as illegitimate by the international



community. Still, being in charge of the financial and administrative bodies in Golan Heights, Israeli government has still not been stopped from taking actions that they view as rightful, even though they may complicate the possibility of further negotiations. Another aspect to be considered in this case is, also, that the government is not left alone with the recent US support on their sovereignty claims while using their Golan Heights Law as a defense for any actions they take in the region.

Syrian Arab Republic

The Syrian Arab Republic, as the second directly involved Member State in the question of Golan Heights, has rather had a passive stance on the issue of Golan Heights due to their priority being aimed at tackling the insurgencies within their de facto territories. However, both the rebel groups and the Assad regime forces have threatened the Israeli occupation and safety in the Golan region in various instances up until the recent day (see *Focused Overview of the Issue, Military Dimension*). While the rebel groups bordering the lands have not refrained from interfering with the functioning of the Quinetra crossing or the UN peacekeeping mission, the government side has been seen as a risk factor by Israel that could allow military threats in the border of Golan Heights to Syria.

While condemning the US recognition of the unilateral annexation of Golan Heights by Israel, the Syrian Arab Republic has also called on the Israeli side to withdraw their decision to expand the Jewish settlements in Golan Heights. The Syrian side is expecting more than just verbal international support, as the foreign ministry claimed the Israeli actions in the Golan Heights area to be “dangerous and unprecedented” steps “that rise to the level of war crimes”.

United States of America (USA)

The United States of America, always having been known as the closest ally of Israel in Middle Eastern matters, has recognized the Golan Heights region as legitimately being under the sovereignty of Israel in 2019, through a tweet that changed the whole policy of the Member State on the matter under the Trump administration. The United States recognized the Golan Heights as part of Israel through a presidential proclamation signed by the U.S. President Donald Trump on March 25, 2019. The directive made the United States the first country to recognize Israeli rather than Syrian sovereignty over the Golan Heights region. The US had, indeed, opposed a UN resolution against Israel on Golan Heights for the first time in history in the general assembly in 2018, claiming it to be useless as it has deemed unsuccessful in ensuring the Israeli withdrawal for many years. Still, this has further complicated the matter, in which the international community is completely against the actions taken in the region and claim them to be illegal under the classification of the land as “Syrian territory militarily occupied by Israel”.



Despite the common expectations, the Biden administration has not changed much as the Golan Heights region, even though not directly stated as before, has been claimed to be “very important to Israel's security” by US top diplomats. Hence it could be said that, beside the fact that Biden has gone against the public view too, the US still recognizes Golan as a part of Israel and is using the de facto instability in the Syrian Arab Republic and the related security threats to debunk any statements accusing the US of supporting an illegitimate claim.

Lebanon

On the issue of Golan Heights, Lebanon has stood with the Syrian Arab Republic and, like the international community, stated that the rightful ownership of the region belonged to the Syrian government. While condemning the US recognition for this reason, another aspect of this recognition was a consequence of the territorial dispute amongst the Lebanese, Syrian, and Israeli sides on Shebaa Farms, the very northern area in Golan Heights.

The area of Shebaa Farms, covering a small portion of the Lebanese-Syrian border and the Golan Heights, was to be demarcated between the two states after the French mandate in the region was over in the 20th century. However, the uncertainties of the time led up to the occupation of that land by Israel in the end, after capturing it from the Syrian forces alongside the Golan Heights. When Israel withdrew from Lebanon in 2000 after the political and military turmoil between the states, the withdrawal did not cover the Shebaa Farms. Hezbollah, the Lebanese Shia Islamist political and militant group, started intermittent attacks on Israel, claiming that the promised withdrawal was not complete.

Syria previously accepted that Lebanon was the sole owner of the Shebaa Farms and that therefore, the military occupation of Golan Heights by Israel, if it were to persist, should have covered the remaining part of the Golan lands. However, under the Assad regime, Syria has returned to their insistence on postponing the demarcation of the border line between Lebanon and Syria in Shebaa Farms. In the meanwhile, Israel does not accept the accusations that their withdrawal from Lebanon has not been complete in 2000 and claims that their unilateral annexation of Golan Heights also covers these lands. Yet, Lebanon has been left dissatisfied and disappointed with the US recognition of Golan Heights as fully under Israeli sovereignty, as this directly wipes out their claim on the small disputed territory, the Shebaa Farms.



Picture 2: The map of the Shebaa Farms



Jordan

Jordan, even though a bordering Member State to Golan Heights on the Southern border, has not stated much while maintaining their strict stance against the Israeli annexation of the region. Standing together with their Arab ally, Jordan has also condemned the US decision to recognize the Golan Heights area as being under the Israeli sovereignty, clearly stating through the Foreign Minister of the time, Ayman Safadi, that this was the “Jordanian stance and the international stance”.

III. Focused Overview of the Issue

The issue of Golan Heights is one that has multiple aspects in itself and has therefore lasted more than just a few decades. In this section; the geography, history, economic dimension, social dimension, military dimension and the diplomatic dimensions of the matter will be discussed and explained in further detail.

1. Geography of Golan Heights

Golan Heights, geographically, is the region that is located in the Middle East, bounded by the Jordan River on the west, Sea of Galilee on the very southwest, Mount Hermon on the North, the Yarmuk River on the south and the Wadi Ruqqad branch of the Yarmuk river on the East. It is 71 km long from north to south and 43 km from east to west and covers a region of about 1,150 square km. It is an elevated area with agricultural opportunities and commercial fishing facilities to the south and more stony elevations to the north, the Mount Hermon slopes. ("Golan Heights | History, Map, & Facts")

The eastern border of Golan heights, with Ruqqad valley, and the western border, with the Hula and Jordan River valleys and the Sea of Galilee, both function as strategic checkpoints for the owner of the region against military threats.



Picture 3: The geography of Golan Heights

2. History of Golan Heights

During the First Arab Israeli War in 1948, though not taking part in the conflict directly, the Syrian Arab Republic had built military defense facilities on the Western side of Golan Heights in order to prevent possible attacks in the future, but the region fortified by the Syrian military forces were causing a substantial amount of Israeli casualties and was deeming the commercial fishing and agriculture facilities impossible in



Israeli soils. As a result, approaching the end of the Six-Day War (the third Arab-Israeli War, June 1967), Golan Heights and Syria became the focus of the Israeli military and the region was completely militarily occupied as Syria was forced to accept an armistice deal on June 10th. With Golan now under the military control and administration of Israeli forces, most of the Druze Arabs fled the area while those remaining were offered Israeli citizenship - indicating a planned occupation in the region - even though most refused and stuck to their Syrian identity.

Syria, with their joint attack with the Egyptian forces against Israel in the Fourth Arab-Israeli War in 1973, or the Yom Kippur War as it took place on the holy Jewish day Yom Kippur, put their last attempt at regaining control over Golan Heights in practice, but again, they were defeated and signed a UN-led ceasefire deal with the Israeli government in 1974, which brought along the placement of a United Nations peacekeeping observer force named the United Nations Disengagement Observer Force (UNDOF) throughout the area of separation, a buffer zone, formed covering the border between the de facto Syria and Israel, who owned the remaining part of Golan Heights now. By the end of 70s, the Israeli government



Picture 4: An Israeli observation point looking over Syria in Golan Heights

had established more than 30 settlements in the area which was recognized by the international community as “a Syrian territory militarily occupied by Israel”.

In 1981, however, Israel held a cabinet meeting in Golan Heights for the first time and passed the “Golan Heights Law”, declaring their unilateral annexation of the land. On the other

hand, this attempt was condemned by not only the international community, but also by a passed resolution in the United Nations Security Council (UNSC), as it was deemed to be against the Article 51 of UN Charter, formed after the disastrous results of World War 2, which clearly prohibits the unilateral annexation (without the recognition of the UNSC) of any land due to it being a violation of a community or a government’s self-defense and international recognition.

Even though in 1991 the US and in 2008 Turkey tried to facilitate and mediate communication, these came out to be unsuccessful as both sides persisted on not compromising their demanding stance and Israeli and Syrian officials could not agree upon a consensus. Then, the start of the Syrian Civil War in March 2011 further yielded the possibility of negotiations impossible as the Israeli side started using the war as an excuse to strengthen their grip over the region. In the meanwhile, certain part of the Syrian Druze in the



region became more lenient towards Israeli citizenship while the other became more enthusiastic over their claim that Golan belonged to Syria.

Despite their previous stance on the matter, under the administration of Donald Trump, the United States of America became the first and only Member State except for Israel to formally by unilaterally recognize the annexation of Golan Heights by Israel. While this has not changed the status of Golan in the international grounds, Member States including Syria, Lebanon, Jordan, and Turkey have condemned this support of an illegal annexation, while the Israeli prime minister of the time, Benjamin Netanyahu, deemed the proclamation to be a “historic justice” for themselves.

3. Economic Dimension

The economic dimension of the question of Golan Heights covers the economic facilities that currently the Israeli government and the Golan citizens make use of.

Firstly, being geographically covered by natural freshwater resources like the Sea of Galilee, The Jordan River and the Yarmuk River gives Golan Heights the advantage of being a great source of freshwater, which is supported by the fact that it currently is the main freshwater resource of Israel and that this has been one of the main reasons why Israel has not been willing to give up on their ownership of the whole of Golan. Similarly, such water sources also pave the way for commercial fishing activities, which is once again an economic advantage for the Israeli Jews and Syrian Druze living in Golan Heights.



Picture 5: Israeli sewage systems causing pollution in Golan Heights

Also, Golan Heights on its own is, mostly on its southern side, a naturally fertile soil that allows productive agricultural facilities. While the Arab Druze are known for their farming habits in their settlements, this has also been used by the Israeli government. Yet, on the other hand, the soil and water of Golan Heights has been subject to pollution due to the insufficient sewage systems and infrastructure capabilities as Israel, though having annexed, does not have as strong a control over this region as their own territories.

Finally, being a land full of valleys, rivers, mountains, and the Sea of Galilee; Golan Heights is famous for its touristic activities and landmarks. However, this has been limited due to the recent developments in



the bordering Syrian soils and the threats of any military activity from the other side of the UNDOF area of separation affecting Golan Heights.

4. Social Dimension

The social dimension of the matter refers to the ethnic diversity in Golan Heights and its possible implications. Currently, more than 40,000 people are living in Golan and more than half of it consists of Syrian Druze who have refused to give up their Arab identity under the unilateral annexation of Israel. Also, a great proportion of this number also includes the relatively newer Jewish population which accounts for more than 30 settlements that have been formed and built after the military occupation of the land in 1967.

While it is questionable whether the Israeli attempt to increase the Jewish population is in accordance with the international law and whether or not it violates the right to self-defense of Syria - as it further complicates the possibility of a solution due the region now having an ethnic diversity despite the annexation being unlawful - it is indeed a worry whether or not the rights of the other side's citizens would be protected in case of a solution, if the settlements are not destroyed at all. Currently, while the only action that the UN has taken towards preserving the ethnic diversity in the region is the ongoing peacekeeping operation, it could also be argued that a more humanitarian response from the international community is also needed - as such an aspect is simply not the focus of UNDOF.

5. Military Dimension

The military dimension of the question of Golan Heights refers to the strategic importance of the elevated plateau in security and defense purposes. Even though Golan Heights has been used by both sides in various instances for protection against military forces, Israel claims that in the current situation, they



Picture 6: Israeli air strike on Iranian sites in Syria after bombs found in Golan Heights

need Golan now more than ever to build a buffer zone, with the help of UNDOF the United Nations Truce Supervision organization (UNTSO), between themselves and the instability of their neighboring countries. The high hills of the region allows for a great advantage against the secret military attack attempts, in case the truce was to be violated by the other side.

For instance, in 2014, an anti-government Islamist rebel group



that participates in the civil war took control of Quneitra, the city on southwest Syria bordering Golan Heights, by attacking Assad's forces. Also, they have turned towards the present UN forces in the Area of Separation too, causing them to pull back from the observation region. It was not until the summer of 2018 that Assad returned with the government forces, backed by Russia, and signed a deal with the rebel group to get them to withdraw. Hence, the possibility of such happening again is one of the reasons why Israel is not willing to give up on this buffer zone as long as the war persists.

Another important aspect for security is the Quneitra crossing, which is the only crossing point between Israel and Syria through Golan Heights. Being used only by UN forces and a limited number of Druze, as well as the government of Israel for the transportation of agricultural goods, it is important that the safety of this crossing is ensured. The crossing opened once again in October 2018. Although Israel stated that they would not intervene with the civil war, the possibility of Assad going against the UN armistice deal signed in 1974 or letting other allied army groups of the Syrian government from Lebanon or Iran get to the border to launch attacks on Israel still threatens the safety of the crossing. This is supported by the fact that it has happened in the past that Israel found bombs located in Golan Heights and used this as an excuse to air strike Iranian sites in Syria (Picture 6).

Until today, security issues surrounding Golan Heights and the Middle East have brought the related negotiations to a dead end, and Israel will supposedly not give up on Golan as it functions as an geographical obstacle on the Syrian border. On the other hand, though, it is a risk for the Syrian Arab Republic as the elevation is located close to the capital city, Damascus.

6. Diplomatic Dimension

When examined from a diplomatic dimension, a clear majority of Member States as well as various UN officials including a spokesman for United Nations Secretary-General Antonio Guterres have stated that the status of Golan Heights has not changed and that it still is a territory of Syria militarily occupied by Israel. Also, the idea of the right to self-defense stated in Article 51 of the UN Charter (see part IV. Key Vocabulary) clearly prohibits the



Picture 7: The Map of Syrian Arab Republic and Israel



unilateral annexation of a territory in diplomatic grounds without the recognition of the UNSC, which is what has happened in this specific matter.

Another aspect of the diplomacy revolving around the situation of Golan Heights is the coalition of Arab States in the Middle East against Israel, and the fact that there is a strict ethnicity and religion based opposition against one Member States makes it difficult for Israel to come to an agreement which they deem fair.

On the other hand, the recent recognition of the land as a part of Israel by its close ally, USA, has further complicated the matter as there no longer is the previous agreement on the question of Golan Heights in the UNSC any more. Hence, it could be argued that an action on this matter will be difficult to take by the international community, let alone against Israel.

Finally, the multiple dimensions of the matter and the ongoing tensions in the Middle East have caused possible bilateral or mediated talks to be more difficult than ever and that is why such dimensions must be addressed while calling for the start of diplomatic relations between Israel and Syria for the third time on the matter.

IV. Key Vocabulary

Annexation: Britannica defines “annexation” as “a formal act whereby a state proclaims its sovereignty over territory hitherto outside its domain” as “a unilateral act made effective by actual possession and legitimized by general recognition”. However, in this case, the term “annexation” will be used to refer to the unilateral declaration of ownership of the Golan Heights territory by Israeli government through the passing of the Golan Heights Law.

Area of Separation: “Area of Separation” refers to the 400-square-km demilitarized zone extending throughout the border between Golan Heights and Syria, inside which the military forces of Israel or Syria are not allowed to enter. This demilitarized zone is being protected and supervised by the United Nations Disengagement Observer Force (UNDOF).

Area of Limitation: “Area of Limitation” refers to the area extending beyond up to 25 kilometers towards both sides of the Area of Separation between de facto Israel and Syria, inside which the aforementioned states are permitted their military forces up to a certain number and mobilized with certain allowed weaponry in their respective Areas of Limitations.

Article 51 of UN Charter: Article 51 of UN Charter states “Nothing in the present Charter shall impair the inherent right of individual or collective self-defense if an armed attack occurs against a Member of the



United Nations, until the Security Council has taken measures necessary to maintain international peace and security” - which, in the question of Golan Heights, deems the unilateral annexation of the region by Israel after military occupation against the international law.

Druze: The “Druze” community is a “small, Middle Eastern religious sect characterized by a system of doctrines and by a cohesion and loyalty among its members that have enabled them to maintain for centuries their close-knit identity and distinctive faith”. In the question of Golan Heights, the term “Druze” refers to the Syrian communities still living in Golan Heights after the military occupation and the unilateral annexation of the region by Israel.

United Nations Disengagement Observer Force (UNDOF): United Nations Peacekeeping defines the United Nations Disengagement Observer Force, established on 31 May 1974, as a peacekeeping mission covering the Syrian border of Golan Heights, which aims to “maintain the ceasefire between the Israeli and Syrian forces and supervise the implementation of the disengagement agreement” signed in 1974 bilaterally. UNDOF has specifically gained importance after the start of the Syrian Civil War, threatening the previously established armistice deal.

V. Important Events & Chronology

Date (Day/Month/Year)	Event
1894	Jewish French Baron Edmond de Rothschild buys Golan Heights for Jewish settlement.
1946	Golan Heights passes to independent Syria after being owned by the French mandate of Syria.
1948-1949	First Arab-Israeli War
5-10 June 1967	Third Arab-Israeli War (Six-Day War)
6-26 October 1973	Fourth Arab-Israeli War (Yom Kippur War)
31 May 1974	Security Council resolution 350 passes, establishing the United Nations Disengagement Observer Force (UNDOF) in Golan Heights.
1981	Israeli government passes the Golan Heights Law, unilaterally annexing the land.
1991-2000	Madrid Conference
2008-2009	Syrian-Israeli indirect talks mediated by Turkey
2011-ongoing	Syrian Civil War



2014	An Islamist anti-government rebel group takes control of Quneitra in Syria.
October 2018	The Assad forces take back Quneitra, the Quneitra crossing opens.
21 March 2019	The United States of America recognizes the Israeli sovereignty over Golan Heights.
18 December 2020	The Security Council resolution 2555 extends UNDOF's mandate in Golan Heights until 30 June 2021, still ongoing.

VI. Past Resolutions and Treaties

- United Nations resolution 242

<http://unscr.com/en/resolutions/doc/242>

This resolution was ratified by the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) and asked the Israeli government to withdraw from the militarily occupied Golan Heights region in 1967, after the Six-Day War. Yet, it was not sufficient and failed to result in the desired withdrawal, as Israel had its own rightful aims in the region too.

- Security Council resolution 350 (1974)

<http://unscr.com/en/resolutions/doc/350>

This resolution was ratified by the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) and aimed a long-lasting ceasefire between the Israeli and Syrian armed forces through the establishment of the United Nations Disengagement Observer Force (UNDOF) as a peacekeeping mission on the de facto border between the two states after the Yom Kippur War. Until today, the resolution was deemed successful in ensuring the non-aggression with the presence of an impartial military force.

- United Nations resolution 497 (1981)

<https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/26751>

This resolution was ratified by the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) and objected to the unilateral declaration of annexation of Golan Heights by Israel through the Golan Heights Law. It condemns the Israeli government and demands that they withdraw their previous unlawful decision. Yet, the resolution



was not sufficient to take the actions mentioned as Israel maintained their grip on the land as a part of their sovereign territory after having occupied it militarily for years.

- Security Council resolution 2555 (2020)

<http://unscr.com/en/resolutions/doc/2555>

This resolution was ratified by the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) and extended the mandate of the United Nations Disengagement Observer Force (UNDOF) in the de facto border between Syria and Israel in Golan Heights until 30 June 2021. The resolution was successful as it only focused on the present peacekeeping operations in the region - which had not bothered either of the sides until the present date - and the mission still continues to try to ensure military stability and safety in the region.

VII. Failed Solution Attempts

Regarding the past solution attempts, the first one that has been tried was the Yom Kippur War, as a military action taken by the Syrian forces to get back the Golan Heights region from the Israeli occupation. However, with the international assistance received from the allies, the Israeli military was able to push back the sudden Syrian attack and consequently, form today's de facto border. Thus, this is an evidence why military action has not brought along success in the question of Golan Heights.

On the diplomatic dimension, similarly, even though most Member States have stated their concerns regarding the illegitimacy of the unilateral annexation of Golan Heights by Israel, this has not created an international pressure on the government to take a step back. Similarly, the bilateral talks between Israel and Syria during the Madrid conference between 1991-2000 and the Turkey-mediated indirect talks between 2008-2009 have not yielded successful outcomes either due to the unwillingness of the sides to compromise on their demands.

The United Nations Security Council has called the Israeli government to withdraw their military forces and their Golan Heights Law, both of which have yielded no successful results either. Having the current upperhand militarily and having the current instabilities in the Syrian territories as a valid excuse, Israel has been ignoring the requests of the international community, as well as the UNSC. Currently, the UNDOF peacekeeping mission remains as the only successful attempt of the UNSC towards ensuring the short-term peace and stability in Golan Heights, even though longer term impacts and initiatives are needed to preserve this progress.



VIII. Possible Solutions

The issue of Golan Heights is, despite not being one that is currently causing any immediate danger to the safety in the region, deep-rooted and has several dimensions in itself. It still persists after years of unsuccessful attempts at diplomatic solutions and therefore, has to be dealt with extensively by focusing on different aspects of the matter.

Firstly, it should be noted that both sides of the territorial dispute have their own claims and reasonings behind their demands, so any diplomatic solution on any of the aspects of the matter should be benefiting both of the sides, as there are permanent members that will be protecting the sovereign rights of both nations. Regarding the matter of economy, Golan Heights' economic income could be regulated. While this can be done through the owner of a territory allowing economic incentives to the other side, it should not be forgotten that security is one of the main problems preventing this from happening.

The Syrian Arab Republic representatives, who currently hold control of the Quneitra region bordering the Golan lands, could be incentivized to sign additional deals that would prevent the risk factors given by the Israeli government, such as the possibility of an allied armed group being allowed to launch an attack from the de facto border or through the Quneitra crossing. Meanwhile, The Israeli government should be demonstrating their willingness to demilitarize Golan Heights to a certain extent in order not to illegitimately have the upper hand in bilateral talks through their one-sided military presence and activities in the region. It should not be overlooked that the sides will not be willing to take the first step while the issue of Shebaa Farms concerning the Lebanese government's claims should not be ignored in possible talks either.

Finally, the extent of the United Nations Disengagement Observer Force could also be examined in order to adapt it in a way it would facilitate the formation of the safe and secure environment (both for the governments as well as the Arab Druze and Jewish communities in the region) in which negotiations would take place. This could include related observations and supervisions upon processes and actions that both Member States take.

IX. Useful Links

- <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/03/21/world/middleeast/golan-heights-israel.html>

A Brief History of the Golan Heights, Claimed by Israel and Syria - The New York Times



A short overview on the issue that the Golan Heights is facing, how it has developed until today, and what the unilateral recognition of Israel as the legitimate owner of the land by the US has changed in it.

- <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-14724842>

Golan Heights profile - BBC News

A summary of the history surrounding the plateau, the attempts at solving the problem, and the perspectives and demands of the involved parties.

- <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2018/nov/16/us-israel-golan-heights-syria-un-resolution-oppose>

US to oppose UN motion condemning Israeli control of Golan Heights | United Nations | The Guardian

A news article on the change of position of the US towards the issue on Golan Heights and its mentioning in the United Nations.

- <https://www.theweek.co.uk/100427/what-is-the-golan-heights-and-is-it-part-of-israel>

What is the Golan Heights - and is it part of Israel? | The Week UK

An explanation of the plateau's current value and the importance of the US position to the matter.

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4J0xWOKDVvQ>

What is the Golan Heights? - YouTube

The information on the Golan Heights and its history presented with images and videos of the plateau.

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