

מכתב לראש הממשלה / 28/1/54 / 632503

28 January 1954

A/ 632503

Dear General Bennike,

I have the honour to communicate to you the following excerpt from a decision taken by the Israel Government at its meeting on 24 January 1954 regarding the Benot-Yaacov Canal Project.

" In accordance with the Government's declared policy and the initiative taken by it prior to the discussion of the matter in the Security Council, the Government of Israel is prepared to discuss with the Chief of Staff of the UNTSO suitable guarantees which it would be ready to offer for the preservation of such private rights as may be affected by the project".

In conformity with this decision I have been instructed by the Minister for Foreign Affairs to convey to you his invitation to resume with him the discussion on this matter which was interrupted in October 1953.

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General Vagn Bennike,
Chief of Staff,
U. N. T. S. O.,
J e r u s a l e m .

The Security Council meanwhile devoted considerable time to the detailed examination of the issues involved but was unable to reach a decision owing to the negative vote cast by the representative of the Soviet Union.

In the discussions held with you prior to the Security Council's deliberations, Mr. Sharett declared the Government's willingness to grant all the necessary guarantees and facilities for the protection of private land and irrigation rights which may be affected in the course of the execution of the project or as the result of its operation.

The debate in the Security Council has clearly established a consensus of opinion that definite obligations should be assumed by the Government of Israel to avoid any adverse effect of the project on legitimate private rights involved.

The Minister for Foreign Affairs would be glad to discuss with you at an early opportunity practical measures for the definition of these obligations in the light of the recent discussions of the Security Council, the records of which contain valuable material likely to be of service in the renewed discussion. May I ask you to let me know when it would be convenient for you to meet Mr. Sharett for this purpose?

Yours sincerely,


Walter Eytan.