



SECURITY COUNCIL REPORT UPDATE REPORT



20 July 2006 No. 5

LEBANON / ISRAEL

Expected Action in the Council

The Council is being briefed today, 20 July, in an open meeting, by the Secretary-General (initial conclusions from the Secretary-General's envoys who visited the region from 12-18 July may be available). A public meeting at the Council is scheduled for Friday 21 July. Following the inconclusive public Council meetings on the situation in Gaza (on 30 June, 6 and 13 July) and Lebanon (on 14, 15 and 17 July), the public meeting will be a major opportunity for Council members to indicate their positions on how to respond to the crisis.

The Lebanese government has again called for an immediate ceasefire, but it is not expected that the Council will be ready to take action on that this week.

Considerable discussion is expected, however, on:

- the plight of civilians in the conflict (and a press statement expressing concern for civilians and calling on all parties to comply with international humanitarian law is an option);
- the proposal made by the Secretary-General and by the UK Prime Minister Tony Blair to establish a stabilisation force in Lebanon as part of a package to reach a ceasefire. (The Secretary-General is expected to recommend that the force be multi-national and be stationed in Lebanon for several months once a ceasefire has been reached, after which the UN Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) would be strengthened and have the mandate to maintain a demilitarised buffer zone.)

Discussion of the related events in Gaza is also expected as some delegations are likely to want to emphasise the linkages between the two situations (and perhaps also their assessments of the roles of Syria and Iran).

Recent Developments

On 25 June, Hamas kidnapped an Israeli soldier and killed two others. They demanded in exchange the release of Palestinian prisoners. Israel refused to negotiate, launched a military operation in Gaza in order to retrieve the soldiers and arrested Palestinian leaders. On 29 June, Kofi Annan called on the Palestinian Authority to release the Israeli soldier and to end rocket attacks against Israel. He also called on Israel to show restraint, avoid damaging infrastructures in Gaza and abide by international

humanitarian law, although he expressed understanding that Israel would go after those who kidnapped the soldier. He also called on the Security Council to address the situation.

On 13 July, the Council debated a draft resolution (S/2006/508) sponsored by Qatar, calling for the immediate and unconditional release of the Israeli soldier, for the release of all Palestinian officials detained by Israel, for a halt to a “disproportionate” military reaction by Israel and calling upon the Palestinian Authority to take “immediate and sustained” action to bring to an end the firing of rockets from Gaza into Israel. The draft also called on the international community to provide emergency assistance to the Palestinian people, and on the Israeli Government to restore and maintain the supply of fuel to Gaza, and to replace destroyed equipment at the Gaza power plant. The US vetoed the draft. Denmark, Peru, Slovakia and the UK abstained. The US said that it wanted more time to negotiate on the text because it did not reflect important new developments (i.e. the crisis in Lebanon), and that it was “unbalanced”, placing demands on one side but not on the other.

On 12 July, the South-Lebanon based militia Hezbollah in an action mirroring the 25 June Hamas operation in Southern Israel, crossed the Blue Line and kidnapped two Israeli soldiers. Hezbollah then joined Hamas by announcing that the soldiers were being held hostage against the release of various prisoners detained in Israel. This latter Hezbollah action, widely recognised as a war crime, was denounced almost universally. The Secretary-General also pointed out that the operation was a “blatant breach” of Security Council resolutions.

Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert described the Hezbollah actions as “an act of war”. Israel's right to respond in self defence was recognised by many members of the international community. Israel also drew linkages with Hezbollah's support for Hamas' earlier actions and Syria's support for both.

The Government of Lebanon announced that it had been unaware of Hezbollah's plans and did not endorse them. However, perhaps reflecting the fragile political situation within the Government, it has not condemned the Hezbollah action or called for Hezbollah to treat the Israeli prisoners in accordance with international humanitarian law.

Israeli planes and artillery have now bombarded Hezbollah positions in southern Lebanon and elsewhere for seven days. Israel asserts that it is targeting Hezbollah facilities, offices and leaders. But because Hezbollah operates within civilian areas, there have been large numbers of civilian casualties. Concerns have been raised that the bombardment involves disproportionate risk for civilians.

Israeli troops crossed into Lebanon in apparently limited ground operations. Israeli jets attacked Beirut's international airport, forcing it to close and Israel announced an air and sea blockade of Lebanon, in order to prevent Hezbollah from obtaining re-supply from Syria and/or Iran. Infrastructure such as roads, bridges and power stations were also attacked.

Hezbollah rocket attacks against Israeli towns have followed, including against Israel's third largest city, Haifa. Hezbollah has made no denial of the fact that its rockets are targeted against civilians.

The civilian population has begun to flee and foreigners are being evacuated.

UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, Louise Arbour, has warned both sides that the impact on civilians may constitute war crimes.

On 12 July, Kofi Annan sent a mission team to the Middle East led by his Special Political Advisor

Vijay Nambiar and including UN Special Envoy for the implementation of resolution 1559 (2004) Terje Roed-Larsen and UN envoy to the Middle East Alvaro de Soto. The Council issued a press statement on 14 July welcoming this initiative. The team visited Egypt, Lebanon, Jordan, Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territories. It also met with Arab League officials and Gulf States representatives. However, it was denied access to Syria. The team is expected to come back before the end of the week.

The Lebanese Prime Minister Fouad Siniora declared his country a “disaster zone” and called for a meeting of the Security Council, which was held on 14 July. The Council had a public briefing from senior Secretariat officials and heard statements from Lebanon and Israel. No Council member proposed any action.

Israel has given three conditions for the cessation of hostilities:

- The immediate and unconditional release of the two Israeli soldiers;
- The cessation of rocket attacks into Israel;
- The full implementation of Council resolutions 1559 (2004) and 1680 (2006), including the disarmament of Hezbollah and the deployment of the Lebanese army in the south.

Hezbollah leader Hassan Nasrallah rejected those conditions. Israel’s intentions seem to be the destruction of Hezbollah’s military capabilities in order to prevent a return to the status quo ante and to force the implementation of Security Council resolution 1559.

The League of Arab States held an emergency summit meeting in Cairo on 15 July. There are media reports that several Arab states, including Saudi Arabia, Jordan, Egypt and some Persian Gulf states find Hezbollah’s action “unexpected, inappropriate and irresponsible”. This stance was widely interpreted as a reflection of growing concern about Iranian influence in the region. The Arab League Secretary General Amr Moussa said the Middle East peace process was dead and called on the UN Security Council to tackle the crisis. He also stated recently that the conditions imposed by Israel for a ceasefire were impossible to meet.

The G8 countries, meeting in Saint Petersburg, issued a statement on 17 July:

- Blaming Hezbollah for the crisis;
- Calling for an end to violence;
- Calling on Israel to exercise utmost restraint, avoid civilian casualties and refrain from destabilising the Lebanese government;
- Calling for the immediate release of the Israeli soldiers;
- Recognising Israel’s right of self-defence;
- Saying the end to Israeli military operations and withdrawal of forces from Gaza were other conditions to lay the foundation for a more permanent solution.

However, G8 countries were divided over some aspects of the issue, with France, Russia and Italy believing that some of Israel’s actions are disproportionate. The US President rejected this analysis and defended Israel’s right to self defence.

At the margins of the G8 summit, Secretary-General Kofi Annan and UK Prime Minister Tony Blair developed the idea of an international force in Lebanon as a part of a ceasefire package to guarantee implementation of Security Council resolution 1559. Such a package might also include elements relating to release of prisoners. This concept has subsequently attracted considerable support. Israel has not rejected the idea although it says much would depend on the firmness of the mandate. Hezbollah has not commented directly, but seems to still reject resolution 1559.

At press time, 302 Lebanese people, mostly civilians, and 29 Israelis including 15 civilians have died

in seven days of conflict. Lebanese Prime Minister said more than 500,000 people had been displaced.

Key Issues

The immediate issue for the Council will be that integrating the issue of the disarmament of Hezbollah into a plan for the cessation of hostilities will take time – not least because neither Hezbollah nor Israel are yet convinced that the necessary concessions should be made. In the meantime civilian casualties on both sides mount and the risk of escalation of the conflict increases. Many Council members and the Secretary-General seem to want the Council therefore to take a stepped approach to the issue including interim action aimed at the protection of civilians.

A related issue is the future of the UN Interim Force in Lebanon, UNIFIL, which was established in 1978 in resolution 425. The UNIFIL mandate expires on 31 July and, accordingly, a Council decision will be required next week. In the past, the Council has been reluctant to link the implementation of resolution 1559 and wider issues relating to the situation between Lebanon and Israel to the renewal of the mandate of UNIFIL. It is clear that UNIFIL, with a very limited mandate, has only been able to play a peripheral role in the current crisis and many have rejected it as a model for the proposed new international force. On the other hand, until there is a ceasefire it will be extremely difficult to extract the UNIFIL personnel and equipment and some see merit in keeping it in place as a building block for a future new and more robust international presence. The Council may want to keep its options open and a technical rollover resolution is therefore a possibility. But the resolution may also offer a useful vehicle for an interim Council statement on other aspects.

A third issue for the Council is whether the Israel/Lebanon issue can or should be separated from the situation in Gaza. It is the view of some that the issues are intimately linked and that the Council should adopt a holistic approach to the current situation.

The concept of operations for a multi-national force in Lebanon is another issue that will be discussed by the Council, but probably not in detail this week. There are several subsidiary issues:

- Should it be a UN force? The UN has particular strengths in peacekeeping, where the parties consent to the mandate, but is less experienced in managing enforcement operations – although it has demonstrated in the DRC, with MONUC, that it can manage robust Chapter VII mandates. Nevertheless if it seems that the mandate will require enforcement of Resolution 1559 and there is a real risk that this will be contested with military force by Hezbollah – or some factions of it – there will be pressure (including from Israel) for the operation to be conducted by a coalition under a Chapter VII mandate. However, others including Lebanon and regional neighbours and some Security Council members seem likely to prefer a UN force. A related matter is funding. The costs of a UN operation are shared via the UN budget. Under a coalition troop contributors have to meet all their own costs, meaning that it will be very difficult for any but developed countries to participate.
- Who should participate? For much of the last 60 years an extremely sensitive issue in the context of proposals for participation in peacekeeping forces in the Middle East has been the composition of the proposed force. For instance, cold war issues and concern about troops from the Soviet Union participating in the region often led to Israel opposing proposals in the past. In the current situation participation by troops from moderate Muslim countries could be a very important balancing factor. Breadth of participation may therefore become an important political condition for brokering any eventual package.
- A major issue is the timing. Without an associated commitment to some form of ceasefire, it is

highly unlikely that the Council will accept the deployment of a force. Indeed, Israel already stated its opposition to that. A related issue is whether some form of de-escalation can be agreed as an interim measure.

- The critical issue in the long run, however, will be the mandate of any force. While a mandate requiring implementation of resolution 1559 may be the key to unlocking agreement by Israel on a ceasefire, Hezbollah may prefer the status quo to continue for quite some time rather than accepting that an international force should be empowered to disarm it.
- Finally, the possibilities of strengthening the Lebanese government's presence in the South and its willingness and capacity to implement Resolution 1559 will also be an issue. This may arise as a stand alone issue and in conjunction with the proposed international force.

Council Dynamics

Council members seem to be divided into three groups:

- Delegations such as the US are unwilling to take action which would undercut Israel's right to self-defence.
- Delegations such as Qatar and Argentina seem to be willing to call for an immediate and unconditional ceasefire.
- The bulk of Council members believe a ceasefire, taking into account the positions of both sides, should be called for as soon as a viable approach emerges (perhaps from the report of the UN team).

There is a wide consensus on the growing risks to civilians and civilian infrastructure and for wider escalation of the situation. There is support for the release of the three hostages without conditions. But there are still divergences between Council members on the merits of the Council taking interim action – of an essentially declaratory nature – as opposed to waiting until it is in a position to adopt a resolution that will be effective in resolving the overall issue.

The US has positioned itself in support of Israel, refusing to support an immediate ceasefire without conditions. It also seems that the US would want to have the Council recognise Israel's right to self-defence and insist on an effective plan for the implementation of resolutions 1559 and 1680 as a condition for a ceasefire. The US position on interim Council action is also influenced by plans that Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice should visit the region. Inevitably, there will be concerns that the Council should not pre-empt her negotiation space. With regards to the establishment of an international force in South Lebanon, the US has a number of concerns. The US believes that such a force must be empowered to fully disarm Hezbollah. Finally, the US wants recognition of the direct link between Iran, Syria, Hamas and Hezbollah and the release of all three Israeli soldiers.

It seems that France and some other delegations will push for an assessment of what role a reinforced UNIFIL could undertake. It also seems that they are keen on starting discussions on a possible draft resolution looking towards the cessation of hostilities, the liberation of the Israeli soldiers and the implementation of resolutions 1559 and 1680. France has circulated elements of a possible resolution that would include

- A call on all parties to exercise utmost restraint;
- A condemnation of the extremist forces that are destabilising the region;
- A call for a cease-fire with as conditions (1) the release of the abducted Israeli soldiers (2) the disarming and disbanding of all militias in Lebanon (3) support to the Lebanese government to deploy its authority over the whole Lebanese territory and (4) respect of the Blue Line;
- Expression of readiness to explore the possibility of a reinforced international security and

monitoring presence in Lebanon.

Underlying Problems

The Lebanese government is in a weak position, especially because of the slow progress with the inter-Lebanese Dialogue (please see our April 2006 *Forecast Report*).

There have been widespread media reports of Iran and Syria arming Hezbollah and of the presence of Iranian personnel and equipment in South Lebanon.

Concerns over possible Israeli military action against Syria by Israel have been raised. Iran's president warned that this would provoke a "fierce response" from his country.

There have also been concerns that the Iranian connection in Lebanon is currently being used by Tehran to create a smokescreen to distract attention from its own looming crisis with the Security Council over its nuclear programme.

Selected UN Documents

Security Council Resolutions

- S/2006/508 (12 July 2006) Qatar-sponsored draft resolution on the situation in Gaza. The draft was vetoed by the US.
- S/RES/1680 (17 May 2006) strongly encouraged Syria to respond positively to the Lebanese request to delineate their common border and called for further efforts to disband and disarm Hezbollah and to restore fully the Lebanese Government's control over all Lebanese territory.
- S/RES/1655 (31 January 2006) extended the UNIFIL mandate to 31 July 2006 and urged Lebanon to take up the proposal to create a Joint Planning Cell.
- S/RES/1559 (2 September 2004) urged Syria's withdrawal from Lebanon and the disarming and disbanding of Lebanese and non-Lebanese militias.
- S/RES/426 (19 March 1978) approved the report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of resolution 425.
- S/RES/425 (19 March 1978) called for strict respect for the international integrity, sovereignty and political independence of Lebanon, urged Israel to withdraw from Lebanese territory, and established UNIFIL.

Presidential Statements

- S/PRST/2006/6 (3 February 2006) welcomed the elections in the Palestinian Authority and reminded both the PA and Israel of their obligations under the roadmap.
- S/PRST/2006/3 (23 January 2006) welcomed the second report on implementation of resolution 1559.
- S/PRST/2005/26 (22 June 2005) welcomed the parliamentary elections in Lebanon.
- S/PRST/2005/17 (4 May 2005) welcomed the first report on implementation of resolution 1559.
- S/PRST/2004/36 (19 October 2004) requested the Secretary-General to report to the Council every six months on implementation of resolution 1559.
- S/PRST/2000/21 (18 June 2000) recognised that Israel withdrew from all of Lebanese territory.

Secretary-General's Reports

- S/2006/26 (18 January 2006) was the latest report on UNIFIL.
- S/2000/590 and Corr.1 (16 June 2000) concluded that Israel withdrew completely from Lebanon.
- S/2000/460 (22 May 2000) Report that verified the implementation of resolutions 425 and 426 (1978)

Reports on Implementation of Resolution 1559

- S/2006/248 (19 April 2006) Third semi-annual report
- S/2005/673 (26 October 2005) Second semi-annual report
- S/2005/272 (29 April 2005) First semi-annual report
- S/2004/777 (1 October 2004) Report of the Secretary-General pursuant to resolution 1559 (2004)

Letters on the Situation in Gaza since 25 June 2006

- S/2006/538 (18 July 2006) Letter from the Permanent Observer of Palestine on the persistent Israeli aggression against the Palestinian people, calling for urgent international action to prevent further deterioration of the situation in the Occupied Palestinian Territory and also further destabilization of the situation in the region
- S/2006/520 (13 July 2006) Letter from the Permanent Observer of Palestine requesting the participation in the Security Council meeting of 13 July
- S/2006/519 (13 July 2006) Letter from the Permanent Observer of Palestine on Israel's military aggression against the Palestinian people and especially in Gaza
- S/2006/511 (12 July 2006) Letter from Finland including a statement from the European Union on the situation in the Middle East
- S/2006/546 (11 July 2006) Letter from Iran including a statement issued at the Ninth meeting of Foreign Ministers of Iraq's Neighbouring Countries on the grave situation in Palestine
- S/2006/502 (10 July 2006) Letter from Israel on the most recent terrorist attacks perpetrated against Israel through the continuous firing of Qassam rockets
- S/2006/501 (10 July 2006) Letter from the Permanent Observer of Palestine on the Israeli aggression against Palestinians particularly in Gaza
- S/2006/499 (10 July 2006) Letter from the Permanent Observer of Palestine including the Palestinian National Conciliation Document on the prisoners adopted on 28 June 2006
- S/2006/491 (7 July 2006) Letter from Malaysia including a statement from the Coordinating Bureau of the Movement of the Non-Aligned Countries in New York on the situation in the Occupied Palestinian Territory
- S/2006/489 (7 July 2006) Letter from the Permanent Observer of Palestine informing that Israel further escalated its aggression against the Palestinian people
- S/2006/485 (5 July 2006) Letter from Israel on the most recent terrorist attacks perpetrated against Israel through the continuous firing of Qassam rockets
- S/2006/479 (3 July 2006) Letter from the Permanent Observer of Palestine on the Israeli aggression against Palestinians and especially in Gaza
- S/2006/475 (30 June 2006) Letter from Iran on the ongoing aggression against Palestinian civilians
- S/2006/465 (30 June 2006) Letter from the Permanent Observer of Palestine requesting the participation in the Security Council meeting of 30 June
- S/2006/462 (29 June 2006) Letter from Qatar requesting an immediate meeting of the Council on the situation in the Middle East
- S/2006/460 (29 June 2006) Letter from the Permanent Observer of Palestine on the continuing and widening Israeli military campaign against the Palestinian people
- S/2006/459 (29 June 2006) Letter from Syria drawing the attention to the flight of Israeli military aircraft over the Syrian coast and to the vast offensive launched by Israel against the Occupied Palestinian Territory in the Gaza Strip
- S/2006/458 (29 June 2006) Letter from Algeria, Chairman of the Group of Arab States, requesting an immediate meeting of the Council on the situation in the Middle East
- S/2006/443 (28 June 2006) Letter from the Permanent Observer of Palestine on the major Israeli air and ground military assault on the Gaza Strip
- S/2006/436 (26 June 2006) Letter from Israel drawing the attention to the capture of Corporal Gilad Shalit by Hamas and calling it an "extremely serious incident"

Letters on the Situation in Lebanon since 10 July 2006

- S/2006/537 (18 July 2006) Letter from Lebanon informing that the Israeli aggression against Lebanon escalated seriously
- S/2006/536 (18 July 2006) Letter from Lebanon informing that the Israeli aggression against Lebanon escalated seriously
- S/2006/534 (18 July 2006) Letter from Syria on the modalities of the public meeting on the situation in the Middle East
- S/2006/531 (17 July 2006) Letter from Lebanon including a list of the aggressions committed by Israel against Lebanon from 12 to 14 July 2006
- S/2006/529 (17 July 2006) Letter from Lebanon informing that the Lebanese Prime Minister called for an immediate ceasefire; the extension of its authority in South Lebanon with the help of the UN and; humanitarian assistance from the international community and qualifying the Israeli aggression as disproportionate
- S/2006/528 (17 July 2006) Letter from Lebanon on the latest results of the Israeli aggression against Lebanon
- S/2006/526 (14 July 2006) Letter from Syria regretting that it was not allowed by the President of the Security Council to speak during the Council's public meeting held on 14 July
- S/2006/522 (13 July 2006) Letter from Lebanon informing of the latest Israeli aggressions against Lebanon
- S/2006/518 (13 July 2006) Letter from Lebanon including a statement issued by the Lebanese Council of Ministers on the situation on the Blue Line
- S/2006/517 (13 July 2006) Letter from Lebanon requesting an urgent meeting of the Security Council on the situation in Lebanon
- S/2006/515 (12 July 2006) Letter from Israel on Hezbollah's actions (the unleashing of a barrage of heavy artillery and rockets into Israel and the kidnapping of two Israeli soldiers), holding the governments of Lebanon, Syria and Iran responsible for this belligerent act of war and violation of the Blue Line, and declared readiness to take appropriate actions to respond
- S/2006/496 (10 July 2006) Letter from Lebanon requesting an extension of the mandate of UNIFIL for an additional 6 months

Historical Background

12 July 2006 In a cross-border raid, Hezbollah guerrillas captured two Israeli soldiers, which triggered the current crisis.

27 June 2006 Israel invaded the Gaza strip to recover the kidnapped Israeli soldier and stop Qassam rocket fire into Israel.

25 June 2006 Hamas kidnapped an Israeli soldier and killed two others. They demanded the release of Palestinian prisoners. Israel refused to negotiate.

26 May 2006 The assassination of two Lebanese citizens in the city of Sidon triggered a violent response by Hezbollah who fired missiles in the direction of the Blue Line. Israel retaliated and heavy bombardments resulted in casualties on the Lebanese side. Israel also threatened to bomb vital facilities in Beirut. UNIFIL brokered a cessation of hostilities on 29 May.

17 May 2006 After consideration of the third report of Terje Roed-Larsen, the Council adopted resolution 1680, which strongly encouraged Syria to respond positively to the Lebanese request to delineate their common border, especially in the Sheb'a Farms area, and called for further efforts to

disband and disarm Hezbollah and to restore fully the Lebanese Government's control over all Lebanese territory.

28 March 2006 Ehud Olmert was elected Israeli Prime Minister.

22 March 2006 The second round of the inter-Lebanese dialogue resumed with the aim to tackle the issues of the Lebanese presidency and the disarmament of Hezbollah.

14 March 2006 An agreement was reached among Lebanese parties to disarm the Palestinian militias operating outside the refugee camps within six months. In addition, Lebanon and Syria have decided to establish formal diplomatic ties, and to demarcate their common border. Finally, the participants in the Lebanese dialogue agreed that the Sheb'a Farms were Lebanese territories. The talks however did not tackle the remaining and more sensitive issues of the disarmament of Hezbollah and the position of President Lahoud, who has been under growing pressure to resign.

2 March 2006 Nabih Berri, the speaker of the Lebanese Parliament officially initiated the first round of the Lebanese National Dialogue among the leaders of major political parties.

26 January 2006 Hamas won the Palestinian Legislative Council elections.

4 January 2006 Ariel Sharon suffered a massive stroke, leaving the leadership of Israel in the hands of Ehud Olmert.

21-22 November 2005 Hezbollah and the IDF engaged in a heavy exchange of fire along the Blue Line.

26 October 2005 Terje Roed Larsen submitted his second report, noting that the disbanding and disarming of militias remained incomplete and that the illegal transfer of arms and people across the borders into Lebanon was worrying. The Secretary-General as well as the Council encouraged the Lebanese government to enter into a dialogue with Hezbollah and the different Palestinian groups to resolve the issue of disbanding and disarming and to re-establish government control over the whole territory.

20 October 2005 The first report of the UN International Independent Investigation Commission on the assassination of former Lebanese Prime Minister Rafik Hariri concluded that the assassination could not have taken place without the involvement of Syrian and Lebanese security officials.

29 June 2005 Hezbollah and the IDF engaged in a heavy exchange of fire in the Sheb'a farms area.

19 June 2005 Hezbollah won all seats in Southern Lebanon in the parliamentary elections.

13 May 2005 Repeated shelling occurred across the Blue Line by both Israel and Hezbollah around the Sheb'a Farms.

26 April 2005 Syria pulled out from Lebanon.

2 September 2004 The Council approved resolution 1559, calling on all remaining foreign forces to withdraw from Lebanon, all Lebanese and non-Lebanese forces to disband and disarm and supporting the extension of the control of the Government of Lebanon over all Lebanese territory. The Secretary-General appointed Terje Roed-Larsen his Special Envoy for the implementation of this

resolution. He has submitted to the Council bi-annual reports on progress towards that end.

16 May 7 June 2000 Israeli forces withdrew from South Lebanon.

26 April 1996 The US negotiated an understanding under which Hezbollah and Palestinian guerrillas agreed not to attack civilians in northern Israel, and which recognised Israel's right to self-defence but also Hezbollah's right to resist the Israeli occupation of southern Lebanon. Although Lebanon and Syria did not sign the document, the Israel-Lebanon Monitoring Group (ILMG), with members from the US, France, Israel, Lebanon and Syria, was set up to monitor the truce.

11 April 1996 Israel launched Operation Grapes of Wrath, bombing Hezbollah bases in southern Lebanon, the southern district of Beirut and the Bekaa valley.

25 July 1993 Israel launched Operation Accountability, the heaviest attack since 1982, in an attempt to end the threat from Hezbollah and from the General Command of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine in southern Lebanon.

22 October 1989 The Taif Agreement was adopted by members of the Lebanese National Assembly. It covered political reform, the end of the war in Lebanon, the establishment of special relations between Lebanon and Syria and a framework for complete Syrian withdrawal from Lebanon

6 June 1985 Part of Israeli troops withdrew but some remained in a security zone in South Lebanon.

1982 It is believed that Hezbollah was created that year.

15 September 1982 Israeli forces occupied West Beirut.

6 June 1982 After an assassination attempt against the Israeli ambassador to the UK, and intense exchange of fire across the Israel-Lebanese border, Israel launched a full-scale invasion of Lebanon called Operation Peace for Galilee.

13 June 1978 Israeli forces had withdrawn from Southern Lebanon. However, the territory was not handed over to UNIFIL but to the SLA.

19 March 1978 The Security Council passed resolution 425, which called on Israel to withdraw from all Lebanese territory and established UNIFIL.

14-15 March 1978 Israel launched a major invasion of Lebanon, occupying land as far north as the Litani River.

13 April 1975 The Lebanese civil war began.

Other Relevant Facts

Secretary-General's Personal Representative to Lebanon
Geir O. Pedersen (Norway)
UNIFIL Force Commander
Major-General Alain Pellegrini (France)
Size and Composition of Mission

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• (31 May 2006): 1,990 troops, assisted by some 50 military observers of UNTSO; and supported by 95 international civilian personnel and 304 local civilian staff• Troop-contributing countries: China, France, Ghana, India, Ireland, Italy, Poland and Ukraine
Cost (approved budget)
1 July 2005 - 30 June 2006: \$99.23 million (gross)