



Security Council

Sixty-second year

5733rd meeting

Friday, 24 August 2007, 10 a.m.

New York

Provisional

<i>President:</i>	Mr. Gayama	(Congo)
<i>Members:</i>	Belgium	Mr. Belle
	China	Mr. Li Junhua
	France	Mr. Lacroix
	Ghana	Mr. Christian
	Indonesia	Mr. Kleib
	Italy	Mr. Mantovani
	Panama	Mr. Arias
	Peru	Mr. Voto-Bernales
	Qatar	Mr. Al-Henzab
	Russian Federation	Mr. Shcherbak
	Slovakia	Mr. Burian
	South Africa	Mr. Kumalo
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Johnston
	United States of America	Mr. Wolff

Agenda

The situation in the Middle East

Letter dated 2 August 2007 from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/2007/470)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.20 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation in the Middle East

Letter dated 2 August 2007 from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/2007/470)

The President (*spoke in French*): I should like to inform the Council that I have received letters from the representatives of Israel and Lebanon, in which they request to be invited to participate in the consideration of the item on the Council's agenda. In conformity with the usual practice, I propose, with the consent of the Council, to invite those representatives to participate in the consideration of the item, without the right to vote, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Gillerman (Israel) and Mr. Salam (Lebanon) took seats at the Council table.

The President (*spoke in French*): The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations.

Members of the Council have before them document S/2007/506, which contains the text of a draft resolution submitted by Belgium, France, Italy, Peru, Slovakia, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the United States of America.

Members of the Council also have before them documents S/2007/392 and S/2007/470, which contain, respectively, the report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of resolution 1701 (2006) and the text of a letter dated 2 August 2007 from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the Security Council.

I wish to draw the attention of the members of the Council to document S/2007/396, which contains the text of a letter dated 29 June 2007 from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the Security Council, transmitting a letter from the Prime Minister of Lebanon.

It is my understanding that the Council is ready to proceed to the vote on the draft resolution (S/2007/506) before it. Unless I hear any objection, I shall put the draft resolution to the vote now.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

I shall first give the floor to those members of the Council who wish to make statements before the voting.

Mr. Kumalo (South Africa): South Africa supports the renewal of the mandate of the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) for an additional year, as recommended by the Secretary-General and as requested by the Prime Minister of Lebanon. However, my delegation would have preferred to have had a draft resolution of a technical nature. There is no reason to have included in the draft resolution unrelated sensitive issues which the Council has on numerous previous occasions commented on in various resolutions and presidential statements. We are concerned that these unrelated issues tend to be selectively chosen from other resolutions and statements of the past.

While we are not entirely satisfied with all of the elements of the draft resolution before us, my delegation will vote in favour of the draft resolution because we continue to believe that UNIFIL has a positive role to play in bringing about long-term peace and security in Lebanon.

The President (*spoke in French*): I shall put the draft resolution to the vote now.

A vote was taken by show of hands.

In favour:

Belgium, China, Congo, France, Ghana, Indonesia, Italy, Panama, Peru, Qatar, Russian Federation, Slovakia, South Africa, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America

The President (*spoke in French*): There were 15 votes in favour. The draft resolution has been adopted unanimously as resolution 1773 (2007).

I shall now give the floor to those members of the Council who wish to make statements following the voting.

Mr. Lacroix (*spoke in French*): France is gratified by the unanimous adoption of resolution 1773 (2007), renewing, unchanged, the mandate of the

United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) for one year, in keeping with the request voiced by the Government of Lebanon. The decision reflects the full support of the Security Council for the activities of the force within the context of its mandate. It also reflects the international community's gratitude for the effectiveness with which UNIFIL is discharging its mandate in support of the Lebanese Armed Forces.

As the Secretary-General stated in his most recent report (S/2007/392), UNIFIL has helped to establish a new strategic military and security environment in southern Lebanon. That result would not have been possible without the dedication and valour of the civilian and military personnel of UNIFIL, to whom my country wishes to pay tribute. In particular, France pays tribute to the memory of the soldiers of the Spanish contingent who were killed on 24 June and the French demining expert killed while performing his duties. Those human losses remind us that, despite improvements in the security situation in southern Lebanon over the past year, UNIFIL continues to operate in a difficult and unstable environment.

Under those conditions, it is imperative that UNIFIL be able to rely on the cooperation of all parties in order to discharge its mandate. That requires, on the one hand, pursuing and strengthening mechanisms for cooperation in the field, including tripartite arrangements currently in force, which have been shown to be effective. It also requires the full implementation by the parties of the Security Council's demands as set forth in resolution 1701 (2006) and reiterated today by the Council, in particular respect for the cessation of hostilities and for the Blue Line in its entirety, and respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Lebanon, as well as for its unity and political independence within its internationally recognized borders. This also requires progress towards achieving a lasting ceasefire and a long-term political solution, as called for by resolution 1701 (2006) and the Council's 3 August presidential statement (S/PRST/2007/29).

Finally, I wish to reaffirm the full commitment of France, side by side with Lebanon and the Lebanese: its commitment on the ground, with more than 1,600 French soldiers deployed within UNIFIL; and its political commitment as demonstrated by the resolute efforts of the French authorities to help the Lebanese find the path to lasting stability through dialogue with

respect for Lebanese sovereignty and Lebanese institutions.

Mr. Mantovani (Italy): Allow me to first thank all delegations for their support of the resolution and for the relevant and constructive contributions they made during the negotiations. Today, the Council has unanimously renewed the mandate of the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) for another year. That is a major outcome, which acknowledges the key stabilizing role that the United Nations mission has played in the region. One year on, we can say that UNIFIL has been successful overall in guaranteeing stability and security in southern Lebanon and along the Blue Line, thus making a vital contribution to the quest for peace in the Middle East. It is also crucial that the resolution reaffirms the target of a permanent ceasefire and of a long-term solution. We are convinced that the full stabilization of southern Lebanon is strictly linked with the fundamental aim of a just and lasting peace in the Middle East.

UNIFIL has not had an easy task. It faces many challenges and risks, as recent tragic events have unfortunately proved. In that regard, I wish to take this opportunity to pay tribute once again to the peacekeepers from Colombia, France and Spain who lost their lives in Lebanon. It is fundamental the UNIFIL be provided with the necessary assets to face the existing risks and threats. We are sure that the Secretary-General will keep working on the measures best suited to guaranteeing full security for the mission's personnel.

Realizing the importance of UNIFIL's task and the relevance of the challenges it faces, we have worked from the beginning for prompt, consensus approval of the resolution. We therefore particularly welcome today's vote and the renewal of the mandate the mission was given in 2006. Coming as it does well in advance of the expiration of UNIFIL's mandate and with the unanimous support of the Council, it sends a strong message of support to UNIFIL and to the Department for Peacekeeping Operations, highlighting the consensus in the Council and in the international community on the effective and irreplaceable role of UNIFIL.

Mr. Al-Henzab (Qatar) (*spoke in Arabic*): My delegation voted in favour of resolution 1773 (2007), which stresses the importance of the sovereignty and political independence of Lebanon. Our position respects the request from the Lebanese Government in

this connection. We reaffirm our consistent strong support for all those working as part of the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL), to which Qatar is also contributing troops. My delegation hopes that, with the adoption of the resolution, the parties will respect their responsibilities in accordance with the resolution in order to reach a permanent ceasefire. We look forward to the Council shouldering its responsibility to bring about stability and peace in the region.

Mr. Kleib (Indonesia): The unanimous adoption of resolution 1773 (2007), which extends the mandate of the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) for 12 months, reflects the continued commitment of the Security Council and the United Nations to the realization of a peaceful and stable Lebanon. After one year of its deployment, UNIFIL not only has provided the Lebanese with the opportunity to rebuild and restore the country's daily life, but also has helped to establish a new strategic military and security environment in southern Lebanon.

The extension of UNIFIL's mandate and the mission's continued presence in Lebanon will bring greater tangible results only when all parties concerned fulfil their obligations under resolution 1701 (2006), including the obligation to provide detailed data on the use of cluster munitions in southern Lebanon. All parties must also exercise restraint with regard to actions that could undermine resolution 1701 (2006) and UNIFIL, including the continued violations of Lebanon's airspace. Regrettably, the resolution does not address that matter in an appropriate way. Lebanese sovereignty and territorial integrity must be respected in their entirety.

The permanent ceasefire, as envisaged by resolution 1701 (2006), is still far from being a reality. The role of UNIFIL in monitoring the cessation of hostilities and in achieving a permanent ceasefire remains critical. Thus, extending the mandate of UNIFIL is of paramount importance.

Finally, Indonesia wishes to reaffirm its commitment to UNIFIL through its unflagging political support as well as the continued presence of its contingent in Lebanon and its intended contribution of additional assets to UNIFIL's Maritime Task Force.

Mr. Christian (Ghana): We welcome today's unanimous vote on the renewal of the mandate of the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL).

We commend UNIFIL for its sacrifices and for its role in the implementation of resolution 1701 (2006). We also commend the peacekeeping partnership and the cooperation between the Lebanese Armed Forces and UNIFIL, and urge that measures taken to enhance the level of cooperation between them be sustained. By providing humanitarian assistance, UNIFIL is contributing to the improvement of the quality of life of ordinary Lebanese on a daily basis.

We are concerned by threats to the safety of UNIFIL personnel and condemn the recent attacks on such personnel resulting in the death of Spanish peacekeepers and damage to a military police vehicle belonging to the Tanzanian contingent. Ghana looks forward to the outcome of the ongoing investigations into those incidents with a view to bringing the perpetrators to justice, and we call on all parties to respect the principles of international law. Ghana welcomes the measures taken so far by the Secretary-General, including efforts to deploy additional risk mitigation assets, to enhance the safety of UNIFIL personnel.

In the light of the prevailing security and political situation in Lebanon, Ghana, as a country contributing troops to UNIFIL and in keeping with its dedication to the pursuit of global peace and security, welcomes the renewal of the existing mandate of UNIFIL, whose continued presence will be desirable in consolidating stability in Lebanon.

Mr. Belle (Belgium) (*spoke in French*): Belgium welcomes the unanimous adoption of resolution 1773 (2007). As a troop contributor, Belgium obviously fully supports the resolution, which extends the current mandate of the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) for a 12-month period, until 31 August 2008. In our view, it is undeniable that UNIFIL has been and continues to be a stabilizing element in southern Lebanon and in the zone.

By adopting this resolution, the Security Council is sending a clear and strong signal: it is endorsing the undeniable initial success of this mission and reaffirming its confidence in UNIFIL with regard to the discharge of its mandate. In addition to condemning the attacks against UNIFIL, the resolution recalls that the security of UNIFIL's contingents and personnel remains paramount for the fulfilment of its mission.

Mr. Wolff (United States of America): The United States welcomes the unanimous adoption of

resolution 1773 (2007) to extend the mandate of the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) for one year. That vote is a clear signal of the Council's support for the United Nations peacekeepers on the ground in south Lebanon and of its commitment to the full implementation of resolution 1701 (2006).

Although the primary aim of this technical resolution is to extend the mandate of UNIFIL, it also reaffirms the Council's resolutions on Lebanon, including resolutions 1559 (2004), 1680 (2006) and 1701 (2006), as well as the three presidential statements on Lebanon adopted since last summer.

We commend the progress that has been achieved since the adoption of resolution 1701 (2006) last summer. The Lebanese Armed Forces (LAF) has deployed throughout the country for the first time in 30 years. Together with the reinforced UNIFIL, the LAF has helped to create a new strategic reality in south Lebanon.

At the same time, the deadly 24 June attack against UNIFIL and the 17 June rocket attack against Israel demonstrate that there are unauthorized armed elements and weapons in south Lebanon and that they pose a danger both to regional stability and to the safety of United Nations personnel. In that regard, we reiterate our condolences to the families, colleagues and Governments of those peacekeepers killed in the line of duty in Lebanon.

We welcome UNIFIL's intention to redouble its efforts to carry out its mandate in response to these attacks, especially in terms of coordination with the Lebanese Armed Forces. We urge UNIFIL and the LAF to move quickly to establish joint patrols and co-located checkpoints, particularly along the Litani river, to ensure that no unauthorized weapons are transferred into south Lebanon. We look forward to hearing more from the Secretary-General on those efforts in his next report.

These and other threats to peace, as well as the violence perpetrated by Fatah al-Islam in the north of Lebanon, underscore the need to fully implement the provisions of the Taif Accords and resolution 1559 (2004), calling for the disbanding and disarmament of all Lebanese and non-Lebanese militia. Peace will never be fully secured until that call is met.

We also reiterate our deep concern about continued illegal weapons transfers across the Syrian-

Lebanese border in violation of resolution 1701 (2006). Those weapons transfers directly threaten both the stability of Lebanon and the safety of United Nations peacekeepers. We join the Secretary-General in calling, yet again, on Syria and Iran to honour their obligations under the arms embargo established under resolution 1701 (2006).

One year has now passed since the cessation of hostilities between Israel and Hizbullah and the adoption of resolution 1701 (2006). While we are pleased by the progress that has been achieved, we deplore the fact that the cause of this conflict — namely, Hizbullah's abduction of the two Israeli soldiers — has not been resolved. The Council must not relent in demanding progress on that issue, as well as on all the others required for a ceasefire and a long-term solution between Israel and Lebanon, in order to fulfil the promise of the resolution that we adopted last summer.

Mr. Shcherbak (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): The Russian Federation welcomes today's unanimous adoption of resolution 1773 (2007), which extends for another year the mandate of the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL). We feel that its adoption is a great step towards strengthening the territorial integrity and sovereignty of Lebanon. We are grateful to the peacekeepers for the stabilizing role they are playing in Lebanon, maintaining peace and security in that country.

At the same time, we feel that the resolution is a compromised text and that other issues that were raised here today in the statements by our colleagues, in particular the question of weapons smuggling, do not relate to the text that we have just adopted. We could also continue the list of problems, as we indicated in our discussions on the resolution, including as regards cluster bombs.

In conclusion, we would like to once again stress our delegation's gratitude for the unanimous adoption of this resolution.

The President (*spoke in French*): There are no other speakers on my list.

The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on its agenda.

The meeting rose at 10.50 a.m.