



General Assembly Security Council

Distr.: General
9 March 2023
English
Original: Arabic

General Assembly
Seventy-seventh session
Agenda item 32
The situation in the Middle East

Security Council
Seventy-eighth year

Identical letters dated 1 March 2023 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of Lebanon to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

On instructions from the Government of Lebanon, we provide below the response of Lebanon to the allegations contained in the identical letters dated 31 January 2023 from the Permanent Representative of Israel to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council ([S/2023/74](#)) and the identical letters dated 17 February 2023 from the Permanent Representative of Israel to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council ([S/2023/120](#)).

- All the allegations made in the two above-mentioned letters are baseless and constitute distortions of the facts. They are aimed at disrupting the relationship of Lebanon with the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) and the Security Council. They are also an attempt to divert the attention of Lebanon and the Security Council from other important issues related to international peace and security and stability in our region. They undermine the positive atmosphere and relative stability created by the understanding on maritime border demarcation at a time when we urgently need to build on what has been achieved to support and develop the foundations of stability in the region.
- The two main parties directly involved in the unfortunate incident at Aqibiyah – namely Ireland and the United Nations, represented by the Minister for Foreign Affairs and Minister of Defence of Ireland, Micheál Martin, and the Under-Secretary-General for Peace Operations, Jean-Pierre Lacroix – visited Lebanon on 26 January 2023. They expressed their appreciation for the cooperation of the Lebanese authorities with both UNIFIL and the Irish authorities, and the swift judicial action taken by the Lebanese authorities to investigate this incident so as to hold those responsible accountable.
- The allegations made by Israel in the letters are intended to provide cover for its repeated daily air, land and sea violations of Security Council resolution [1701 \(2006\)](#) and of Lebanese sovereignty. In their meetings with Lebanese authorities, United Nations officials have acknowledged that these Israeli



violations undermine the mission and importance of the UNIFIL presence and constitute violations of Lebanese sovereignty. With these two letters, the Israelis are also trying to divert attention from the violations they are perpetrating in the expanded part of the village of Ghajar on the outskirts of the town of Mari and their attempt to annex it by force after having occupied it in 2006. The Mission of Lebanon to the United Nations has periodically provided the Security Council with information on these violations, which have been cited in the relevant reports of the Secretary-General.

- All Lebanese political forces and official authorities have condemned the unfortunate incident at Aqibiyah and called for those responsible to be held accountable. Lebanon is committed to enabling UNIFIL carry out its mission and ensuring the safety of its personnel. Lebanon also warns of the danger of exploiting this unfortunate incident to disrupt Lebanese relations with UNIFIL. The Lebanese appreciate the role played by UNIFIL and are committed to its presence, its mission, and security and stability in the South. Lebanon reiterates that it complies fully with all the provisions of Security Council resolution [1701 \(2006\)](#) and all other relevant international resolutions.
- The shipping containers located along the Blue Line are not military barracks and do not prevent UNIFIL from fulfilling its mandate. They belong to Green Without Borders, an environmental organization with due expertise that is registered in accordance with official Lebanese legal procedures. They have already been visited by UNIFIL. The organization is active in the border area. To date, its activity has been conducted on private property. It does not cross the Blue Line or obstruct the movement of UNIFIL or its access to the Blue Line. The Lebanese army, on instructions from the relevant political authorities, is in constant contact and coordination with UNIFIL to address any concern or obstacle that might impede the international force in carrying out its functions.

I should be grateful if you would have the present letter circulated as a document of the General Assembly under agenda item 32, and of the Security Council.

(Signed) **Jeanne Mrad**
Counsellor
Chargé d'affaires a.i.