



SECURITY COUNCIL REPORT

UPDATE REPORT



8 December 2006 No. 2

LEBANON

On Monday 11 December the Council will hold consultations on the practical implementation of resolution 1701 (2006) (and in particular, on the operations of the UN Interim Force in Lebanon) in response to a factual report submitted by the Secretary-General by letter on 1 December. The Council is expected to adopt a presidential statement.

The Secretary-General Update

In his report, the Secretary-General says that:

- Israeli over flights of Lebanese airspace in violation of resolution 1701 have continued. He says these are undermining the credibility of UNIFIL and of the Lebanese Armed Forces;
- Reports of illegal arms smuggling across the Lebanese-Syrian border are still being received by the UN. He notes that they have not been verified. However, a team of border police experts has been dispatched by the UN at the request of the Lebanese government to assess the need for assistance in securing entry points;
- The completion of the augmentation of the UNIFIL troop strength is expected in December 2006 and should reach approximately 13,300 military personnel;
- The Secretary-General's facilitator is currently engaged with all parties to obtain the release of the Israeli soldiers and to deal with the issue of the Lebanese prisoners detained in Israel.
- There is the possibility that new anti-personnel landmines were laid by Israel in South Lebanon last summer;
- A senior cartographer has been appointed to determine the territorial definition of the Sheb'a Farms and the UN looks forward to reporting further on this issue in early 2007.

Proposed Presidential Statement

The P3 (France, UK and US) have circulated a draft presidential statement on 7 December, which:

- Gives strong support to the Siniora government and condemns efforts to destabilise it;
- Expresses deep concern at the Secretary-General's suggestions that there have been smuggling of arms across the Lebanese-Syria border and calls upon Syria to reinforce control at the border;
- Invites the Secretary-General to pursue additional assessments of the situation along the border and report back to the Council with recommendations;
- Expresses an intention to consider further steps to implement the arms embargo;
- Expresses deep concern at the presence of unexploded ordnances since last summer;
- Encourages efforts aimed at settling the issue of the Israeli and Lebanese prisoners;

- Notes with appreciation the progress made on the issue of the Sheb'a Farms and looks forward to further recommendations;
- Requests the Secretary-General to report on a quarterly basis on implementation of resolution 1701. (This is a new and important supplementation of the 1701 regime).

Council Dynamics

While the majority of Council members seem likely to support the draft, it seems that Russia, China and Argentina have some concerns with regards to the language used to condemn efforts to destabilise the Siniora government. Some also think that it is not be appropriate to mention the existence of reports on arms shipments into Lebanon until they are verified.

At press time, in response to these concerns, the P3 is revising the draft, with the hope to finalise it and adopt it on Monday 11 December. However, it seems that the P3 attach significance to those two issues and a difficult negotiation may be ahead. It also seems that some Council members wanted to see additional provisions on the issue of cluster munitions, which may be reflected in the final text.

UN Documents

Secretary-General's reports on resolution 1701
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• S/2006/933 (1 December 2006)• S/2006/730 (12 September 2006)• S/2006/670 (18 August 2006)