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The situation in the Middle East

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Seventy-ninth year

Identical letters dated 17 April 2024 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, I write in response to the identical letters dated 8 April 2024 from the Permanent Representative of Israel to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council ([S/2024/299](#)).

The Government and people of Lebanon express their deep regret over the horrific incident involving a patrol of the United Nations Truce Supervision Organization (UNTSO) in the vicinity of the town of Rumaysh in southern Lebanon on Saturday, 30 March 2024, when an explosion injured three UNTSO personnel and a Lebanese translator who was accompanying them as they were performing their duty.

Lebanon would like to reiterate its commitment to the principles of international legitimacy and United Nations resolutions, which are entirely consistent with its principles and higher interests. It stresses its full confidence in and support for the international forces operating on its territory and views with great concern the serious Israeli allegations of an attack on UNTSO forces, which it sees as an attempt to portray Lebanon as a State hostile to the United Nations, the Charter of the United Nations and the Organization's principles. That is absolutely unacceptable. Lebanon is a founding member of the United Nations, and over the years has amply demonstrated its faith in and cooperation with that Organization. It was Lebanon that asked for the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) presence, and it is Lebanon that has called for the renewal of the Force year after year, because it views UNIFIL as worthy of being entrusted with the task of maintaining peace and realizing security and stability.

We would also like to note that these Israeli accusations are being made in the absence of any concrete evidence linking Lebanese parties to the attack on UNTSO personnel. As a party to the conflict, Israel is hardly in a position to hurl accusations and make judgments. Lebanon considers the Israeli accusations to be political and



aimed at justifying its continuous and escalating aggression against Lebanon since 8 October 2023.

With regard to investigations, we would like to point out that, immediately after the incident, the competent Lebanese security authorities launched serious and confidential investigations to uncover the causes of the incident and expose the perpetrators. The Lebanese armed forces are also cooperating, coordinating and exchanging information with the UNIFIL investigative team to get to the truth and ensure that anyone threatening the safety of international forces is held accountable.

There can be no doubt that the international forces and Lebanese army personnel deployed in southern Lebanon are operating in a very dangerous security environment, especially since the outbreak of clashes in southern Lebanon last October, coinciding with the Israeli war on Gaza. They, their vehicles and their posts have been constantly subject to attacks from the Israeli side. Israel has attacked Lebanese army posts, checkpoints, patrols and surrounding areas more than 216 times. UNIFIL patrols, posts and surrounding areas have been subject to more than 67 attacks. Despite all this, Lebanon reaffirms its commitment to facilitating the work of the peacekeeping and truce-monitoring forces operating on its territory, and to ensuring their security and safety. It considers any attack on them to be contrary to its national interests and international obligations.

Lastly, Lebanon finds these Israeli repeated calls for implementation of Security Council resolution [1701 \(2006\)](#) and heartfelt expressions of concern for the safety and security of UNIFIL and UNTSO personnel in southern Lebanon to be preposterous. The Israeli armed forces have been attacking posts and vehicles belonging to international forces in the south on a daily basis. They have been violating resolution [1701 \(2006\)](#) ever since its adoption with their land, sea and air violations of Lebanese sovereignty, their refusal to mark the borders with Lebanon, and their failure to withdraw from the Lebanese territory they still occupy. How can Israel, which has refused to comply with international resolutions since 1948, call for United Nations action to implement resolution [1701 \(2006\)](#)? It is Israel that is undermining efforts to restore calm, as well as ignoring the roadmap put forward by Lebanon and welcomed by the international community to achieve sustainable security in southern Lebanon in line with resolution [1701 \(2006\)](#).

I should be grateful if you would have the present letter issued as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda item 34, and of the Security Council.

(Signed) Hadi **Hachem**
Chargé d'affaires a.i.