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THE SITUATION IN THE MIDDLE EAST

SECURITY COUNCIL
Forty-first year

Letter dated 5 March 1986 from the Permanent Representative of
Israel to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

The Government of Israel rejects the unfounded allegations contained in the letter dated 18 February 1986 addressed to you by the Permanent Representative of Lebanon to the United Nations (A/41/169-S/17839).

In the absence of an effective central authority in Lebanon, Israel has no choice but to take the steps necessary to ensure the safety of its citizens. In March 1985, the Israeli border town of Metullah and its environs was the target of a spate of terrorist car bombings. Metullah lies right on the border. The fence around its houses is the international border. Consequently, if a car bomb reached Metullah, as the March attempts nearly did, it would be too late. To prevent a repetition of such attacks, Israel's security authorities constructed a small security fence extending a few hundred metres beyond the border. The sole purpose of this fence is to provide security; it does not alter the status of the international border in any way.

The policy of the Government of Israel regarding its border with Lebanon has been stated many times, including in my statement in the Security Council (S/PV.2623). More recently, on 11 February 1986, Defence Minister Yitzhak Rabin said: "Israel is not interested in one inch of Lebanese territory, nor one drop of Lebanese water. However, security problems on the northern border occasionally necessitate the implementation of certain security measures. A return to normalcy in the area will bring an effective end to this problem between Israel and Lebanon."

* A/41/50.

I have the honour to request that this letter be circulated as an official document of the General Assembly, under item 37 of the preliminary list, and of the Security Council.

(Signed) Benjamin NETANYAHU
Ambassador
