



Security Council

PROVISIONAL

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ENGLISH

PROVISIONAL VERBATIM RECORD OF THE TWO THOUSAND
SEVEN HUNDRED AND EIGHTH MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Tuesday, 23 September 1986, at 3.30 p.m.

President: Mr. BELONOVCV

(Union of Soviet Socialist
Republics)

Members:

Australia
Bulgaria
China
Congo
Denmark
France
Ghana
Madagascar
Thailand
Trinidad and Tobago
United Arab Emirates
United Kingdom of Great Britain and
Northern Ireland
United States of America
Venezuela

Mr. WOOLCOTT
Mr. TSVETKOV
Mr. LI LUYE
Mr. BALE
Mr. BIERRING
Mr. de KEMOULARIA
Mr. GBEHO
Mr. RAKOTONDRAMBOA
Mr. KASEMSRI
Mr. ALLEYNE
Mr. AL-SHAALI

Sir John THOMSON
Mr. WALTERS
Mr. AGUILAR

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The meeting was called to order at 4.05 p.m.

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

The agenda was adopted.

THE SITUATION IN THE MIDDLE EAST

- (a) SPECIAL REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL ON THE UNITED NATIONS INTERIM FORCE IN LEBANON (S/18348)
- (b) LETTER DATED 18 SEPTEMBER 1986 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF FRANCE TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL (S/18353)

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Russian): In accordance with the decisions taken at previous meetings on this item, I invite the representative of Lebanon to take a place at the Council table; I invite the representatives of Israel and the Syrian Arab Republic to take the places reserved for them at the side of the Council Chamber.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Fakhoury (Lebanon) took a place at the Council table; Mr. Netanyahu (Israel) and Mr. Al-Atassi (Syrian Arab Republic) took the places reserved for them at the side of the Council Chamber.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Russian): The Security Council will now resume its consideration of the item on its agenda.

Members of the Security Council have before them document S/18356, which contains the text of a draft resolution submitted by France.

Members of the Council have also received photocopies of a letter dated 23 September 1986 from the Permanent Representative of Lebanon to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General. That letter will be circulated tomorrow as a document of the Security Council under the symbol S/18362.

The first speaker is the representative of the United Arab Emirates.

Mr. AL-SHAALI (United Arab Emirates) (interpretation from Arabic): I had not intended to participate in the debate today, but there are some observations that I should like to place on record.

First, Sir, I wish to express my delegation's pleasure at your assumption of the presidency of the Council and at seeing you carrying out your functions with such wisdom and skill. I also extend our thanks to Mr. Alleyne, Permanent Representative of Trinidad and Tobago, for the skilful manner in which he presided over the Council last month.

Secondly, I wish to convey my delegation's condolences and heartfelt sympathy to the delegations and Governments of France and Ireland on the loss of life and injuries sustained by their countrymen engaged in peace-keeping efforts in southern Lebanon. We wish to pay a tribute to the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) for the role it is playing and the sacrifices being made by those taking part in it. They need our full support, as indicated by our colleague, Sir John Thomson yesterday.

Sometimes we need to be frank and honest with others, but, more important, we invariably need to be honest with ourselves. That is what was lacking in the statement made yesterday afternoon by the representative of Israel when he spoke at length about the decisions and statements of the Party of God concerning resolution 425 (1978) and the rejection of that resolution by the leaders of that party. However, the representative of Israel failed to talk about his duty concerning the position of Israel towards that resolution, and especially paragraph 2, which reads: (spoke in English)

"Calls upon Israel immediately to cease its military action against Lebanese territorial integrity and withdraw forthwith its forces from all Lebanese territory".

(Mr. Al-Shaali, United Arab Emirates)

(continued in Arabic)

Where are we now in connection with the implementation of that resolution? That is the question that the representative of Israel should have addressed. For when the Security Council adopted resolution 425 (1978), it had in mind Israel and not the Party of God.

The function of the representative of Israel is to state the position of his country regarding the implementation of resolution 425 (1978) and the deployment of the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) to the internationally recognized boundaries of Lebanon.

It is only too well known that in Israel's policies, occupation is treated as a philosophy. I do not intend to dwell on that. There is occupation for religious reasons; there is occupation for security reasons; there is occupation for historical reasons. The fact is that all the Arab territories that are occupied are occupied for one reason or another. But in regard to a part of the territory of Lebanon the justification for occupation that is used is the weakness of the central Government. That is a new justification for occupation. If we were to accept it, every country in the world would be open to occupation.

All of us are aware of the circumstances afflicting Lebanon. But no one can deny the hard fact that part of Lebanon is occupied, and that by definition occupation is illegal - regardless of the justifications and methods used to maintain the occupation.

What is before the Council now is the fact that this occupation contributes directly to complicating Lebanon's internal state of affairs, and, in particular, to subjecting UNIFIL to clashes and confrontation with some local forces in southern Lebanon.

(Mr. Al-Shaali, United Arab Emirates)

Moreover, at this very moment when the Security Council is meeting to examine the status of UNIFIL in southern Lebanon and the dangers facing its contingents, news agencies are reporting that Israeli forces are mobilizing and massing and that there is a possibility that they will invade another part of Lebanon.

Clashes between local militias and UNIFIL are only natural, simply because the local militias are trying to respond to Israeli acts of aggression against the civilian population and villages in southern Lebanon. We recognize that UNIFIL's mandate is to prevent such incidents. In trying to do so, however, it is suffering casualties.

Israel should not interfere in any way in the internal affairs of Lebanon. But it is responsible before the Security Council and before the international community as a whole for its continued occupation of part of Lebanese territory and for its refusal to implement Security Council resolution 425 (1978). Israel is responsible to Lebanon for that but it is responsible first and foremost to the Security Council. We therefore hope that the Council will assess the situation in accordance with its responsibility.

Before I conclude, I wish to express my delegation's appreciation of the efforts made by the mission led by Mr. Goulding which was dispatched to the scene by the Secretary-General. We are grateful for the objective report submitted by that mission. I express my delegation's appreciation, too, for the interest shown by the Secretary-General in the welfare of the contingents of UNIFIL in southern Lebanon.

With regard to the draft resolution now before the Security Council, my delegation would have liked to see a clearer text, a text that would place more binding obligations on Israel to withdraw its forces to the internationally

(Mr. Al-Shaali, United Arab Emirates)

recognized boundaries of Lebanon, in accordance with Security Council resolution 425 (1978). Nevertheless, we shall support the present draft resolution in the interest of consensus and unanimity.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Russian): I thank the representative of the United Arab Emirates for the kind words he addressed to me.

The next speaker is the representative of Israel. I invite him to take a place at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. NETANYAHU (Israel): I should like to make three brief points, setting forth three reasons why we think that the draft resolution now before the Security Council should not be adopted.

The first reason is that the draft resolution does not address the problem - both the larger problem and the immediate problem - before the Council. The larger problem stems from the absence of any capacity in Lebanon to establish any authority or sovereignty over Lebanon's territory. That is in the first place the source of the attacks that are launched against us and have been launched against us for over eight years. It is also the source of the problems that afflict every square inch of Lebanon today. We have taken measures - as is our right - to protect ourselves. Every country must take measures when the territory of a neighbouring State is being used to wage war against it. Many of the countries represented round this table, and others, have done exactly that - and I do not recall Security Council meetings being devoted to their actions. Everyone knows that we have such a right. We could quibble about legalisms, but everybody understands, in common sense, that a country simply cannot forfeit its sovereignty and its responsibility to prevent the use of its territory for the launching of terrorist attacks against a neighbour.

Thus, so far as Israel's right and its obligation to act are concerned, we reserve that right and that obligation and shall continue to act on that basis.

(Mr. Netanyahu, Israel)

The other problem of sovereignty is the absence of any control over the spillover of violence of the warring factions inside Lebanon, the various fanatic groups and sects supported by external Powers. Specifically, if the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL), which also has been caught in the crossfire in this situation, were positioned north-south in the Bekaa Valley - many miles to the north - or if it were positioned in Beirut, it would absorb exactly the same kind of attacks, and possibly even more, because there would be greater freedom for Hezbollah and others to act. UNIFIL is a target in its own right, for the reasons I mentioned yesterday - and those reasons have absolutely nothing to do with resolution 425 (1978) or with any of the proposals made or propositions alluded to in the draft resolution now before the Council.

So that is the first objection to the draft resolution: it does not address the basic problem in Lebanon or the reason why we are meeting right now, in September, on this item and not next January.

(Mr. Netanyahu, Israel)

The second objection we have to the draft resolution is a very simple one: Hezbollah is killing UNIFIL troops. It is deliberately murdering French and other troops, and Hezbollah is watching this debate, it is watching this discussion this afternoon. And when Hezbollah sees that in response to its attacks, in response to those very attacks it has made on UNIFIL, the Council chooses to adopt a draft resolution that essentially points the finger at Israel, will Hezbollah stop its activities? I assure you, both from what they say - and we hear what they say - and also from the pattern of what they do - that they will increase them.

So this draft resolution, in itself, will contribute to a growth of terrorism, to a growth of attacks on UNIFIL - and not only on UNIFIL. On this point, I may say - as a personal comment, but a comment that also reflects the position of my Government - that there is an unfortunate regression. Last year, and, indeed, in some statements this year, this Council, and, indeed, this Organization, both in the General Assembly and in this Chamber, began to assume a more positive attitude towards terrorism, a much more forceful, uncompromising, unjustifying, unapologizing attitude towards the problem of terrorism. You attack the terrorists. You attack them politically and you acquire the means - the physical, military and other means necessary - to roll them back. This today is a regression, a clear regression from that general progress that I and my Government had thought this body was making.

The third objection is what this draft resolution specifically asks for - and I do not mean of Israel, I mean of the Secretariat and, specifically, of the Secretary-General. Under the present circumstances, the draft resolution is asking the Secretary-General to take on something that everybody around this table knows very well is not feasible, and certainly not feasible within the span of 14 or 21

(Mr. Netanyahu, Israel)

days, whichever, it makes no difference. Now, I do not believe that around this table the objective of most of the members is to bring about an impossible situation, to bring about a deliberate failure of mission, to bring about - perhaps to induce - some sort of process that will lead to the collapse of this Force. It is very easy to create conditions that are impossible; it is very easy to create failures. But the purpose of the Council and the purpose of this debate is to solve a real problem and not to offer fake solutions.

So, if the purpose is to address the problems as they are, if the purpose is not to encourage terrorism, if the issue is to maintain - indeed, to protect and secure - UNIFIL, then I would hope that most, that all of the responsible members of the Council will not lend their hand to this draft resolution.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Russian): I should now like to make a statement in my capacity as representative of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

The Soviet delegation has studied with great attention the special report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL), document S/18348. It has also carefully followed the Security Council's discussion of this item. We fully share the profound concern expressed by the Secretary-General and Council members at the situation that has emerged in the UNIFIL-occupied zone in Lebanon, quite rightly described in the report as "intolerable".

It is true that, having set up the Force in March 1978 following the large-scale Israeli invasion of Lebanon, the Security Council, in resolution 425 (1978), gave it the primary task of confirming the withdrawal of Israeli troops from Lebanese territory. Today, we are compelled to state that that task has not

(The President)

yet been fulfilled and that the situation in southern Lebanon where it concerns UNIFIL continues to worsen before one's very eyes.

The reasons underlying this extremely dangerous situation - as clearly stated in the Secretary-General's report - lie in Israel's continuing obstinate refusal to withdraw its troops from the territory of Lebanon. It is because of that situation created by Tel Aviv that UNIFIL is still unable to discharge the functions allocated to it under Security Council resolution 425 (1978).

That defiant disregard of Security Council resolutions, including the basic resolutions 508 (1982) and 509 (1982) demanding that Israel withdraw all its military forces forthwith and unconditionally to the internationally recognized boundaries of Lebanon, has been confirmed in the statements made yesterday and today by the representative of Israel. For many years now, the Israel occupiers have continued to hold sway on Lebanese soil. By employing local mercenaries Israel has illegally created a so-called security zone in the border areas of southern Lebanon to be used as a springboard for constant attacks and aggressive sorties against the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Lebanon, to strike deep into Lebanese territory and to destabilize the situation in that country generally. Council members, of course, know full well who is backing Israel, who is preventing the aggressor from being called to heel and who is systematically preventing the implementation of Council decisions, including those relating to implementation of the UNIFIL mandate.

Today, the people of Lebanon and the international community as a whole are faced with the dangerous consequences of that irresponsible policy of connivance with the aggressor being followed by Washington. It is precisely in that broader political context that we should view the recent armed incidents that have occurred

(The President)

in which UNIFIL servicemen have been attacked. In a statement issued on 5 September of this year, Council members voiced their unanimous indignation at such resort to deliberate violence, which places in jeopardy the safety of the members of the Force.

I should like to take this opportunity to express sincere sympathy to the Governments of Ireland and France and to the families of the UNIFIL servicemen. I should also like to stress that the armed acts of provocation against UNIFIL call for condemnation and must cease forthwith. At the same time, those tragic events, which once again highlight the dangerous and abnormal situation in which UNIFIL is compelled to operate, should not obscure the main point, namely, that the solution to the problems of southern Lebanon must involve the cessation of Israeli occupation of Lebanese territory. As the Secretary-General clearly pointed out in his special report:

"The solution lies in complete withdrawal of Israeli forces from Lebanese territory and the deployment of UNIFIL to the international frontier where it can play the role originally assigned to it" (S/18348, para. 32).

That, in the opinion of the Secretary-General, is the best way to promote and enhance the security of the UNIFIL servicemen, and we fully share that view.

(The President)

The Soviet Union decisively condemns Israel's continuing aggression in Lebanon and expresses solidarity with the people of Lebanon fighting for their legitimate rights. The key to normalizing the situation in Lebanon is clearly set forth in Security Council resolutions 425 (1978), 508 (1982) and 509 (1982), calling for the withdrawal of Israeli troops from the whole of Lebanese territory. It is the Soviet delegation's conviction that it is the bounden duty of the Security Council to secure implementation of those decisions and seek a cessation of Israeli occupation in Lebanon. Respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the State of Lebanon must be ensured and an end put to the arbitrary rule of the Israeli authorities vis-à-vis the civilian population in the southern part of that country.

The withdrawal of Israeli troops to the international border would naturally create favourable conditions so that the United Nations Force could finally be enabled to discharge the tasks assigned to it by the Security Council. The alternative to this decision would be merely a further escalation of tension in south Lebanon, something which is fraught with very serious consequences for international peace and security in the region.

I now resume my functions as President.

Mr. Clovis Maksoud, Permanent Observer of the League of Arab States to the United Nations, has asked to make a statement. With the consent of the Council, I invite him to take a place at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. MAKSOUD: I had not intended to make another statement, given that the Security Council is called upon urgently to vote on the draft resolution before it, which seeks to correct the obstruction in the way of implementation of the mandate of the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) - obstruction which has lasted for far too long and which has strained the patience of the international community almost to the breaking point.

(Mr. Maksoud)

But after hearing the representative of Israel registering his reasons for objecting to the proposed resolution - not necessarily objections, for not only does he object but his country actually obstruct its implementation - I felt duty-bound to make an additional statement and respond to the reasons given by Israel because these reasons tend to provide insight into the overall strategy of response, the ideological background of the policy it pursues and the basic patronizing attitude characteristic of an occupying Power.

First of all, does the Security Council address the problem of Lebanon? In a way, yes; and in a way, no. The problems of Lebanon are for the Lebanese to resolve. Hence it is not within the Council's purview to address Lebanon's internal problems. Needless to say, the Lebanese themselves are fully aware that they have problems. At precisely the moment when the Lebanese parties were taking serious, constructive steps towards national reconciliation, Israel chose to time its aggression today - as it did before - in a way so as to complicate further the process of national unity and cohesion by maintaining an illegal presence inside Lebanon, in south Lebanon, openly prompting illegal militias to defy the authority of the central Government and advertising that it had also a claim on part of the militias just like everyone else.

It is the diagnostic fallacy of Israel about Lebanon and the timing of Israel's aggression that have led many in the Council and throughout the international community to focus - perhaps once and for all - on the real causes of the Lebanese tragedy. The international community has come to the conclusion that since Israel's invasion of 1978 - as I said yesterday - Israel has refused to withdraw from all Lebanese territories, refused to allow UNIFIL to implement its mandate, rode roughshod over UNIFIL in 1982. After redeploying its troops to south Lebanon, it has continued to sustain an illegal militia that defies the authority of both UNIFIL and the Lebanese central Government.

(Mr. Maksoud)

Yet the Security Council is seized of this question and it has every right to be, since as a Member of the United Nations Lebanon has consistently depended on the United Nations for the preservation of its territorial integrity. Hence Lebanese authorities and Lebanese parties have always been aware that one principal factor of stability in Lebanon is that the territory of south Lebanon should be restored to the sovereignty of the State in order that the State can shoulder its national and international commitments and responsibilities.

It is the presence of Israeli occupation forces in south Lebanon and Israel's repeated attempts to invalidate UNIFIL that have helped to contribute to the destabilizing situation in Lebanon. The Lebanese President and the Lebanese Cabinet have for the past three to four weeks met repeatedly to secure national reconciliation. In doing so, they have - as the Ambassador of Lebanon has stated - looked to the United Nations to honour its commitments in order to enable Lebanon to carry out its own responsibilities.

(Mr. Maksoud)

For the Israeli representative to come before this Council and manipulate the tragedy of Lebanon to sustain Israeli military and strategic hegemony in the South of Lebanon, which is the cause of repeated crises and the undoing of our Lebanese national cohesion, represents the ultimate in aggressiveness. Then, he reinforces his statement by contemptuously asserting to this Council, ex cathedra, that Israel will maintain its right to continued occupation of the South of Lebanon, on the false pretext of maintaining a "security zone".

Whom is the Israeli delegation trying to bluff? The problem and the crisis with the Israelis is that they come arrogantly and speak ex cathedra, consumed with their own sense of temporary power and openly exercising their disproportionate military strength. On the pretext of maintaining a "security zone", they are trying to consolidate the notion that they can continue to maintain their occupation of South Lebanon. They are thus informing the Security Council that that is a "right" that Israel intends to exercise. That means that, irrespective of what the Security Council decides, they will continue to practise what they have always practised and preached: that the Security Council can adopt as many resolutions as it wants - and the draft resolution before the Council refers to such past resolutions as 425 (1978), 444 (1979), 450 (1979), 459 (1979), 474 (1980), 483 (1980), 488 (1981), 508 (1982) and 509 (1982) - but that they will stand by their self-righteous proclamation that their occupation of South Lebanon is a prerogative of their exercise of sovereignty. That is as if the sovereignty of Israel were predicated on the perpetual violation of Lebanon's sovereignty.

Then, in discussing his objections to the draft resolution, the Israeli representative condescendingly said that the Council should not quibble about legalisms. Naturally, his desire that the Council should not quibble about legalisms emerges from a sustained ideological and practical commitment to the defiance and violation of international law, which Israel has been guilty of not

(Mr. Maksoud)

only in South Lebanon but in its annexation of the Golan, in its annexation of Jerusalem and in the proliferation of illegal settlements in the West Bank and Gaza. The Israeli representative's talk of "quibbling about legalisms" is in fact an attempt to enshrine Israel's defiance and to sustain its contempt of international law by prompting the Security Council to neglect legality.

Then the Israeli representative spoke about the spillover of violence in Lebanon on to the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL). In the semantic acrobatics he seeks to perform in this Council we see a deliberate attempt to use the term "violence" as if it were a characteristic of the resistance. Let me repeat the obvious: the occupation of Lebanese territory is illegal; it is conducted and maintained by the use of force, by the use of the logistical, military, financial and intelligence capabilities of Israel, directly or vicariously through its illegal elements in South Lebanon. That is planned violence that terrorizes the residents of the occupied territory. That is a form of terrorism that is not discussed so much these days. But that kind of terrorism is highly structured, systematic and sustained, and comes in the guise of an Israeli army terrorizing residents by air, by sea and on land, day in and day out, in Lebanese villages and towns and in the Palestinian refugee camps.

Israel expects its occupation, its presence, its attacks and its inhuman practices to go both unnoticed by the Security Council and unresisted by the population. If the population resists it will be described as terrorism: in the usual tradition of all racist and colonial Powers, Israel describes resistance as terrorism, lumping obnoxious individual acts by desperadoes together with legitimate forms of national resistance to occupation.

(Mr. Maksoud)

We therefore submit the following observations: resistance petitions the United Nations and sometimes even petitions the occupying force; it demonstrates; it protests. Violence is the option of last resort. It is when persuasion becomes hopeless that occupation must pay the price. That is the significance of resistance on this, the fourth anniversary of the emergence of the Lebanese national resistance in the South of Lebanon.

If Israel complies with the resolutions of the Security Council and withdraws forthwith from the occupied territories of Lebanon, much of the violence will be not removed, but definitely defused pending the ultimate historical reconciliation which the Lebanese have sought but which has eluded them. The draft resolution before the Council addresses a central problem of Lebanon; it does not address the entire situation of Lebanon, and it is not expected to.

Another diversionary tactic is the assertion that this Council is meeting, and should be meeting, to address the problem of Hezbollah. Suddenly, the Israeli representative, assuming the cleverness of Israel's detailed intelligence, poses as an expert on Hezbollah. Let me state in response that every time a society loses hope in being able to exercise its legitimate internationally recognized rights, that is a recipe for ensuring that resistance will develop a fringe of recklessness. Resolve the problem of South Lebanon, execute the mandate of the Security Council, allow UNIFIL to be deployed to the international boundaries of Lebanon, enable the Lebanese army - as the representative of Lebanon said yesterday - to be complemented by UNIFIL in the South of Lebanon, and you will have none of the lunatic fringes trying to ride the coattails of legitimate resistance to occupation, for when resistance appears to be helpless to restore legitimacy the door is opened to reckless exploitation.

(Mr. Maksoud)

Therefore, in a way the cause of much of the tragedy we have witnessed in southern Lebanon is the fact that there has been no hope of implementing the resolution, and therefore there is a hopelessness about fulfilling the Security Council's mandate. The draft resolution is a serious attempt to rectify that imbalance. That is why the League of Arab States hopes that the Security Council will support it.

The Israeli representative says that the time-table, 21 days, is unrealistic and not feasible. Is it a strange suggestion that any resolution should be instantly implemented when adopted, if the Security Council is to exert its authority and if its mechanism is to regain credibility and effectiveness? From our vantage point the period of 21 days is too long. However, if it is the collective wisdom of the Council that the Secretary-General should have 21 days to report not on the situation, but on the implementation of the resolution, the purpose is to give time to some of those who are reluctant to restrain Israel in its addiction to aggression; it is to placate those that show characteristic permissiveness as regards Israel's behaviour. In the world of today that may be a realistic bow to the power of power. The period of 21 days is a time-frame that is considered reasonable, therefore it is acceptable to us.

On the other hand, we have a warning for the Council, in the light of today's events, Mr. Rabin's repeated statements and the potential - as indicated by Mr. Rabin - for extending the security zone to another sector of Lebanese territory, with another influx of Israeli soldiers and attacks similar to those that have already taken place. Let us hope that the period of 21 days does not mean a repeat demonstration of Israel's addiction to attack, to strike, to expand and to invade.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Russian): It is my understanding that the Council is ready to proceed to vote on the draft resolution. If I hear no objection, I shall put the draft resolution to the vote now.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

I shall now call on those members of the Council who wish to make statements before the voting.

Sir John THOMSON (United Kingdom): My intervention yesterday was the result of a question raised by the Permanent Representative of Israel. Today I wish to address the draft resolution put forward by the Permanent Representative of France.

I repeat the condolences I offered yesterday to the French and Irish delegations and to the families of those gallant soldiers who have been killed or wounded. I also repeat my praise for the troops of the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) and for the Governments that have been public-spirited enough to contribute to it.

The situation in southern Lebanon is more than serious; it is dangerous. I fully agree with the Permanent Representative of France, who said in opening the debate on Friday that the events of recent weeks were of a different order from those we had witnessed hitherto. The delegation of France is entirely right to bring the situation before us and to ask for action. My delegation supports this call.

The draft resolution is in firm but necessarily general language. It remains for the Secretariat to work out exactly what steps need to be taken. We favour additional security measures, but shall need careful and detailed costings before we can take a position on them.

(Sir John Thomson, United Kingdom)

The draft resolution rightly condemns in the strongest terms the attacks against UNIFIL and expresses indignation at any support which may overtly or covertly be given to them. Those attacks show the intention of certain people to defy not only the international community but also the great majority of the local people. They are intended to call UNIFIL's continued existence into question.

Lest there be any doubt, I should make it clear that the Council is not meeting on this occasion following harassment of UNIFIL by Israel or Israeli-controlled forces. The armed elements attacking UNIFIL in recent weeks seem to prefer anonymity, but this does not prevent our having a fairly clear idea of who they are and what their ultimate purpose is. Their use of violence against a United Nations Force is wholly unacceptable. The ending of that violence is the urgent concern of the Council, but experience and careful analysis have shown that a full and lasting solution will not be possible without also addressing the wider problems facing UNIFIL in carrying out its mandate under resolution 425 (1978).

UNIFIL was created to assist in restoring peace and security to the international border between Lebanon and Israel. It has long been the Council's view, embodied not only in resolution 425 (1978) and subsequent resolutions renewing UNIFIL's mandate but also, in the strongest terms, in resolution 509 (1982), that Israel should withdraw its forces completely from Lebanese soil and fully respect the sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity of Lebanon. The same conclusion has been reached in successive reports on the situation of UNIFIL by the Secretary-General, most recently in the comprehensive and realistic account of UNIFIL's problems he presented on 18 September in document S/18348.

(Sir John Thomson,
United Kingdom)

I do not suggest that the mere withdrawal of Israeli forces from Lebanese soil, and the ending of Israeli control of a part of Lebanese territory, will prove to be the full answer. Given instability in the area and the presence of armed and warring groups within the Arab and Islamic worlds, other measures may be required to restore the authority of the Lebanese Government and ensure peace along the international frontier. But there is no possibility of any solution without the withdrawal of Israeli forces and the deployment of UNIFIL to the border in accordance with its mandate under resolution 425 (1978).

(Sir John Thomson, United Kingdom)

The continuing refusal by Israel to withdraw can only lead to the perpetuation of the highly unstable and dangerous conditions which now reign in the area and which offer outsiders the opportunity for interference. My delegation firmly believes that no outside forces should be permitted in any part of Lebanon except those which have the consent of the Lebanese Government, and therefore it will vote in favour of the draft resolution now before the Council.

Mr. LI LUYE (China) (interpretation from Chinese): At the outset, I wish to congratulate you, Sir, on your assumption of the presidency of the Security Council for this month. I have every conviction that, with your outstanding ability in diplomacy, you will certainly guide this Council to the successful accomplishment of its tasks of this month. I wish also to take this opportunity to thank Ambassador Alleyne of Trinidad and Tobago for conducting the proceedings of the Council in an active and steady manner last month.

Over the past few weeks, the conditions of UNIFIL have drastically deteriorated as the result of a series of irresponsible and unprovoked attacks against the Interim Force in southern Lebanon, during which a number of French and Irish officers and soldiers lost their lives while carrying out the noble mission of peace-keeping in the Middle East. On behalf of the Chinese Government, I wish to convey our condolences to the deceased and express our sympathy and solicitude to the Governments of their countries and the bereaved families. I wish also to convey our respect to all the UNIFIL officers and soldiers who stand fast at their posts despite difficult conditions and dedicate themselves to the United Nations cause of peace-keeping and to the Governments of the troop-contributing countries.

The Chinese delegation has studied the special report of the Secretary-General on UNIFIL (S/18348) and taken note of some of the important suggestions he raised in the report. We thank him and his colleagues for the report.

(Mr. Li Luye, China)

The Chinese delegation is of the view that the continued presence of UNIFIL is necessary and that the reasons given by the Secretary-General as to why he "cannot recommend that the Council decide to withdraw the Force" (S/18348, para. 31) are understandable. At the same time, we truly believe that UNIFIL faces serious difficulties, or even a crisis, which must be resolved at the earliest possible date.

The Chinese delegation has consistently maintained that the fundamental solution to the problems confronting the Force lies in the following: Security Council resolution 425 (1978) must be steadfastly implemented; Lebanon's territorial integrity, sovereignty and political independence must be strictly respected; Israel must withdraw all its troops from the territory of Lebanon and dismantle the so-called security zone it has set up in southern Lebanon; and UNIFIL should be stationed along the international border of Lebanon so as to truly play its proper role of maintaining international peace and security. This is also the best way to improve the safety of the Force's personnel. The Security Council is obliged to make resolute efforts and adopt effective measures towards this end. The Chinese delegation calls on all parties concerned to work in co-operation with, and render the necessary support to, UNIFIL, without which it would be impossible for the Force to accomplish its mission.

The Chinese delegation will vote in favour of the draft resolution as contained in document S/18356. At the same time, I wish to state the following position of the Chinese Government: We hope that the costs incurred in the implementation of the relevant provisions of the draft resolution will be covered by the regular budget of UNIFIL and not by extra funds.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Russian): I thank the representative of China for his kind words addressed to me.

Mr. BIERRING (Denmark): Mr. President, it gives me great pleasure not only to welcome you as the new Permanent Representative of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics to the United Nations but also to congratulate you on your assumption of the presidency of the Council for the month of September. The very skilful way in which you have already guided the Council's deliberations augurs well for a highly successful presidency. I also wish to express my delegation's appreciation to the Permanent Representative of Trinidad and Tobago,

for Alleyne, for the excellent way in which he conducted the work of the Council during the month of August.

Mr. President, allow me first to convey, through you, to the Governments of France and Ireland, as well as to the families of the UNIFIL soldiers who were killed or wounded during the recent incidents in southern Lebanon, my Government's profound sympathy and condolences.

These incidents most tragically illustrate the rapid deterioration of the situation in southern Lebanon and the extremely difficult conditions under which the soldiers of UNIFIL operate.

Denmark fully understands and shares the view that the recent developments and particularly the series of premeditated attacks against the French contingent, the latest of which occurred only a few days ago, have created an intolerable situation for UNIFIL.

These attacks can in no way be justified and deserve the unanimous condemnation of all members of the international community. It is imperative that such deliberate attacks against United Nations soldiers, whose only ambition is to serve peace in the area, be brought to an end immediately.

(Mr. Bierring, Denmark)

What is at stake here is not only the very future of an important United Nations peace-keeping operation but indeed the fate of thousands of innocent civilians in strife-ridden Lebanon.

Denmark, therefore, strongly urges all concerned parties in the area to avail themselves of whatever influence they have in order to bring about the cessation of the attacks.

These attacks have clearly shown the vulnerability of UNIFIL and the necessity of adopting urgent measures aimed at the effective enhancement of the security of the members of the Force.

My delegation, therefore, welcomes the decision of the Secretary-General to advance the departure to the region of the mission of inquiry headed by Mr. Goulding to consider measures to be taken to improve the security of UNIFIL and to consult once more with the parties on how progress can be made towards implementation of Security Council resolution 425 (1978).

(Mr. Bierring, Denmark)

In his special report on the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL), the Secretary-General describes the measures already taken to improve the security of the members of the Force and a number of recommendations by the Force Commander which in his view would respond well to the situation in which UNIFIL finds itself. The Security Council should give serious consideration to those recommendations, and I can assure the Secretary-General and the other members of the Council that Denmark is ready to bear its fair share of the extra cost involved in their implementation.

I turn now to the long-standing problems concerning UNIFIL's mission. My Government has for long been of the opinion that the solution lies in complete withdrawal of Israeli forces from Lebanese territory and the deployment of UNIFIL to the international frontier. We fully understand Israel's legitimate concern over the security of its northern border, across which it has been in the past, and still is, subjected to attack. At the same time, however, it has been and continues to be our firm belief that the present security zone is neither a legitimate nor an effective means of meeting Israel's security concerns.

The possible consequences of the continuation of the present impasse is clearly stated in the Secretary-General's report. Such a situation would in our best judgement not be in the interest of any of the parties concerned. It is therefore essential that all efforts be exerted to ensure substantial progress towards implementation of resolution 425 (1978).

For the reasons I have outlined my delegation will vote in favour of the draft resolution before us. We have, however, certain reservations as to the realism of the time-limit contained in the draft.

(Mr. Bierring, Denmark)

In conclusion, I should like to reaffirm my Government's strong support for UNIFIL and express our deep gratitude to the troop-contributing countries for the sacrifices which they have already made as well as to the Commander, officers and men of UNIFIL for the exemplary dedication and courage they have shown in performing their dangerous and difficult tasks. I also commend the Secretary-General and his staff for their untiring efforts to solve the problems which have weighed so heavily on UNIFIL since its establishment.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Russian): I thank the representative of Denmark for the kind words he addressed to me.

Mr. TSVETKOV (Bulgaria) (interpretation from French): Since I have not yet had an opportunity of congratulating you, Comrade President, on your assumption of the presidency of the Security Council for September, I wish to do so now. And I do so with pleasure, since I have no doubts whatsoever that your excellent professional qualities ensure the success of the work of this very important body. It is all the more satisfying to me to honour in that post the worthy representative of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, to which my country, the People's Republic of Bulgaria, is linked by fraternal ties of friendship, mutual co-operation and assistance, within the socialist family.

I take this opportunity also of extending my delegation's gratitude to Mr. Alleyne, the Permanent Representative of Trinidad and Tobago, on the outstanding way in which he carried out his duties as President of the Council in August.

It is a matter of deep concern that the Security Council has had to meet once again in a period of two weeks to consider the situation in southern Lebanon, in the light of the special report by the Secretary-General on the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL). And there is good reason for the Council to

(Mr. Tsvetkov, Bulgaria)

meet. The situation in southern Lebanon remains extremely serious. What is more, we are witnessing there a dangerous escalation of tension that could degenerate into direct armed conflict. The incidents of provocation which have continued to afflict UNIFIL and have resulted in the death of innocent victims are a cause for serious concern.

On behalf of my Government, I take this opportunity of expressing our sincere sympathy to the French and Irish Governments as well as our condolences to the families of the victims. These acts of provocation against the United Nations Force in southern Lebanon demand our condemnation; they must be stopped immediately.

The recent tragic events are further proof of the abnormal and dangerous conditions in which UNIFIL operates and which prevent it from fulfilling its mandate under Security Council resolution 425 (1978). The main reason for that state of affairs and for the deterioration in the situation in southern Lebanon is well known to all. It is Israel's continued occupation of a large part of Lebanese territory, as well as the constant, systematic acts of aggression directed by the Israeli occupier and its lackeys in southern Lebanon against the independent and sovereign Lebanese State.

I express my Government's gratitude for the Secretary-General's special report on UNIFIL and thank him for its objectivity and its prompt preparation. I would expressly emphasize that the Bulgarian delegation entirely shares the conclusion of the report that

"The solution lies in complete withdrawal of Israeli forces from Lebanese territory and the deployment of UNIFIL to the international frontier, where it can play the role originally assigned to it of restoring international peace and security". (S/18348, para. 32)

(Mr. Tsvetkov, Bulgaria)

Such a solution conforms fully to the views of the People's Republic of Bulgaria on this question. As is well known, the means for achieving a just and lasting peace in Lebanon are clearly and unequivocally indicated in Security Council resolutions 508 (1982) and 509 (1982), in which the Council demanded that Israel withdraw all its military forces forthwith and unconditionally to the internationally recognized boundaries of Lebanon. Moreover, the international community unanimously believes that a solution to the problems in Lebanon is possible only on the basis of the maintenance of the unity, independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity of Lebanon.

It is our view that it is high time to make Israel comply with the Security Council resolutions. To that end, what is required first and foremost is the constructive co-operation of all the members of the Council. In our opinion, the Security Council, which the Charter has endowed with the necessary competence and machinery, can and must urgently take measures to guarantee the application of its decisions - in this case, those concerning southern Lebanon.

Given the positive role that UNIFIL is called upon to play in regard to the solution of Lebanon's problems, the Bulgarian delegation believes that, despite the continued deterioration of the conditions in which the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon is obliged to operate, it should continue to carry out its mandate as defined in Security Council resolution 425 (1978) and the subsequent relevant resolutions.

(Mr. Tsvetkov, Bulgaria)

For all those reasons, while we would have preferred the draft resolution to include a more explicit mention of the withdrawal of Israeli forces to the internationally-recognized borders of Lebanon, in keeping with Security Council resolution 425 (1978), and although there are other aspects of the draft resolution with which we are not entirely satisfied, Bulgaria will vote in favour of the draft resolution, while reserving the right to express our views on its financial implications when those are known.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Russian): I thank the representative of Bulgaria for his kind words addressed to me.

Mr. WOOLCOTT (Australia): As this is the first time I am speaking in the Council this month, let me at the outset congratulate you, Sir, on your assumption of the presidency for the month of September. My delegation is confident that, as a representative of a country with the power and influence of the Soviet Union, in which I personally have had the pleasure of serving on two occasions in my career, you will carry out your duties with impartiality and with your already acknowledged diplomatic skills.

I would also like to express the appreciation of my delegation to Ambassador Alleyne of Trinidad and Tobago, for the patient, tactful and effective manner in which he conducted the affairs of the Council throughout August.

I should also like to extend Australia's sincere condolences to France and to Ireland and to the families of the members of their armed forces over the tragic losses which they have suffered. I also wish to pay tribute to all of the troop-contributing countries of the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIPIL) for the courageous manner in which they are serving the cause of peace-keeping at this difficult and dangerous time.

(Mr. Woolcott, Australia)

My delegation has listened attentively to each of the preceding speakers. Australia will vote in favour of the draft resolution before us because we support its general thrust and, in particular, because we believe that all foreign forces in Lebanon should withdraw, except those which are there at the request of the Government of Lebanon. We consider that the draft resolution is also helpful in making clear the complete unacceptability of armed attacks against a United Nations peace-keeping force. That is something we deplore.

The Permanent Representative of Israel said a few minutes ago that deliberate attacks on UNIFIL will not stop, but we must hope that they will and that the draft resolution before us will be heeded by those responsible for the attacks against UNIFIL. While Israel's refusal to withdraw all of its forces from Lebanon has clearly prevented UNIFIL from fulfilling its mandate, the recent incidents which have given rise to this draft resolution are a manifestation of a different - even if related - problem. As the Secretary-General noted in his special report, armed elements have begun attacking UNIFIL because of their opposition to the very presence of the United Nations Force.

We all know that the Security Council is meeting at a critical time for UNIFIL. As the Secretary-General has noted, the Force faces a major crisis. This is so despite the commitment of the troop-contributing countries and the financial and political support of the great majority of Member States. Clearly, we are facing a delicate situation and a period of anxiety and uncertainty. My delegation is concerned about the future of UNIFIL, and we can only hope that, despite the obvious difficulties, which were underlined with painful clarity in the statements made in this Council yesterday and, indeed, again today, this draft resolution will go some way towards enabling the Force to fulfil its mandate in accordance with

(Mr. Gbeho, Ghana)

resolution 425 (1978). The draft resolution before the Security Council today expresses the view that this should happen. It is now up to all those more directly involved to find the will to see that it does happen.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Russian): I thank the representative of Australia for his kind words addressed to me.

Mr. GBEHO (Ghana): My delegation has already had the opportunity to congratulate you, Sir, on your assumption of your duties as President of the Council. Permit me, however, to add my personal congratulations to those already offered you. Your country and mine have had common positions on many of the issues that come before the Council, and I am hopeful that under your presidency progress can be made in the Council in finding solutions to some of the intractable problems with which the Council is seized.

May I also add my personal appreciation and congratulations to Ambassador Alleyne of Trinidad and Tobago for his exemplary and brilliant presidency during the month of August.

I had not previously intended to speak. I decided to do so a few moments ago because I thought that, since Ghana is a troop-contributing country and one of the very few from the continent of Africa, Africa's voice should also be heard in this debate.

A few days ago the Council decided to authorize the Secretary-General to send a mission to southern Lebanon to investigate on the ground the activities that have caused the Council to be convened. Today, the report of that mission is before the Council, and my delegation has studied it very carefully. What is more, the Ghana delegation has also listened to all sides in this debate, and I am happy to say that the report generally enjoys the support of my delegation.

(Mr. Gbeho, Ghana)

The Ghana delegation is able to give its support to the Secretary-General's conclusions, and particularly to the arrangements made to meet the increasing escalation of violence, because its thrust confirms what was reported to the Council earlier on, namely, that there is indeed a dangerous escalation of violence in southern Lebanon. What is more, the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) itself, in spite of its mandate, has become the target of that violence.

In the debate to which we have listened, one thing has been clear, and that is reflected in the Secretary-General's report: the continued illegal occupation of the sovereign territory of Lebanon is at the core of the problem in southern Lebanon today.

We heard the Ambassador of Israel refer to another aspect of the situation. In his statement he tried hard to put the blame on parties other than Israel, especially the Hezbollah, and sought to conclude that, therefore, it was the Hezbollah that was causing all the tension in southern Lebanon, and not Israel's illegal presence there.

(Mr. Gbeho, Ghana)

After having carefully considered that evidence, my delegation has come to the conclusion that we cannot put too much credence on it, for it lacks the hallmark of proof. Quotations from civilians and from one or two religious figures reported in a Lebanese newspaper cannot be accepted by the Council as watertight proof for the ongoing violence.

On the other hand, it is accepted by practically all who have cared to debate the issue that because the presence of Israel in the so-called security zone is an act of lawlessness in itself it has tended to encourage further lawlessness and has also made Israeli troops and representatives targets of violence in south Lebanon.

My delegation was more than disappointed yesterday when the representative of Israel posed a rhetorical question about Lebanon. He asked: what sovereignty; what central authority? He went on further to ask: when was the last time the President of Lebanon visited south Lebanon? The visit of the President of Lebanon to the area of violence cannot be the test of sovereignty of the country, and we regret that this attitude seems to be at the root of Israeli attitude vis-à-vis Lebanon.

We shall therefore vote in favour of the draft resolution before the Council, because it reiterates what we ourselves - as a State and as a troop-contributing country - have said all along, that the continued illegal presence of Israeli forces in south Lebanon cannot be acceptable to the Council.

Before I conclude, allow me to convey the sympathy and condolences of my delegation and my country to the representatives of France and Ireland on the irreparable losses they have sustained recently in Lebanon. We ask that our condolences be conveyed especially to the families of those soldiers who, unfortunately, were killed in the course of United Nations duty.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Russian): I thank the representative of Ghana for the kind words he addressed to me.

I shall now put to the vote the draft resolution contained in document S/18356.

A vote was taken by show of hands.

In favour: Australia, Bulgaria, China, Congo, Denmark, France, Ghana, Madagascar, Thailand, Trinidad and Tobago, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, Venezuela

Against: None

Abstaining: United States of America

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Russian): The result of the voting is as follows: 14 in favour, none against and 1 abstention. The draft resolution has therefore been adopted as resolution 587 (1986).

I call on the representative of the United States, who wishes to make a statement following the voting.

Mr. WALTERS (United States of America): This is the first time I have had occasion to congratulate you, Sir, on your assumption of the presidency of the Security Council. We are sure that you will continue to guide the Council's deliberations with the same distinction and steadfast diplomatic skills that have marked your career in the service of your country in various parts of the world.

I would also like to thank Ambassador Alleyne for the distinguished and impartial way in which he guided the Council during the month of August, and we who know him and know what he has done are much in his debt.

The United States has consistently and vigorously supported the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) since that Force was created in 1978. In very difficult circumstances and in the face of major obstacles, UNIFIL has made a significant contribution to the stability of south Lebanon. We continue to believe

(Mr. Walters, United States)

that UNIFIL plays an important role, both in the present circumstances and in the context of possible future arrangements which, by ensuring stability in south Lebanon and security for northern Israel, could enable it to fulfil its mandate.

Our support for UNIFIL as an organization is matched by our respect and admiration for the troops who have manned it over the years. The troop-contributors have faced the dangers of their mission with courage and fortitude. UNIFIL has suffered casualties in the cause of peace, and we salute those who have made these sacrifices. Most recently the brave sons of two nations - France and Ireland - with which my country enjoys the closest of relations, have lost their lives on behalf of peace in Lebanon. I wish to use this occasion to express my deepest sympathy to the families of these brave men and to the armed forces to which they belonged.

In particular, we join our voices to those of civilized people everywhere in deploring the recent wave of attacks on UNIFIL soldiers. Those who have carried out these attacks are criminals. We strongly endorse efforts by the Secretary-General and others to improve the security of the Force and we hope that any step that can contribute to the safety of those in the field will be taken as soon as possible. We urge all those who live in south Lebanon and benefit from the stability and security that UNIFIL provides to continue their support of that courageous Force.

It is precisely because of our strong support for UNIFIL and its goals that we regret that we had to abstain in the vote on this resolution, put forward by a close friend and ally. As the record clearly shows, we are prepared to make considerable sacrifice for the sake of Lebanon sovereignty, unity and independence. In addition to our own consistent and firm support for UNIFIL, our own forces, together with those of France, have given their lives in Beirut for the same objective. But one thing is quite clear: it is not Israel that is killing and

(Mr. Walters, United States)

wounding the soldiers of UNIFIL, and this is a watertight truth. Unfortunately, the resolution just adopted by the Council will not support that objective. It calls on the Secretary-General

"... to make the necessary arrangements for a deployment of the Force to the southern border of Lebanon".

By focusing exclusively on redeployment of the Force the resolution ignores the critical factor that has prevented the fulfilment of UNIFIL's mandate: the absence of agreement among the parties concerned on security arrangements that would protect their respective interests.

Our position is clear: lasting peace and stability in south Lebanon can come only through agreed on security measures that ensure both the safety and the well-being of the people of south Lebanon and of Israelis who live near the Lebanese border and who have also been victims of violence and terror originating in south Lebanon.

(Mr. Walters, United States)

Such measures must be agreed on by the parties concerned; they are not in the power of the Secretary-General to impose. It is neither realistic nor responsible to demand this, and doing so will only increase the level of friction and mistrust that seems to have been an obstacle to the fulfilment of the mandate of the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL).

The situation in South Lebanon is fraught with danger. The United States believes that the status quo is unsatisfactory for Lebanese and Israelis alike, as well as for UNIFIL. To deal with this situation a renewed effort is needed to achieve agreed-on security arrangements that protect the interests of all concerned. If the Council wishes to act it should address itself to this task.

The question that must be faced is: What action can be taken in these next weeks? We agree with the view expressed here yesterday that the attacks against UNIFIL would not cease if its area of deployment were changed. These attacks occur because of the absence of adequate Government of Lebanon authority in the area where UNIFIL is already deployed. The problem, in short, is that the Government of Lebanon, unfortunately, is not able to exercise its authority over the territory from which the attacks against UNIFIL are being launched. If this Council in its deliberations is to do anything useful, this lack of effective authority in the area where UNIFIL already exists is the first, not the last, question to be addressed. Indeed, one of the missions of UNIFIL, as spelled out in previous resolutions of this Council, is to assist the Government of Lebanon in restoring its authority over its territory. If this problem can be solved the remaining problems all but solve themselves. If this problem cannot be solved in a short time-frame, attention must then be directed to ameliorating the dangers to UNIFIL that flow from the lack of effective authority in that part of Lebanon.

(Mr. Walters, United States)

We must also reserve our position on what we will do when the Council receives the report, a report which must focus on all aspects of this problem. It is incumbent upon the Council to put the time that we have to good use. The Council should not allow itself to be rushed into actions which can make the already difficult situation worse.

I wish to be completely clear: we support UNIFIL. We respect and admire the troop-contributors, which include some of our closest allies. However, we did not believe that a draft resolution such as the one that was before us today would advance that end.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Russian): I thank the representative of the United States of America for the kind words he addressed to me.

The representative of Lebanon has asked to make a statement, and I call upon him now.

Mr. FAKHOURY (Lebanon) (interpretation from Arabic): My delegation cannot refrain from expressing its astonishment and deep regret at the result of the voting on the draft resolution submitted by France, and specifically at the abstention of the delegation of the United States, even though the draft resolution laid stress on Security Council resolution 425 (1978), which, as members will recall, was formulated and submitted by the delegation of the United States in 1978.

We had expected the speedy implementation of resolution 425 (1978); we had expected that the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) would have been enabled to fulfil its mandate completely and as quickly as possible. That would have been the case had it not been for Israel's refusal to withdraw from Lebanon and the impossibility of deploying UNIFIL units to the internationally recognized

(Mr. Fakhoury, Lebanon)

border. We had hoped for unanimity among Council members, as there had been last April and last July when they extended UNIFIL's mandate and this September, when the President of the Council issued a statement. We had hoped that the Council would be unanimous today in adopting a resolution stressing the need to implement past resolutions in order to ensure the safety of the men of the Force.

The future of UNIFIL - and hence the future of southern Lebanon and its civilian population, and the population of Lebanon - remains the direct responsibility of the Security Council.

I must call attention to the fact that today's vote in the Security Council coincides with the intensification of acts of aerial aggression committed by Israel against villages in the mountains of Lebanon and with shelling by artillery provided by Israel to the so-called South Lebanon Army. The shelling has been directed against several villages in southern Lebanon.

The responsibility lies, first and foremost, with the permanent members of the Security Council, and they should fully shoulder that responsibility. The major question is: what will follow the forthcoming report by the Secretary-General? What does the future hold for UNIFIL? Lebanon cannot accept that all the bloodshed and sacrifices made by UNIFIL units should be in vain not because of any failure on their part to fulfil their mandate, but because of difficulties placed in their way.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Russian): There are no further speakers for this meeting. The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on its agenda.

The meeting rose at 5.50 p.m.

