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THE SITUATION IN THE MIDDLE EAST

SECURITY COUNCIL  
Thirty-fourth year

Letter dated 28 August 1979 from the Permanent Representative of  
Lebanon to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I.

Upon instructions from my Government, I am conveying our appreciation for the appeal you addressed to "all parties concerned" on Friday, 24 August 1979, for a cease-fire in South Lebanon, and the efforts deployed by Your Excellency, the Commander of UNIFIL and members of the Secretariat to implement a cease-fire on the terrain. My Government wishes to share your deep sorrow for the death of the Fijian soldiers who had come to serve the cause of peace in Lebanon. We pray that you convey to the Commander of UNIFIL and the Government of Fiji our most heartfelt sentiments, and the hope that we shall all be able to put an end to what is now commonly called "the cycle of violence", imperilling peace and security, and preventing the implementation of Security Council resolutions, let alone the unbearable losses in human lives, the destruction of property, and the near to total disruption of civil society. Already in our letter of 11 July 1979 to the President of the Security Council (S/13452) we had expressed our concern that, "if left unchecked", the general context of violence and counter-violence, created since the adoption of resolution 450 (1979), "might lead to total deterioration and an erosion, beyond repair, of the United Nations Forces' credibility and capacity to act efficiently".

My Government believes that, with the events of last week, we have now reached the danger point which calls for some urgent measures.

II.

In the aforementioned letter of 11 July 1979, we had reminded the Security Council of the following:

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\* A/34/150.

"Resolution 450 (1979) was voted with the understanding that measures were going to be taken, within the context of the United Nations, to create conditions that would be conducive to the total restoration of Lebanese sovereignty, the preservation of the territorial integrity and independence of Lebanon, and the full exercise of the Government's authority. The General Armistice Agreement of 1949 between Lebanon and Israel was confirmed and all parties were called upon to strictly observe the dispositions of the relevant United Nations resolutions and decisions."

Since then, we felt compelled to call for an urgent meeting of the Security Council by our letter of 24 August 1979 (S/13516) asking specifically that all practical ways and means conducive to the implementation of the appropriate resolutions of the Security Council be examined "in accordance with relevant provisions of the Charter", as called for by resolutions 444 (1979) and 450 (1979), not excluding a request for sanctions against Israel, if it should continue its policy of defiance and aggression.

### III.

Pursuant to our letter of 24 August 1979, and pending a debate by the Security Council, I am now instructed by my Government to request explicitly from Your Excellency - in accordance with the appropriate Security Council resolutions, and particularly resolutions 426 (1978), 444 (1979) and 450 (1979), and more generally in accordance with the prerogatives of the Secretary-General and the mandate granted by these resolutions - that measures be taken urgently to fulfil the following:

1. Ensure the safety and integrity of UNIFIL and its headquarters and obtain the necessary guarantees for its freedom of movement and action, in accordance with the Secretary-General's report of 12 January 1979 (S/13026 and Corr.1, para. 22), and as called for by the Security Council repeatedly as part of a "phased programme of activities", then particularly on 26 April 1979.
2. Provide UNIFIL with the necessary weapons and equipment "of a defensive character" that will enable the Force to exercise self-defence,

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which includes "resistance to attempts by forceful means to prevent it from discharging its duties under the mandate", as stated in the Secretary-General's report of 19 March 1978 1/ and instantly approved by resolution 426 (1978) then confirmed by resolution 450 (1979). A serious deterrent capability will at least enable the Force to discourage further challenges to its authority and prevent attacks on its men and installations that imperil both its safety and success.

3. Support UNIFIL with necessary logistical and infrastructural means, not excluding additional personnel, that will increase its deterrent capability and enable it "to function as an efficient military unit", as stated in paragraph 5 of resolution 450 (1979).

4. Reconsider the definition of the "area of operations" of UNIFIL and its methods of deployment and movement, in the light of developments on the terrain since resolution 426 (1978) confirmed the provisions of the Secretary-General's report of 19 March 1978. For the sake of the security of the Force, its efficiency and the preservation of Lebanon's territorial integrity, and given the recent escalation of violence by acts of aggression and hostilities outside the originally occupied area, we think that UNIFIL should enjoy greater freedom of action for the implementation of its mandate, as initially requested during the Security Council debates of March 1978.

5. Increase the number of UNTSO posts and personnel on the border with Israel, and wherever necessary, with the appropriate guarantees of safety and freedom of action to enable them, as requested in our letter to Your Excellency of 15 June 1979, to verify, with unimpeachable impartiality, all violations of the General Armistice Agreement of 1949, the validity of which having been reaffirmed by paragraph 6 of resolution 450 (1979).

6. Reactivate the Mixed Armistice Commission as called for in resolution 450 (1979) and call for a meeting under the auspices of the highest possible United Nations military authority in the area. The initial agenda of this meeting should naturally be the examination of the appropriate measures to be taken by the parties concerned in order to confirm the cease-fire reached on the terrain and prevent the resurgence of hostilities and

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1/ Official Records of the Security Council, Thirty-third Year, Supplement for January, February and March 1978, document S/12611, para. 4 (d).

acts of aggression. It is evident from the report of the Secretary-General of 19 March 1978 that, in view of the interim character of UNIFIL, ILMAC should be progressively prepared to assume its responsibility towards international peace and security on the internationally recognized and guaranteed frontiers of Lebanon.

#### IV.

My Government feels that the above-mentioned measures cannot be taken without the full co-operation of Lebanese civilian and military personnel. To this end, I am authorized by the appropriate authorities to solemnly pledge such co-operation without the slightest reservation. The presence of a Lebanese Army contingent in UNIFIL's area of operations, under the operational command of the Force, has been so far a successful contribution in many respects, more in fact than has been told. We are ready to assume further responsibilities inside and outside the "area of operations" either under the operational command of UNIFIL or in conjunction with UNIFIL's planned action. The governing principle should, however, always be clearly what resolution 425 (1978) states as the assistance by the United Nations to enable Lebanon to recover its "territorial integrity, sovereignty and political independence ... within its internationally recognized boundaries", then "assisting the Government of Lebanon in ensuring the return of its effective authority in the area", ... "to prevent the recurrence of fighting and to ensure that its area of operation will not be utilized for hostile activities of any kind" (S/12611, para. 2).

#### V.

In our letter of 7 May 1979, we said that it was "clear to us that a certain measure of 'peace-enforcing' was not precluded at the very inception of UNIFIL" (S/13301, para. 7). We also said that we were not yet seeking a fundamental change in the mandate of UNIFIL and hoped that this shall not become necessary (see S/13301, para. 15). However, my Government feared, even then, that the time may come when we will have to "examine practical ways and means in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter" which "should enable UNIFIL to enforce peace, if and when necessary, on all those - without exception - who would irresponsibly threaten its security and obstruct the fulfilment of its mission" (S/13301, para. 16).

We fear, Your Excellency, that the time has come for such an examination, in the most serious and determined manner. My Government shares your view that UNIFIL is threatened, and so is its mission of peace, and that the consequences, as you

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yourself said, "would not only be a new disaster for the Government and people of Lebanon, but could also lead to a renewed and serious deterioration of the situation in the Middle East as a whole" (S/13301, para. 3).

My Government's insistence that the situation should be fundamentally reviewed, with utmost urgency, in the light of our above-stated proposals should thus be understood as an expression of our earnest desire to spare Lebanon and the Middle East the disaster which we feel may be nearer and nearer every day.

In this perspective, we feel that it is imperative to repeat, once more, the call by the Security Council for diplomatic action parallel to military deterrence. We are referring in particular to paragraph 7 of resolution 450 (1979) which reads:

"Urges all Member States which are in a position to do so to bring their influence to bear on those concerned, so that the Force can discharge its responsibilities fully and unhampered".

While expressing appreciation for the efforts deployed in this context by friendly States, my Government wishes at this juncture to stress the importance it attaches to a greater consolidation of such efforts and to the necessity of focusing on the full and unconditional implementation of the Security Council resolutions.

I have the honour to request that this letter be distributed as a document of the General Assembly, under item 25 of the provisional agenda, and of the Security Council.

(Signed) Ghassan TULNI  
Ambassador  
Permanent Representative

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