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REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL ON THE UNITED NATIONS INTERIM
FORCE IN LEBANON

(for the period 14 September 1978 to 12 January 1979)

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Annex. Map of UNIFIL deployment as of January 1979

INTRODUCTION

1. The present report describes developments relating to the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) for the period 14 September 1978 to 12 January 1979. Some of this information was contained in my interim report concerning the implementation of resolution 434 (1978) submitted to the Security Council on 18 November 1978 (S/12929). The purpose of the present report is to provide a comprehensive account of the activities of UNIFIL in pursuance of the mandate entrusted to it by the Council in resolutions 425 (1978) and 426 (1978) and extended by resolution 434 (1978).

I. COMPOSITION AND DEPLOYMENT OF THE FORCE

A. Composition and command

2. The composition of UNIFIL as of 12 January 1979 was as follows:

Infantry units

Fiji	501
France	681
Iran	598
Ireland	646
Nepal	599
Nigeria	599
Norway	623
Senegal	594

Headquarters company

Ireland	114
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Logistic units

France	609
Norway	288

TOTAL 5,852

3. In addition to the above, UNIFIL is assisted by 36 military observers of the United Nations Truce Supervision Organization (UNTSO).

4. The composition of the Force remained unchanged, except for the withdrawal on 7 October of the Canadian signals unit (126 all ranks) and the arrival on 16 October 1978 of the Irish headquarters company.

Rotation of contingents

5. During the period covered by the report, the Fijian, French, Irish, Nepalese, Nigerian, Norwegian and Senegalese battalions carried out a full rotation.

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Casualties

6. During the four months covered by this report, four members of UNIFIL died of natural causes and accidents. Fifteen were injured as a result of firing and four as a result of road accidents.

Discipline

7. The discipline, understanding and bearing of the members of UNIFIL, who have worked in difficult and often dangerous conditions, have been of a high order, reflecting credit on the soldiers and their commanders, as well as on the countries that contribute contingents to the Force.

8. Command of UNIFIL continues to be exercised by Major-General Emmanuel A. Erskine. Lieutenant-General Ensio Siilasvuo continues as the Chief Co-ordinator of United Nations Peace-keeping Missions in the Middle East.

B. Deployment

9. The deployment of UNIFIL has remained essentially as described in my report of 13 September 1978 (S/12845, para. 18). The current deployment is shown on the map attached to the present report. There has been a change in the composite guard detachment situated in Tyre barracks. This unit now comprises 45 men from one battalion, instead of 80 from two; it continues to be drawn on a two-week rotational basis from all battalions in the Force.

II. ACCOMMODATION AND LOGISTICS

A. Accommodation

10. In my report of 13 September 1978 (S/12845, paras. 19 and 20), I emphasized the urgent need for the provision of further prefabricated buildings before the arrival of the rainy season and winter. The Force has made progress in setting up such buildings for personnel in the field and at headquarters. However, even when all the buildings procured under the current budget are set up, some 50 per cent of personnel will still be accommodated under canvas. The improvement of these accommodations and the construction of shelters for contingent personnel to protect them against winter conditions has begun, but progress has been slow because of long lead times in the procurement of the necessary matériel and because of the considerable amount of labour involved. Work is proceeding on storage facilities and other installations at UNIFIL headquarters.

B. Logistics

11. Logistic support for UNIFIL continues to be provided by the French and Norwegian logistic units. Following a review of requirements, the strength of the logistic components of the Force was increased by 145 during the period under review. The functions of these units remain as described in my report of 13 September 1978 (S/12845, paras. 22 and 23). Since the departure of the Canadian signals unit, communications have been provided by contingents and by the Field Operations Service.

12. In accordance with normal procedures, the maximum effort is made to provision UNIFIL from Lebanese sources or through Lebanon. However, owing to the location of UNIFIL headquarters and logistic components in Naqoura and owing to difficulties of communication and supply, it has proved necessary to make arrangements for some provisioning of the Force from the Israeli side. The Israeli authorities have extended their co-operation in this regard.

III. FUNCTIONS AND ACTIVITIES OF THE FORCE

A. Guidelines and terms of reference

13. The guidelines for the operation of UNIFIL are set out in my report on the implementation of Security Council resolution 425 (1978) (S/12611), which was approved by the Security Council in its resolution 426 (1978). According to that report, UNIFIL was envisaged as a two-stage operation. In the first stage, the Force was to confirm the withdrawal of Israeli forces from Lebanese territory to the international border. Once this was achieved, UNIFIL was to establish and maintain an area of operation. In this connexion, the Force was to supervise the cessation of hostilities, ensure the peaceful character of the area of operation, control movement and take all measures deemed necessary to ensure the effective restoration of Lebanese sovereignty.

B. Co-operation with UNTSO

14. As provided in its terms of reference, UNIFIL from its inception has had the co-operation of UNTSO military observers. At present, these military observers are organized into two elements. First, the headquarters of the Israel-Lebanon Mixed Armistice Commission (ILMAC) in Beirut, headed by the Chairman of ILMAC also functions as a liaison office for UNIFIL and for the Chief Co-ordinator of United Nations Peace-keeping Missions in the Middle East. Second, 36 military observers form the "Observer Group Lebanon", which performs various tasks under the operational control and supervision of the Force Commander. In this connexion, the military observers man two former UNTSO observation posts along the armistice demarcation line, conduct patrols as necessary and provide liaison teams with various parties. In addition, UNTSO continues to provide some administrative support for UNIFIL.

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C. Contacts with the parties

15. Contacts with the parties concerned have been maintained both at United Nations Headquarters and in the area. The Chief Co-ordinator maintained contact with the parties concerned in respect of the further implementation of the UNIFIL mandate. Mr. John Saunders, my Special Representative for humanitarian assistance in Lebanon, has also assisted UNIFIL by providing a liaison channel with the Lebanese authorities in Beirut whenever required.

16. General Erskine has been in constant contact with the parties on matters concerning the deployment and functioning of the Force. In the area of operation, negotiations and consultations were held by members of UNIFIL with the various armed groups, as required, to ensure the smooth functioning of the Force and to minimize the risks of confrontation and armed clashes. This was generally done through liaison teams and through contacts by the battalion commanders. The battalion commanders also investigated local violations of the cease-fire and all other situations involving incidents which might have led to hostile activities within the UNIFIL area of operation. UNIFIL also maintained regular contacts with the local civilian authorities and population.

D. Activities of the Force

17. During the period under review, the activities of UNIFIL were concentrated on three objectives. First, UNIFIL continued to ensure that the area where it is fully deployed was not used for hostile activities of any kind and to promote a progressive return to normal conditions. Second, it sought to extend its deployment in the border area, which had been handed over to the Lebanese de facto armed groups by the Israeli forces during the last phase of their withdrawal. Third, it continued its efforts to assist the Government of Lebanon in restoring its effective authority in the area.

18. In the area where UNIFIL has full control, it continued to take effective action to prevent the entry of armed personnel and to provide the population with some measure of assurance and safety. In order to achieve that objective, UNIFIL employed the methods described in detail in my report of 13 September 1978 (S/12845, para. 27). There were, however, a number of incidents (see below paras. 25 to 31), which were protested to the parties concerned.

19. UNIFIL has continued to support the United Nations emergency relief and reconstruction programme for southern Lebanon, which is co-ordinated by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for humanitarian assistance in Lebanon. Ongoing projects under this programme include food distribution to the local population, survey and repair of water and electrical equipment, provision of health services to civilians, supply of fertilizer for agriculture, reconstruction and repair of school buildings, provision of school equipment and recruitment of teachers. The UNIFIL medical company continued to provide medical treatment for civilians in emergency cases. An important function of UNIFIL has been the collation of relevant information, and it has recently completed a survey of all villages in its area of operation.

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20. Immediately after the adoption of Security Council resolution 434 (1978), contacts were initiated on an urgent basis with the Israeli authorities and, through them, with the Lebanese de facto armed groups, with a view to securing UNIFIL's full deployment and control in the area handed over by Israel to those groups in June 1978. Following the meeting of the Security Council on 8 December and in light of the statement of the President of the Council, the Chief Co-ordinator and the Force Commander renewed their consultations with the Israeli authorities in order to further the implementation of the Security Council mandate.

21. As may be recalled, reference was made in my interim report (S/12929, para. 15) to certain detailed suggestions that were put forward to provide for further deployment of UNIFIL in its area of operation. Those suggestions were made without any prejudice to the right of UNIFIL, under Security Council resolutions 425 (1978) and 426 (1978), to deploy effectively in its entire area of operation. Specifically, they were viewed as the minimum requirements for the effective functioning of UNIFIL in the remainder of its area of operation.

22. Those suggestions, made in November 1978 to the Israeli authorities for transmission to the de facto armed groups, were along these lines:

(a) UNIFIL must exercise full control of the area around its headquarters at Naqoura, including Naqoura village, within a radius of 3 kilometres in all directions;

(b) UNIFIL should exercise control of two key road-links - between Shihin and Ras El Bayyadah, and between Ebel Es Saqi and Metulla - that are essential for its operations;

(c) UNIFIL should exercise supervision and control in certain Shia villages that are located in areas not presently under its control.

23. Despite the energetic efforts by the Chief Co-ordinator and the Commander of UNIFIL, no positive response to the above suggestions has been received. In this connexion, the latest in the series of efforts to elicit a positive response took place at a meeting on 8 January between Defence Minister Weizman of Israel and the Chief Co-ordinator. During these contacts, the Israeli authorities have maintained that UNIFIL suggestions on further deployment should properly be discussed directly with Major Haddad of the Lebanese de facto armed groups. UNIFIL has made it clear repeatedly that, although it is obliged to deal with Major Haddad on a pragmatic basis, it cannot give any official recognition to his status or recognize his right to control the remainder of the UNIFIL area of operation.

24. UNIFIL has continued to search, in close co-operation with the Lebanese Government, for ways to bring about the effective return of Lebanese authority to southern Lebanon. It will be recalled that in July 1978 a task force of the Lebanese army on its way to Tibnin had to stop in the Kaoukaba area because of resistance from the Lebanese de facto armed groups in Marjayoun. It has remained in that area since (see S/12845, paras. 49 and 50). Efforts to promote the deployment of the Lebanese army in the south have been pursued, and on 22 December,

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a joint working group of UNIFIL and the Lebanese army was set up to work out a plan of action. As a result of these efforts, on 8 and 11 January 1979, small teams of Lebanese military personnel were attached to the UNIFIL contingents in order to represent the Lebanese Government in the area. These teams are to be augmented by further personnel in the near future.

E. Incidents

25. There were a number of incidents involving Palestinian armed elements and Lebanese de facto armed groups outside the area where UNIFIL is fully deployed. Firing across the Litani River occurred frequently, and there were exchanges of heavy artillery and mortar fire between 11 and 22 December and, on a smaller scale, between 18 and 21 December 1978.

26. From September to December, there were occasional incidents involving Palestinian and Lebanese armed elements and UNIFIL. They were mainly attempts at infiltration of armed personnel into the area of operation. In each case, the armed personnel involved was escorted out of the area. Recently, however, some of these armed elements have carried out hostile activities against UNIFIL, such as hijacking, firing at vehicles and patrols, and ambushes. It has not been possible to determine fully the reasons for these recent incidents. In any event, contacts have been made with PLO liaison offices, both at Tyre and in Beirut, to ensure the cessation of these incidents.

27. Incidents involving the Lebanese de facto armed groups have occurred almost daily. Apart from the incidents described in the interim report (S/12929, paras. 8 and 9), UNIFIL installations, especially in the southern part of the central/eastern sector and, more recently, in the eastern part of the eastern sector, have been harassed by firing, including, in a few cases, mortar fire. In the area under the control of those groups, where UNIFIL had previously gained limited freedom of movement, patrols and supply vehicles have been shot at, stopped at roadblocks and threatened, in order to deter them from carrying out their missions. In particular, on 27 November 1978 a checkpoint was set up in strength by the Lebanese de facto armed groups on the coastal road which is a major supply route for UNIFIL. This has been a source of serious concern and incidents, including a shooting incident on 1 January 1979 in which a Norwegian corporal was wounded. UNIFIL has made continual efforts by peaceful means to have the checkpoint removed.

28. Since last October, the Lebanese de facto armed groups have also subjected civilian settlements in the UNIFIL area of operation to harassment. In addition to the incidents mentioned in my interim report (S/12929, para. 10), Shama, Kunin, Tibnin, Kafer Choûba, Ett Taibé, Shaqra, Bayt Yahun and Ayta az Zutt have been shelled or have come under fire from automatic weapons. The Lebanese de facto armed groups have also threatened the inhabitants of those villages with further firing if they do not support them. These actions have prompted a number of civilians to leave their homes for safer areas.

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29. There have been a few cases of firing at or near UNIFIL positions in the eastern part of the eastern sector from positions of the Israel Defence Force on Israeli-occupied Syrian territory. Also, on 27 December, the village of Chebaa came under machine-gun fire from such a position.

30. It is relevant to mention certain incidents involving Israeli forces and Palestinian armed elements outside the UNIFIL area of operation, since they have had a bearing on the situation in the area of operation. On 20 December, following certain bombing incidents in Israel, Israeli aircraft conducted a raid on Palestinian installations in the area of Tyre. On 21 December, rockets were fired from north of the Litani River at Qiryat Shemona in Israel. On the same day, Israeli artillery stationed in the vicinity of Metulla shelled the area of Kaoukaba, Hasbaiya and Nabatiyah. These incidents have been brought to the attention of the President of the Security Council or of the Secretary-General by the Permanent Representative of Lebanon (see document A/33/542-S/12975), the Permanent Observer of the PLO (see S/12977) and the Permanent Representative of Israel (see S/12979). On 31 December, two Israeli patrol boats fired at locations in the southern end of the Tyre pocket, using rockets and heavy machine-guns. The fire was returned by armed elements.

31. On a number of occasions, UNIFIL has observed the presence of Israeli military personnel on Lebanese territory, either alone or together with elements of the Lebanese de facto armed groups. In addition to the instance of mine-laying described in my interim report (S/12929, para. 12), Israel Defence Force personnel has been seen manning checkpoints and positions, transporting water and supplies, constructing positions, observing the impact of shelling across the Litani River etc.

IV. FINANCIAL ASPECTS

32. By its resolution 33/14 of 3 November 1978, the General Assembly, among other things, authorized the Secretary-General to enter into commitments for UNIFIL at a rate not to exceed \$11,142,000 per month for the period from 19 January to 31 October 1979, inclusive, should the Security Council decide to continue the Force beyond the period of four months authorized under its resolution 434 (1978) of 18 September 1978. Accordingly, should the Security Council renew the UNIFIL mandate for a period of six months beyond 19 January 1979, the costs to the United Nations for maintaining UNIFIL during this period would be within the level of the authorization to enter into commitments provided by the General Assembly in its resolution 33/14, assuming continuance of its existing strength and responsibilities.

V. OBSERVATIONS

33. During the period under review, although UNIFIL has continued to play an important role in maintaining peace and stability in south Lebanon and particularly in its area of operation, there has been virtually no further progress in deploying the Force in the area in the south held by de facto armed groups. This means that, despite continuous and persistent efforts at all levels, UNIFIL has reached the end of its second mandate without completing the tasks assigned to it in Security Council resolution 425 (1978).

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34. A crucial element for the effectiveness of United Nations peace-keeping operations is the co-operation of the parties concerned, and UNIFIL is no exception to this rule. The fact is that UNIFIL now lacks the co-operation both of the de facto forces under Major Haddad and of the Israeli Defence Forces, in relation to the complete deployment of UNIFIL in its entire area of operations. Thus the comments which I made in my report to the Security Council of 18 November on this question (S/12929, paras. 15 to 17) still stand, and I shall not repeat them at length here. I shall merely repeat that in this regard the assumptions on which UNIFIL was set up have not been fulfilled. Indeed, the attitude of the de facto forces has if anything stiffened, and the pattern of threats and harassing actions has persisted and increased in intensity.

35. I feel obliged to bring to the attention of the Council a pattern of behaviour on the part of the de facto forces that would suggest a deliberate intention to harass UNIFIL in its efforts to fully implement Security Council resolutions 425 and 426. This is the more regrettable because such harassment frequently endangers the security and welfare of the civilian population in UNIFIL's area of operation. Although repeated efforts have been made through the intermediary of the Israeli authorities, to put an end to such activities, the de facto forces have given every indication that they intend to continue them. If the restraint being shown by UNIFIL continues to be exploited in this way, it may be necessary for the Council to consider what course of action would be warranted to deal with this situation.

36. Quite apart from the frustration of the objectives of UNIFIL, the present state of affairs poses an increasing risk of the erosion of UNIFIL's effectiveness and of the morale of the various contingents of the Force. The members of the Force have made great sacrifices in carrying out the difficult duties assigned to them by the Security Council, and it is natural in the present situation that they should feel an increasing sense of frustration as the months go by with apparently little prospect of obtaining even a reasonable degree of co-operation from some of the parties. Furthermore, as I have pointed out before, there is a serious risk of weakening the co-operation with UNIFIL which has hitherto been practised by armed elements to the north and west of the UNIFIL area. Recent incidents already show some evidence of such a tendency.

37. Having said this, I wish to repeat what I have said in previous reports, namely that the situation in south Lebanon cannot be divorced from the situation in the rest of the country and to a lesser extent in the region as a whole. This factor unquestionably plays an important role in determining the attitude of the various parties to UNIFIL, an attitude which is strongly influenced by their perception and interpretation of developments in Lebanon and in the region as a whole. It is important to remember that UNIFIL is not acting in isolation in south Lebanon and that external factors have a bearing on its possibilities of making further progress.

38. These difficulties should not be allowed to obscure UNIFIL's valuable contribution to peace in the area. Apart from restoring peace and normality in a large part of its area of operations, UNIFIL continues to prevent the resumption of serious hostilities between the armed groups in the area. There can be no doubt that without UNIFIL these hostilities would be contributing another explosive element to the already highly sensitive situation in Lebanon.

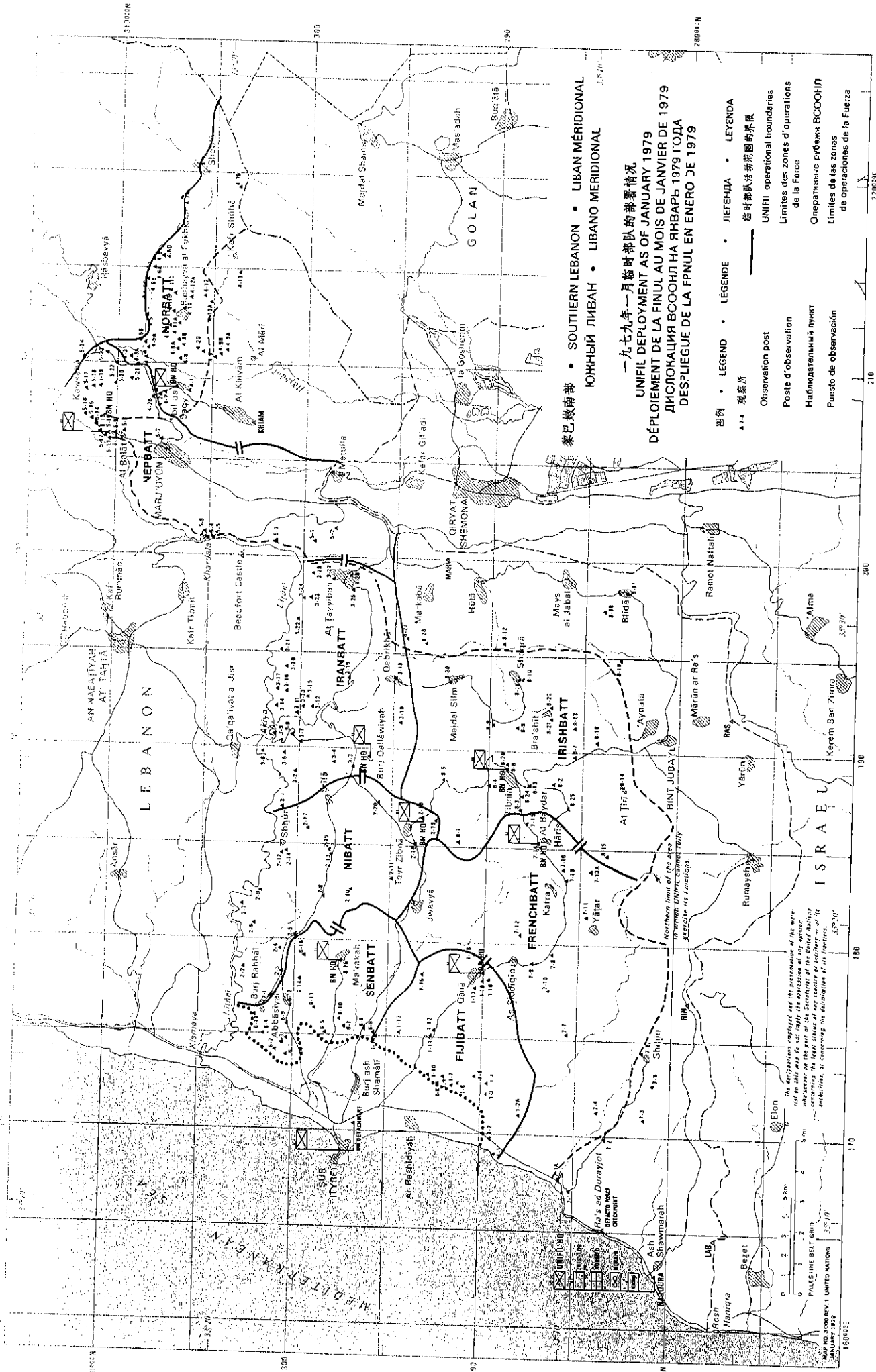
39. UNIFIL has continued to give its fullest support to the Lebanese authorities in working out arrangements designed progressively to strengthen the presence and authority of the Government in the area. I hope that these measures, and particularly the recent move to the south of some elements of the Lebanese army, will prove to be only a first step. I hope also that they may begin to establish in the area the spirit of confidence which is so much needed to overcome the present obstacles to the restoration of Lebanese authority.

40. I am fully aware of the potential dangers of assuming an automatic renewal of UNIFIL's mandate and I recall the original intention of the Council that this Force would be interim in nature. I am aware also that there are some reservations about renewing the mandate for a six months period. However, taking into account all aspects of the problem, I have concluded that I should recommend for the Council's consideration the extension of the mandate of UNIFIL for a further period of six months. The Lebanese Government has informed me of its full agreement with this recommendation. I have no doubt that, for all its difficulties, UNIFIL performs an essentially stabilizing function and that its premature withdrawal would inevitably disrupt the fragile peace which now exists in southern Lebanon.

41. That being said, I feel obliged to inform the Council that the present situation cannot, in my view, continue indefinitely. Through no fault of its own, UNIFIL has not been in a position to alter, since my last report, a situation which is neither acceptable to the Government of Lebanon nor compatible with the intentions of the Security Council. I therefore appeal to those immediately concerned to reconsider urgently their attitude to UNIFIL and to ask themselves whether, in the context of the maintenance of international peace and security, they would really be better off if UNIFIL were obliged by continuing frustration to withdraw without fulfilling its mandate. I also urge the members of the Security Council to bring their influence and their best efforts to bear in support of the full implementation of resolution 425 through the removal of the present obstacles to this objective.

42. In connexion with the renewal of the mandate I wish to inform the Council that the Government of Iran has decided to withdraw its contingent at the end of the current mandate. The Government of France has also informed me that it intends to reduce its contingent by withdrawing the French infantry battalion, although the reinforced logistics battalion will be maintained. I have been contacting a number of possible contributing Governments in an effort to find the necessary replacements for the contingents which are being withdrawn and have informed the Council separately of the response.

43. In conclusion I wish to pay tribute to the Commander of UNIFIL, Major-General Erskine, and his staff, both civilian and military, and the officers and men of the contingents of UNIFIL for their courage, dedication and steady discipline in the face of a very difficult and sometimes dangerous situation. I wish also to express my appreciation to the Governments which are providing contingents and other forms of support to UNIFIL.



黎巴嫩南部 • SOUTHERN LEBANON • LIBAN MÉRIDIONAL
 ЮЖНЫЙ ЛИВАН • LIBANO MERIDIONAL

一九七九年一月临时部队的部署情况
 UNIFIL DEPLOYMENT AS OF JANUARY 1979
 ДИСЛОКАЦИЯ ВООЮН НА ЯНВАРЬ 1979 ГОДА
 DESPLIEGUE DE LA FPNUL EN ENERO DE 1979

图例 • LEGEND • LÉGENDE • ЛЕГЕНДА • LEYENDA
 观察所
 Observation post
 Poste d'observation
 Наблюдательный пункт
 Puesto de observación

UNIFIL operational boundaries
 Limites des zones d'operations
 Operativas риблеми ВООЮН
 Limites de las zonas de operaciones de la Fuerza

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