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LETTER DATED 15 DECEMBER 1980 FROM THE PERMANENT
REPRESENTATIVE OF LEBANON TO THE UNITED NATIONS
ADDRESSED TO THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

1. Your report to the Security Council of 12 December 1980 (S/14295) has been carefully examined by my Government, and I am instructed to transmit to you, as well as to the Council, our utmost appreciation for the most objective review contained therein. More particularly, my Government wishes to express its total agreement with the observations (paras. 57 to 69) with which the report is concluded.
2. As the Security Council is about to meet to examine the renewal of the mandate of the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon, I am instructed by my Government, in the light of your report, to submit that the following problems must, once more, be addressed, in a practical manner:
 - (a) The security, safety and freedom of movement of the personnel of the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon and the United Nations Truce Supervision Organization;
 - (b) The complete and immediate withdrawal of Israel, and full deployment of the Force in the totality of the area of operation, up to the internationally recognized boundaries;
 - (c) The cessation of all hostile activities, thus ensuring the peaceful character of the area of operation and assisting the restoration of Lebanese sovereignty and effective authority;
 - (d) The reactivation of the Israel-Lebanon Mixed Armistice Commission, and the total and unconditional implementation of the 1949 General Armistice Agreement between Lebanon and Israel.
3. In the report under consideration, it is said that "the present situation is everything but satisfactory", and that "it is essential that the present trend of inadequate co-operation and lack of progress should be reversed" (para. 68). While we fully share this view, and believe (as stated in para. 57) "that UNIFIL can successfully fulfil its mandate only if it has the full co-operation of all the parties concerned", we wish to draw your attention to paragraph 7 of resolution 444 (1979) of 19 January 1979, subsequently repeated in resolutions 450 (1979), 459 (1980) and 474 (1980) which states that the Security Council:

"Reaffirms its determination, in the event of continuing obstruction of the mandate of the Force, to examine practical ways and means in accordance with relevant provisions of the Charter of the United Nations, to secure the full implementation of resolution 425 (1978)".

4. My Government feels that the time has now come to search for such "practical ways and means", not necessarily by reviewing and redefining the mandate of the Force, but by rendering it more effective and more implementable. Indeed, this is a course we have been calling for since the events of April 1979, which then led to an urgent meeting of the Security Council. In a letter addressed to Your Excellency, following the Council meeting, and dated 7 May 1979 (S/13301), we said that it was "clear to us that a certain measure of 'peace-keeping' was not precluded at the very inception of the Force" which should be enabled "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". In support of our thesis, in this same memorandum, we quoted the Secretary-General's report to the General Assembly of September 1978 (A/33/1) which read as follows:

"To resort to force is the last and least desirable course for a peace-keeping force. Negotiation and persuasion must be the primary method for achieving its objectives. However, if such methods prove unavailing, the Security Council may well have to consider what other approaches are open to it under the Charter".

5. In this perspective, I am instructed by my Government to ask that the renewal of the mandate of the Interim Force be accompanied by, and probably made contingent upon, the following dispositions:

(a) Articulate the deterrent capability of the Force, implicit in its definition as "an integrated and efficient military unit", by providing it with the necessary weapons and equipment, giving it the necessary instructions, supporting it with the necessary logistical and infrastructural means - not excluding, if deemed necessary or helpful, additional personnel;

(b) Reconsider the methods of definition of the "area of operation" of the Force and its methods of deployment and movement, in the light of recent developments on the terrain. Escalation of violence by acts of aggression and hostilities outside the original area of operation, the so-called "pre-emptive strikes" and "cycles of violence", all make it imperative for the Force to enjoy a freedom of action commensurate with the objectives of its mandate, as stated in resolution 425 (1978) and defined in the Secretary-General's report of 19 March 1978 (S/12611) confirmed by resolution 426 (1978), and more particularly paragraphs 2 (b) and 2 (c) of the said report;

(c) Accelerate the reactivation of the Israel-Lebanon Mixed Armistice Commission and intensify diplomatic efforts with all the parties concerned, and with all those who are in a position to assist in the establishment of a time-table for the expeditious implementation of the mandate of the Interim Force and the unconditional observance of the General Armistice Agreement. Such a plan of action may necessitate, within the Secretary-General's prerogatives, the special

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commissioning, at an appropriately high level, of a working-group or a special task-force in the interest of celerity and efficacy, which will identify the problems, specify solutions, conciliate and co-ordinate all the efforts that can be conducive to peace and security in the area.

6. In conclusion, allow me, Excellency, in the name of Lebanon to express our deepest gratitude to you and through you to the members of the Secretariat, to the commanders and staff of the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon and the United Nations Truce Supervision Organization, to the officers and soldiers of the various contingents, to the observers, and last but not least to the troop-contributing countries and friendly Governments for their efforts and sacrifice to preserve international peace and security in my country and beyond. The greatest tribute that can be paid to each and all is to accent the "interim" character of the Interim Force by ensuring the objective conditions of its success within an immediate time-frame.

I have the honour to request that this letter be circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Ghassan TUENI
Ambassador
Permanent Representative
