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

## Strength and composition of the Force

1. As of 2 April 1978 the strength of the Force was as follows:

Canada - 18 (temporarily detached from UNEF)
France - 627
Iran - 195 (temporarily detached from UNDOF)
Norway - 216 (advance party)
Sweden - 224 (temporarily detached from UNEF)

2. In addition, 68 observers of UNTSO assist UNIFIL in the performance of its tasks.

3. The airlift of the remainder of the Norwegian contingent consisting of about 530 men together with four helicopters, vehicles and a considerable amount of equipment is under way.

4. The Government of Nepal has informed the Secretary-General that the Nepalese contingent (about 600 all ranks) will be ready to proceed to the mission area by 11 April. Arrangements are being made to airlift the contingent by that date.

5. In response to an approach by the Secretary-General, the Government of Senegal has agreed to provide a battalion of about 600 all ranks for service with UNIFIL.

6. With reference to paragraph 6 of the Secretary-General's progress report of 23 March (S/12620), I have requested the Governments of France and Norway to provide the necessary logistic elements for UNIFIL and both Governments have so agreed. Discussions have been held between the Secretariat and military representatives of the two Governments with a view to working out the detailed arrangements for the logistic component of the Force.

7. I am continuing consultations concerning additional contingents to UNIFIL, bearing in mind the principle of equitable geographical representation.

8. The Government of Iran has made available, free of charge to the United Nations, a Falcon jet aircraft for an initial period of one month.

Deployment and activities of the Force

9. The main body of the French battalion, about 458 all ranks, is now deployed in the Tyre area. It has set up its headquarters in the former Lebanese Army Camp in the city. French troops are manning six checkpoints and are undertaking patrolling activities in the area.

10. The Iranian company is deployed in the central sector south of the Litani River. The company is manning the Akiya Bridge and is expanding its presence east and west of that bridge.

11. The Swedish company is deployed in the eastern sector south of the Litani. Swedish troops have set up positions at Ebel Es Saqi, Rachaya El Foukhar, Hebbariye and at the Khardala Bridge and are expanding their patrolling activities east and west of Ebel Es Saqi.

12. The Canadian logistic unit consists of a movement control detachment and a signal detachment. The movement control detachment is assigned to the UNIFIL reception area at the Beirut Airport to facilitate the reception of arriving units of the Force. The signal detachment is stationed at the Naqoura forward headquarters. Communication links have been established between the forward headquarters and all the contingents.

13. A Norwegian party of 9 all ranks has completed its reconnaissance in the Swedish contingent sector in preparation for the deployment of the main body of the Norwegian contingent.

14. The UNTSO observers continue to man the observation posts established by UNTSO. Selected observers are assigned to staff responsibilities at the Naqoura forward headquarters. Two teams of two observers each are attached to each of the contingents for liaison and other purposes. Other observers are providing liaison with the various forces in southern Lebanon and at Beirut.

Casualties

15. The first casualties of UNIFIL in line of duty occurred on 29 March. A member of the Swedish contingent was killed and another seriously wounded when their vehicle hit a mine near the Khardala Bridge.

General situation and contacts with the parties

16. I have maintained contact with the Government of Lebanon, the Government of Israel and with the PLO with a view to the rapid implementation of Security Council resolution 425 (1978) especially in regard to the cease-fire and the withdrawal of the Israeli Forces. The Chief Co-ordinator of United Nations Peace-keeping Missions in the Middle East, Lieutenant-General Ensio Siilasvuo, has also continued his contacts with all the parties concerned for the same purpose. The

Interim Force Commander, Major-General E. A. Erskine, has been in constant contact with the parties on matters concerning the deployment and functioning of the Force.

17. On 27 March the Secretary-General issued an appeal to all the parties concerned to observe a general cease-fire in southern Lebanon. During a meeting with the Chairman of the Executive Committee of the PLO on the next day, General Erskine conveyed this appeal to him on behalf of the Secretary-General, and Mr. Arafat informed the Secretary-General, through General Erskine, of acceptance of the Secretary-General's appeal for a general cease-fire.

18. General Erskine reports that the situation in southern Lebanon has remained generally quiet. There has been, however, a number of firing incidents in certain areas.

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