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LETTER DATED 10 APRIL 1978 FROM THE SECRETARY-GENERAL ADDRESSED
TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

I have the honour to refer to the establishment of the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) in pursuance of Security Council resolutions 425 and 426 (1978) of 19 March 1978. In my letter to you of 21 March 1978 (S/12616), I informed the Council of the measures taken to establish UNIFIL as quickly as possible. I later informed the Council that I had accepted the offers of the Governments of France, Norway and Nepal to provide contingents for UNIFIL.

As indicated in my progress report on UNIFIL of 2 April 1978 (S/12620/Add.1), the Government of Senegal has agreed to provide a contingent for the Force, and it is my intention, subject to the usual consultations, to proceed expeditiously with all the necessary arrangements for this contingent to arrive in the area of operations at the earliest possible moment. I have also approached a number of other Governments for the provision of additional contingents for service with UNIFIL. I am continuing consultations in this regard, bearing in mind the principle of equitable geographical representation.

In my report to the Security Council on the establishment of the Force (S/12611) of 19 March 1978, I informed the Council that I intended to examine the possibility of building on the existing logistic arrangements in the Middle East. In the event, this has not proved to be practicable and I have therefore requested the Governments of France and Norway to provide logistic support for the Force. Discussions have been held at Headquarters with military representatives of the two countries, at which agreement has been reached as to the sharing of the responsibility for this urgent and vital task. More details on this matter are to be found in paragraph 4 of my Progress Report of 8 April 1978 (S/12620/Add.2).

In the above-mentioned report to the Security Council on the establishment of UNIFIL, I proposed that Major-General E. A. Erskine, Chief of Staff of the United Nations Truce Supervision Organization in Palestine (UNTSO), would be appointed as Interim Commander. I wish now to inform the Council that it is my intention, subject to the consent of the Security Council, to appoint General Erskine as Commander of the Force.

I would be grateful if you would bring this letter to the attention of the Members of the Security Council.

(Signed) Kurt WALDHEIM