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LETTER DATED 31 MAY 1979 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 of 19 March 1978.

In April last, the Norwegian Permanent Representative informed me that his Government was obliged, for overriding administrative reasons, to withdraw the Norwegian helicopter unit from UNIFIL at the end of the present mandate. Because the helicopter unit is absolutely essential for the functioning of UNIFIL, I considered it necessary to begin searching for a suitable replacement unit without delay, in the event the Security Council should decide to extend the mandate of UNIFIL beyond 19 June.

In this connexion, the Government of Italy has informed me that it is willing to make available a replacement helicopter unit. It is my intention to accept this offer subject to the usual consultations and on the understanding that the necessary practical arrangements will be finalized only if and when the Security Council decides to extend the present mandate of UNIFIL. I am informing the Council of this matter now in order to avoid any gap in the servicing of UNIFIL in this critical area.

I should be most grateful if you would bring this matter to the attention of the members of the Security Council.

(Signed) Kurt WALDHEIM
