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Items 31 and 34 of the preliminary list*

QUESTION OF PALESTINE

THE SITUATION IN THE MIDDLE EAST

Letter dated 24 June 1982 from the Permanent Representative of France
to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to transmit to you herewith the text of a statement by the President of the French Republic concerning Lebanon, issued on 24 June 1982.

I would request you to circulate the text of this statement as an official document of the General Assembly under items 31 and 34 of the preliminary list.

(Signed) Luc de La BARRE DE NANTEUIL

* A/37/50/Rev.1.

ANNEX

Statement by the President of the French Republic concerning Lebanon,
issued at 8.30 p.m. on 24 June 1982

There is every reason to fear, in a matter of hours, tragic fighting which, in Beirut itself, would add to the sufferings already endured by the populations of Lebanon.

An assault on and destruction of the capital of Lebanon would grievously and lastingly jeopardize the future of the entire country and peace throughout the region.

France solemnly calls upon Israel to observe the requirements of the cease-fire.

There is a vital and urgent need for disengagement between all the forces now in action in West Beirut and on its periphery and for the Lebanese army to be allowed to interpose itself, with the backing, if the legitimate Government so desires, of a force constituted under the auspices of the Security Council.

It will thus be possible to achieve neutralization of West Beirut under the supervision of United Nations observers.

This constitutes the first stage in re-establishing the authority of the Lebanese Government in its territory. France is prepared, within the framework of the Security Council, which it is informing immediately, to render assistance to whatever efforts may be decided upon by the Government of Lebanon.

Such neutralization is a prerequisite for the early opening of the negotiations that are necessary in order to ensure the existence, security and other legitimate rights of each of the States and peoples involved, and first and foremost of Lebanon itself; France will make known in due course its proposals in that connexion.
