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LETTER DATED 10 JULY 1974 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE
OF ISRAEL TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT
OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

On instructions of my Government, I have the honour to bring to your attention the following:

On 8 July 1974, units of the Israeli naval forces sank approximately 10 boats in each of the harbours of Tyre, Sidon and Ras a-Shakh in southern Lebanon. The Israeli commandos left behind leaflets which said:

"Lebanese fishermen,

"Until now fishing off our shores had been conducted in peace and safety. Lebanese and Israeli fishermen have departed and returned to their harbours without hindrance. Lebanese boats have more than once found refuge in Israeli ports whether as a result of mechanical difficulties or storms which had forced them ashore. Your boats have always been hospitably received and you and your boats have returned safely to Lebanon.

"Like you we want this situation to continue in the future but circumstances may force a change.

"We came this time to warn you. It is in your hands to decide. You have the choice between peace and trouble. The same terrorists who have caused great damage to the inhabitants of southern Lebanon - to their houses, their villages and their fields - now plan to bring disaster to you as well. They use your fishing harbours, your boats and hide behind your peaceful civilian activities to sow death and destruction. It was from your harbours that the terrorists set out and operated on the Israeli coast. It was from your harbours that the terrorists who murdered a peaceful woman and children had set out, and we know that they are planning additional operations from your harbours, using your boats.

"It is up to you. Don't let them operate out of your homes. Take this warning to heart before it is too late. We are in favour of an independent Lebanon, a peaceful Lebanon, a Lebanon not subject to dictates of the terrorists who dare not operate out of any other country.

"Keep away from evil.

"The Israeli Defence Forces"

It will be recalled that on 25 June, a murder squad from Lebanon infiltrated in a rubber dinghy into the Israeli coastal town of Nahariya and killed a woman, her 10-year-old daughter, her son, aged five, and an Israeli soldier.

On the following day, 26 June, the editor of the Beirut El-Nahar, Michel Abu-Jaudeh, wrote in his newspaper:

"The Naharyah action proves that there is no obstacle or limit to the fedayeen activity. While Israel is repeatedly warning Lebanon to take effective measures in order to close the border to the fedaveen, the fedayeen action, coming this time from the sea, proves that it is useless to block the land frontier."

There have been indications that similar additional atrocities, to be carried out by sea from ports in Lebanon, were being prepared by the terrorist organizations. The purpose of the 8 July action was to foil those plans and to avert the use of the above-mentioned harbours by terrorists as their operation and auxiliary bases.

It will be recalled that in recent weeks the Government of Lebanon has continued to co-operate openly with the murder organizations. There have been frequent meetings and consultations between Lebanese leaders and terrorist henchmen such as Yassir Arafat, head of the so-called Palestine Liberation Organization - the umbrella organization of the terror groups and of El Fatah, which claimed responsibility for the Nahariya slaughters. At those meetings, agreement was reached between the Lebanese Government and the terrorist organizations on such matters as the establishment of liaison committees and the formation of joint Lebanese-terrorist patrols. At the Arab Defence Council meeting which took place in Cairo on 3-5 July, the Government of Lebanon and the murder organizations adopted a common stand and put forward joint proposals. The Prime Minister of Lebanon was reported by international news media as having publicly embraced the representatives of the murder gangs and told them: "What you want we want."

The conference decided that Arab States should extend their support to Lebanon's policy of sheltering and assisting the terrorist bands and help Lebanon to face up to the inevitable consequences of its criminal policy.

The Government of Israel is determined that Arab terror warfare, directed primarily against civilians, should cease and holds the Lebanese Government responsible for shirking its duty to liquidate the operation of the murder bands on and from its territory.

It is Israel's right and obligation under international law and the United Nations Charter to defend itself against these savage attacks and to protect its citizens.

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

(Signed) Yosef TEKOAH
Permanent Representative of Israel
to the United Nations