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Letter dated 12 April 1974 from the Permanent Representative of Lebanon
to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I wish to refer to the letter addressed to the Secretary-General by the Permanent Representative of Israel on 11 April 1974 (A/9515-S/11259) and, on instructions of my Government, I have the honour to state the following:

1. In that letter, it was alleged that a "group of terrorists crossed the Israeli-Lebanese frontier", and staged an attack in Kiryat Shmona resulting in the death of 18 inhabitants and of the attackers themselves.

(a) Reports submitted by the United Nations observers to the Security Council through the Secretary-General do not contain any contention that any infiltration has taken place from Lebanon into Israel. This also has been confirmed through the consultations that the Lebanese authorities had with the observers regarding their observation, who did not record any activity or infiltration during this week along the Lebanese border.

(b) It is also a well known fact that Israel has erected a system of electrified barbed wires along the Lebanese border which seals any crossing into Israel. The observers are in a position to confirm this fact. Correspondents of international news media who visit constantly both sides of the border refer often to the elaborate measures taken against possible infiltration.

(c) The Lebanese Government wishes to assert that no infiltration whatsoever has taken place from Lebanon into Israel and that the measures taken by the Lebanese Army prevent any infiltration.

(d) Moreover the Lebanese Government has assurances from the Palestine Liberation Organization that it does not conduct any operation from across the Lebanese border. Mr. Yasser Arafat, Chairman of the organization, as well as other Palestinian representatives, declare and affirm that the organization is

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conducting its resistance movement from within Israel and the occupied territories by elements stationed there. With particular reference to the Kyriat Shmona's attack both the Palestine Liberation Organization and the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine have declared that the operation which took place there was undertaken by individuals residing in the occupied territories and did not come from outside.

(e) Israel has not produced any evidence to substantiate its allegation. To the contrary statements made in Israel contradict allegations contained in the letter of the Israeli representative. Mr. Shlomo Hillel, Minister of Police, stated today that "until now I do not know what exactly happened in Kyriat Shmona and do not know whether the perpetrators came from inside or outside".

(f) It is established that Arabs in Israel are conducting acts of resistance against Israel. Mr. Hillel himself stated on 8 April in a televised interview that those acts are undertaken by a group of about 250 Israeli Arabs and that 400,000 Israeli Arabs should not be responsible for such acts.

2. The Israeli letter alleges that the Popular Front-General Command issued a statement at Beirut in which it has assumed the responsibility for the attack in Kiryat Shmona. This is an absolute falsehood. Two communiqués were issued outside of Lebanon, one in Europe and the other in the Middle East. The fact that Lebanon is known to be a centre for free dissemination of information and that the communiqués were published there, as they were elsewhere, should not constitute a basis for such an absurd allegation and infer from it that Lebanon should assume responsibility for what happened in Kiryat Shmona.

3. The letter as well as the statement made by the Prime Minister of Israel, Mrs. Meir, on 11 April in the Israeli Knesset attempted to hold the Government and the people of Lebanon as responsible for the developments which took place in Kiryat Shmona. This is not the first time that the Israeli Government has laid the responsibility on the doorsteps of Lebanon every time there was an action undertaken by Palestinian elements, whether within Israel and the occupied territories or anywhere else. Israel has resorted on many occasions to this pretext to justify its many attacks on Lebanon. At present, Israeli officials are resorting to worn out pretexts in order to divert both Israeli and international public opinion from the acute political crisis engulfing Israel. The Prime Minister of Lebanon, Mr. Takieddine El Solh, has referred to this attempt as being intended for internal consumption.

4. Neither the Lebanese Government nor the Lebanese people could be held responsible for the actions of non-Lebanese operating outside Lebanon, whether in Israel or anywhere else. Lebanon is not in a position to act as a policeman to protect Israel or its citizens. In this connexion, I wish to refer to my letter of 5 June 1972 ^{1/} which contained a declaration made by President Suleiman Franjeh, in which he stated that "Lebanon ... is not bound in any way

^{1/} Official Records of the Security Council, Twenty-seventh Year, Supplement for April, May and June 1972, document S/10677/Rev.1.

whatsoever to assume responsibility for acts of violence whose recurrence and escalation it deplores". The mere presence of Palestinian refugees in Lebanon, whom Israel has evicted from their homeland, is not a sufficient and valid ground to impute to Lebanon responsibility for actions by Palestinians inside Israel or elsewhere.

5. While Lebanon regrets the loss of innocent civilian lives, it cannot but remind the international community that a fundamental element for the elimination of tension in the Middle East and for the establishment of permanent stability and peace is the recognition of the inalienable and legitimate rights of the Palestinian people and the implementation of the pertinent United Nations resolutions.

6. Lebanon, a faithful member of the United Nations, has always upheld the purposes and the principles of the Charter in its peaceful policy and has called and worked for a just and lasting peace in the Middle East. The Lebanese Government rejects the Israeli accusation and forewarns the Security Council of the tenure of the threats made by Israeli officials against Lebanon.

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

(Signed) Edouard GHORRA
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

