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THE SITUATION IN THE MIDDLE EAST

SECURITY COUNCIL
Thirty-ninth year

Letter dated 13 July 1984 from the Permanent Representative of
Israel to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

With reference to the letter dated 6 July 1984 addressed to Your Excellency by the Permanent Representative of Lebanon (A/39/340-S/16660) and on instructions of my Government, I wish to state very clearly that Israel fully respects and observes the internationally recognized principle of the freedom of navigation on the high seas.

It is well known that Israel is exposed to an ongoing, serious terrorist threat to its maritime borders and its citizens from the direction of the high seas. Israel is consequently fully justified in having exercised its inherent right to self-defence, in the seizure of the ship "Elisor Blanco" by the Israel Navy. In the past, several attacks were carried out by terrorists from the sea: the seizure of the "Elisor Blanco" was consequent to strong indications that the ship carried persons closely connected with an imminent threat to Israel's security.

Following a brief investigation by the Israel authorities, the ship, its crew and most of the passengers were allowed to proceed on their voyage to Beirut. Two passengers strongly suspected of involvement in terrorist activity and plans have been detained for further investigation.

I have the honour to request that this letter be circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under item 36 of the preliminary list, and of the Security Council.

(Signed) Aryeh LEVIN
Ambassador
Deputy Permanent Representative of Israel
to the United Nations

* A/39/50.