

# **Security Council**

Distr. GENERAL

201 B R 11

S/18990 24 July 1987

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

# REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL ON THE UNITED NATIONS INTERIM FORCE IN LEBANON

(for the period 12 January-24 July 1987)

## Introduction

1. In its resolution 594 (1987) of 15 January 1987, the Security Council decided to extend the mandate of the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) for a further interim period of six months and twelve days, until 31 July 1987. The Council also reiterated its strong support for the territorial integrity, sovereignty and independence of Lebanon within its internationally recognized boundaries; re-emphasized the terms of reference and general guidelines of the Force as stated in the report of the Secretary-General of 19 March 1978, approved by resolution 426 (1978); called upon all parties concerned to co-operate fully with the Force for the full implementation of its mandate; and reiterated that UNIFIL should fully implement its mandate as defined in resolutions 425 (1978), 426 (1978) and all other relevant resolutions. The Council requested the Secretary-General to continue consultations with the Government of Lebanon and other parties directly concerned on the implementation of the resolution and to report to the Council thereon.

#### Organization of the Force

2. As of July 1987, the composition of UNIFIL was as follows:

Mili	tary	personnel

Fiji	HQ UNIFIL Infantry battalion Military police company	6 614 <u>7</u>	627
Finland	HQ UNIFIL Infantry battalion Military police company	15 504 <u>9</u>	528

France	HQ UNIFIL Composite battalion (maintenance company, defence company, armoured escort company,	32 479	
	bomb disposal detachment) Military police company	10	521
Ghana	HQ UNIFIL Infantry battalion Engineer company Military police company	27 836 60 <u>10</u>	933
Ireland	HQ UNIFIL Infantry battalion	12 649	
	HQ Camp Command Military police company	71 13	745
Italy	HQ UNIFIL Helicopter unit	4	48
Nepal	HQ UNIFIL Infantry battalion Military police company	11 834 <u>5</u>	850
Norway	HQ UNIFIL Infantry battalion Maintenance company Military police company	34 655 175 <u>17</u>	881
Sweden	HQ UNIFIL Logistic battalion Military police company	8 629 8	645
	TOTAL UNIFIL		5 778

The deployment of UNIFIL as of July 1987 is shown on the annexed map.

- 3. In addition to the above personnel, UNIFIL was assisted by 74 military observers from the United Nations Truce Supervision Organization (UNTSO). They manned the five observation posts along the Lebanese side of the Israel-Lebanon armistice demarcation line and a post at Chateau de Beaufort. They also maintained a mobile team at Tyre and operated seven mobile teams in the UNIFIL area. These unarmed officers are organized as Observer Group I panon (OGL) and are under the operational control of the Commander of UNIFIL, Major-General Gustav Hägglund.
- 4. The bebanese army unit serving with UNIFIL maintained a strength of 128 all ranks. The bulk of the unit was stationed in Tyre and small elements were stationed in Arzun, Al Yatun and Qana. It is with regret that I have to report the

murder by unknown assailants, on 24 June, of the Lebanese army captain who served in Tyre as liaison officer to UNIFIL.

- 5. Logistic support for UNIFIL was provided by the Swedish logistic battalion, elements of the French composite battalion, the Norwegian maintenance company, the Ghanaian engineer company and the Italian helicopter unit, as well as certain civilian sections (notably those responsible for communications and vehicle maintenance). The Foreign Minister of France has informed me of his Government's decision to withdraw during 1987 the explosive ordnance detachment which forms part of the French composite battalion and is responsible for mine clearing and the defusion or destruction of explosives and ordnance. I have contacted other Governments contributing troops to UNIFIL about the replacement of this important unit and I hope that this will be arranged shortly.
- During the reporting period, the Force Commander continued to implement a number of measures which had been decided on in late 1986 and early 1987 in order to enhance the Force's effectiveness and improve the security of its personnel. Amongst these was the introduction of revised Standing Operating Procedures designed to ensure both that the tasks assigned to individual units are realistic and practicable in the prevailing circumstances in southern Lebanon and that those tasks are carried out in as uniform a manner as possible by all units in the Force. Minor changes were made in the sectors assigned to each battalion, in the light of experience gained after the major redeployment which had taken place at the end of 1986. The Force Commander continued to take all possible measures, within the resources available, to improve the physical security of the positions occupied by the Force. The crash programme initiated in 1986 has now become a continuing programme, to which I have instructed General Hägglund to give high priority. Progress was also made in rendering operational the composite mechanized company which has been established as the Force Mobile Reserve of UNIFIL (see S/18581 and Corr.1, para. 9). On 1 June 1987, the first elements of this unit moved into their new quarters at position 1-15 near Qana. It comprises Fijian, Finnish, Ghanaian, Irish and Nepalese elements. A Norwegian component will shortly be added to it, with the result that all six infantry battalions will be represented. The Government of Finland has generously agreed to add eleven armoured personnel carriers to its contingent-owned equipment and to make these vehicles available for use by the Force Mobile Reserve. Efforts are being made to arrange for the addition of the six remaining armoured vehicles required to bring the unit's vehicle holdings up to strength.
- 7. UNIFIL has had increasing difficulty in obtaining the land and buildings it needs, for example for the establishment of new positions. Under arrangements made when the Force was set up, UNIFIL rents these directly from the owners to whom the rent due is then paid by the Lebanese authorities. Since no payments have been made since 1984, land owners have become reluctant to make additional land and buildings available to the Force, and some of those with whom rental agreements already exist are pressing UNIFIL to vacate their premises because of the non-payment of the rent to which they are entitled. I have raised this matter with the Lebanese authorities and I hope that the problem will be solved soon.

8. During the period under review, five members of the Force lost their lives. A French soldier was killed in an explosion while defusing a roadside device. Two Ghanaians, an Irish, and a Norwegian soldier died as a result of accidents or from other causes. In addition, six soldiers were wounded by hostile action. Since the establishment of UNIFIL, 144 members of the Force have died, 58 of them as a result of firing and mine or bomb explosions, 61 in accidents and 25 from other causes. More than 200 have been wounded by firing or mine/bomb explosions.

## Situation in the UNIFIL area

- 9. The situation in the UNIFIL area remained essentially unchanged. Israel continued to maintain in southern Lebanon its "security zone", which is manned by the Israel Defence Forces (IDF) and the so-called "South Lebanon Army" (SLA). The boundaries of the "security zone" have not been defined but are in effect determined by the forward positions of the IDF and the SLA. The "security zone" includes the area adjacent to the international border, parts of the Nepalese, Irish and Finnish battalion sectors, the Norwegian battalion sector and sizeable areas to the north of the UNIFIL area of operation. Within the battalion sectors mentioned, the IDF and the SLA maintained a total of 19 positions, of which 17 were manned permanently. During the reporting period, a position south of Kaoukaba was vacated and two new positions were established, one north of Bayt Yahun and the other south-west of At Tiri. Of three adjacent positions south of Brashit only one is now in use. IDF personnel have been observed in SLA positions on numerous occasions and the two forces often operate together. During the reporting period, there appeared to be a general increase in IDF strength in the "security zone", notably at the IDF position overlooking the Akiya Bridge in the Finnish sector.
- 10. Armed resistance groups continued to launch frequent operations against the IDF and the SLA using small arms, rocket-propelled grenades, rockets and mortars, as well as roadside bombs. UNIFIL recorded 5 such operations in the second half of January, 5 in February, 12 in March, 9 in April, 7 in May, 7 in June, and 11 in the first half of July 1987. Many more operations were reported from those parts of the "security zone" where UNIFIL is not deployed. In the UNIFIL area, most of the resistance operations were limited in scope and involved mainly the laying of mines and small ambushes. But there were also a number of larger, co-ordinated attacks, which were undertaken by groups of up to about 150 men and included increasingly accurate mortar fire on IDF/SLA positions. The most serious of these incidents are described in the paragraphs that follow.
- 11. About half of the resistance operations recorded by UNIFIL were directed against two adjacent "security zone" positions on Tallet Hugban which overlook the villages of Kafra and Yatar in the Nepalese battalion sector. The personnel in those positions fired frequently at civilian as well as UNIFIL targets within their range. Three civilians were killed and four wounded and two Nepalese soldiers of UNIFIL were also wounded by such firing. The situation in that part of the UNIFIL area remained very tense throughout the reporting period; most of the inhabitants of Kafra and Yatar have left their villages and those that remain in Yatar require UNIFIL escort to travel to and from the village. Similarly, UNIFIL provides escorts for people working in the fields in that area. A particularly serious

incident took place on 13 June, when several small groups of armed elements in a co-ordinated operation ambushed an SLA convoy on its way from Tallet Huqban to Sribbin. Three SLA personnel were killed and several others wounded. Subsequently, the armed elements surrounded and disarmed the UNIFIL sentries at post 5-24 A, a checkpoint outside Haris. The items waken from the sentries were returned later that day.

- Another troubled area was the triangle between Akiya Bridge, Qabrikha and Ett Taibe in the Finnish battalion sector. In addition to roadside bombs, mortar attacks and ambushes, co-ordinated ground attacks on IDF and SLA positions were carried out on 16 January and during the night of 17/18 April 1987. The latter incident began in the evening of 17 April, when the IDF and SLA positions near Akiya Bridge came under mortar fire from north of the Litani. The IDF reinforced the positions, returned fire with tanks, artillery and mortars and deployed helicopter gunships. Later in the night, the two positions again came under mortar fire, as did an SLA position at Al Qantarah. Shortly thereafter, approximately 60 armed elements launched a ground attack on the latter position. The attackers were repelled and suffered casualties. At about the same time, a civilian vehicle approached the Akiya Bridge from the north. The two Finnish sentries on duty at the UNIFIL checkpoint there tried to warn the vehicle off because of the heavy firing in the area. However, the occupants of the vehicle, who turned out to be armed elements, overpowered and disarmed the sentries. They took them to a nearby Finnish position where the troops were in shelters because of the firing. Using the sentries as hostages, the armed elements disarmed the troops. Finally they withdrew, taking with them 16 rifles and 2 military radios as well as money and other personal effects. Most of these items were subsequently returned.
- 13. The IDF and the SLA fired frequently from their positions or when on patrol in the "security zone", making movement within the range of their weapons very hazardous. As already mentioned, the people in the Kafra/Yatar area were particularly harassed by such firing. When attacked, the IDF and the SLA generally responded with heavy shelling from tanks and mortars as well as from Israeli artillery located in the "security zone". In addition, Israeli helicopter gunships were deployed. On a number of occasions fire was directed at inhabited areas in retaliation for an attack. On 28 January a man was killed in Brashit, and on 19 March a young boy in Kafra was seriously injured by such firing.
- 14. A new development during the reporting period was the movement of IDF patrols forward of the "security zone" into the UNIFIL area, bypassing UNIFIL positions. On a number of occasions this led to clashes with armed elements from nearby villages who mobilized to confront the IDF patrols when their presence became known. The following such incidents were reported by UNIFIL:
- (a) On 28 March, an IDF patrol moved to the vicinity of Zibqin in the Nepalese battalion sector, where it was confronted by armed elements. An exchange of fire ensued, in which three of the armed elements were killed and five Israeli soldiers were wounded. Subsequently, a tense confrontation developed between UNIFIL and armed elements wishing to pass checkpoints 5-5 and 5-6 to join the fight against the IDF. Tension was eventually defused through negotiation;

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- (b) A similar confrontation was averted on 29 June, when a UNIFIL patrol encountered a group of Israeli soldiers who had set up an ambush on a road north of Majdal Silm in the Irish battalion sector. The UNIFIL patrol deployed and called in reinforcements which arrived "ithin a few minutes. At this point, the Israeli soldiers withdrew:
- (c) In the early hours of 2 July, an IDF patrol was confronted by armed elements south of Frun in the Finnish battalion sector. Following an exchange of fire, wounded were reported on both sides;
- (d) A very serious confrontation developed on 6 July, following reports that an IDF patrol had moved to a hill feature west of Yatar, in the Nepalese battalion sector. From 0815 hours local time, armed men began to arrive from the direction of Siddiqin; they broke through UNIFIL checkpoint 5-5 and deployed near position 5-6 from where they began to fire. An intensive exchange ensued which lasted until late in the evening and covered the area between position 5-6 and the villages of Kafra and Yatar. In addition to automatic weapons, the armed elements, whose number reached about 150, used mortars and rocket-propelled grenades. The IDF employed helicopter gunships, tanks, artillery and mortars. In the course of the day, armed elements made several attempts to enter position 5-6 and in the late afternoon a strong group of men forced its way inside and fired from the position at the Israeli helicopters. The Deputy Force Commander went to the scene with reinforcements but was held up by the heavy firing. With the help of local leaders of the Amal Movement, the armed elements were persuaded to leave the position at 2100 hours;
- (e) The next morning, the IDF/SLA operated again in the Yatar/Kafra area, supported by helicopter qunships. They were again engaged by armed elements. Sporadic firing continued until the evening, including artillery, tank and mortar fire, which forced the Nepalese troops in position 5-6 to move into their shelters. At 2130 hours local time, some 100 armed elements occupied the position again. The Force Commander gave orders to clear the position by force at first light but, forlowing contacts with a local Amal leader, the armed elements left it before the order came into effect.
- 15. On 1 July, UNIFIL observed earth works being carried out by an SLA working party on what was apparently to become a new position on a hill some 1,200 metres forward of the present SLA position at Al Qantarah. After investigation, UNIFIL occupied the site without incident on the afternoon of 2 July. In subsequent contacts with the Israeli military authorities the Force Commander made it clear that he could not accept any extension of the Israeli "security zone" into the area at present controlled by UNIFIL and that he would set up a permanent UNIFIL position on the hill in question if this was necessary to prevent the establishment of an IDF/SLA position there. On 6 July, the IDF informed the Force Commander that they would not pursue their project, since UNIFIL intended to set up a position of its own on the hill.
- 16. The IDF and, more frequently, the SLA fired at or close to UNIFIL positions and vehicles on an almost daily basis. In a few cases, this happened at a time when the IDF/SLA were responding to attacks by armed elements. But in most cases

the firing was both unprovoked and, apparently, deliberate. During the reporting period, three UNIFIL soldiers were wounded by such firing. In addition to the two mentioned in paragraph 11 above, a Nepalese soldier sustained injuries on 1 June, when a mortar round fired from inside the "security zone" hit UNIFIL position 5-14. In another serious incident, on 12 May, several rounds were fired from an Israeli tank at position 6-14C north of Majdal Silm. One round exploded inside the position, fortunately causing only material damage. UNIFIL protested about some 300 of these incidents to the Israeli military authorities and pressed them to honour repeated undertakings to put a halt to such actions.

- 17. There were also a number of incidents between UNIFIL and armed elements. These arose mainly from the denial of passage to armed persons at UNIFIL checkpoints and they were most serious when this happened in the context of an operation against the IDF or the SLA (see paras. 11, 12 and 14 above). On 50 occasions during the reporting period, unidentified armed elements fired at or close to UNIFIL positions.
- 18. A very serious incident occurred in the early hours of 28 January, when a building in Tibnin which served as accommodation for 18 Irish soldiers was destroyed by explosive charges. Fortunately, some of the charges failed to go off, though two soldiers were injured. Despite immediate investigation, it has not been possible to determine who carried out this action.
- 19. The general decline of the Lebanese economy, including the rapid depreciation of the Lebanese pound and related price increases, has brought serious hardship to many families in the UNIFIL area. One result has been a rise in property crimes robberies, burglaries, thefts of which UNIFIL personnel have occasionally been the victims. On three occasions during the reporting period, unarmed military observers of OGL were robbed at gunpoint. A more serious incident, which had tragic consequences, took place on 20 May. In the early hours of that day, two men entered UNIFIL position 8-1 in Kafr Dunin, through a breach that had been made in the fence surrounding the position. Having removed a load of timber from the stores of the Ghanaian engineer company, they again entered the position but were spotted by a UNIFIL sentry who fired at them. Both intruders regrettably died from their wounds.
- 20. UNIFIL continued to co-operate with the Lebanese authorities, United Nations agencies and programmes, the International Committee of the Red Cross and non-governmental organizations in extending humanitarian assistance to the local population. Co-operation with the United Nations Disaster Relief Co-ordinator remained particularly close. In May, UNIFIL distributed some 1,000 tons of foodstuffs and a large amount of medicines, financed by various European organizations and shipped by sea to Tyre. As before, many Lebanese were treated at UNIFIL medical centres and some 3,600 at the UNIFIL hospital in Nagoura, including more than 200 in-patients.
- 21. From time to time, the families of prisoners known or believed to be held in a prison in El Khiam in the Israeli "security zone" have sought the help of UNIFIL in having the prisoners released or in obtaining permission to visit them or in simply discovering their fate. UNIFIL has been unable to assist these families, since the

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Israeli authorities profess total non-involvement with the prison and refer all such requests to the SLA, which has denied access to the prisoners not only to representatives of UNIFIL, but also to those of other international organizations, notably the International Committee of the Red Cross.

22. During the reporting period, the Lebanese authorities and a number of Lebanese personalities drew my attention to the damage that was being done to the archaeological site of Tyre because of the illegal excavation and sale of antiquities. It was recalled that reference had been made to this matter in Security Council resolution 459 (1979). The question was raised as to whether the mandate of UNIFIL could be extended in order to give it responsibility for protecting the antiquities of Tyre. I expressed my grave concern at the damage that was reportedly being done to the archaeological heritage in Tyre, but had to point out that: (a) control of illegal digging was a police function which would not normally be undertaken by a peace-keeping force; (b) it would require much manpower at a time when UNIFIL was already stretched in carrying out the other functions entrusted to it by the Council; and (c) as most of the Tyre archaeological site was outside the current area of operation of UNIFIL, a geographical, as well as a functional, extension of its mandate would be required, which might not be acceptable to all the parties concerned. I have however instructed the Force Commander to discuss with the Lebanese authorities what UNIFIL might be able to do to help in this matter, without any change in its mandate and within its existing manpower and priorities.

# Financial aspects

- 23. By section IV of its resolution 41/179 A of 5 December 1986, the General Assembly authorized the Secretary-General to enter into commitments for UNIFIL at a rate not to exceed \$12,125,000 gross (\$11,922,000 net) per month for the 12-month period beginning 19 January 1987, should the Security Council decide to continue the Force beyond the period of six months authorized under its resolution 586 (1986). By its resolution 594 (1987) of 15 January 1987, the Security Council extended the mandate of UNIFIL to 31 July 1987. Should the Council decide to extend UNIFIL beyond its current mandate period, the costs to the United Nations for maintaining the Force during a six-month extension period would be within the commitment authorized by the Assembly in its resolution 41/179 A, assuming continuance of the Force's existing strength and responsibilities. In the event that the current strength of the Force is increased or its mandate is extended beyond 31 January 1988, the Secretary-General will report to the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions and to the General Assembly during its forty-second session on the additional requirements needed for maintaining the Force.
- 24. In paragraph 25 of my last report (S/18581 and Corr.1), I drew to the Council's attention the serious financial situation faced by the Force. I regret to have to report that the situation has not changed and, in fact, has continued to deteriorate. UNIFIL has always encountered difficulty in meeting its expenses, particularly as regards the reimbursement of troop costs at the full rate set by the General Assembly. This has been due to a shortfall in the UNIFIL Special

Account resulting from the non-payment of assessed contributions, in whole or in part, by certain Member States. In my last report, I mentioned that the United States Government has informed me that the Administration was seeking from Congress a supplemental appropriation of \$21.6 million. The requested supplemental appropriation was not approved. Because substantial arrears due from various Member States remain unpaid, the accumulated shortfall in the UNIFIL Special Account was estimated to have reached \$281 million at the beginning of July 1987. Consequently, reimbursement to the troop-contributing Governments has continued at the reduced rate of \$600 per person per month.

# Observations

- 25. The situation in southern Lebanon has remained highly unstable. The refusal of Israel to withdraw completely and its insistence on maintaining the "security zone" continue to thwart efforts to start a process to restore international peace and stability in the area.
- 26. In the central part of the area of UNIFIL (and to the north of it) the various Lebanese resistance groups have intensified their campaign against the IDF and its Lebanese allies, who have often responded with great violence to attacks against their positions. The main sufferers from these hostilities have been the civilian population. Several villages in the area of UNIFIL have again become depopulated, their inhabitants living as refugees in villages further from the "security zone" or in Tyre. UNIFIL has continued to do all it can to protect civilians, in close co-operation with the local leaders.
- 27. UNIFIL has also been affected by these hostilities. In several cases, UNIFIL positions have been occupied by armed elements engaged in attacks against IDF/SLA positions and UNIFIL positions, especially in the Nepalese sector, continue to be the target of deliberate harassing file by the IDF and more frequently by the SLA. They are also, on occasions, caught in cross-fire during armed exchanges between the IDF/SLA and resistance groups. Regrettably, one soldier was killed and six were wounded as a result of hostile action during the current mandate period. I would like, however, to point out that this is in sharp contrast to the 10 killed and 43 wounded in the period which ended on 19 January 1987.
- 28. The security measures and the new operating procedures introduced by the Force Commander have contributed significantly to the decline in casualties. But the need for the greatest vigilance remains: UNIFIL soldiers are carrying out their responsibilities in a highly volatile part of the world and there will be no relaxation in my efforts to enhance their security. I renew my appeal to all those involved in the hostilities in southern Lebanon to treat UNIFIL and its personnel with the respect due to those sent on a mission of peace at the request of the Lebanese Government and with the full backing of the international community, to help them fulfil their tasks and to do nothing which could put their lives at risk.
- 29. As for the Governments involved, their positions remain as I have described them in my last report (S/18581 and Corr.1, paras. 30-32). As there has been no change in the position of the Government of Israel, it has again proved impossible

to make progress towards implementation of Security Council resolution 425 (1978), which requires complete withdrawal of Israeli forces from Lebanon. It is also a matter of great regret that the assassination of Prime Minister Rashid Karame of Lebanon on 1 June 1987 has proved a major setback to the hopes expressed in my last report that progress would be made towards national reconciliation in Lebanon.

- 30. In these circumstances the continuing Israeli presence and the inability of the central Government of Lebanon to exercise effective authority violence persists in the southern part of the country. In this very complicated situation, it remains exceedingly difficult for UNIFIL to carry out its task of preventing hostile activity and restoring international peace and security, without, from time to time, finding itself in confrontation with one or more of the parties. It is greatly to the credit of General Hägglund and those under his command that they have been able to prevent the violence from escalating.
- 31. In a letter dated 16 July 1987, the Permanent Representative of Lebanon has conveyed to me his authorities' request to extend UNIFIL for a further six months. The letter also says that the Lebanese authorities, in spite of the situation in southern Lebanon resulting from the continuing Israeli presence, are convinced that UNIFIL remains an essential element of stability and provides the best means of achieving peace and security in the area. For the reasons I have given in previous reports to the Council and especially to avoid a vacuum which could cause the present conflict to intensify and spread, I recommend that the Security Council accept the Lebanese authorities' request and renew the mandate of UNIFIL for a further period of six months, that is, until 31 January 1988.
- 32. I must again, however, draw to the Council's attention the demands that this recommendation implies for the Governments which contribute troops to UNIFIL. If it accepts the recommendation, the Council will be asking those Government, both to continue to send their personnel on a dangerous mission and to bear much of the cost of doing so. While again paying tribute to the unselfishness and dedication of the troop contributors who have responded so generously in the past to the Council's requests, I must underline the unfairness of a situation in which, because of past and present withholding by some Member States of their assessed contributions, those Governments do not receive the reimbursement which the General Assembly has decided they should receive.
- 33. Finally, I pay tribute to Major-General Gustav Hägglund, the Force Commander, and to all the men and women under his command and control, both military and civilian, for the courage and determination with which they have faced another very difficult mandate period. Their discipline and bearing have been of a high order, reflecting credit on themselves, on their countries and on the United Nations.



