



Security Council

Distr.: General
12 November 2020

Original: English

Implementation of Security Council resolution 1701 (2006) during the period from 17 June to 20 October 2020

Report of the Secretary-General

I. Introduction

1. The present report provides a comprehensive assessment of the implementation of Security Council resolution 1701 (2006) since my previous report, dated 14 July 2020 (S/2020/710), including on the provisions of resolution 2539 (2020). The area of operations of the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) remained generally stable, notwithstanding two breaches of the cessation of hostilities. Outstanding obligations remain for both parties under resolution 1701 (2006). There was no progress towards a permanent ceasefire between Lebanon and Israel. The reporting period was overshadowed by a massive explosion at the port of Beirut on 4 August, which caused significant loss of life, displacement and property damage.

II. Implementation of resolution 1701 (2006)

A. Situation in the area of operations of the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon

2. On 27 July, UNIFIL observed approximately 50 shells fired from south to north across the Blue Line. The Israel Defense Forces informed the mission that they had encountered hostile activity close to one of their positions south of the Blue Line, in the Shab'a Farms area, and launched retaliatory shelling towards Kfar Shuba and Bastrah (both in Sector East). UNIFIL contacted the parties, urging de-escalation. Shortly thereafter, the cessation of hostilities was restored. The following day, the Israel Defense Forces informed UNIFIL that they had observed three individuals whom they alleged to be Hizbullah operatives, at least one of whom was armed, crossing south of the Blue Line. The Israel Defense Forces confirmed that one of their soldiers had fired warning shots close to the three individuals, and that they had fired mortar smoke grenades and tank shells into an "open area" north of the Blue Line. The Israel Defense Forces also showed UNIFIL a rifle and camouflage cap allegedly left behind by the individuals. Hizbullah issued a statement on 27 July denying any involvement in the incident and reiterated that retaliation for the death of a Hizbullah member following an air strike inside the Syrian Arab Republic on 20 July was "yet to come". UNIFIL confirmed that a house in Habbariyah (Sector East) was damaged by shelling. In identical letters addressed to the President of the Security Council and



to me, dated 29 July (A/74/979-S/2020/762), the Permanent Representative of Lebanon stated that the “Israeli bombardment of Lebanese territory on 27 July 2020 constitutes an act of aggression against Lebanon and its people, a violation of its sovereignty and territorial integrity, and a breach of international conventions, including the Geneva Conventions of 1949, in that civilian sites were targeted”. The Permanent Representative of Israel, in identical letters dated 17 August addressed to the President of the Security Council and to me (S/2020/806), stated that “this attack is further evidence that the Lebanese Armed Forces do not secure the Blue Line effectively”. The investigation by UNIFIL continues.

3. A second breach of the cessation of hostilities occurred on 25 August. UNIFIL heard two gunshots in the vicinity of Hula (Sector East), which the Israel Defense Forces told the mission were small arms fire across the Blue Line towards the Israel Defense Forces in the kibbutz of Manara. Shortly thereafter, UNIFIL observed several flares fired from Israel Defense Forces positions towards Aytarun and Ayta al-Sha‘b (Sector West) and Mays al-Jabal, Hula, Kafr Kila and Kfar Shuba (Sector East). UNIFIL contacted the parties and urged restraint. UNIFIL radars detected 87 artillery and 11 mortar rounds, fired by the Israel Defense Forces, some of which landed north of the Blue Line. The Israel Defense Forces announced on 26 August that “our aircraft struck Hizbullah observation posts” along the Blue Line and communicated to UNIFIL that the positions targeted were “disguised as Green without Borders posts”. In a statement, the Lebanese Armed Forces stated that Israeli helicopters had fired missiles at the Green without Borders sites in Ayta al-Sha‘b and Ramiyah (Sector West), as well as at a nature reserve in Aytarun belonging to Green without Borders, causing a fire. In identical letters dated 9 September to the President of the Security Council and to me (A/74/1010-S/2020/894), the Permanent Representative of Lebanon wrote that “these Israeli violations put the lives of civilians and the integrity of Lebanese territory at risk”.

4. UNIFIL confirmed that shells had hit the areas of Hula and Aytarun, damaging a house on the outskirts of Aytarun. After obtaining access to the Green without Borders sites in Ayta al-Sha‘b and Ramiyah, the mission confirmed damage to site structures and found three areas of impact at a cordoned-off location beyond the Green without Borders sites in Aytarun. South of the Blue Line, UNIFIL noted a bullet hole in a wall in Manara that, according to the Israel Defense Forces, was caused by small arms fire from the Hula area. The investigation by UNIFIL is ongoing.

5. On 31 August, UNIFIL observed four illumination rounds fired from south of the Blue Line, one of which landed inside a UNIFIL position in Naqurah (Sector West). The Israel Defense Forces informed UNIFIL that they had fired shells after detecting “suspicious movements” close to the technical fence. A UNIFIL investigation continues.

6. On 21 September, UNIFIL observed five flares, fired from an indeterminate location, one of which landed inside a UNIFIL position in Alma al-Sha‘b (Sector West). Three of the flares landed approximately 200 m north-east of the position, causing a fire in the surrounding vegetation. The Israel Defense Forces confirmed that they had conducted military activity that required illumination in the area. In identical letters dated 9 October addressed to the President of the Security Council and to me (A/75/531-S/2020/999), the Permanent Representative of Lebanon stated that “Lebanon condemns in the strongest terms this attack against its sovereignty”.

7. UNIFIL observed several incidents of weapons pointing across the Blue Line. It brought each incident to the attention of the Israel Defense Forces and the Lebanese Armed Forces, asking that urgent remedial measures be taken.

8. On 10 July and 31 August, UNIFIL was informed by the Lebanese Armed Forces and the Israel Defense Forces that four Sudanese nationals crossed south of the Blue

Line. In a letter dated 17 September to the Lebanese Armed Forces, UNIFIL highlighted the security risks posed by such crossings and urged that preventative measures be taken in coordination with United Nations partners and other international organizations as appropriate.

9. The Israel Defense Forces continued to enter Lebanese airspace on a daily basis in violation of resolution 1701 (2006) and of Lebanese sovereignty. From 17 June to 20 October, UNIFIL recorded a daily average of 12.63 airspace violations, totalling 61 hours and 51 minutes in overflight time, a significant increase from the previous reporting period. Unmanned aerial vehicles accounted for approximately 95 per cent of the violations. The remaining airspace violations involved fighter aircraft or unidentified aircraft.

10. On 7 August, the Israel Defense Forces announced that, on the previous day, they had “downed a drone” that had crossed south of the Blue Line. On 22 August, Hezbollah stated that it had downed an Israeli drone in the vicinity of Ayta al-Sha‘b. Meanwhile, the Israel Defense Forces posted on social media that one of their drones had “crashed inside Lebanese territories”. In the aforementioned letters dated 9 October (A/75/531-S/2020/999), the Permanent Representative of Lebanon stated that “on 9 September 2020, the Israeli army launched a remotely controlled aircraft on the outskirts of Mays al-Jabal”, which “breached the Blue Line” and “dropped four stun grenades in Lebanese territory”. On 10 September, the Lebanese Armed Forces informed UNIFIL that they had downed an Israeli drone near Ayta al-Sha‘b. UNIFIL confirmed the presence of a small commercial quadcopter drone at the site. It did not observe the reported incidents and is following up with the parties.

11. From 17 June to 20 October, UNIFIL recorded 480 ground violations by Lebanese civilians crossing south of the Blue Line, including 385 violations by shepherds and farmers, mainly in the Shab‘a Farms area, as well as 66 violations by civilians on their way to the Shu‘ayb well near Blida (Sector East).

12. The occupation of northern Ghajar and an adjacent area north of the Blue Line by the Israel Defense Forces continued. While the Government of Lebanon has welcomed the UNIFIL proposal of 2011 for the facilitation of the withdrawal of the Israel Defense Forces from the occupied area, the Government of Israel has yet to respond.

13. To help to keep the area between the Blue Line and the Litani River free of unauthorized armed personnel, assets and weapons, UNIFIL, in close coordination with the Lebanese Armed Forces, maintained 16 permanent and an average of 108 temporary checkpoints and conducted 350 counter-rocket-launching operations each month. UNIFIL observed unauthorized weapons in the area of operations on 152 occasions. All cases involved hunting weapons.

14. Pursuant to resolution 2539 (2020), UNIFIL maintained its high operational tempo and visible presence throughout the area of operations, conducting on average 13,510 monthly military operational activities, including 7,382 patrols. Some 3.6 per cent of the mission’s military operational activities included at least one woman peacekeeper.

15. UNIFIL vehicular, foot and air patrols maintained an operational footprint in all municipalities and villages in the area of operations. Air reconnaissance patrols continued over areas to which ground patrols have limited access, including private property and land contaminated by explosive remnants of war or anti-personnel mines. As detailed in my report of 14 July (S/2020/710), the percentage of operational activities conducted in close coordination with the Lebanese Armed Forces was reduced in March as a preventive measure following the outbreak of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic. The percentage of coordinated operations has since

increased to approximately 17 per cent, while observing precautionary measures against the pandemic.

16. On 27 September, UNIFIL temporarily deployed an engineering unit to Beirut in the aftermath of the port explosion on 4 August, at the request of and in coordination with the Lebanese authorities, and pursuant to resolution 2539 (2020). Over three weeks, the mission carried out construction work, cleared 11,500 tons of debris and assisted in the restoration of damaged heritage sites.

17. Despite repeated requests, UNIFIL has yet to gain full access to several sites of interest, including Green without Borders sites. On 24 September, UNIFIL sent a further request to the Lebanese Armed Forces to facilitate access to some of the sites. Furthermore, as detailed in my report dated 14 March 2019 (see S/2019/237, para. 2), UNIFIL has yet to gain access to all locations north of the Blue Line related to the discovery of tunnels that it had confirmed were crossing the Blue Line. The Permanent Representative of Israel, in identical letters dated 25 August 2020 addressed to the President of the Security Council and to me (S/2020/835), presented a map demonstrating “the link between the areas to which UNIFIL is repeatedly denied access and the areas in which Hizbullah prepares and conducts its terrorist activities”.

18. While freedom of movement of UNIFIL was respected in most cases, the mission did encounter several restrictions. Details of incidents involving restrictions to its freedom of movement and access are provided in annex I.

19. It is worth noting that, on 26 July, an incident against peacekeepers occurred when seven shepherds threw stones at a UNIFIL patrol, threatening the peacekeepers with a mace, in Arab al-Wazzani (Sector East). One of the shepherds twice tried to ram a UNIFIL peacekeeper with a vehicle, prompting the peacekeeper to fire a warning shot into the air. Throughout the UNIFIL investigation into the incident, the Lebanese Armed Forces attributed the incident to “provocation” by the peacekeepers; the mission concluded that the patrol’s actions were consistent with its mandate and rules of engagement.

20. The UNIFIL Maritime Task Force continued to carry out maritime interdiction operations throughout the maritime area of operations, hailing 2,575 vessels. Of the 245 vessels referred by UNIFIL to the Lebanese Armed Forces for inspection, the Lebanese Armed Forces inspected and cleared 239. UNIFIL has requested clarification from the Lebanese Armed Forces as to why six referrals were not acted upon.

21. The explosion at the port of Beirut on 4 August severely damaged one UNIFIL Maritime Task Force vessel that was docked approximately 400 m from the blast site, injuring 36 peacekeepers, 23 of them seriously. The vessel was replaced on 16 September.

22. UNIFIL continued to support the capacity-building of the Lebanese Armed Forces Navy, conducting 169 training sessions and exercises and jointly applying common operational standards for commanding, monitoring and hailing activities. Training sessions requiring in-person attendance remain suspended owing to COVID-19-related measures.

23. Within the framework of the strategic dialogue process, in a virtual meeting co-chaired with UNIFIL on 12 August, the Lebanese Armed Forces gave a briefing to representatives of the international community on their needs in connection with efforts to clear debris from the port area in Beirut and repair damage to the Beirut Naval Base. The Lebanese Armed Forces noted that implementation of the advanced integration exercise for maritime interdiction operations, jointly planned by the Lebanese Armed Forces Navy and the UNIFIL Maritime Task Force as a step towards a partial transfer of responsibilities, remained suspended. The refurbishment project for the headquarters of the Lebanese Armed Forces model regiment in Sribbin (Sector

West), funded by the European Union, resumed on 1 July. A centre in Shawakir (Sector West) was selected for the training of the regiment's troops pending enhancement of the site.

B. Security and liaison arrangements

24. UNIFIL convened tripartite meetings on 2 July and 3 September, with a curtailed format and fewer participants owing to COVID-19 restrictions. Discussions were focused on incidents along the Blue Line, violations of resolution 1701 (2006) and liaison and coordination issues. UNIFIL continued its regular liaison and outreach activities with both parties, in person and virtually. It also continued its ongoing bilateral engagement with the parties to find common ground and better utilize the tripartite mechanism to resolve contentious issues, including by revitalizing the subcommittee discussions on the marking of the Blue Line.

25. Despite the agreement of Israel to the proposal in 2008 for a UNIFIL liaison office in Tel Aviv, the establishment of the office remains pending.

26. In accordance with the Action for Peacekeeping initiative of 2018 and the commitment to strengthening the protection of civilians, UNIFIL continued to provide capacity-building support to national authorities, including local civil emergency responders, through quick-impact projects and projects funded by troop-contributing countries.

27. In support of the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) on women and peace and security, 1,819 UNIFIL military and civilian personnel, including 118 women, participated in UNIFIL training on gender mainstreaming.

C. Disarming armed groups

28. No progress was achieved with respect to the disarmament of armed groups. Hezbollah continued to acknowledge publicly that it maintains military capabilities. The maintenance of arms outside the control of the State by Hezbollah and other groups in violation of resolution 1701 (2006) continues to restrict the State's ability to exercise full sovereignty and authority over its territory.

29. On 14 August, the Secretary-General of Hezbollah, Hassan Nasrallah, stated: "Today, there is an equation that protects Lebanon; it is called the balance of deterrence. This equation is getting stronger day by day through the development of its equipment and means and qualifications and human, military and material capabilities".

30. Lebanese security forces made 23 terrorism-related arrests from 17 June to 20 October, including of suspected affiliates of Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL). On 21 August, in the village of Kaftun, in the Kurah district of North Lebanon, four unidentified assailants shot and killed two municipal police officers and the son of the mayor. On 13 September, near Tripoli, North Lebanon, four Lebanese Armed Forces personnel were killed in a raid on the house of the individual allegedly behind the incident in Kaftun on 21 August, who also died in the raid. In a related raid by the Internal Security Forces in Wadi Khalid on 26 September, nine members of an ISIL cell died. On 27 September, three unknown assailants shot dead two Lebanese Armed Forces soldiers near Minniyah, North Lebanon. One of the assailants died in the clash.

31. In eastern and northern Lebanon, several personal disputes escalated into shootings, resulting in 29 fatalities (including 4 children). At least eight personal disputes in Baalbek, eastern Lebanon, involved the use of rocket-propelled grenades. On 27 August, armed clashes between Sunni inhabitants of Khaldah, Mount Lebanon,

and local Hezbollah supporters resulted in two deaths, including one child. On 7 September, in Tariq al-Jadidah, Beirut, one person died following an armed clash between two Sunni groups.

32. The security situation in the Palestine refugee camps across Lebanon was generally calm, with isolated incidents reported in the Ein El Hilweh camp near Sidon, South Lebanon, and the Beddawi camp near Tripoli, North Lebanon.

33. In early September, the leader of Hamas, Ismail Haniyeh, visited Lebanon for an intra-Palestinian conference hosted virtually from Ramallah by the President of the State of Palestine, Mahmoud Abbas. Mr. Haniyeh met with several Lebanese officials, Hezbollah and Palestinian faction leaders. On 6 September, while visiting Ein El Hilweh, he declared that “the camps of the diaspora will remain resistance fortresses”.

34. There was no progress in dismantling the military bases maintained by the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine-General Command and Fatah al-Intifada.

D. Arms embargo and border control

35. Allegations of arms transfers to non-State armed actors continued and remain of serious concern. If confirmed, such transfers would constitute a violation of resolution [1701 \(2006\)](#) (see annex II). While taking allegations of arms transfers seriously, the United Nations is not in a position to substantiate them independently.

36. In his address to the General Assembly on 29 September, the Prime Minister of Israel, Benjamin Netanyahu, showed maps depicting an alleged Hezbollah “missile factory” and “secret weapons depot” next to a gas station in Janah, Beirut, warning that it was “where the next explosion could take place”. He appealed to the Lebanese people, stating that “Iran and Hezbollah have deliberately put you and your families in grave danger. [...] You should tell them: tear these depots down”. Later that day, Mr. Nasrallah stated that “we do not place missiles at the Beirut port nor next to a gas station. We know very well where we should place our missiles”. Hezbollah held a media tour of the Janah location the same evening.

37. Lebanon has yet to submit its initial report on measures taken towards its compliance with the Arms Trade Treaty, to which it acceded on 9 May 2019.

38. In identical letters to the President of the Security Council and to me dated 1 July ([A/74/938-S/2020/642](#)), the Permanent Representative of Lebanon stated that “on 4 June 2020, four Israeli enemy warplanes flying at low altitude ... violated Lebanese airspace, entering over the sea off Sidon”. She added that “Israeli enemy interference caused other targets to appear on the radar screens of Rafic Hariri International Airport in Beirut as missiles were being fired towards Syrian territory”.

39. On 22 September, an explosion occurred in the village of Ayn Qana, near Nabatiyah, South Lebanon. The Lebanese Armed Forces announced that they had launched an investigation. On 26 September, Hezbollah stated that one of its fighters had died, which was linked to the explosion in unconfirmed media reports.

40. Reports of Hezbollah engagement in the fighting in the Syrian Arab Republic continued.

41. Despite the continued closure of the land border with the Syrian Arab Republic since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, the smuggling of people and goods continued, in particular along the north-eastern border, through unofficial crossings. Between 17 June and 20 October, the Lebanese Armed Forces dismantled at least 13 such crossings. On 4 July, in Hirmil, eastern Lebanon, the Lebanese Armed Forces arrested three Sudanese nationals suspected of crossing illegally from the Syrian Arab

Republic. On 13 July, in Brital, Baalbek-Hirmil, in eastern Lebanon, suspected smugglers shot dead a Lebanese Armed Forces soldier. Also in Hirmil, armed clashes between clans allegedly involved in border smuggling resulted in the death of a child on 10 July and the accidental injury on 25 July of a Lebanese Armed Forces soldier who later succumbed to his wounds; on 4 September, the Lebanese Armed Forces arrested one person for alleged cross-border smuggling and seized weapons, ammunitions and drugs.

42. Since July, there were approximately 30 irregular movements of persons by boat from Lebanon towards Cyprus, mostly Syrian refugees and Lebanese nationals, as well as Palestine refugees and migrant workers. The Lebanese authorities intercepted at least 13 groups with 193 individuals in Lebanese territorial seas, while Cypriot authorities sent back five boats with over 200 individuals. On 14 September, a UNIFIL Maritime Task Force vessel detected a boat in apparent distress outside Lebanese territorial seas, 26 nautical miles from Tripoli. In line with the duty under customary international law to render assistance to those in distress at sea, as reflected in the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, UNIFIL brought the 36 persons in the boat, and another individual rescued from the sea, to shore. In response to a request from the Government of Lebanon dated 25 September for UNIFIL assistance in addressing trafficking in persons and migrant smuggling, the mission informed Lebanese officials that it did not have such a mandate; however, UNIFIL would continue to fulfil its obligations under the Convention.

E. Landmines and cluster bombs

43. UNIFIL cleared 2,575 m² of land in the UNIFIL area of operations, finding and disposing of 301 anti-personnel mines. The Mine Action Service conducted 23 quality assurance and quality control monitoring visits, three quality assurance handovers and four risk awareness briefings to 36 UNIFIL military personnel.

F. Delineation of borders

44. No progress was made towards the delineation or demarcation of the border between Lebanon and the Syrian Arab Republic, nor in relation to the issue of the Shab'a Farms area. The Syrian Arab Republic and Israel have yet to respond to the provisional definition of the Shab'a Farms area proposed in my report of 30 October 2007 on the implementation of resolution 1701 (2006) (see S/2007/641, annex).

45. On 1 October, Israel, Lebanon and the United States of America announced that the parties had agreed to a framework for discussions with respect to the land and maritime boundaries between Israel and Lebanon. Subsequently, representatives of Israel and Lebanon met on 14 October at United Nations premises in Naqurah, South Lebanon, to launch discussions aimed at reaching consensus on a common maritime boundary. The opening session was mediated and facilitated by the United States and hosted by the United Nations Special Coordinator for Lebanon.

G. Political and institutional stability

46. On 4 August, a massive explosion occurred at the port of Beirut. According to initial statements from the Lebanese authorities and pending the outcome of their official investigation, an estimated 2,750 ton stockpile of ammonium nitrate ignited after a fire broke out in an adjacent storage facility. Nearly 200 people were killed, 6 remain missing and over 6,500 were injured, including 1,000 children. Hundreds of thousands were displaced, with widespread material damage.

47. On 5 August, the Council of Ministers of Lebanon endorsed the recommendation of the Higher Defence Council to declare a state of emergency in Beirut for two weeks, subsequently extended until the end of the year. Also on 5 August, the Council of Ministers formed an investigative commission to probe the causes of the explosion and report its findings to judicial authorities within five days. On 7 August, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights stressed that “victims’ calls for accountability must be heard, including through undertaking an impartial, independent, thorough and transparent investigation”. In the final statement of the international conference on assistance and support for Beirut and the Lebanese people, co-hosted by France and the United Nations on 9 August, immediate assistance was offered for an impartial, credible and independent inquiry into the explosion, at the request of Lebanon. Civil society actors, prominent figures and some political parties called for an international investigation. On 10 August, the Council of Ministers referred the case to the Judicial Council, following which an investigative judge was appointed. Lebanon solicited the technical assistance of foreign experts, including from France, Turkey and the United States, to aid the investigation. As at 20 October, 25 arrest warrants had been issued, and several acting and former ministers summoned for questioning.

48. In the immediate aftermath of the explosion, national and international search and rescue teams, disaster management experts and a United Nations Disaster Assessment and Coordination Team were dispatched to Beirut. A forward emergency room, including relevant ministerial, municipal and national humanitarian relief representatives, was formed on 8 August. The Lebanese Armed Forces, granted extraordinary powers during the state of emergency, assisted with logistics, the distribution of humanitarian aid, search and rescue and rubble removal.

49. Under the lead of the Deputy Special Coordinator and Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator for Lebanon, the United Nations led the coordination of the emergency humanitarian response, including the receipt and distribution of funds from international donors who had expressed a preference for channelling emergency funding through the United Nations. While the Deputy Special Coordinator and Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator launched a flash appeal seeking \$354.9 million, an emergency operations cell led by the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs ensured effective coordination of the emergency response while maintaining linkages to the Lebanon COVID-19 Emergency Appeal and the Lebanon Crisis Response Plan. Over 180,000 people received assistance. As at 19 October, the flash appeal was 28.6 per cent funded at \$101.6 million. The Lebanon COVID-19 Emergency Appeal was revised upwards in July, with a target of \$473 million.

50. The World Bank, with the United Nations and the European Union, undertook a rapid damage and needs assessment, in which it was estimated that the explosion had caused \$3.8 to \$4.6 billion in physical damage and economic losses of \$2.9 to \$3.5 billion. Recovery and reconstruction costs up to the end of 2021 are estimated to be between \$1.8 and \$2.2 billion. A follow-up joint United Nations, World Bank and European Union strategic framework for reform, recovery and reconstruction, with a three-phased approach comprising emergency relief, human recovery and reconstruction, is under preparation.

51. Public outrage following the explosion sparked renewed protests and precipitated the resignation of the Government on 10 August. In violent clashes between protestors and security forces in Beirut on 8 August, 1 member of the Internal Security Forces died, with 281 protestors, 108 soldiers and 136 Internal Security Forces personnel reportedly injured. There were reports that 49 protestors were injured on 10 and 11 August. In protests on 1 September, 21 protestors and two riot police were injured.

52. Human rights observers alleged the use of excessive force, including the firing of live ammunition and metal pellets, by security forces during the protests from 8 to 11 August. In responding to such allegations, the Internal Security Forces, in a letter dated 14 September, “denied that their members used live ammunition, rubber bullets or metal pellets”. The Internal Security Forces attributed the actions to the Parliament Security Force, including non-uniformed “civilian employees of the Parliament Police”. Investigations into prior allegations of excessive use of force by security forces against protestors (see [S/2020/195](#), para. 60) remain outstanding.

53. In announcing his resignation on 10 August, the Prime Minister of Lebanon, Hassan Diab, attributed the crises facing the country to “endemic corruption in politics, administration and the State”. He criticized the political establishment for “settling political scores, adopting populist electoral rhetoric and destroying what is left of the State”. This followed the resignation on 3 August of the Minister for Foreign Affairs, Nassif Hitti, who cited an “inability to carry out [his] mission” owing to the “absence of an effective will” to enact the reforms demanded by the Lebanese people. On 13 August, eight Members of Parliament, including one woman, also resigned. On 10 September, by-elections for the eight seats were postponed until after 1 January 2021 owing to prevailing infrastructural, funding, health, safety and security challenges.

54. The donors’ conference convened jointly by France and the United Nations on 9 August underscored the solidarity of the international community with the Lebanese people, with pledges totalling more than \$298 million for immediate humanitarian relief. At a briefing to Member States on the humanitarian situation in Lebanon, convened by the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs on 10 August, I called for “robust international support for all people in need in Lebanon, especially women and girls”.

55. On 31 August, the President of Lebanon, Michel Aoun, held binding parliamentary consultations resulting in the designation of Mustapha Adib as Prime Minister. On 23 September, following a ministerial-level meeting co-chaired by the Minister for Foreign Affairs of France, Jean-Yves Le Drian, and me on the margins of the seventy-fifth session of the General Assembly, the International Support Group for Lebanon issued a statement urging the leaders of Lebanon to “unite in support of the timely formation of a Government able to meet the legitimate aspirations” and needs expressed by the Lebanese people. However, on 26 September, having failed to reach agreement with the political blocs on the composition of a Government, Mr. Adib returned his mandate, lamenting the failure of parliamentary blocs to commit to “what they had pledged”.

56. On 14 September, political tensions led to an armed clash between supporters of the Lebanese Forces party and the Free Patriotic Movement in Sin al-Fil, east of Beirut. The Lebanese Armed Forces restored calm and issued a statement urging “citizens to adhere to peaceful expression of opinion and to avoid any action that could jeopardize our stability and security”.

57. During the reporting period, the Government advanced anti-corruption measures, a key element to reforms, adopting legal provisions to facilitate related prosecution as well as a modern asset declaration system. On 30 September, Parliament passed the Law on Illicit Enrichment.

58. On 18 June, the Council of Ministers appointed the 10 commissioners (including 4 women) of the National Commission for the Missing and Forcibly Disappeared in Lebanon. However, both that Commission and the National Human Rights Commission, including the Committee for the Prevention of Torture, remain inoperative while no budget has been allocated.

59. With support from the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women), 44 women's rights activists and organizations issued a charter on 27 August demanding that the humanitarian response to the explosion in Beirut be gender-sensitive and inclusive of women and prioritize the needs of vulnerable groups, especially women-headed households, older persons, refugees and migrant domestic workers.

60. Meanwhile, the socioeconomic situation in Lebanon further deteriorated. On 27 August, the Governor of the Central Bank indicated that foreign currency reserves had diminished to \$19.5 billion, including \$17.5 billion in obligatory reserves, jeopardizing subsidies on critical imports. Informal capital controls continued to limit access to deposits and the transfer of funds overseas. Meanwhile, the Lebanese pound traded for up to 10,000 pounds to the United States dollar on the black market. The Central Administration of Statistics noted inflation of 120 per cent for the consumer price index and 367 per cent for the food price index from August 2019 to August 2020. The World Food Programme registered a 168 per cent increase in the cost of a national food survival minimum expenditure basket from October 2019 to August 2020.

61. Discussions with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) stalled. On 26 June, the Managing Director of IMF, Kristalina Georgieva, stated that "the core of the issue is whether there can be a unity of purpose in the country that can then carry forward a set of very tough but necessary measures". In June, two senior members of the Ministry of Finance negotiating delegation resigned, citing "no genuine will" to implement reforms. On 5 October, the first of three firms contracted by the Government for a forensic audit of the Central Bank commenced work. On 19 October, IMF projected that the Lebanese economy would contract by 25 per cent in 2020.

62. The explosion in Beirut is estimated to have cost over 150,000 jobs, compounding the 30 per cent unemployment rate registered in June. With approximately 200,000 housing units damaged, thousands of families face long-term displacement. The poverty rate, previously estimated by the World Bank to reach 45 per cent by the end of 2020, is also expected to rise. On 28 August, the Special Rapporteur on the right to food called upon the international community to "step up its assistance and support [...] to prevent people throughout Lebanon from going hungry as a result of the 4 August explosion".

63. Over 500 hospital beds were lost through damage to health facilities, compounding pressure on a health-care system already struggling to handle COVID-19-related admissions. As at 20 October, Lebanon had confirmed 64,336 cases of the disease and 531 associated deaths. The number of COVID-19 cases increased after the relaxation of the country's lockdown, including the reopening of the airport, on 2 July and again after the explosion. Efforts to reimpose lockdown measures faced widespread public opposition. Outbreaks in Rumiya and Zahlah prisons sparked riots and led to renewed calls to release prisoners through an amnesty law.

64. As at 30 June, overall international assistance to Lebanon reported by donors stood at \$1.2 billion, including \$944 million disbursed in 2020 and \$256 million carried over from 2019. Donors reported \$531 million in outstanding commitments for 2020 and \$215 million in commitments for 2021 and beyond. Within the overall amount, the Lebanon Crisis Response Plan for 2020 is 26 per cent funded at \$689 million, with United Nations entities and non-governmental organizations reporting \$497 million in funds received in 2020 and \$192 million carried over from 2019.

65. As at 30 September, 896,160 refugees and asylum seekers were registered with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) in Lebanon, including 879,529 Syrian refugees and 16,631 refugees and asylum seekers of other nationalities. With new registrations of Syrian refugees by UNHCR suspended by the Government since 2015, the actual number of Syrians in need of

international protection in Lebanon is unknown. The Government of Lebanon estimates that there are 1.5 million Syrian refugees in Lebanon.

66. UNHCR is aware of 7,535 refugees having returned to the Syrian Arab Republic between 1 January and 30 September, many through unofficial crossings. The main reasons for return cited by the refugees included increasing difficulty surviving in Lebanon owing to the dire socioeconomic situation, reunification with family members in the Syrian Arab Republic and improved security in their place of return. Surveys conducted by UNHCR with refugee households in Lebanon revealed that refugees were increasingly unable to cover basic needs. Over 80 per cent of refugees now live in extreme poverty.

67. Deportations of Syrians who entered or re-entered Lebanon irregularly after 24 April 2019 have resumed, without due process guarantees, after a temporary halt while border crossings were closed owing to the COVID-19 pandemic. The United Nations continues to raise with the Lebanese authorities the importance of applying the procedural safeguards provided for under national law to ensure respect for the principle of non-refoulement. On 14 July, the Council of Ministers adopted a return policy to accelerate the safe return of displaced people to the Syrian Arab Republic. It called for cooperation with the international community, notably UNHCR, and referred to the international obligations of Lebanon, including the principle of non-refoulement, and the dignity of refugees.

68. The explosion at the port of Beirut left 23 Syrian refugees dead. A total of 543 refugee households reported family members injured; 2 Palestine refugees died and 26 were reported injured. As at 19 October, 1,232 Syrian refugees, 1,777 Palestine refugees and 15 refugees of other nationalities had tested positive for COVID-19, including 23 Syrians and 46 Palestinians who had died. UNHCR and the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) are leading efforts to prevent and contain the transmission of the disease among the refugee population and ensure their equal access to testing and treatment under the national COVID-19 response plan. The \$94.6 million COVID-19 flash appeal for UNRWA is allocating approximately \$26.1 million to its Lebanon operations through December 2020.

69. On 18 August, the Trial Chamber of the Special Tribunal for Lebanon pronounced its judgment in the *Ayyash et al. case*, in connection with the bombing that killed 22 people, including the former Prime Minister, Rafic Hariri, and injured 226 others on 14 February 2005. The Chamber unanimously found Salim Ayyash guilty beyond reasonable doubt of all charges, including conspiracy aimed at committing a terrorist act, and the intentional homicide of Mr. Hariri and 21 other persons with premeditation using an explosive device. However, according to the Chamber, the prosecution did not prove its case beyond reasonable doubt in relation to Hassan Habib Merhi, Hussein Hassan Oneissi and Assad Hassan Sabra. It found those individuals not guilty in relation to all counts charged against them. All four defendants were tried in absentia. From The Hague, the former Prime Minister, Saad Hariri, the son of Rafic Hariri, welcomed the verdict, stating that “for the first time in the history of the many political assassinations that Lebanon has witnessed, the Lebanese know the truth, and for the first time, true justice has prevailed”.

III. Security and safety of the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon

70. In response to the explosion in Beirut, the United Nations security plan for the central area of Lebanon and specific contingency plans were activated. UNIFIL also activated its crisis management response mechanisms. The blast resulted in three

fatalities among United Nations dependents, with 106 United Nations personnel injured, including 36 military personnel from UNIFIL. All but one United Nations office in Beirut sustained material damage, and 254 United Nations staff residences were damaged.

71. The COVID-19 Countrywide Business Contingency Plan of Lebanon continued to inform United Nations preparedness measures, in line with World Health Organization guidelines, including quarantine and remote working arrangements as appropriate. As at 20 October, 368 United Nations personnel, including 258 with UNIFIL, had tested positive for COVID-19. UNIFIL continues to take measures to prevent the spread of the disease, including by quarantining all incoming UNIFIL personnel.

72. UNIFIL continuously reviewed its security plans and risk prevention and mitigation measures in close coordination with the Lebanese authorities. Strict security measures remained in place in the Arqub area (Sector East), including the use of armed escorts for official movements by all United Nations personnel. UNIFIL facilitated 13 missions to the Arqub area by members of the United Nations country team. On 27 July, national staff residing in Sector East were advised to remain indoors following shelling by the Israel Defense Forces in the Shab‘a Farms area (see para. 2).

73. The United Nations continued to follow up with the Lebanese authorities on the incident of 4 August 2018 in the village of Majdal Zun (Sector West), in which armed individuals attacked a UNIFIL patrol, as described in my report dated 15 November 2018 (see [S/2018/1029](#), para. 16). The United Nations has not been informed of any related criminal proceedings to bring the perpetrators to justice. Furthermore, the Lebanese Armed Forces informed UNIFIL in a letter dated 10 September that they objected to the repeated calls by the mission for a complete investigation into the incident in Bar‘ashit on 10 February, as detailed in my report dated 10 March 2020 (see [S/2020/195](#), para. 15).

74. UNIFIL continued to monitor proceedings in Lebanese military courts against individuals suspected of planning or perpetrating serious attacks against the mission. The Permanent Military Court held hearings on 20 October regarding the attack against UNIFIL peacekeepers serving with the Spanish contingent in 2007 and the case of terror intent opened in January 2014. In the case of the attempted serious attack against UNIFIL in 2008, in which one of the four convicted perpetrators filed an appeal, a hearing was held on 24 September. In the case of the serious attack perpetrated against UNIFIL on 27 May 2011, a hearing was held on 29 June. In two other cases of serious attacks perpetrated against UNIFIL, on 26 July and 9 December 2011, hearings were held on 3 June.

IV. Deployment of the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon

75. As at 20 October, UNIFIL comprised 10,198 military personnel, including 561 women (5.5 per cent), from 45 troop-contributing countries; 241 international civilian staff, including 91 women (38 per cent); and 571 national civilian staff, including 154 women (27 per cent). The UNIFIL Maritime Task Force comprised six vessels, two helicopters and 791 of the Force’s military personnel, including 29 women (4 per cent). In addition, 54 military observers, including 8 women (15 per cent), from the United Nations Truce Supervision Organization serve with Observer Group Lebanon, under the operational control of UNIFIL. The most senior military women serve at the rank of Colonel; the most senior civilian woman serves at the D-2 level.

76. Pursuant to the Action for Peacekeeping commitment to strengthen performance and accountability, UNIFIL continued to implement the Comprehensive Performance

Assessment System, informing the 2021–2022 budget planning process and the development of a Blue Line barrel inspections and maintenance timetable.

77. In line with the Action for Peacekeeping commitment to improve the safety and security of peacekeepers, the mission improved the protection of camps and observation positions along the Blue Line, enhancing 18 observation posts, replacing bullet-proof glass, updating video surveillance systems and removing vegetation. It also enhanced the very high frequency radio network, enabling real-time vehicle tracking.

78. In implementation of the Action for Peacekeeping commitments and resolution [2436 \(2018\)](#), UNIFIL assessed 20 subordinate military units and one ship for logistics, training and operational preparedness by 30 June. Some 15 of the military units and the ship were assessed as having satisfactory operational preparedness. Five military units were assessed as facing minor shortfalls, mainly relating to maintenance works and logistics. Of the 11 identified issues, 7 have been addressed; measures are under way to address the 4 remaining issues, related to logistics.

79. By letter to the President of the Security Council dated 29 October ([S/2020/1059](#)), I presented the first elements of the implementation plan on the assessment of the continued relevance of UNIFIL resources and options for improving efficiency and effectiveness between UNIFIL and the Office of the United Nations Special Coordinator for Lebanon (see [S/2020/473](#)), pursuant to resolution [2539 \(2020\)](#). The implementation of the recommendations of the assessment report continues as a matter of priority in consultation with the parties, members of the Security Council and troop-contributing countries.

V. Conduct and discipline

80. UNIFIL received one allegation of sexual exploitation and abuse involving a member of a military contingent. The case is under investigation by the relevant troop-contributing country. UNIFIL and the Office of the United Nations Special Coordinator for Lebanon continued to modify their preventive mechanism on sexual exploitation and abuse, taking into account the increased risks of sexual harassment and domestic violence since the implementation of COVID-19 work modalities, and continued efforts to raise public awareness. Military commanders continued to receive briefings on their accountability in respect of conduct and discipline matters.

VI. Observations

81. I reiterate my deepest condolences to the families of the victims of the explosions in Beirut on 4 August and to all those injured and displaced by that tragic incident. I reiterate the need for an impartial, thorough and transparent investigation to ensure accountability and help to prevent such tragedies from recurring. I am grateful for the widespread support and solidarity of the international community for the recovery effort in Beirut.

82. In addition to the impact of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, the explosion further exacerbated the financial and socioeconomic crises facing Lebanon. This national tragedy can nevertheless be a catalyst for positive change. More than one year since the Lebanese people took to the streets, the implementation of reforms to address their demands remains outstanding. I urge all political forces to facilitate the timely formation of a Government able to undertake the reforms necessary to put the country on the path to recovery. In that regard, I call upon political and financial

stakeholders to converge around an economic plan that protects the most vulnerable and facilitates the resumption of discussions with IMF.

83. Projections of worsening food insecurity and poverty are deeply worrisome, as are reports that Lebanese are beginning to emigrate irregularly by sea. A people-centred humanitarian and recovery response, anchored in human rights, is required to address the needs of all affected populations.

84. As calls for protests continue in Lebanon, I remind the authorities to protect the rights to freedom of expression and peaceful assembly. The security forces of Lebanon should abide by international norms and standards on the use of force, in particular the principles of legality, necessity and proportionality, and conduct investigations into reports of disproportionate or excessive force to ensure accountability. The protestors should also exercise their rights in accordance with the rule of law and without resorting to violence.

85. I strongly condemn violations of resolution [1701 \(2006\)](#) and of the cessation of hostilities by both sides. I reiterate my urgent appeal to all parties to honour their commitments to fully implement the resolution, cease violations, respect the cessation of hostilities and refrain from any actions or rhetoric that could jeopardize the cessation of hostilities or destabilize Lebanon or the region.

86. I am deeply concerned at the breaches of the cessation of hostilities on 27 July and 25 August. I commend the timely intervention by UNIFIL to contain the situations. To maintain stability along the Blue Line, the parties should fully utilize the liaison and coordination arrangements with UNIFIL and refrain from unilateral action.

87. I commend the parties for continuing to attend tripartite meetings while respecting COVID-19 precautionary measures. The United Nations will continue to support efforts to defuse tension through dialogue, pursue opportunities for confidence-building and create an environment conducive to resolving underlying grievances, including through the continued good offices of the Special Coordinator for Lebanon and the UNIFIL Head of Mission and Force Commander.

88. The continued daily violations of Lebanese airspace by Israeli aircraft, including allegedly to carry out strikes inside the Syrian Arab Republic, and unmanned aerial vehicles remain of deep concern. The overflights constitute a violation of resolution [1701 \(2006\)](#) and of Lebanese sovereignty and cause distress to the Lebanese population. I reiterate my condemnation of all violations of Lebanese sovereignty and my calls for the Government of Israel to cease all overflights of Lebanese territory. The continued occupation by the Israel Defense Forces of northern Ghajar and an adjacent area north of the Blue Line also represents a continuing violation of resolution [1701 \(2006\)](#).

89. In line with the provisions outlined in resolution [2539 \(2020\)](#), I call upon the Lebanese authorities to grant UNIFIL full access to all locations north of the Blue Line requested for swift conduct of its investigations. I reiterate my concern that UNIFIL has not been allowed access to locations north of the Blue Line in connection with its investigations into the tunnels crossing the Blue Line, confirmed by UNIFIL in December 2018 and early 2019, as well as to the Green without Borders site in Aytarun connected with the incident on 1 September 2019. The Lebanese authorities have primary responsibility for ensuring that there are no unauthorized armed personnel, assets or weapons in the area and, to that end, must facilitate the mission's access to such locations for preventive inspections and investigative purposes.

90. The freedom of movement of UNIFIL in its entire area of operations, including along the full length of the Blue Line, remains critical. Its ability to conduct patrols and activities independently must be upheld in accordance with the its mandate. I call

upon the Lebanese authorities to investigate any such restrictions of movement, including with respect to the incidents in Bar'ashit on 10 February and Blida on 25 May. More than two years after the attack on peacekeepers in Majdal Zun, the United Nations has still not been informed of any criminal proceedings against the attackers. I reiterate my call to the Lebanese authorities to fulfil their obligations to ensure the safety of UNIFIL personnel and full accountability for those who attack peacekeepers.

91. The contributions of the Lebanese Armed Forces to the humanitarian response following the explosion in Beirut, as well as in combating terrorist threats in parts of Lebanon, serve as reminders of the stabilizing role of State security institutions in Lebanon. I welcome the resumption of the refurbishment of the headquarters of the Lebanese Armed Forces model regiment and the selection of a site for the regiment's training. To advance progress with the Lebanese Armed Forces Navy transition strategy, further international support is encouraged, including to repair the damage to the Beirut Naval Base caused by the explosion on 4 August. The improved inspection rate by the Lebanese Armed Forces of vessels referred by the UNIFIL Maritime Task Force is welcomed, and I encourage the Lebanese authorities to inspect all hailed vessels referred by the mission to the Lebanese Armed Forces, in accordance with resolution [1701 \(2006\)](#). I call upon donors and partners to reinforce the role of the Lebanese Armed Forces as the only legitimate armed forces of Lebanon.

92. The continued self-acknowledged maintenance of unauthorized weapons outside State control by Hizbullah and other non-State armed groups represents a grave violation of resolution [1701 \(2006\)](#). I call upon the Government of Lebanon to take all actions necessary to ensure full implementation of the relevant provisions of the Taif Accords and of resolutions [1559 \(2004\)](#) and [1680 \(2006\)](#), which require the disarmament of all armed groups in Lebanon so that there will be no weapons or authority in Lebanon other than those of the Lebanese State. Earlier decisions of the Lebanese National Dialogue Conference pertaining to the disarmament of non-Lebanese groups and the dismantling of the military bases of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine-General Command and Fatah al-Intifada should be implemented.

93. I encourage both parties to embrace the renewed momentum towards resolution of the land and maritime boundary disputes. The United Nations, through its representatives, is fully committed to supporting the process as requested by the parties and within its capacity and mandate.

94. The Government of Lebanon should abide by its policy of disassociation, consistent with the Baabda Declaration of 2012, and all Lebanese parties and nationals should cease their involvement in the Syrian conflict and other conflicts in the region. I condemn any movement of fighters and war materiel across the Lebanese-Syrian border in violation of resolution [1701 \(2006\)](#).

95. The continued hospitality of Lebanon towards refugees is commendable. The United Nations will redouble its efforts to support Lebanon during these difficult times. I recall the importance of maintaining respect for due process of law and the dignity of refugees while the United Nations and international partners continue to work collectively towards creating enabling conditions for safe, dignified and voluntary returns and third country resettlement in a sustainable manner. I thank donors for their enduring commitment in responding to the refugee crisis in Lebanon.

96. Furthermore, I appeal to donors to provide flexible and generous funding for the flash appeal in response to the explosion in Beirut. I also appeal for continued donor support for the Lebanon COVID-19 Emergency Appeal and the Lebanon Crisis Response Plan. Adequate funding is also needed for UNRWA to maintain its essential services.

97. I reiterate my gratitude to all countries contributing military personnel and equipment to UNIFIL and Observer Group Lebanon and encourage them to increase the number of women among military personnel in UNIFIL. I thank the Special Coordinator for Lebanon, Ján Kubiš, and the staff of his office; the UNIFIL Head of Mission and Force Commander, Major General Stefano Del Col, and the civilian and military personnel under his leadership; and the members of the United Nations country team.

Annex I

Restrictions on the freedom of access and movement of the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon from 17 June to 20 October 2020

1. In its resolution [2539 \(2020\)](#), the Security Council called upon the Government of Lebanon to facilitate the access of the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) in line with resolution [1701 \(2006\)](#), while respecting Lebanese sovereignty.
2. During the reporting period, UNIFIL conducted an average of 7,650 monthly patrols, of which 2,232 (29 per cent) were foot patrols. It conducted an average of 2,832 patrols each month along the Blue Line, both by vehicle and on foot (55 and 45 per cent, respectively). It also conducted an average of 51 helicopter patrols each month, as well as an average of 965 monthly inspection activities, including the operation of temporary and permanent checkpoints, and counter-rocket-launching operations.
3. While the freedom of movement of UNIFIL was respected in most cases, there were several restrictions of freedom of movement and access. In such instances, both the Lebanese Armed Forces and members of the local community frequently stated that mission patrols should be accompanied by the Lebanese Armed Forces. During the reporting period, the Lebanese Armed Forces continued to object to some patrol routes, which were proposed by UNIFIL in order to expand its presence in areas outside main routes and municipal centres, on the grounds that they were either private roads or involved areas of strategic importance to the Lebanese Armed Forces. UNIFIL has consistently followed up on reported incidents with the appropriate authorities, and continuously engages with the Lebanese Armed Forces to secure freedom of movement and unrestricted access to all areas within its area of operations.

Access to all locations along the Blue Line

4. As detailed in paragraphs 2–4 of the report of the Secretary-General, the Lebanese Armed Forces have facilitated access by UNIFIL to a number of locations of interest, in connection with its investigations into the breaches of the cessation of hostilities on 27 July and 25 August. However, UNIFIL is yet to gain full access to several other sites of interest, including a number of Green without Borders sites, despite repeated formal requests to the Lebanese Armed Forces. Access to those locations is required both in connection with investigations and as part of the mission's daily monitoring of the Blue Line, as mandated under resolution [1701 \(2006\)](#) and recalled in resolution [2539 \(2020\)](#).

Freedom of movement incidents

5. On 23 June, two individuals in civilian clothes blocked the road by stopping their vehicle in front of an Observer Group Lebanon vehicle in Shaqra (Sector East). The individuals said that the Observer Group Lebanon patrol should not enter their village without being accompanied by the Lebanese Armed Forces or without informing the municipality, adding that they had contacted the Lebanese Armed Forces. During the encounter, the individuals remained calm. Soon thereafter, the Lebanese Armed Forces arrived and escorted the Observer Group Lebanon patrol out of the area. UNIFIL is following up on the incident.
6. On 6 July, an individual in civilian clothes stopped his vehicle in front of a UNIFIL patrol in Kunin (Sector West) and asserted that the patrol was not supposed to be there. Shortly thereafter, nine additional individuals arrived in vehicles and on foot and displayed threatening hand gestures and swore at the patrol. The patrol

managed to leave the area and continued its task. It observed, however, that it was being followed by two vehicles and decided to return to the base in Burj Qallawiyah to avoid any risk of escalation. UNIFIL informed the Lebanese Armed Forces about the incident and met the following day with the mayor of Kunin, who was unaware of the incident.

7. On 15 July, a UNIFIL logistics unit unintentionally entered a secondary road while conducting a reconnaissance of routes in the vicinity of Kunin. An individual in civilian clothes on a motorbike blocked the road by stopping in front of the convoy and shouted at the peacekeepers. The convoy leader exited the vehicle to talk to the individual, whereupon approximately 50 additional individuals calmly gathered at the scene. About 30 minutes later, the Lebanese Armed Forces arrived after being contacted by the group of individuals and enabled the convoy to leave the spot and continue its movement. On 22 September, UNIFIL liaised with the mayor of Kunin, who said that the unit had been stopped as it had not followed the road signs set up following an agreement between the municipality and UNIFIL aimed at ensuring that UNIFIL patrols did not enter narrow roads with big vehicles.

8. On 6 August, three individuals in civilian clothes stopped a UNIFIL patrol in the vicinity of Hanin (Sector West) by placing their vehicle in the middle of the road, preventing the patrol from entering the village. Owing to the unfriendly attitude of the group, the patrol decided to continue its movement using an alternative route. UNIFIL informed the Lebanese Armed Forces. The following day, the mission contacted the mayor of Hanin, who referred it to the Lebanese Armed Forces.

9. On 25 August, two individuals in civilian clothes in Kafra (Sector West) blocked a UNIFIL patrol by placing a scooter in front of the UNIFIL vehicle. The patrol decided to reverse in order to avoid escalation and continued its assigned task using an alternative road. UNIFIL subsequently called on the mayor of Kafra, who dismissed the incident as having been carried out by teenagers. He said that the community was “annoyed” by the incident and that he had contacted the Lebanese Armed Forces and Internal Security Forces to inform them that such behaviour would not be tolerated.

10. On 29 August, a UNIFIL military police vehicle, tasked to follow up on a road traffic accident in Marun al-Ra’s (Sector West), was stopped by a group of approximately 50 individuals in civilian clothes, who placed their vehicles in front of and behind the UNIFIL vehicle. The individuals requested the UNIFIL personnel to hand over their cameras and mobile phones. After a short discussion, the UNIFIL vehicle was able to proceed without the personnel handing over any assets. The mission informed the Lebanese Armed Forces. It contacted the mayor of Marun al-Ra’s and other municipal staff on 6 September regarding the incident but obtained no further information.

11. On 9 September, a UNIFIL patrol was stopped by five individuals in civilian clothes, while trying to enter the village of Bidyas (Sector West). The civilians told the patrol that it could not drive through the village because of restrictions related to the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic. When attempts to convince the villagers to let the UNIFIL vehicle pass failed, the patrol reversed and continued its movement around the village using an alternative road. UNIFIL informed the Lebanese Armed Forces. The same day, it contacted the mayor of Bidyas, who stated that it was likely that the incident took place outside the precincts of Bidyas municipality and involved residents of a neighbouring village. He stressed that he and members of his municipal council did not accept any unfriendly or inappropriate acts against UNIFIL and promised to use his good offices to sort out any misunderstandings in the future.

12. On 11 September, Observer Group Lebanon and UNIFIL military personnel taking part in an investigation parked their cars in front of a Lebanese Armed Forces position near Ayta al-Sha'b (Sector West). When UNIFIL personnel exited their vehicles, they were approached by eight individuals in civilian clothes, who accused them of taking pictures. The individuals gesticulated at the peacekeepers and asked them to leave. Some of the individuals tried to open the driver's door of the Observer Group Lebanon vehicle. Soon thereafter, the Lebanese Armed Forces arrived, and the individuals left the area. UNIFIL and Observer Group Lebanon personnel accompanied by the Lebanese Armed Forces proceeded to the investigation site. Following up on the incident, the mayor of Ayta al-Sha'b characterized the incident as a "random occurrence".

13. On 21 September, two individuals in a vehicle without a licence plate stopped an Observer Group Lebanon patrol on a road near Bidyas by placing their vehicle across the road. One of the individuals approached the patrol and stated that the United Nations was prohibited from passing through the area. The Observer Group Lebanon patrol proposed calling the Lebanese Armed Forces to clarify the situation, whereupon the individuals went back to their vehicle and left the area. Observer Group Lebanon continued its patrol. UNIFIL followed up on the incident with the mayor of Bidyas, who told it that he had not heard about the incident and was of the view that the perpetrators were not from the area. The following day, the mayors of Burj Rahhal and Bidyas told UNIFIL that there was no such vehicle of that particular model and colour in their villages. UNIFIL informed the Lebanese Armed Forces.

14. On 3 October, two individuals in civilian clothes stopped a UNIFIL patrol at the entrance to the village of Dayr Ntar (Sector West). The patrol decided to turn around and continue its patrol using an alternative route, while requesting the Lebanese Armed Forces to escort it through the village. The Lebanese Armed Forces subsequently escorted the patrol through the village. Following up on the incident the same day, the municipal officer of Dayr Ntar said that she was aware of the incident and had talked to the two individuals involved, who had reiterated that the UNIFIL patrol could not enter the village without being escorted by Lebanese Armed Forces.

15. On 9 October, a UNIFIL patrol arrived in Bayt Lif (Sector West) to verify a report about a fire in the area. Upon arrival, the patrol observed a car on fire and a group of individuals in civilian clothes attempting to extinguish it. Shortly after the arrival of the patrol, some of the individuals started shouting at the patrol personnel, urging them to leave the area. The patrol decided to leave. UNIFIL informed the Lebanese Armed Forces. As part of the UNIFIL investigation, the following day, municipal officials told UNIFIL that they were not aware of the incident and that there had not been any fire in Bayt Lif but in the outskirts of the neighbouring villages of Dibil and Rashaf.

Annex II

Implementation of the arms embargo

1. In paragraph 20 of its resolution [2539 \(2020\)](#), the Security Council recalled paragraph 15 of resolution [1701 \(2006\)](#), according to which all States should take the necessary measures to prevent, by their nationals or from their territories or using flag vessels or aircraft, the sale or supply of arms and related materiel to any entity or individual in Lebanon other than those authorized by the Government of Lebanon or the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL). The United Nations continued to engage with Member States on allegations of weapons transfers and efforts to address such violations of resolution [1701 \(2006\)](#).

2. No response was received during the reporting period to my letter dated 22 October 2019 addressed to the President of Lebanon, in which I recalled that Lebanon had been requested to share with the Secretariat any pertinent information or developments related to the arms embargo.

3. In line with paragraph 15 of resolution [1701 \(2006\)](#), it is incumbent upon all States to take the necessary measures to prevent, inter alia, the sale or supply to any entity or individual in Lebanon of arms and related materiel of all types. During the reporting period, no information was shared with the Secretariat in this regard.

4. The United Nations remains committed to supporting overall compliance by the parties with resolution [1701 \(2006\)](#) in all its provisions and to advancing its implementation. This applies to the implementation of the arms embargo under paragraph 15 of resolution [1701 \(2006\)](#) and any decision that would be adopted by the Security Council in this regard. I look forward to continued dialogue with the Council and its members on furthering our joint goal of the full implementation of resolution [1701 \(2006\)](#).
