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Implementation of Security Council resolution 1701 (2006) during the period from 21 October 2020 to 19 February 2021

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 12 November 2020 (S/2020/1110), including on the provisions of resolution 2539 (2020). Against a backdrop of increasing hardship in Lebanon, the area of operations of the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) remained generally stable. Outstanding obligations remain for both parties under resolution 1701 (2006). There was no progress towards a permanent ceasefire between Lebanon and Israel.

II. Implementation of resolution 1701 (2006)

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

2. On 14 November, UNIFIL observed 12 illumination rounds fired from south of the Blue Line close to Abbasiyah (Sector East). All 12 rounds landed south of the Blue Line. In this connection, the Israel Defense Forces informed UNIFIL that they had apprehended an individual who had crossed south of the Blue Line close to Ghajar (Sector East). UNIFIL has launched an investigation into the incident. On 17 November, UNIFIL observed 17 illumination rounds fired from south of the Blue Line close to Abbasiyah; 11 of the rounds landed north of the Blue Line. On this occasion, the Israel Defense Forces informed UNIFIL that they had apprehended two Israeli citizens in the area, who allegedly were involved in drug smuggling. On 19 November, UNIFIL observed eight illumination rounds fired from south of the Blue Line near Sarda (Sector East); seven landed north of the Blue Line. The Israel Defense Forces informed UNIFIL that they had fired the rounds after observing suspicious activity in the area. On 28 November and 1 January, respectively, UNIFIL observed 14 and 2 illumination rounds fired from an Israel Defense Forces position close to Mays al-Jabal (Sector East), all of which landed south of the Blue Line. On both occasions, the Israel Defense Forces informed UNIFIL that they had prevented a number of individuals from crossing south of the Blue Line. On 16 February, UNIFIL observed an illumination round fired from south of the Blue Line near Arab al-Wazzani (Sector East), which landed south of the Blue Line. Subsequently, the Israel Defense Forces informed UNIFIL that they had fired the round in response to suspicious activity in the area.



3. On 16 November, UNIFIL observed Israel Defense Forces soldiers firing eight small arms rounds in the air after a sewage truck approached the Blue Line from the north, close to Markaba (Sector East). Shortly thereafter, an Israel Defense Forces tank pointed its barrel north of the Blue Line. On 13 December, UNIFIL observed a group of Israel Defense Forces soldiers close to Hula (Sector East), one of whom fired three shots in the air after four individuals in civilian clothes approached the Blue Line from the north. UNIFIL launched an investigation into the incident. On 9 January, UNIFIL observed eight Israel Defense Forces soldiers close to Kfar Shuba (Sector East), with one of the soldiers firing two shots in the air. On 15 February, UNIFIL observed three Israel Defense Forces soldiers firing two shots in the air after two men in civilian clothes approached the Blue Line from the north near Hula, one of whom threw stones towards the area south of the Blue Line. UNIFIL is following up on all of these incidents with the parties. On 15 November, the Israel Defense Forces informed UNIFIL that they had fired shots in the air close to Blida (Sector East) after two individuals were spotted approaching the technical fence. UNIFIL also launched an investigation into an incident on 15 December, when the Israel Defense Forces allegedly fired warning shots in the air after a boy crossed south of the Blue Line close to Mays al-Jabal. On 7 February, the Israel Defense Forces informed UNIFIL that they had fired shots in the air close to Mays al-Jabal to deter individuals from crossing south of the Blue Line.

4. UNIFIL continued to observe incidents of weapons being pointed by the Israel Defense Forces and the Lebanese Armed Forces across the Blue Line, often requiring efforts by UNIFIL to reduce tensions, including by interpositioning between the parties on the ground. On 10 November, UNIFIL interpositioned between the parties close to Udaysah (Sector East), after an Israel Defense Forces tank pointed its barrel towards a group of approximately 20 Lebanese Armed Forces soldiers, 3 of whom were armed with rocket-propelled grenade launchers, and three individuals in civilian clothes. Some of the Lebanese Armed Forces soldiers pointed their weapons towards the tank. On 23 December, an Israel Defense Forces tank near Mays al-Jabal pointed its barrel north of the Blue Line towards an area where Lebanese Armed Forces and UNIFIL personnel were standing, whereupon one Lebanese Armed Forces soldier pointed a rocket-propelled grenade launcher towards the tank. The tank laid a smokescreen, following which the Lebanese Armed Forces and then UNIFIL left the area. On 30 December, UNIFIL personnel took position between the parties in Markaba after an Israel Defense Forces tank pointed its barrel towards an area where several Lebanese Armed Forces and UNIFIL personnel, as well as five individuals in civilian clothes, were standing, following which Lebanese Armed Forces soldiers pointed a rocket-propelled grenade launcher and an automatic rifle towards the Israel Defense Forces. On 26 January, UNIFIL observed Israel Defense Forces soldiers with two tanks and Lebanese Armed Forces soldiers in defensive positions pointing weapons at each other across the Blue Line in the vicinity of Mays al-Jabal. UNIFIL also observed individuals in civilian clothes, some with professional cameras, north of the Blue Line. The Israel Defense Forces withdrew from the area 90 minutes later. On 5 February, UNIFIL interpositioned between the parties close to Mays al-Jabal when Israel Defense Forces soldiers and Lebanese Armed Forces soldiers pointed weapons across the Blue Line.

5. During the reporting period, UNIFIL assessed that a dirt road in the vicinity of Udaysah had crossed south of the Blue Line, at two locations in an area where Lebanon has reservations. At the urging of UNIFIL to address these violations of the Blue Line, the Lebanese Armed Forces intervened with Udaysah municipality, which commenced realignment of the road on 28 January. UNIFIL is maintaining a monitoring and liaison presence in coordination with the parties to ensure calm during the corrective roadworks.

6. Following the facilitation of access by the Lebanese Armed Forces and the Israel Defense Forces to relevant locations in connection with the breaches of the cessation of hostilities that took place on 27 July and 25 August 2020 (see [S/2020/1110](#), paras. 2–4), UNIFIL finalized its investigations into the two incidents and shared its findings with the parties. UNIFIL has been unable to substantiate the claim by the Israel Defense Forces of an attempted infiltration from north to south across the Blue Line that preceded its shelling in Kfar Shuba on 27 July. Regarding the 25 August incident, UNIFIL confirmed that the exchange of fire was initiated from north of the Blue Line, with sniper/small arms fire from the Hula area into the Manarah area south of the Blue Line, followed by retaliatory fire by the Israel Defense Forces targeting several Green without Borders locations north of the Blue Line. In identical letters dated 16 November addressed to the President of the Security Council and myself ([S/2020/1120](#)), the Permanent Representative of Israel stated “[these are] the two most significant attacks conducted by Hezbollah against Israeli soldiers and positions in recent months”. In identical letters dated 29 January addressed to the President of the Security Council and myself ([A/75/732-S/2021/104](#)), the Permanent Representative of Lebanon stated that there was “no truth to the Israeli claims that Hezbollah attacked from north of the Blue Line on 27 July and 25 August 2020.”

7. The Israel Defense Forces continued to enter Lebanese airspace in violation of resolution [1701 \(2006\)](#) and of Lebanese sovereignty. From 21 October to 19 February, UNIFIL recorded 333 airspace violations, totalling 758 hours and 11 minutes in overflight time. Unmanned aerial vehicles accounted for approximately 77 per cent of the violations. The remaining airspace violations involved fighter aircraft or unidentified aircraft. In identical letters dated 12 January addressed to the President of the Security Council and myself ([A/75/714-S/2021/51](#)), the Permanent Representative of Lebanon stated that “Israeli enemy aircraft, whether reconnaissance aircraft or warplanes, have violated Lebanese airspace in a manner that is disturbing and provocative and aimed at terrorizing the inhabitants of Lebanon in all populated areas of the country.”

8. On 10 November, the Israel Defense Forces stated that it had downed “a drone belonging to Hezbollah that crossed from Lebanon into Israel.” On 24 November, UNIFIL detected an unmanned aerial vehicle flying in a north-eastern direction, falling north of the Blue Line near Qulay‘at (Sector East). UNIFIL did not find any debris. On 22 January, the Israel Defense Forces stated that it had “downed a drone that crossed from Lebanon into Israeli airspace,” close to the Kibbutz Hanita, south of Alma al-Sha‘b (Sector West). UNIFIL did not observe the incident. On 1 February, Hezbollah said that it had “downed a drone belonging to the Israeli enemy that had entered Lebanese airspace outside Blida”. UNIFIL did not observe the incident.

9. UNIFIL continued to liaise and coordinate with the parties to defuse tensions along the Blue Line and to underscore the importance of respecting resolution [1701 \(2006\)](#). From 21 October to 19 February, UNIFIL recorded 328 ground violations by Lebanese civilians crossing south of the Blue Line, including 229 violations by shepherds and farmers, mainly in the Shab‘a Farms area, as well as 71 violations by civilians on their way to the Shu‘ayb well near Blida. On 13 January, UNIFIL observed eight Lebanese Armed Forces soldiers, some of whom were armed, crossing south of the Blue Line near Kfar Shuba on three different occasions while taking photographs of the area south of the Blue Line. Following a warning by UNIFIL, they returned north of the Blue Line. On 12 January, the Israel Defense Forces apprehended a shepherd who had crossed south of the Blue Line close to Bastrah (Sector East). In identical letters dated 13 January addressed to the President of the Security Council and myself ([A/75/717-S/2021/78](#)), the Permanent Representative of Lebanon informed about this incident and stated that it was “being pursued in coordination with UNIFIL”. On 15 January, UNIFIL, in coordination with the

International Committee of the Red Cross, facilitated the return of the shepherd to Lebanon. A UNIFIL investigation is ongoing.

10. In addition to Blue Line violations observed by UNIFIL, the Lebanese Armed Forces informed UNIFIL on 15 November that it had apprehended a Palestinian who had crossed north of the Blue Line near Duhayrah (Sector West). On 18 and 28 November, the Israel Defense Forces informed UNIFIL that it had thwarted attempted crossings south of the Blue Line by Sudanese citizens in the vicinity of Ayta al-Sha'b (Sector West) and an unspecified location. On 28 November, the Lebanese Armed Forces informed UNIFIL that it had arrested two Sudanese citizens for attempting to cross south of the Blue Line close to Mays al-Jabal. UNIFIL, in coordination with the parties, facilitated the return of seven cows that had crossed south of the Blue Line on 24 January in the Wazzani area (Sector East). UNIFIL has launched an investigation into the incident.

11. 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.

12. 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 129 temporary checkpoints and conducted 357 counter-rocket-launching operations on average each month.

13. UNIFIL observed unauthorized weapons in the area of operations on 317 occasions. All but the following four incidents involved hunting weapons. On 13 November, an Observer Group Lebanon patrol observed an individual pointing a rifle without a magazine at a driver of another vehicle in Ayn Ibil (Sector West). On 1 December, UNIFIL observed seven individuals, one carrying an M16 rifle, close to the Blue Line near Ghajar. On 1 December, UNIFIL observed two individuals, one carrying an AK-47 rifle, near Aytarun (Sector West). On 27 January, UNIFIL observed two individuals, one carrying an AK-47 rifle, in the vicinity of Ramiyah (Sector West). UNIFIL informed the Lebanese Armed Forces of all four incidents.

14. Pursuant to resolution [2539 \(2020\)](#), UNIFIL maintained its operational tempo and visible presence throughout the area of operations, conducting on average 13,497 monthly military operational activities, including 6,281 patrols. Some 4 per cent of the mission's military operational activities included at least one woman peacekeeper. UNIFIL vehicular, foot and air patrols maintained an operational footprint in 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. While observing precautionary measures owing to the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic, the proportion of UNIFIL operations conducted in close coordination with the Lebanese Armed Forces remained at 15 per cent. Owing to COVID-19-related restrictive measures, in November, UNIFIL decreased operational activities by about 6 per cent. Since 14 January, the Lebanese Armed Forces suspended training activities, while community engagement walks remain suspended.

15. Despite repeated requests, UNIFIL has yet to gain full access to several locations of interest, including some Green without Borders sites. While the freedom of movement of UNIFIL was respected in most cases, the mission did encounter some restrictions to its movements, as detailed in annex I.

16. The UNIFIL Maritime Task Force continued to carry out maritime interdiction operations throughout the maritime area of operations, hailing 2,192 vessels. The Lebanese Armed Forces inspected and cleared all 373 vessels referred by UNIFIL for inspection.

17. UNIFIL continued to support the capacity-building of the Lebanese Armed Forces Navy by conducting 216 training sessions and exercises, jointly practising common operational standards for commanding, monitoring and hailing activities. This included the conduct of the first advanced maritime interdiction operation integration training on 25 November. Training sessions requiring in-person attendance remain suspended owing to COVID-19-related restrictions.

18. The Lebanese Armed Forces and UNIFIL continued their engagement within the framework of the strategic dialogue, although at a reduced pace owing to COVID-19 restrictions. UNIFIL assisted the Lebanese Armed Forces in developing plans for the model regiment training concept and enhancement of the training site identified in Shawakir (Sector West). Preparatory steps for the refurbishment of the model regiment headquarters in Sribbin (Sector West) were finalized.

B. Security and liaison arrangements

19. UNIFIL convened tripartite meetings on 27 October, 7 December and 2 February, in a curtailed format and with fewer participants, owing to COVID-19 restrictions. UNIFIL continued its regular liaison and coordination activities with both parties, in person and virtually. The mission also continued its ongoing bilateral engagement with the parties and utilized the tripartite mechanism to resolve contentious issues, including by revitalizing the discussions on the marking of the Blue Line.

20. After being on hold since May 2017, the Blue Line marking process resumed on 16 November, with the Lebanese Armed Forces concluding the verification of 21 pending Blue Line markers on 21 December. UNIFIL has urged the Israel Defense Forces to complete the verification of its eight pending markers. In line with the recommendations of the Comprehensive Planning and Performance Assessment System, UNIFIL continued the refurbishment of existing Blue Line markers.

21. 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.

22. In accordance with the Action for Peacekeeping initiative, UNIFIL, through quick-impact projects and civil-military cooperation initiatives funded by troop-contributing countries, continued to provide capacity-building support to national authorities, including the Internal Security Forces, and supported local authority efforts to prevent COVID-19 transmission. Such support included the donation of personal protection equipment and the training of medical personnel in virus detection, screening and quarantining.

23. UNIFIL continues to support the implementation of resolution [1325 \(2000\)](#) on women and peace and security, including through the training of 5,015 UNIFIL military and civilian personnel, including 351 women, during the reporting period. UNIFIL sector commanders and battalion commanders continue to meet specific performance benchmarks related to women and peace and security. In line with resolution [2539 \(2020\)](#), UNIFIL supports implementation of the first national action plan of Lebanon for the implementation of resolution [1325 \(2000\)](#), as a member of the plan's five coordinating committees.

C. Disarming armed groups

24. No progress was achieved with respect to the disarmament of armed groups. Hizbullah continued to acknowledge publicly that it maintains military capabilities. The maintenance of arms outside the control of the State by Hizbullah 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.

25. On 27 December, the Secretary-General of Hizbullah, Hassan Nasrallah, stated, "The resistance now has double the number of precision missiles it had last year. ... We can hit precisely all important targets inside the Israeli entity."

26. In identical letters dated 16 November addressed to the President of the Security Council and to me (S/2020/1120), the Permanent Representative of Israel stated that Hizbullah had continued its "military entrenchment and presence in southern Lebanon" and that "this dangerous situation poses a threat not only to Israel and its citizens, but also to the people of Lebanon, which Hezbollah uses as human shields to protect its arsenal of over 130,000 rockets and military infrastructure". On 26 January, the Israel Defense Forces Chief of Staff, Aviv Kochavi, said, "every fifth house in Lebanon is either a missile warehouse or rocket warehouse", adding that, "we are going to attack military targets, but if a rocket is linked to a house, it's categorized as a military target."

27. The Lebanese Armed Forces and Internal Security Forces made 24 terrorism-related arrests between 21 October 2020 and 19 February 2021, including of suspected affiliates of Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant.

28. In eastern and northern Lebanon, several personal disputes escalated into shootings, resulting in 33 fatalities (including two children) and injuries to 78 persons. At least 16 personal disputes in Baalbek-Hirmil, eastern Lebanon, involved the use of rocket-propelled grenades.

29. On 3 December, the Higher Defence Council ordered tighter security measures to counter the proliferation of weapons and their use for celebratory purposes. Nevertheless, on 1 January, in Baalbek, eastern Lebanon, a Syrian woman refugee was killed following celebratory shooting. In a separate incident, also on 1 January, a civilian aircraft parked at Rafic Hariri International Airport in Beirut was damaged following celebratory shootings.

30. The security situation in the Palestine refugee camps across Lebanon remained stable, despite isolated incidents reported in the Ein el Hilweh and Mieh Mieh camps. 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

31. 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.

32. With reference to paragraph 36 of my report dated 12 November 2020 (S/2020/1110), on 29 September, at the annual debate of the General Assembly, under the right of reply, the representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran characterized as baseless and unfounded the allegations made by Israel against his country. He pointed to the Israeli regime's violation of the dignity of Palestinians and other Arabs living under occupation, in flagrant violation of international law and disregard for United

Nations resolutions, as well as its continued occupation of territories in the Syrian Golan and part of Lebanon (see [A/75/PV.15](#)).

33. On 27 December, the Secretary-General of Hizbullah, Hassan Nasrallah, stated that Hizbullah “took the Kornet [missile] from the Syrians to defend our country and we used it in the July war”. On 3 January, Mr. Nasrallah stated that “when Iran gave missiles ... to Lebanon, it was for the ... Lebanese people to defend Lebanon”.

34. Reports of Hizbullah engagement in the fighting in the Syrian Arab Republic continued.

35. The border between Lebanon and the Syrian Arab Republic remained closed owing to COVID-19 restrictions, with limited exceptions. Cross-border smuggling continued to be reported, however, including of fuel, flour and medicine. On 13 December in Uwaynat, Akkar, the Lebanese Armed Forces arrested four Lebanese individuals attempting to smuggle 27 Syrian nationals into Lebanon. As part of anti-trafficking operations, on 2 January, in Hirmil, the Lebanese Armed Forces arrested three Lebanese individuals who had shot towards a military vehicle, killing one soldier and injuring another.

36. The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) is aware of one movement by sea from Lebanon to Cyprus, in January, involving seven Syrian nationals.

E. Landmines and cluster bombs

37. UNIFIL cleared 4,906 m² of land in the UNIFIL area of operations, finding and disposing of 985 anti-personnel mines. The Mine Action Service conducted 30 quality assurance and quality control monitoring visits, one quality assurance handover and four risk awareness briefings to 21 UNIFIL military personnel.

F. Delineation of borders

38. 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).

39. On 28 and 29 October and 11 November, representatives from the Governments of Israel and Lebanon held the second, third and fourth rounds of talks to discuss the delineation of their maritime boundary. The United States of America mediated the discussions, which were hosted by the Office of the United Nations Special Coordinator for Lebanon at UNIFIL premises in Naqurah, South Lebanon. A further round of talks scheduled for 2 December was postponed until further notice.

G. Political and institutional stability

40. On 22 October, the President of Lebanon, Michel Aoun, held binding parliamentary consultations resulting in the designation of the former Prime Minister, Saad Hariri, as Prime Minister, with 65 votes out of 120 members of Parliament (8 having resigned). Mr. Hariri vowed to quickly form a Government of non-partisan specialists, whose mission would be to implement the economic, financial and administrative reforms featured in the road map of the French initiative. As at 19 February, despite ongoing discussions between the President and Prime Minister-

designate, as well as exhortations by key domestic actors and international partners, no agreement had yet been reached with respect to a future Cabinet.

41. The worsening economic and financial crisis in Lebanon has resulted in over half of the population sliding into poverty. Gross domestic product in 2020 contracted by about 20 per cent. Depositors' access to their accounts remains tightly limited. The Lebanese pound has lost nearly 85 per cent of its official value since October 2019, trading at around 9,000 pounds for the dollar on the black market. On 8 January 2021, the Governor of the Central Bank, Riad Salameh, indicated that, the exchange rate "will be floating", while noting that this should be accompanied by a confidence-enhancing programme and cooperation with the International Monetary Fund. Mr. Salameh also indicated that the Central Bank had around \$500 million above the minimum mandatory reserve level of \$17.5 billion. The consumer price index rose by 145 per cent from November 2019 to November 2020, while food and beverage prices increased by around 402 per cent for the same period. Talks between the Government of Lebanon and the Fund remain stalled.

42. On 1 December 2020, the World Bank stated that a "deliberate lack of effective policy action by authorities has subjected the economy to an arduous and prolonged depression". In a report dated 1 December 2020, the World Bank urged Lebanon to adopt "a credible, comprehensive and coordinated macro-financial stability strategy, within a medium term macro-fiscal framework", comprising debt and financial sector restructuring, a new monetary policy framework, fiscal adjustments, pro-growth reforms and enhanced social protections.

43. On 29 December 2020, the caretaker Prime Minister, Hassan Diab, indicated that critical import subsidies could continue for another "six months if we apply rationing". On 12 January, the World Bank approved a \$246 million loan for a three-year Emergency Social Safety Net Project to provide emergency cash transfers and access to social services to approximately 786,000 poor and vulnerable Lebanese.

44. On 26 November, the firm contracted to audit the Central Bank withdrew, citing "insufficient provision of information". The Central Bank had cited the banking secrecy law as grounds not to share certain information. On 21 December, Parliament approved a law suspending banking secrecy for one year. On 19 January 2021, the office of the Attorney-General of Switzerland requested legal assistance from the Lebanese authorities related to an investigation into alleged money laundering and embezzlement tied to the Central Bank of Lebanon. The request has been transferred to the public prosecutor of Lebanon.

45. Public frustration at the worsening socioeconomic situation as well as COVID-19 restrictive measures escalated into violence on several occasions. On 26 and 27 January in Tripoli, 2 protestors died, and 246 protesters and 81 security personnel were injured, when protesters stormed local government buildings and clashed with security forces. On 29 October in Beirut, a Syrian refugee set himself on fire and died. On 6 January, also in Beirut, a Lebanese man self-immolated. On 7 January, another Syrian refugee self-immolated, in Ta'labaya, Biqā'.

46. Fears of insecurity and lawlessness prompted peaceful protests in Hirmil, Biqā', on 5 January, and in Tripoli, North Lebanon, on 8 January. On 21 November, in B'abda, Mount Lebanon, 69 prisoners escaped from the Justice Palace. The Internal Security Forces apprehended 37 fugitives and another 5 fugitives died when their getaway vehicle crashed, while 27 remain at large. On 2 December, in Qartaba, Jubayl, a retired customs colonel was found inside his house with a deadly head injury; a criminal investigation was launched. On 21 December, in Kahhalah, Alayh, Mount Lebanon, unidentified individuals shot dead a Lebanese national in his car. On 4 February, a political activist and publicist known for stances critical of Hizbullah, Lokman Slim, was found shot dead in his car near Nabatiyah, South Lebanon.

Mr. Slim's death was condemned across the political spectrum, and a criminal investigation was ordered.

47. The death toll of the explosion that occurred at the port of Beirut on 4 August stands at 205, including 23 Syrian and 2 Palestine refugees. Over 6,500 people were injured, with 543 refugee households reporting family members injured and 26 Palestine refugees reported injured. The investigation into the explosion's causes and circumstances continues. On 26 November, Parliament rejected the request of the investigative judge, Fadi Sawan, to expand the investigation to former and current caretaker ministers. On 10 December, Judge Sawan announced his intention to question as suspects the caretaker Prime Minister, the former Minister for Finance, Ali Hassan Khalil, and the former Ministers of Public Works, Ghazi Zeiter and Youssef Fenianos. On 17 December, Mr. Khalil and Mr. Zeiter requested the Court of Cassation to transfer the case to another judge. On 18 February, the Court of Cassation dismissed Judge Sawan from the investigation. A new judge, Tareq Bitar, was appointed the next day. As at 19 February, 37 individuals had been charged; of these, 25 were detained. Victims and their families have staged protests against what they perceived as a lack of accountability and political interference in the investigation.

48. Since 4 August, humanitarian assistance coordinated by the United Nations has reached approximately 300,000 people through protection, food security, shelter and rehabilitation, water, sanitation and hygiene interventions. Coordination continued with the Lebanese Armed Forces, which leads government efforts. The humanitarian flash appeal that was announced on 14 August and closed on 31 December received \$165.1 million (84 per cent) of the \$196.6 million requested. Together with non-flash appeal funding, donors have contributed \$310.9 million to the port explosion response.

49. Following the rapid damage and needs assessment of the explosion at the port of Beirut, the United Nations, the World Bank and the European Union launched their strategic framework for reform, recovery and reconstruction on 4 December. The framework includes a calculation for a people-centred recovery of \$584 million, over 18 months. Longer-term reform and reconstruction costs are estimated at \$2 billion.

50. The strategic framework and the Lebanon Financing Facility (a multi-donor trust fund) were presented to the international conference in support of the Lebanese population, which was hosted virtually by France and the United Nations on 2 December. Taking stock of the humanitarian response to the crisis and efforts towards early recovery, participants expressed concern regarding the socioeconomic and humanitarian situation, reiterated the urgent need for Lebanese political leaders to agree as soon as possible on the formation of a credible Government, called for respect for human rights and reaffirmed solidarity with the people of Lebanon. Participants emphasized the importance of the continuity of funding beyond emergency humanitarian aid, notably for good governance, health, education, social protection, housing, culture and heritage, with special attention to the immediate needs of small and medium-sized enterprises. The participants supported the reconstruction of the port facilities and adjacent neighbourhoods to build back better and in an inclusive and transparent manner, and strongly recalled the importance of the effective implementation of the reforms expected by the men and women of Lebanon and the international community.

51. In December, judicial authorities convicted three senior officers of the Internal Security Forces and others of serious corruption crimes and initiated prosecutions, using the recently adopted illicit enrichment law, against more than 25 senior public officials, including the former commander of the Lebanese Armed Forces. Other anti-corruption initiatives included the introduction of a new asset declaration system and the establishment of a special office for whistle-blower protection.

52. The National Anti-Corruption Institution remains inoperative pending the appointment of its commissioners. The National Commission for the Missing and

Forcibly Disappeared in Lebanon and the National Human Rights Commission, including the Committee for the Prevention of Torture, are also not yet functional, with no budgets allocated. On 6 January, the Human Rights Committee of the Parliament issued a declaration on hate speech, recognizing with grave concern its increased intensity in Lebanon and committing to confront it. Investigations into prior allegations of the excessive use of force by security forces against protestors (see [S/2020/195](#), para. 60) remain outstanding.

53. On 25 November, parliamentary committees reviewed electoral reform proposals ahead of the 2022 parliamentary elections.

54. On 21 December, Parliament amended the domestic violence law to include economic and psychological violence, introduced specialized prosecutors and judges, and adopted a law criminalizing sexual harassment in the workplace and in public spaces. In support of the country's efforts to implement the national action plan on Security Council resolution [1325 \(2000\)](#) on women and peace and security, the United Nations has advised on mainstreaming gender equality in the Lebanese Armed Forces, improving the prevention of and response to gender-based violence and trafficking in persons, increasing the active participation of women in peacebuilding and intensifying support for their political representation and participation in the 2022 elections.

55. As at 31 December, overall international assistance to Lebanon reported by donors stood at \$2.01 billion, including \$1.7 billion disbursed in 2020 and \$304 million carried over from 2019. Donors reported \$372 million in outstanding commitments for 2021 and beyond. Within the overall amount, the Lebanon Crisis Response Plan for 2020 is 63 per cent funded at \$1.68 billion, with United Nations entities and non-governmental organizations reporting \$1.4 billion in funds received in 2020 and \$245 million carried over from 2019.

56. Also as at 31 December, 882,162 refugees and asylum seekers were registered with UNHCR in Lebanon, including 865,531 Syrian refugees and 16,631 refugees and asylum seekers of other nationalities. The number of registered Syrian refugees continued to decrease owing to returns to the Syrian Arab Republic, resettlement to third countries, deaths and onward movements. With new registrations of Syrian refugees by UNHCR suspended since 2015, the actual number of Syrians in need of international protection in Lebanon is unknown. The estimate of the Government of Lebanon remains at 1.5 million.

57. At the International Conference on Facilitating Repatriation of Refugees to Syria, convened in Damascus on 11 and 12 November, the caretaker Ministers for Foreign Affairs and Emigrants and Social Affairs of Lebanon stressed country's desire for an increase in refugees returning to the Syrian Arab Republic, referring to the policy on returns adopted by the Council of Ministers on 14 July 2020, which set out measures to accelerate the safe return of displaced people to the Syrian Arab Republic. Meanwhile, deportations of Syrians who entered or re-entered Lebanon irregularly after 24 April 2019 continued, without the application of legal procedural safeguards.

58. On 23 November, in Bisharri, North Lebanon, after a Syrian man shot and killed a Lebanese man, local Lebanese attacked Syrians and their homes, injuring 13 and forcing some 338 Syrian families to move. On 26 December, following a personal dispute between Lebanese and Syrian nationals in Minniyah, North Lebanon, a local informal refugee settlement was torched, injuring four and forcing around 90 Syrian refugee families to relocate.

59. Inside the Palestine refugee camps, protests calling attention to socioeconomic distress, as well as humanitarian and protection needs, led to temporary closures of United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) facilities and service disruptions.

60. On 11 December, the Special Tribunal for Lebanon sentenced Salim Ayyash, who had previously been convicted, to life imprisonment in the *Ayyash et al.* case in connection with the bombing on 14 February 2005 that killed 22 people, including the former Prime Minister, Rafic Hariri, and injured 226 others. The Tribunal issued a renewed arrest warrant for Mr. Ayyash, who remains at large. On 13 January, the Prosecution, the Defence and the legal representative of participating victims filed appeals.

61. COVID-19 infections surged, reaching the stage 4 level of community transmission by late January. The Government imposed a nationwide lockdown from 14 January to 8 February. The Lebanese Armed Forces distributed financial assistance to around 280,000 of the most vulnerable families to alleviate the economic and social impact of the lockdown. With the intensive care unit occupancy rate near 95 per cent and the ongoing emigration of health professionals further straining the country's capacity to manage the pandemic, the World Health Organization, UNHCR and the United Nations Children's Fund helped to secure additional hospital beds, equipment and human resources, notably nurses. As at 8 February, Lebanon had recorded 339,122 cumulative cases and 3,993 cumulative fatalities. By the same date, 2,781 Syrian refugees, 5,215 Palestine refugees and 28 refugees of other nationalities had tested positive for COVID-19, of whom 127 Syrians and 184 Palestinians have died. UNHCR and UNRWA are working to contain transmission of the virus among the refugee population and ensure their equal access to testing, treatment and vaccines under the national COVID-19 response plan. The Lebanon COVID-19 Emergency Appeal had received \$91 million by 31 December. With emergency funding support from the World Bank, Lebanon received its first shipment of vaccines on 13 February. With additional supplies from the COVID-19 Vaccine Global Access (COVAX) Facility, the Government aims to vaccinate at least one third of the population, including refugees and migrant workers, by December 2021.

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

62. 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.

63. 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 24 missions to the Arqub area by members of the United Nations country team.

64. 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 15 December 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 serious attack against UNIFIL on 27 May 2011, a hearing was held on 26 October, with the next hearing scheduled for 21 September 2021. In the 1980 case, in which two UNIFIL peacekeepers from Ireland were shot dead and one was injured, and in which the United Nations shared with the Court, at its request, the report of the Board of Inquiry convened by UNIFIL on the incident, the Permanent Military Court issued a verdict on 21 December, sentencing the perpetrator to 15 years of hard labour. The case has been appealed before the Military Court of Cassation. The United Nations has not

been informed of any criminal proceedings to bring to justice the perpetrators of 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 ([S/2018/1029](#)).

IV. Deployment of the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon

65. As at 19 February, UNIFIL comprised 10,636 military personnel, including 637 women (6.0 per cent), from 45 troop-contributing countries; 244 international civilian staff, including 94 women (38.5 per cent); and 565 national civilian staff, including 151 women (26.7 per cent). Since the departure of the Brazilian flagship on 2 December, the UNIFIL Maritime Task Force has comprised five vessels, one helicopter and 697 of the Force's military personnel, including 32 women (4.6 per cent). Germany assumed command of the Maritime Task Force on 15 January. In addition, 52 military observers, including 9 women (17.3 per cent), from the United Nations Truce Supervision Organization serve with Observer Group Lebanon, under the operational control of UNIFIL. The most senior military woman serves at the rank of Colonel; the most senior civilian woman serves at the D-2 level.

66. Pursuant to the Action for Peacekeeping commitment to strengthen performance and accountability, UNIFIL undertook its first performance assessment utilizing the Comprehensive Planning and Performance Assessment System (CPAS) framework in November. The framework also informed the 2021–2022 budget planning process.

67. In implementation of the Action for Peacekeeping commitments and Security Council resolution [2436 \(2018\)](#), UNIFIL finalized the assessment of 14 subordinate military units and two ships for logistics, training and operational preparedness on 30 October. The shortfalls identified within two military units, related to logistics and documentation, have been addressed. On 31 January, the Mission concluded the assessment of 15 additional military units and one ship, with 12 shortfalls relating to logistics, training, documentation, area familiarization and gender identified among eight units, to be addressed by 20 February.

68. In my 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 (see [S/2020/473](#)), pursuant to resolution [2539 \(2020\)](#). In November, UNIFIL completed the civilian staffing review, ensuring closer alignment of the workforce with UNIFIL requirements. Following the finalization of a comprehensive plan for enhanced video surveillance at 19 positions along the Blue Line, which will enhance force protection, situational awareness and the detection and reporting of violations of resolution [1701 \(2006\)](#), UNIFIL has commenced the procurement of related equipment.

V. Conduct and discipline

69. Neither UNIFIL nor the Office of the United Nations Special Coordinator for Lebanon received any allegations of sexual exploitation and abuse during the reporting period. Both missions continued to improve their related preventative mechanisms, taking into account the increased risks of gender-based violence, including sexual harassment and domestic violence, since the implementation of COVID-19 work modalities and to raise public awareness. Military commanders continued to receive briefings on their accountability in respect of conduct and discipline matters.

70. The United Nations country team, with international and national non-governmental organizations, supported the prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse network of Lebanon through the development of inter-agency standard operating procedures, an information-sharing protocol on allegations of sexual exploitation and abuse, awareness-raising materials and technical guidance documents to strengthen prevention and response efforts, in addition to awareness-raising with front-line aid workers and the promotion of the integration of a prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse approach to the COVID-19 response and the response to the explosion at the port of Beirut.

VI. Observations

71. I reiterate my call, and echo that of the international community, to all political forces to facilitate the timely formation of a Government able to undertake the reforms necessary to put Lebanon on the path to recovery. Meanwhile, I also call on the caretaker Government of Lebanon and its Parliament to exercise their responsibilities in taking policy and legislative steps to alleviate the impact of the country's multiple crises on the population. I urge the authorities of Lebanon to act to halt the deepening financial and economic crisis, strengthen accountability and ensure good governance, in line with the needs of the people.

72. At the 2 December conference of support to the Lebanese population, the international community sent a strong message that genuine reforms are critical to restore the trust of the Lebanese population and the international community, and for the engagement of the international community in support of Lebanon. The United Nations will, together with the World Bank and the European Union, work to implement the strategic framework for reform, recovery and reconstruction, with continued gratitude for the generous support of the international community for the recovery effort in Beirut. The active, unified and committed cooperation of an empowered Government will be indispensable for the successful implementation of this framework and to bring tangible relief to the population.

73. I reiterate the need for an impartial, thorough and transparent investigation into the explosion at the port of Beirut.

74. Noting that transformative, people-centred reform remains a key demand of the Lebanese people, I encourage the Parliament, electoral authorities and other stakeholders to put in place the required electoral frameworks, in keeping with the constitutionally stipulated electoral calendar for 2022.

75. I call for the respect of obligations and commitments under international human rights law. I condemn the killing of Lokman Slim and urge a swift and transparent investigation to bring the perpetrators to justice. Perpetrators of serious violations and abuses of human rights must be held accountable. The space for civic engagement and freedom of expression must be preserved.

76. As public protests continue, 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. Protestors should exercise their rights in accordance with the rule of law and without resorting to violence.

77. I am concerned by the incidents along the Blue Line, including the occasions on which weapons were pointed by the parties across the Blue Line. Such incidents have the potential to lead to escalation, with serious consequences. I commend the timely intervention by UNIFIL to contain such situations and the effective liaison and coordination mechanism by which UNIFIL has kept the parties positively engaged. I wish to recall that the identification of the Blue Line in 2000 was solely the

responsibility of the United Nations for the practical purpose of confirming the withdrawal of the Israel Defense Forces from Lebanon in compliance with Security Council resolution 425 (1978) and without prejudice to future border agreements. Both sides, despite their respective reservations, undertook to respect the Blue Line as identified by the United Nations. I urge both parties to do their utmost to prevent violations of the Blue Line, which must be respected in its entirety. It is essential that the parties avoid provocative actions and inflammatory rhetoric, exercise utmost restraint and refrain from hostile activity that could put at risk the cessation of hostilities. The parties should use the liaison and coordination arrangements with UNIFIL to the maximum extent, refrain from unilateral action and allow UNIFIL, in the first instance, to resolve tensions.

78. I commend the parties for continuing to attend the tripartite meetings, despite COVID-19 restrictions. I urge the parties to engage with UNIFIL in the Blue Line subcommittee and find agreed solutions to the outstanding contentious areas. The United Nations will continue to support efforts to defuse tensions through dialogue, pursue opportunities for confidence-building and create an environment conducive to resolving underlying differences, including through the continued good offices of my Special Coordinator for Lebanon and the UNIFIL Head of Mission and Force Commander.

79. The continued violations of Lebanese airspace by Israeli aircraft, including allegedly to carry out strikes inside the Syrian Arab Republic, as well as of low-flying aircraft 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 call again 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 equally represents a continuing violation of resolution 1701 (2006).

80. I call upon the Lebanese authorities to grant UNIFIL full access to all locations north of the Blue Line requested in connection with the mission's investigations, including with respect to the tunnels crossing the Blue Line, confirmed by UNIFIL in December 2018 and early 2019, and to the Green without Borders site in Aytarun in connection with the incident on 1 September 2019, as well as the daily monitoring of the Blue Line, as mandated under resolution 1701 (2006) and recalled in resolution 2539 (2020). The Lebanese authorities have the 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.

81. The freedom of movement of UNIFIL in its entire area of operations, including along the full length of the Blue Line, remains critical. The mission's ability to conduct patrols and activities independently must be upheld in accordance with its mandate. It is incumbent 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 2020. The United Nations has still not been informed of any criminal proceedings against the attackers from the Majdal Zun incident of 2018. The Lebanese authorities must fulfil their obligations to ensure the safety of UNIFIL personnel and full accountability for those who attack peacekeepers. I note the verdict of 21 December by the Permanent Military Court of Lebanon sentencing the perpetrator to 15 years of hard labour for the kidnapping and killing of two UNIFIL peacekeepers and causing serious injury to a third peacekeeper in April 1980. I welcome this development and urge the timely conduct and completion of judicial processes into all outstanding cases of attacks against United Nations personnel.

82. The 100 per cent inspection rate by the Lebanese Armed Forces of vessels referred by UNIFIL through the reporting period is welcome. I am encouraged by the commencement of the advanced maritime interdiction operation integration training for Lebanese naval personnel and crews, an important step towards a partial transfer of UNIFIL Maritime Task Force responsibilities to the Lebanese Navy. International partners are strongly encouraged to further support the Lebanese Armed Forces in bringing the model regiment project and naval transfer plan forward. I reiterate my call for donors and partners to reinforce support to the Lebanese Armed Forces, as the only legitimate armed forces of Lebanon.

83. I look forward to the cooperation of Lebanon and Israel for the continued implementation by UNIFIL of all recommendations in the UNIFIL assessment report. The Secretariat and UNIFIL are committed to carrying out this process in consultation with and with support from the parties, members of the Security Council and troop-contributing countries.

84. 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 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.

85. The Government of Lebanon should abide by its policy of disassociation, consistent with the B'abda 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).

86. The United Nations fully supports efforts to improve border control, including through the action plan of Lebanon to operationalize the integrated border management strategy approved by the Government in October 2019.

87. I encourage both parties to continue talks to discuss the delineation of their maritime and land boundaries. The United Nations, through its representatives, is fully committed to supporting the process as requested by the parties and within its capacity and mandate.

88. Legislative steps to counter domestic violence and sexual harassment represent important advances in strengthening the legal framework to protect women. I look forward to the Government of Lebanon issuing the requisite decrees to ensure their enforcement.

89. The increased use of hate speech in Lebanon is of concern. Political leaders should promote a balanced, fact-based dialogue and speak out against intolerance, discriminatory stereotyping and instances of hate speech.

90. I commend Lebanon for its continued hospitality towards refugees and thank donors for their unwavering support. While the United Nations and partners continue to work to create the conditions for safe, dignified and voluntary returns, respect for due process of law and the dignity of refugees remains indispensable.

91. With humanitarian needs rapidly rising among refugees, migrant workers and Lebanese citizens alike, continued and flexible humanitarian and development funding is essential to protect lives and maintain stability. I appeal to donors to fund

the strategic framework for reform, recovery and reconstruction accordingly and welcome continued support for ongoing health emergency assistance and the Lebanon Crisis Response Plan. Social protection systems and safety nets should include the vulnerable refugee population. Furthermore, I reiterate my calls for the international community to uphold its commitments so that UNRWA can continue providing relief and services to the Palestine refugee community.

92. 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 commend and thank my former Special Coordinator for Lebanon, Ján Kubiš, upon the completion of his assignment, for his leadership and dedication in advancing the important work of the United Nations in Lebanon. I thank the UNIFIL Head of Mission and Force Commander, Major General Stefano Del Col, the civilian and military personnel under his leadership and the members of the United Nations country team for their continued efforts.

Annex I

Restrictions on the freedom of access and movement of the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon from 21 October 2020 to 19 February 2021

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 6,281 monthly patrols during the day and night, of which 2,045 (33 per cent) were foot patrols. The mission conducted an average of 2,430 patrols each month along the Blue Line, both by vehicle and on foot (52 and 48 per cent, respectively). In addition, the mission conducted an average of 51 helicopter patrols each month, as well as an average of 970 inspection activities, including the operation of temporary and permanent checkpoints, and counter-rocket-launching operations. While the freedom of movement of UNIFIL was respected in most cases, there were instances of restrictions in the freedom of movement. 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

3. As detailed in paragraph 6 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

4. On 17 November, an Observer Group Lebanon patrol, while driving through the village of Ayta al-Sha'b, deviated from the main road into a narrow street. While reversing to return to the main road, the road was blocked by an individual in civilian clothes on a scooter. Shortly thereafter, more individuals in civilian clothes arrived in four vehicles. The group looked inside the Observer Group Lebanon patrol vehicle and took pictures. The patrol contacted the Lebanese Armed Forces and requested assistance. While the Observer Group Lebanon personnel remained inside the vehicle, some of the individuals knocked on its doors. One person also deflated one of the patrol vehicle's tyres. Shortly thereafter, the Lebanese Armed Forces arrived at the scene and escorted the patrol from the area. UNIFIL met with the mukhtar and two municipal officials, who stated that, owing to communication issues between the patrol and the individuals, tensions had escalated. The officials also reiterated the sensitivities among locals with regard to patrolling in residential neighbourhoods.
5. On 3 December, a UNIFIL patrol observed a vehicle and four individuals in civilian clothes, one of whom was taking pictures with a professional camera of the area south of the Blue Line, near Yarun (Sector West). Shortly thereafter, while

driving, the patrol encountered the same vehicle blocking the road. Two occupants of the vehicle approached the patrol and asked why they had taken photographs. The individuals snatched a camera from the seat of the patrol vehicle and left the area. The Lebanese Armed Forces were informed of the incident. The camera is yet to be retrieved. UNIFIL is following up with the Lebanese Armed Forces.

6. On 9 January, a UNIFIL two-vehicle patrol was driving on a narrow road near Yarun. The patrol moved to the side of the road to give way to a civilian car coming from the opposite direction. When the civilian car was passing, an individual reached out from the car and smashed a window of one of the UNIFIL patrol vehicles with an unknown object. No injuries to UNIFIL personnel were reported. UNIFIL informed the Lebanese Armed Forces about the incident.

7. On 27 January, a UNIFIL patrol observed two individuals in olive green attire with two vehicles in the vicinity of Ramiyah (Sector West). One of the individuals, who was carrying an AK-47 assault rifle, approached the patrol, made menacing hand gestures and told the patrol to immediately leave the area. When the patrol reversed and started driving away from the area, the patrol was followed by the two vehicles for about five minutes. UNIFIL informed the Lebanese Armed Forces about the incident.

8. On 30 January, when a UNIFIL patrol was conducting a static observation north-east of Rashaf (Sector West), a vehicle and a scooter arrived and blocked the road. Four individuals in civilian clothes approached the UNIFIL patrol, questioned their presence and asked the peacekeepers to leave the area. The four individuals also filmed the patrol. Shortly thereafter, the group moved the scooter and car out of the patrol's way and followed it up to the main road as the patrol left the area. UNIFIL informed the Lebanese Armed Forces about the incident. UNIFIL met with the mayor, who stated that the peacekeepers had been on private property and, therefore, the owners of the land had asked them to leave.

9. On 9 February, five individuals in civilian clothes approached a UNIFIL patrol in the vicinity of Hula (Sector East). One of the individuals took photographs of the patrol and waved a stick at the patrol, demanding that it leave the area. As the patrol subsequently left the area, the individual threw stones at the patrol vehicles and then followed the patrol on a scooter. On being contacted by UNIFIL, the mayor of Hula ascribed the incident to an "individual act" and promised to discuss it with members of the municipal council. On 15 February, also in Hula, an individual in civilian clothes threw stones at a UNIFIL patrol while several other individuals made rude hand gestures. UNIFIL again informed the mayor of Hula, who said that he was not aware of the incident.

10. On 11 February, approximately 25 individuals in civilian clothes blocked the road of a two-vehicle UNIFIL patrol in Bint Jubayl (Sector West) by placing vehicles across the road. While talking to the driver of one of the UNIFIL vehicles, one of the individuals reached through the window and took the vehicle key, upon which four peacekeepers exited the vehicles. Six individuals pulled one of the peacekeepers aside, following which the three other peacekeepers outside their vehicles cocked their weapons. The individuals then released the peacekeeper. After approximately 40 minutes, a UNIFIL reinforcement arrived, accompanied by the Lebanese Armed Forces. The Lebanese Armed Forces talked to the individuals, who returned the UNIFIL vehicle key. The UNIFIL patrol then left the area, accompanied by the Lebanese Armed Forces. No peacekeepers were injured, but one UNIFIL vehicle sustained minor damage. UNIFIL followed up with the mayor of Bint Jubayl, who said that the patrol had entered private property.

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 reiterated my request that the Government of Lebanon share with the Secretariat any pertinent information or developments related to the arms embargo.
3. Paragraph 15 of resolution [1701 \(2006\)](#) stipulates that all States shall 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 new 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 \(2006\)](#).