



Security Council

Sixty-second year

5719th meeting

Thursday, 19 July 2007, 10 a.m.

New York

Provisional

<i>President:</i>	Mr. Wang Guangya	(China)
<i>Members:</i>	Belgium	Mr. Verbeke
	Congo	Mr. Gayama
	France	Mr. De La Sablière
	Ghana	Mr. Christian
	Indonesia	Mr. Kleib
	Italy	Mr. Azzarello
	Panama	Mr. Arias
	Peru	Mr. Voto-Bernales
	Qatar	Mr. Al-Nasser
	Russian Federation	Mr. Rogachev
	Slovakia	Mr. Mlynár
	South Africa	Mr. Kumalo
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Ms. Pierce
	United States of America	Mr. Khalilzad

Agenda

The situation in the Middle East

Letter dated 12 July 2007 from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/2007/424)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation in the Middle East

Letter dated 12 July 2007 from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/2007/424)

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): I should like to inform the Council that I have received a letter from the representative of Lebanon, in which he requests to be invited to participate in the consideration of the item on the Council's agenda. In conformity with the usual practice, I propose, with the consent of the Council, to invite that representative to participate in the consideration of the item, without the right to vote, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Salam (Lebanon) took a seat at the Council table.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): In accordance with the understanding reached in the Council's prior consultations, I shall take it that the Security Council agrees to extend an invitation under rule 39 of its provisional rules of procedure to Mr. Serge Brammertz, Commissioner of the United Nations International Independent Investigation Commission.

It is so decided.

I invite Mr. Brammertz to take a seat at the Council table.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations.

Members of the Council have before them document S/2007/424, which contains the text of a letter dated 12 July 2007 from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the Security Council, transmitting the eighth report of the International Independent Investigation Commission.

I now give the floor to Mr. Serge Brammertz, Commissioner of the United Nations International Independent Investigation Commission.

Mr. Brammertz: I would like to thank the members of the Security Council for this opportunity to provide the Council with an update on the progress made by the International Independent Investigation Commission.

The Commission's latest report covers activities over the past four months. The work of the Commission during this reporting period was marked by a wide-ranging effort to bring together the considerable amount of information collected since the creation of the Commission in 2005. That process allowed the Commission to critically analyse the large volume of information collected and to assess progress made to date. As a result, a series of detailed reports totalling more than 2,400 pages were produced, covering all aspects of the Hariri investigation and the other investigations being conducted or supported by the Commission.

The Commission continues to focus primarily on the investigation into the assassination of Rafik Hariri and 22 others on 14 February 2005. The Commission's review of its sizeable holdings and analysis in this case is covered in a 2,000-page confidential consolidated report that deals with all aspects of the investigation. For example, in relation to the forensic aspects of the investigation, the Commission has consolidated more than 10,000 pages of information and forensic reports produced since 2005 and has reviewed dozens of experiments and examinations undertaken by the Commission and by external experts on the Hariri case.

Regarding the improvised explosive device (IED) used in the attack, the consolidated results confirm the Commission's conclusions about the type and quantity of the explosives, the initiating system and the container used to carry the IED, as well as the exact circumstances of the blast. Investigations are ongoing to trace the precise origin of the explosives and to establish possible forensic links with other cases.

In the most recent of the earlier reporting periods, during which 32 interviews were conducted on the Hariri case, special emphasis was placed on the investigation related to the Mitsubishi Canter van used to carry the IED. As previously noted, the van was stolen in Japan before being shipped to the United Arab Emirates and was then transported to northern Lebanon

in December 2004. The Commission is currently working on new information regarding the sale of the van to individuals who could have been involved in its final preparation for the attack on Rafik Hariri.

The Commission has also brought together and advanced its investigations regarding the suicide bomber. Forensic analyses using samples collected in a number of locations have allowed the Commission to narrow down the countries from which the suicide bomber could have originated. Those experiments are currently ongoing.

To support the investigations in all areas of the Hariri and other cases, the Commission has developed DNA and fingerprint databases that are being used to identify possible matches using other similar databases. The Commission has also created a sketch database and has initiated an inventory of all the physical and biological exhibits it has accumulated.

The Commission continues to further its understanding of the motives to assassinate Rafik Hariri. Some aspects related to the motives have been resolved to the satisfaction of the Commission. These include, among others, the role of the Bank Al-Madina affair.

As noted in my last briefing, the Commission is concentrating on Rafik Hariri's political activities and on the political events and dynamics in the period leading up to the attack, as these most probably shaped the motive for the assassination. They include the adoption of Security Council resolution 1559 (2004), the events surrounding the extension of President Emile Lahoud's term and the perceived outcomes of the 2005 parliamentary elections.

Following a detailed review of its information and findings, the Commission has identified a number of persons who present a particular interest to the investigation into the assassination of Rafik Hariri. The Commission's findings suggest that these individuals may have been involved in some aspects of the planning or execution of the attack, or that they could have known that such a plan was under way. This line of the investigation will be a priority for the Commission in the next few months.

The Commission conducted a similar consolidation of its findings in each of the 17 other cases where it was mandated to provide technical assistance to the Lebanese authorities. Over 400 pages

of consolidated reports were produced on those cases, and the findings from 25 forensic examinations undertaken by the Commission and by external experts have been reviewed. In the attacks targeted at Marwan Hamedeh, Samir Kassir, George Hawi, Elias El-Murr, May Chidiac, Gebran Tueni and Pierre Gemayel, the Commission has focused on analyzing threats and claims of responsibility, determining possible motives, examining and comparing the modus operandi, drawing up a profile of each victim and attempting to determine possible commonalities. The Commission also continues to look into possible links between these cases and the Hariri case.

On 13 June 2007, Member of Parliament Walid Eido, his son and six other people were killed by an IED in central Beirut. Following a request from the Lebanese Prime Minister to the United Nations, the Commission was tasked to provide technical assistance to the Lebanese investigations into this attack. A team of forensic experts working for the Commission completed a two-week examination of the crime scene, and the Commission is currently awaiting results from those examinations to proceed with comparative analyses.

In total, 27 interviews were conducted by the Commission on those targeted attacks during the reporting period. In addition, 25 interviews were conducted on the nine attacks where no individuals were targeted, including the Ain Alaq bombings of February 2007.

The Commission has continued to maintain a close and collegial relationship with the Lebanese judicial authorities, who have been regularly informed about the progress made in all investigations. Since my last briefing to the Council, the Commission has made 88 requests for assistance to the Prosecutor General of Lebanon, and responses have been provided fully and expeditiously.

Cooperation with Syria remains generally satisfactory. Syria provided timely responses to the Commission's 11 requests for assistance during this reporting period. In addition, the Commission is grateful for the logistical and security arrangements made by the Syrian authorities for the Commission's various activities in Syria, in particular during four missions to Syria in this reporting period. In addition, 18 requests for assistance were sent to 12 other States, and responses have been mostly positive.

I would like to take this opportunity to note once again that the Commission relies on the support of all States to provide information, assistance and expertise when required. The Commission is grateful for the support it has received from a number of States during this reporting period. That support remains essential for the successful completion of the Commission's mandate.

As the Council is aware, the security situation in Lebanon has deteriorated since my last briefing to the Council. The Commission is very mindful of the prevailing security conditions and of specific threats it faces due to the nature of its work. In this reporting period, the Commission has conducted regular assessments on all aspects of its security in close cooperation with the Lebanese security forces, and a number of additional mitigating measures have been put in place. In this regard, the Commission notes that the security of witnesses and persons who cooperate with the Commission needs to be guaranteed. This remains a priority for the Commission and will also have to be addressed by the Special Tribunal for Lebanon in a timely manner.

The comprehensive consolidation effort carried out by the Commission during this reporting period has yielded several important results by highlighting areas of the investigation that have been resolved to the satisfaction of the Commission, as well as a number of open questions that will have to be addressed as priorities in the months to come.

As noted earlier, the consolidation of the Commission's findings across several areas of the Hariri case, and in some of the other cases, has helped identify a number of persons who may have been involved in some aspect of the crime. A number of commonalities across cases have also been brought to light as a result of the consolidation exercise. Based on these and other results, the Commission has produced detailed work plans in each area under investigation; those workplans will help to make the best possible use of the Commission's limited resources in the next few months.

Set against the backdrop of Security Council resolution 1757 (2007), the confidential consolidated reports will provide a useful starting point in the transition from the Commission to the Special Tribunal for Lebanon. This process will be facilitated by a state-of-the-art information management system established

by the Commission, based on the best practices used in international tribunals.

In closing, I would like to reaffirm to the Council that the Commission stands ready to cooperate with the Secretary-General and with the Special Tribunal for Lebanon to ensure a smooth handover to the Tribunal at the time when the Tribunal will begin functioning.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): I thank Mr. Brammertz for his briefing.

I now give the floor to the representative of Lebanon.

Mr. Salam (Lebanon) (*spoke in Arabic*): Allow me at the outset, on behalf of the delegation of Lebanon, to congratulate you, Mr. President, and your country, China, for assuming the presidency of the Security Council for this month. I would also like to commend the Belgian delegation, which presided over the Council during the past month. I commend Mr. Serge Brammertz for continuing in a highly professional manner the investigations that have been entrusted to him.

The Council has followed the just efforts of Lebanon to face the terrorist acts that have been directed against our State for over two years. It has actively followed the events surrounding the assassination of Prime Minister Rafik Hariri and established the International Independent Investigation Commission (IIC) to find those who planned and carried out this major crime against Lebanon. Since then, the Council has not hesitated in responding positively to the requests of the Lebanese Government for technical assistance with regard to terrorist crimes that followed, the most recent of which was the assassination of Member of Parliament Walid Eido.

The persistence of the international community and the Council in these matters was crowned by the adoption of resolution 1757 (2007), which laid down the legal context for the establishment of the special international tribunal for Lebanon, in accordance with an arrangement that resulted from considerable study between the United Nations and the Lebanese Government. Since the establishment of this tribunal will put an end to impunity, it will no doubt contribute to deterring all those who would like to continue their terrorist activities and will enhance the stability of our country and the sense of security of our people.

The Council is meeting today to consider the eighth report submitted by Commissioner Serge Brammertz, which represents an advanced stage in the march for justice and truth that we have started together. We have listened attentively to the briefing by Commissioner Brammertz on the results achieved by IIC over the past four months, and on behalf of my Government I would like to emphasize the following points.

First, we commend the high professionalism that characterized the work of the IIC Commissioner and all his staff and their efforts in continuing to seek information on a solid and clear basis.

Secondly, we welcome the clear progress that the investigation has made, which will now allow Commissioner Brammertz to analyse the information provided and present the Commission's conclusions, as the Commissioner mentioned in more than one paragraph of his report.

Thirdly, we must mention that the Commission has started taking measures to provide the best possible conditions for the transition of its work to the Office of the Prosecutor of the international tribunal.

Fourthly, we wish to thank the Commission for the technical assistance that it is providing to the Lebanese authorities to investigate the terrorist crimes that followed the assassination of Prime Minister Hariri and his companions, which has enabled us to establish causal and methodological relations between many of these crimes.

Fifthly, my Government asserts its keenness to ensure the security of IIC and the safety of its personnel. It has thus intensified the measures to

provide security to the Commission. Political assassinations and terrorist explosions that seek to destabilize Lebanon and its sovereignty will not be allowed to undermine one of the pillars of Lebanese and international justice and should not be allowed to affect in any way the work of international legitimacy in Lebanon — that is, the task of the international force and its role in southern Lebanon.

The eighth report of IIC arrives on the first anniversary of the destructive Israeli aggression against Lebanon. The Council played a major role in putting an end to that aggression and urged the international community to provide assistance to Lebanon in different fields. The Council's commitment to the stability of Lebanon, its safety and the security of its people is reiterated every time the Council condemns terrorist acts that seek to destabilize Lebanon and its unique national experiment, which is based on diversity, openness, democracy and respect for private and public freedoms.

The Council's meeting today is indeed an expression of the solid interrelationship between justice and stability and the Council's keenness for international peace and security.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): I thank the representative of Lebanon for his statement.

There are no other speakers on my list. In accordance with the understanding reached in the Council's prior consultations, I would now like to invite Council members to informal consultations on the subject.

The meeting rose at 10.35 a.m.