



Security Council

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Identical letters dated 9 July 2012 from the Permanent Representative of the Syrian Arab Republic to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

On instructions from my Government, I have the honour to transmit to you the position of the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic on the report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of Security Council resolution 1701 (2006) (S/2012/502).

- The Syrian Arab Republic once again affirms its commitment to respect the sovereignty, territorial integrity, unity and political independence of Lebanon. Syria further reaffirms its commitment to providing the Lebanese Government with all possible support and assistance in consolidating its authority and sovereignty over all Lebanese territory.
- With respect to paragraphs 3, 5, 39, 44, 49, 51, 52, 59, 66, 67, 69 and 75, the Syrian Arab Republic stresses that it is unacceptable to continue dragging the name of Syria or the internal situation in Syria into the Secretary-General's report on the implementation of Security Council resolution 1701 (2006), which was adopted with regard to the Israeli aggression against Lebanon, because that falls outside the mandate specified in the resolution and increases the likelihood of counterproductive confusion between the tasks and jurisdictions of mandate-holders and the various United Nations and other specialized organizations and agencies. We are therefore constrained to affirm that to insist on making that connection constitutes part of the current political and media campaign that is hostile to Syria and aims to increase intervention in the internal affairs of Syria by certain regional and international Powers and States. Syria is taken aback by that continued, deliberate and unhelpful confusion between internal events in Syria and the specific mandate that was awarded to the Secretary-General by resolution 1701 (2006) with regard to the implementation of that resolution.
- Paragraph 3: it is surprising and unfortunate that the report states that the death of the Lebanese journalist was caused by fire from the Syrian army and does not leave any opportunity to gain access to even the smallest part of the investigation that established that quite the opposite was true. What is stated with regard to the "incursions" and "abductions" of Syrian security forces has no basis in truth. What took place was no more than attempts by the forces to implement Syrian law with respect to preventing the smuggling of arms and



explosives from Lebanon to Syria, which is carried out with the support of certain Lebanese political parties that have contacts with the armed terrorist groups that are funded from abroad, and which are involved in many incidents of fire that claim the lives of numerous Syrian civilians and army and security personnel. It is affirmed by the official Lebanese authorities and the report itself, in paragraphs 4, 25, 45 and 46, that arms are indeed smuggled from Lebanon to the “Syrian opposition”. Two such incidents were established to have been carried out on 27 April and 8 May 2012, and were referred to in the letter which the Syrian Arab Republic addressed to the Secretary-General on 17 May 2012 (S/2012/334). Those arms were intended for the terrorist groups in Syria. The operations carried out by the Syrian army along the Syrian-Lebanese borders that are referred to in the report are legitimate operations, and part of the Syrian authorities’ exercise of sovereignty over their territory and prevention of the infiltration of terrorists or smuggling of arms into Syrian territory.

- Paragraphs 5, 49 and 66: the Syrian Government reiterates that the problem of the so-called “Syrian refugees” is largely spurious and exaggerated. The Government hopes that they will return to their homeland and that their presence will not be exploited for foreign political purposes. Syria asserts that the majority of those who have fled to Lebanon are either members of armed terrorist groups who are sought by the law in Syria, or are people who have been obliged by such groups to leave their homes in an attempt to create a humanitarian crisis and bring about foreign intervention on humanitarian pretexts. Once again, Syria expresses its wish to see the safe return to their homes of all Syrian citizens who are suffering because of the armed terrorist groups, and to see those citizens released from the clutches of armed terrorist groups and the States which are providing them with arms and finance. It should be noted that certain parties in Lebanon and other organizations and individuals wish to exploit this humanitarian aspect for political purposes and undermine Syria and its stability.
- Paragraph 39: Syria affirms that the Palestinian presence in Lebanon, Syria and other States is the outcome of the humanitarian tragedy that has been the fate of the Palestinian people for more than 50 years, following the occupation of their homeland, their dispossession and the failure of the international community to respect and protect human rights in Palestine. Syria has nothing to do with the Lebanese-Palestinian agreements that regulate that presence. As for the report’s statement regarding the existence of Palestinian bases along the Lebanese-Syrian border, we reiterate our affirmation that all such bases are within Lebanese territory, and therefore it is not possible for Syria to intervene in that matter, which is historically linked to the aforementioned reasons for the Palestinian presence in Lebanon and other neighbouring States, including Syria. Those reasons are exacerbated by Israel’s persistent refusal to implement the resolutions of international legitimacy and, in particular, Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973) and General Assembly resolution 194 (III), which guarantees the right of return of the refugees to the lands from which they were driven out. Israel also persistently obstructs all approaches to and opportunities for a comprehensive peace in the region.
- Paragraph 44: the report of the Secretary-General states that he takes seriously what he calls Israeli “allegations” of significant transfers of arms to Hizbullah

across the border between Lebanon and Syria. At the same time, however, he makes it clear that the United Nations does not have the means to independently verify those claims. It is therefore legitimate to question the use of making that statement in the report, while what has been affirmed in several paragraphs, as referred to above, is that during the reporting period, attempts took place to transfer arms from Lebanon to the “Syrian opposition” inside Syria.

- Paragraphs 51 and 52: Syria reiterates that it does not accept the references of the report to the delineation of the border between Syria and Lebanon, because under international law, such delineation is an issue of bilateral sovereignty that is governed by the nature of the bilateral relations and the common wishes of the two countries. Syria also absolutely rejects any attempt to exploit the efforts exerted by the Government of Syria to protect its borders from the threat of transnational terrorism in order to carry out the political agenda that lies behind the demands to delineate the border between the two countries or to link those efforts to attempts to target Syria as part of the events that are currently taking place in its territory. Yet again, Syria affirms that the true obstacle to the complete delineation of the border between Syria and Lebanon, before there is any effective border administration, is the continuation of the Israeli aggression against and occupation of the occupied Syrian Golan and the Shab’a Farms. It is impossible to carry out any demarcation in the region in view of the occupation and while there is no international will to guarantee absolute and unconditional respect for and implementation of Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973) and the principle of land for peace, which would help to achieve a just and comprehensive peace in the region. Under those circumstances, the focus in the report on the complexity of the security situation in certain areas along the Syrian-Lebanese border as a reason to promote the logic of delineating and demarcating the border is unacceptable, and an attempt to distract the attention of the Security Council from the basic subject of the report, namely, Israeli aggression against Lebanon.
- Paragraph 67: Syria completely refuses to be held responsible, as it is in the report, for incidents along the Syrian-Lebanese border in which civilians have been killed, injured or put at risk. Such responsibility has been established on the basis of fabricated media reports and without the slightest investigation or verification that such incidents have taken place. If the situation was as the report alleges, who then is responsible for the deaths of numerous Syrian border guards and customs personnel along the Syrian-Lebanese border and on the borders of Syria with other neighbouring States?

(Signed) **Bashar Ja’afari**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative