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ENGLISH

PROVISIONAL VERBATIM RECORD OF THE TWO THOUSAND SEVEN HUNDRED AND SIXTH MEETING

held at Headquarters, New York,
on Friday, 19 September 1986, at 5 p.m.

President:	Mr. BELONOGOV	(Union of Soviet Socialist Republics)
Members:	Australia	Mr. HOGUE
	Bulgaria	Mr. TSVETKOV
	China	Mr. LI Luye
	Congo	Mr. BALE
	Denmark	Mr. BIERRING
	France	Mr. de KEMOULARIA
	Ghana	Mr. GBEHO
	Madagascar	Mr. RAKOTONDRAMBOA
	Thailand	Mr. KASEMSRI
	Trinidad and Tobago	Mr. ALLEYNE
	United Arab Emirates	Mr. AL-SHAALI
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Sir John THOMSON
	United States of America	Mr. WALTERS
	Venezuela	Mr. PABON GARCIA

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The meeting was called to order at 5.20 p.m.

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

The agenda was adopted.

THE SITUATION IN THE MIDDLE EAST

(a) SPECIAL REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL ON THE UNITED NATIONS INTERIM FORCE IN LEBANON (S/18348)

(b) LETTER DATED 18 SEPTEMBER 1986 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF FRANCE TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL (S/18353)

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Russian): I should like to inform members of the Security Council that I have received a letter from the representative of Israel in which he requests to be invited to participate in the discussion of the item on the Council's agenda. In accordance with the usual practice I propose, with the consent of the Council, to invite the representative of Israel to participate in the discussion without the right to vote, in conformity 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. Netanyahu (Israel) took the place reserved for him at the side of the Council Chamber.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Russian): The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda.

Members of the Council have before them the special report (S/18348) of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon.

The Security Council is meeting today in response to a request contained in a letter (S/18353) addressed to the President of the Security Council on 18 September 1986 by the Permanent Representative of France to the United Nations.

The Secretary-General of the United Nations wishes to make a statement, and I now call upon him.

The SECRETARY-GENERAL: The members of the Security Council have already received my special report on the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) which was circulated this morning as document S/18348. I therefore need not repeat the information and observations contained in that report.

I wish, however, to emphasize my deep personal concern at the difficult, indeed intolerable, situation now confronting UNIFIL. I regret to have to inform the Council that the seriousness of the situation was again underlined, about three hours ago, by a further rocket attack by unidentified armed elements against a position of the French battalion in the northern part of the UNIFIL area. According to prelimi[illegible]ports, five French soldiers were wounded, one of them seriously. I repeat [illegible]nation of such attacks on UNIFIL by extremist armed elements.

It is essential that effective measures be taken urgently to enable UNIFIL to fulfil the mandate entrusted to it by the Security Council, to ensure the security of the Force's personnel and, also, to resolve its financial difficulties.

As I have pointed out in my report, I believe that in the present situation the only hope of progress now lies in a determined effort by the Security Council itself. I have accordingly recommended that the members of the Council, both collectively and individually, should take urgent action to unblock the present impasse and make substantial progress towards implementation of resolution 425 (1978), which will also be the best way of improving the security of the personnel of UNIFIL. But time is of the essence. If such progress is not achieved soon, it is my belief that the Council may be compelled to give serious consideration to an alternative which could involve many grave dangers.

I wish to take this occasion to express my appreciation to the troop-contributing countries for the support and co-operation they have extended to UNIFIL. Because of the deterioration of the situation in the UNIFIL area and the

(The Secretary-General)

worsening deficit in the UNIFIL budget resulting from the failure of some Member States to pay their assessed contributions, the troop-contributing countries not only must send their men on a dangerous mission, but also must do so at considerable financial sacrifice. And yet, despite these difficulties, they have continued to support UNIFIL and maintain their contingents in the area. The United Nations owes them an immense debt of gratitude.

I cannot conclude this statement without paying a special tribute to UNIFIL's Force Commander and his officers and men. They have carried out their important duties in difficult and dangerous circumstances with exemplary dedication and courage.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Russian): I now call upon the representative of France.

Mr. de KEMOULARIA (France) (interpretation from French): At the outset, I wish once again to convey my Government's gratitude to all those who have expressed their sympathy in connection with the repeated attacks in southern Lebanon that have resulted in the death of French soldiers serving under the United Nations flag. Our Irish and Nepalese friends know that we share the grief of their officers and soldiers.

I also thank the President of the Security Council for having convened this meeting so quickly at our request. I appreciate the efficiency with which the Secretary-General - whose messages of solidarity have moved us - issued instructions to make sure that the mission that he had sent to the scene could submit a report very quickly.

This meeting, unfortunately, is an indication that a new phase has begun in the tragic deterioration of the situation in southern Lebanon.

(Mr. de Kemoularia, France)

For several weeks now, France has been urgently drawing the attention of the United Nations to the ever-worsening spiral of events in UNIFIL's area of operations. Everyone is aware of this accelerated, tragic chain of incidents and attacks: the incidents of 11 August, which for several days immobilized and paralysed several UNIFIL contingents; sporadic firing against elements of the Force; an attack by a remote-controlled mine on 20 August against an officer of the Irish contingent, who was killed; a similar attack on 4 September against French soldiers, three of whom were killed; a further mine attack on 13 September in which one soldier was killed and five were injured. This very afternoon, as the Secretary-General has just indicated, we have learned that there has been a new attack against a UNIFIL position held by the French contingent in which, as the Secretary-General has noted, five soldiers were wounded, two of them seriously.

(Mr. de Kemoularia, France)

We must once again see to it that the Council expresses the indignation of the community of nations at these cowardly assaults and condemns them vigorously.

Over the last several weeks, we have accumulated a heavy toll. It has, alas, confirmed that our apprehensions and warnings were well founded. We brought the matter before the United Nations at an early stage and invited the international community to devote its fullest attention to the situation because these events on the ground seemed to us to be of exceptional gravity and likely to challenge the role, indeed the very existence, of the United Nations Force.

In view of their repetition and nature, the attacks of the last several weeks, which have been deliberate and directed at pin-pointed targets, are indeed different from the cycle of incidents that have afflicted UNIFIL since 1978. The recent series of attacks, which were, as each of us knows, accompanied by demands and threats, is particularly alarming because it expresses the determination of some fundamentally to call into question the very existence of UNIFIL, and, it must rightly be said, most often through its largest contingent - that is the French contingent.

The United Nations cannot remain indifferent in the face of this tragic turn of events. It cannot remain passive when UNIFIL, unable to react, is pinned to the ground and condemned to retrenchment.

Meeting at our request on 5 September, the Council reacted immediately, as was appropriate, by dispatching a mission to propose immediate security measures and also to gather the appropriate fundamental elements that today enable us to consider the matter further and to take the necessary decicions. The time has come for our Council to shoulder its responsibilities.

Security measures have been taken or have been suggested; they are inadequate. Almost all of them are in effect passive defence measures. Certainly

(Mr. de Remoularia, France)

the Force must protect itself, but that is not its role in Lebanon. If it is not to lose its dignity and its very raison d'être, the Force cannot possibly simply dig itself in. Above and beyond immediate security measures, which are indispensable and require on-the-spot support from the entire UNIFIL hierarchy, we must go to the core of the matter and find out whether the means available to UNIFIL are appropriate to its mission or whether we must take a fresh look at the mission itself. There you have the two parameters of the debate, and the Security Council must reflect upon them and take decisions.

In this debate we must ask ourselves the reasons for the outbreaks of brutal, deliberate violence in recent weeks. The reports that have reached us, the circumstances surrounding these incidents and the demands and some of the things that followed lead us to this conclusion: there are those in southern Lebanon who are using criminal means to prevent UNIFIL from pursuing the activities in which it has been engaged since 1978, whereas the Force has not even attained its primary objective, namely deployment along the international border. When the international community created UNIFIL its main purpose was not to play the role of policeman in an area of Lebanon, or, however noble and efficacious that might be, to carry out humanitarian tasks there. It was created at the very request of the Lebanese Government to ensure respect for the integrity of a sovereign State.

The truth is that UNIFIL, which was created on Lebanese soil, and whose mission is first and foremost to ensure the sovereignty and integrity of Lebanon, cannot act there without the unanimous support of the Lebanese. It must foster and encourage such support, and that is why our Council must call upon all parties concerned to offer their co-operation to the United Nations and to UNIFIL. But in truth that support can be mobilized only around the sovereignty and integrity of

(Mr. de Kemoularia, France)

the country. That means that no foreign armed element not accepted by the Lebanese authorities can continue to exist in the southern Lebanon region. If we wish to see to it that UNIFIL once again enjoys the full support of the Lebanese population, it must be able to be deployed as quickly as possible, as was envisaged in 1978, along the international border. We feel that that would effectively restore the conditions necessary to enable the United Nations to bring about respect for its entire mission of peace and its humanitarian objectives in southern Lebanon.

We note from the report that the Secretary-General has today submitted to us, with which we became familiar this morning, that our concerns are the same as his. The draft resolution that France will introduce a little later will invite the parties concerned to do their utmost to enable UNIFIL to carry out its mission. It will ask for the swiftest possible deployment of the Force along the international border in accordance with the mandate contained in resolution 425 (1978).

The French Government feels the United Nations should reconsider its mission in southern Lebanon if so essential an objective as the return of civil peace to the region is not speedily achieved.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Russian): As has been agreed, the Council will now conclude its work for today.

The next meeting of the Security Council to continue consideration of the item on its agenda will take place on Monday, 22 September 1986, at 4 p.m.

The meeting rose at 5.40 p.m.