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Implementation of Security Council resolution 1559 (2004)

Thirty-ninth semi-annual report of the Secretary-General

I. Background

1. The present report is the thirty-ninth semi-annual report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of Security Council resolution 1559 (2004). It provides a review and assessment of the implementation of the resolution since the issuance of the previous report on the subject (S/2023/755), on 12 October 2023, and covers developments until 22 March 2024.

2. Following the attack by Hamas and other groups on Israel on 7 October and subsequent developments in Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territory, the situation along the Blue Line escalated: it began in the contested Shab'a Farms area, with Hizbullah stating on 8 October that it had conducted an attack in the Shab'a Farms "in the path of liberating the remaining parts of our occupied Lebanese land and in solidarity with the triumphant Palestinian resistance", and subsequently extended all along the Blue Line. The reporting period was marked by almost daily exchanges of fire between Hizbullah and other Lebanese and non-Lebanese militias and the Israel Defense Forces across the Blue Line, with breaches of sovereignty and territorial integrity, which highlighted the presence of Lebanese and non-Lebanese militias operating outside the control of the Government of Lebanon. These developments have undermined security and stability and underscore the importance of the full implementation of resolution 1559 (2004).

II. Implementation of resolution 1559 (2004)

3. Since the adoption of resolution 1559 (2004), limited progress has been made in its implementation. A number of provisions, including with respect to the existence and activities of Lebanese and non-Lebanese militias, remain pending.

A. Sovereignty, territorial integrity, unity and political independence of Lebanon

4. Through the adoption of resolution 1559 (2004), the Security Council sought to help strengthen the sovereignty, territorial integrity, unity and political independence of Lebanon under the sole and exclusive authority of the Government of Lebanon throughout the country, in accordance with the Taif Accords of 1989, to which all the



political parties in Lebanon had committed themselves. That objective has remained the priority of my efforts.

5. The Lebanese Parliament did not convene to elect a new president, and the country remained without an executive authority since the term in office of the former President Michel Aoun ended on 31 October 2022. In an effort to support resolving the presidential vacuum, the Quintet, comprising the Ambassadors to Lebanon of Egypt, France, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and the United States of America, held meetings in Beirut, including on 30 January, 20 February and 7 and 18 March, with a view to reaffirming the priority for the Parliament of electing a president of the Republic.

6. The exchanges of fire across the Blue Line between Hizbullah and other Lebanese and non-Lebanese militias in Lebanon, and Israel dominated throughout the reporting period. The exchanges of fire, which have resulted in civilian casualties and displacement of populations on both sides, have been predominantly concentrated in the vicinity of the Blue Line, although some strikes have landed deeper into the territories of Lebanon and Israel.

7. In identical letters dated 5 December addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council ([A/78/688-S/2023/966](#)), the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of Lebanon to the United Nations stated that "Israel ... persists in violating the sovereignty of Lebanon and to attack it by land, sea and air The ongoing violation by Israel of resolution [1701 \(2006\)](#) and the sovereignty of Lebanon, and the failure of Israel since 1948 to implement the relevant United Nations resolutions are acts of provocation that fuel the conflict and undermine efforts to establish security and stability." On 16 February, the caretaker Prime Minister, Najib Mikati, said, "while Lebanon stresses the need for stability in the region and calls on all parties to refrain from escalation, we find Israel continuing its aggression, which prompts us to ask about the steps taken by the international community to stop this prolonged aggression". On 14 November, the Speaker of the Parliament, Nabih Berri, warned of "the Israeli enemy's persistence in escalating its aggression, repeatedly targeting civilians, media professionals, and paramedics, extending its attacks deep into southern Lebanon, as well as its threats to the Lebanese capital, Beirut, which increases the risks of expanding the flames of Israeli war in the region, contrary to international and Arab positions calling for adherence to international legitimacy represented by resolution [1701 \(2006\)](#) and the rules of engagement". On 25 October, the Grand Mufti, Sheikh Abdul Latif Derian, said that "Lebanon endures the most dangerous and difficult conditions on its southern borders due to the permanent Israeli aggression, ongoing human rights violations in occupied Palestine, and genocidal crimes against the Palestinian people in the Gaza Strip".

8. On 12 October, 35 opposition parliamentarians issued a joint statement in which they asserted that "Lebanon's sovereignty is a red line and no faction on Lebanese soil, especially Hizbullah, has the right to embroil the country in a war with consequences that we cannot afford". The leader of the Free Patriotic Movement, Gebran Bassil, on 27 October emphasized "Lebanon's right to self-defence against any Israeli aggression and the necessity to protect Lebanon from using its territory as a launching pad for war attacks, preventing Lebanon from slipping into such conflicts". The leader of the Lebanese Forces, Samir Geagea, on 19 January expressed his "regret over the position of the caretaker government, which, instead of carrying out its duties to achieve the interests of Lebanon and its people, handed the decision over to a group and made way for it to turn the country into a battlefield and a buying and selling card on the region's table". The Maronite Patriarch, Bechara Boutros al-Rahi, on 3 March said, "no one should drag our country into war, killing, destruction, displacement and homelessness, for no use and for issues that the Lebanese in general and our people in the Lebanese south have nothing to do with". The Political Bureau of the Kata'ib Party, in a statement on 6 March, called for the

establishment of a State “free from any external or internal dominance, [that] possess[es] the decision of war and peace, safeguard[s] its borders, and ha[s] its decisions emanate from the representatives of the Lebanese people. Secondly, weapons should be confined to the hands of legitimate forces and the Lebanese army, the sole legitimate defender of the nation”.

9. On 4 March, the Kata’ib, the Lebanese Forces and independent allies highlighted the importance of safeguarding the sovereignty of Lebanon and the implementation of Security Council resolutions [1559 \(2004\)](#) and [1701 \(2006\)](#) and the importance of supporting the Lebanese Armed Forces to safeguard the border areas. The head of the Progressive Socialist Party, Member of Parliament Taymour Jumblatt, on 17 February called for “giving existing diplomatic efforts the opportunity to mature the necessary solutions and understandings, to spare Lebanon, exhausted by the weight of its crises, from a widespread war”.

10. Parliament convened on 14 and 15 December to enact several laws, including legislation to postpone the retirement age of incumbent heads of State security agencies holding the rank of General and Major General by one year. Consequently, the term of the Lebanese Armed Forces Commander, General Joseph Aoun, whose term was due to end in January 2024, was extended. After a year-long boycott of legislative sessions, opposition parties, including the Lebanese Forces, the Kata’ib and independent and emerging groups, provided a quorum for the extraordinary session. Hizbullah parliamentarians were absent from the vote, and the Free Patriotic Movement bloc boycotted the session. Parliament also adopted legislation to establish a sovereign wealth fund to manage potential revenues from the country’s offshore oil and gas reserves, while the draft capital controls law was returned to the parliamentary committees for further review.

11. Parliament adopted the State budget for 2024 prior to the constitutional deadline of 31 January, following a session held from 24 to 26 January and attended by most blocs, including the opposition parties, independent and emerging groups, and the Free Patriotic Movement.

12. Nearly two years since the signing of the staff-level agreement between the International Monetary Fund and Lebanon ([S/2022/556](#), para. 50), most prerequisite actions for a board-level agreement remain outstanding.

13. The judicial investigation into the Beirut port explosion remains stalled. On 15 January, in response to a lawsuit filed by the former Minister of Public Works Youssef Fenianos, the Court of Cassation Judge Sabbouh Suleiman suspended the arrest warrant issued for Fenianos by the lead investigative judge, Tarek Bitar, in September 2021. Representatives of the families of the victims of the Beirut port explosion filed a recusal lawsuit against Judge Suleiman on 23 January.

14. As at 20 March, the prosecution of 68 individuals in the case of the deadly clashes in Tayyunah on 14 October 2021 ([S/2021/953](#), para. 57) remained pending. Over three years since the killing on 4 February 2021 of Lokman Slim ([S/2021/240](#), para. 46), there has been no progress in the investigation.

15. In the case of the armed clashes in Khaldah that occurred on 1 August 2021, 9 of the 16 convicted defendants who, by the initial ruling in April 2023, had been sentenced to prison appealed the decision ([S/2023/755](#), para. 13). In December 2023, five of the nine appellants were released on bail by the Military Court of Cassation. In November 2023, the Permanent Military Court scheduled for April 2024 the next trial session in the case of a Syrian refugee who died in August 2022 in a State security centre in Bint Jubayl, southern Lebanon (*ibid.*).

16. The mandate of the Special Tribunal for Lebanon ended on 31 December 2023 with the completion of its non-judicial residual functions and liquidation.

17. The action plan of the National Strategy for Women in Lebanon 2024–2026, devised by the National Commission for Lebanese Women in collaboration with partners in the public sector and civil society and with international support, was launched on 22 February. Highlighting the importance of joint efforts for advancing women's rights and the implementation of Security Council resolution 1325 (2000), the national action plan offers opportunities to tackle violence against women and girls; empower them at the personal, educational, economic and social levels; and ensure further equality between women and men. As at December 2023, several Members of Parliament from diverse political backgrounds publicly expressed support for a draft legislation on temporary special measures, indicating growing commitment across the political spectrum to addressing gender disparities in public representation.

18. The Israel Defense Forces continued to enter Lebanese airspace in violation of Lebanese sovereignty and resolutions 1559 (2004) and 1701 (2006). In the context of breaches in the cessation of hostilities across the Blue Line by Hizbullah and other Lebanese and non-Lebanese militias and the Israel Defense Forces since 8 October, there has been a significantly higher volume of air violations by Israel compared with the previous reporting period (see S/2024/222).

19. From late October, the Israel Defense Forces conducted strikes on specific targets in Lebanon (ibid.). The Israel Defense Forces targeted Hizbullah and Hamas members, including commanders, inter alia, in Bayt Yahun on 22 November, in Khirbet Silim on 8 January and near Tyre on 13 March. Carrying out strikes deeper in Lebanese territory, the Israel Defense Forces targeted locations, including in Jadra on 10 February and Ghaziyah on 19 February. On 26 February and 11 and 12 March, the Israel Defense Forces struck locations in the Bika', some 100 km from the Blue Line, which reportedly resulted in several casualties.

20. On 2 January, the Deputy Head of the Political Bureau of the Hamas movement, Saleh al-Aroui, and two other Qassam Brigades leaders were killed in an air strike in the southern suburbs of Beirut. In identical letters dated 4 January addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council (A/78/708-S/2024/24), the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of Lebanon to the United Nations stated that "on 2 January 2024 at 1740 hours, Israel carried out an air strike, firing six missiles at a residential building in the Madi neighbourhood in the southern suburbs of Beirut. ... Two Lebanese and five Palestinians were killed." He added, "It constitutes the first escalation of its kind since 2006, inasmuch as this time it affected a densely populated residential area in the southern suburbs of the capital of Lebanon, Beirut, in a blatant violation by Israel of the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Lebanon and the safety of its citizens and civilian air traffic."

21. In its resolution 1680 (2006), the Security Council strongly encouraged the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic to respond positively to the request made by the Government of Lebanon to delineate their common border. This remains critical to enabling proper border control and management, including the movement of people and the potential movement of arms.

22. The delineation and demarcation of the boundaries of Lebanon also remain elements essential to guaranteeing national sovereignty and territorial integrity. While border delineation is a bilateral matter, progress on the issue remains an obligation for Lebanon and the Syrian Arab Republic, in accordance with resolution 1680 (2006).

23. Israel continued to occupy the northern part of the village of Ghajar and an adjacent area north of the Blue Line, in violation of the sovereignty of Lebanon and resolutions 1559 (2004) and 1701 (2006).

24. There was no progress in relation to the issue of the Shab'a Farms area. Furthermore, neither the Syrian Arab Republic nor Israel has responded to the provisional definition of the area contained in the report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of resolution [1701 \(2006\)](#) of 30 October 2007 ([S/2007/641](#)).

25. In identical letters dated 9 January addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council ([A/78/712-S/2024/36](#)), the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of Lebanon to the United Nations relayed the Government's position that "full and comprehensive implementation of resolution [1701 \(2006\)](#) within an integrated package of explicit international guarantees ... could bring about lasting security and overall stability. ... Israel must withdraw to agreed international borders, starting with point B1 in the Ras al-Naurah area, which is located within the internationally recognized Lebanese borders, all the way to the outskirts of the town of Mari, which includes the expanded part of the town of Ghajar. Israel must withdraw fully from the Shab'a Farms and the Kafr Shuba hills, with demarcation of the border there to be left exclusively to Lebanon and Syria."

B. Extension of control of the Government of Lebanon over all Lebanese territory

26. The Government of Lebanon continued its efforts to extend the authority of the State over all the Lebanese territory, as called for in the Taif Accords and in resolution [1559 \(2004\)](#).

27. The Lebanese Armed Forces did not engage in the breaches of the cessation of hostilities across the Blue Line, despite coming under fire. In identical letters dated 9 January addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council ([A/78/712-S/2024/36](#)), the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of Lebanon to the United Nations stated that there had been "34 Israeli attacks on Lebanese army posts", including on 5 December, when "Israeli forces fired four shells directly at a Lebanese army post in the South, destroying the post, killing a Lebanese soldier and injuring three others". On 5 December, the Israel Defense Forces stated that "IDF soldiers operated in self-defence to eliminate an imminent threat that had been identified from Lebanon. The threat was identified within a known launch area and observation point of the Hezbollah terrorist organization. ... The Lebanese Armed Forces were not the target of the strike. The IDF expresses regret over the incident." Several more Lebanese Armed Forces personnel were reportedly injured, including on 27 October, when a Lebanese Armed Forces convoy was hit during Israel Defense Forces shelling in the vicinity of Nabi Yusha' in southern Lebanon.

28. In identical letters dated 8 October addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council ([S/2023/744](#)), the Permanent Representative of Israel to the United Nations stated that "Hezbollah's continued military build-up, presence and malign activities in Southern Lebanon including within the area of operations of the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) and particularly along the Blue Line during such times of tension, have the potential to fuel and spread the flames of conflict, leading to dramatic consequences in our region. Israel regards these activities as grave violations of the relevant Security Council resolutions, including resolution [1701 \(2006\)](#) and [1559 \(2004\)](#)."

29. In identical letters dated 13 November to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council ([S/2023/867](#)), the Permanent Representative of Israel to the United Nations stated that "Israel expects the Lebanese Government to assert control over all of its territory. The Lebanese Armed Forces must ensure that neither Hezbollah nor Palestinian terrorist groups are able to plan and execute attacks against Israel from Lebanon. Security Council resolutions [1701 \(2006\)](#) and [1559](#)

(2004) should be fully implemented in order to ensure that southern Lebanon is not utilized for hostile activities against Israel, regardless of the affiliation of the terrorist group that carries out the attacks.”

30. In identical letters dated 9 January addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council (A/78/712-S/2024/36), the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of Lebanon to the United Nations stated that “the Government of Lebanon also requests support from the United Nations to help the Lebanese State extend its authority over the entirety of Lebanese territory by strengthening its armed forces. In particular, support should be provided for deployment of those forces south of the Litani River, and they should be provided with equipment in cooperation with UNIFIL, so that there will be no weapons without the consent of the Government of Lebanon and no authority other than that of the Government of Lebanon, in accordance with paragraph 3 of resolution 1701 (2006)”.

31. The Lebanese Armed Forces continued their operations to maintain security and stability in the country, including through counter-terrorism and anti-trafficking activities. During three counter-terrorism operations between 21 October and 20 February, Lebanese security forces arrested seven individuals on terrorism-related charges.

32. From 21 October to 19 March, Lebanese State security forces arrested 44 individuals in at least 27 counter-narcotics operations. Lebanese State security forces apprehended 921 individuals, including 600 individuals of Syrian nationality who were pushed back at the border between Lebanon and the Syrian Arab Republic on 8 November and 7 alleged smugglers, to combat the smuggling of people.

33. The sole indictee detained with respect to the fatal attack against a UNIFIL convoy in the vicinity of Mazra'at al-Aqibiyah on 14 December 2022 was released on bail on 14 November 2023 for medical reasons. He did not attend the trial hearing scheduled for 15 December; the hearing was postponed to 7 June 2024.

34. Member States continued to provide bilateral support to the Lebanese Armed Forces and State security institutions, given the ongoing economic crisis in the country. The Lebanese Armed Forces Commander, General Aoun, participated in a technical meeting hosted by Italy on 1 March to support the Lebanese Armed Forces, along with the officials of France, Germany, Italy, Spain and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

35. As at 29 February, 793,825 refugees and asylum-seekers were registered with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) in Lebanon, including 782,517 Syrian refugees and 11,308 refugees and asylum-seekers of other nationalities. With new registrations of Syrian refugees by UNHCR suspended by the Government of Lebanon since 2015, the actual number of refugees remains unknown. As indicated in the Lebanon Crisis Response Plan for 2023, the Government estimates that there are 1.5 million Syrian refugees in Lebanon.

36. In 2023, there were 65 verified actual or attempted movements by sea from Lebanon involving 3,921 passengers, the majority of whom were individuals of Syrian nationality. Of those movements, 34 reached Cyprus and 3 returned to Lebanon. UNHCR is aware of at least 19 deportation incidents involving 932 people related to attempted onward boat movements. UNHCR is also aware of 12,870 individuals deported from Lebanon or pushed back at the border with the Syrian Arab Republic in approximately 500 incidents in 2023.

C. Disbanding and disarmament of Lebanese and non-Lebanese militias

37. In its resolution [1559 \(2004\)](#), the Security Council called for the disbanding and disarmament of all Lebanese and non-Lebanese militias, a key provision of the resolution that has yet to be implemented. The provision reflects and reaffirms a decision to which all Lebanese committed themselves in the Taif Accords.

38. Lebanese and non-Lebanese militias within the country continued to operate outside the control of the Government, in violation of resolution [1559 \(2004\)](#). While several groups across the political spectrum in Lebanon possess weapons outside government control, Hizbullah is the most heavily armed militia in the country. The maintenance of arms by Hizbullah and other groups and the use of sophisticated weapons by Hizbullah pose a serious challenge to the State's ability to exercise full sovereignty and sole and exclusive authority over all its territory.

39. There has been no tangible progress towards the disbanding and disarming of Lebanese and non-Lebanese militias, as called for in the Taif Accords and resolution [1559 \(2004\)](#). Since the adoption of that resolution, few steps have been taken to tackle that crucial issue, which lies at the heart of the sovereignty and political independence of Lebanon. The maintenance by Hizbullah of a military arsenal outside of a legal framework, the significant exchanges of fire across the Blue Line, and the involvement of Hizbullah in the Syrian Arab Republic continued to be denounced by a number of voices in Lebanon, who consider those issues to be destabilizing factors in the country, increasing the risk of war and undermining democracy. Many Lebanese see the continued presence of such arms as an implicit threat that the weapons could be used within Lebanon for political reasons.

40. Since 8 October, Hizbullah and other Lebanese and non-Lebanese militias have repeatedly demonstrated their military capabilities in strikes from southern Lebanon into Israel (see [S/2024/222](#)), with anti-tank guided missiles, artillery, offensive drones, mortars, rockets and surface-to-air missiles used in such strikes.

41. In his first public speech since 8 October, the Secretary-General of Hizbullah, Hassan Nasrallah, stated on 3 November, "The Islamic resistance in Lebanon began its operations the next day after the Aqsa Flood operation. These operations are an expression of our solidarity with Gaza, its people and its resistance." On 11 November, Nasrallah stated, "For the first time, we used the offensive drones ... as well as ... the Burkan [volcano] rockets against Israel Defense Forces installations. The operations that were carried out ..., whether in response with Katyusha rockets or with drones, were in deeper areas than any time before." On 26 January, Hizbullah announced the use for the first time of a surface-to-surface "Falaq 1" missile against an Israel Defense Forces position. On 5 March, it published statistics on its operations since 8 October, claiming 1,194 strikes against Israel, including 841 strikes on 64 Israel Defense Forces positions and 107 strikes on 22 villages. On 16 February, Nasrallah stated that "the resistance in Lebanon has the precise and great missile and rocket capability that can extend from Qiryat Shmona to Eilat". On 5 March, the head of Hizbullah's parliamentary bloc, Member of Parliament Mohammad Raad, said, "We do not wish for war ..., but we are fully prepared to face it We have not used all our weapons and we have not yet opened the arms depots of open war." On 13 March, Nasrallah stated that "the support fronts in Lebanon and Yemen will continue and the Islamic resistance in Iraq will continue sending drones and missiles into Israel".

42. Hizbullah publicly claimed responsibility for almost daily strikes from Lebanon against Israel Defense Forces positions or personnel south of the Blue Line using, inter alia, rockets, guided missiles, artillery shells, drones, anti-tank missiles and

surface-to-air missiles, including on the Mount Meron base with rockets on 6 January and a drone attack on the Israel Defense Forces northern command headquarters in Tsfat on 9 January. On 26 February, Hizbullah claimed responsibility for downing an Israel Defense Forces drone east of Sidon. On 27 February, Hizbullah claimed that it had attacked the Mount Meron base with a large missile barrage “in response to IDF’s aggression on Baalbek”. In a statement on 12 March, Hizbullah said, “In support of our steadfast Palestinian people in Gaza and in solidarity with their brave and honourable resistance, and in response to the Israeli aggressions against our people, villages, and cities, most recently near the vicinity of Baalbek where a citizen was martyred, the fighters of the Islamic Resistance launched at 7 a.m. on Tuesday, 12 March 2024, a barrage of more than a hundred Katyusha rockets targeting the Air Defense and Missile Command headquarters in Kila barracks, the missile and artillery base in Yoav, and the artillery positions surrounding them.”

43. The Qassam Brigades of Hamas and Al-Quds Brigades of the Palestinian Islamic Jihad publicly claimed responsibility for attacks from Lebanon on northern Israel, including on 29 and 30 October, 2, 6 and 12 November and 10, 19 and 25 December. The Qassam Brigades on 27 February announced that it had attacked the “command HQ of the Eastern Brigade 769 ‘Ghaybur camp’ and ‘airport barracks’ in Beit Hillel”. On 28 February, the Qassam Brigades announced two attacks consisting of 40 rockets each.

44. Al-Fajr, the military wing of the Lebanese group Al-Jama‘a al-Islamiya, and the Lebanese Resistance Brigades also publicly claimed responsibility for attacks on northern Israel. The Amal Movement and the Syrian Social Nationalist Party acknowledged fatalities among their members.

45. In identical letters dated 11 October addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council ([S/2023/756](#)), the Permanent Representative of Israel to the United Nations stated, “On 9 October, four terrorists infiltrated Israel from Lebanon. Palestinian Islamic Jihad claimed responsibility for this attack, which could not have been executed without Hezbollah’s consent. Later on, an anti-tank missile and mortar shells were fired towards Israel. Hezbollah, the Iranian-backed terrorist organization, claimed responsibility for that shelling. ... Israel views these terror attacks from Lebanon as a grave violation of its sovereignty and a grave risk for the deterioration of regional stability. These attacks also constitute grave violations of Security Council resolutions, including resolutions [1701 \(2006\)](#) and [1559 \(2004\)](#).”

46. In a letter dated 28 December addressed to the President of the Security Council ([S/2023/1059](#)), the Permanent Representative of Israel to the United Nations stated that “the gravity and volume of these attacks is unprecedented and includes the launching of hundreds of rockets, anti-tank missiles and mortar shells, the firing of gunshots towards Israel Defense Forces (IDF) positions, personnel and Israeli communities along the northern border, and various drone infiltrations”.

47. In identical letters dated 13 November addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council ([S/2023/867](#)), the Permanent Representative of Israel to the United Nations stated that “these organizations [Hizbullah and other terrorist groups] continue unabated to strengthen their military presence and capabilities and amass new and sophisticated weapons with the direct aid, support and guidance of Iran. ... The Shiite Iran-backed militia ‘Imam Hussein’, originally deployed in Syria, has been transferred to south Lebanon in order to support Hezbollah’s campaign against Israel.” In a letter dated 4 December addressed to the President of the Security Council ([S/2023/950](#)), the Permanent Representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran to the United Nations “categorically reject[ed] the baseless allegations and unwarranted references made against the Islamic Republic of Iran in

the identical letters dated 13 November 2023 from the representative of the Israeli regime”.

48. In a letter dated 22 February to the Security Council, the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Israel, Israel Katz, wrote that “Iran is accelerating the pace of its weapons transfers to Hezbollah These transfers include, among others, components of air defence systems, drones (such as Shahed-101 and Shahed-136) and various types of missiles (such as Mini-Ababil and surface-to-air missiles ‘358’). Israel has warned the international community time and time again against Hezbollah and Iran’s ongoing efforts to expand Hezbollah’s military build-up in violation of Security Council resolutions including [1559 \(2004\)](#) and [1701 \(2006\)](#).” In a letter dated 26 February addressed to the President of the Security Council (see [A/78/801-S/2024/211](#)), the Minister for Foreign Affairs and Emigrants of Lebanon, Abdallah Bou Habib, wrote that “the accusations made by Israel are based on dates, numbers and names, without any real support or physical proof. We see those accusations as being nothing more than pre-emptive arguments that Israel is using to justify its war against Lebanon.” In a letter dated 7 March addressed to the President of the Security Council ([S/2024/221](#)), the Permanent Representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran responded that “the accusations in the letter are entirely baseless and are categorically rejected. ... It is also a misleading effort aimed at covering up and legitimizing Israel’s aggression against Lebanon and its continual breaches of international law, the Charter of the United Nations and Security Council resolutions [1559 \(2004\)](#) and [1701 \(2006\)](#), by levelling unfounded allegations against Iran.”

49. Residential areas and civilian infrastructure on both sides of the Blue Line were increasingly affected by the exchanges of fire, including in the vicinity of hospitals, schools and religious sites. The Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs reported that, as at 21 March, there were 90,491 people displaced and at least 54 civilian fatalities in Lebanon, including 23 women and 8 children, 3 journalists and 7 health workers, related to the exchanges of fire since 8 October 2023. Some 61,000 people displaced and 6 civilian fatalities, including 1 woman, were also reported in northern Israel.

50. Notwithstanding the decision taken in 2006 in the context of the national dialogue, and confirmed at subsequent sessions, to disarm Palestinian militias outside the camps within a six-month period, no progress was made during the reporting period with regard to dismantling the military bases of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine-General Command and Fatah al-Intifada in the country.

51. Following a meeting in Lebanon on 25 October between the Secretary-General of Hizbullah, Hassan Nasrallah, the Secretary-General of the Palestinian Islamic Jihad, Ziad al-Nakhalah, and the Deputy Head of the Political Bureau of the Hamas movement, Saleh al-Arouri, Hizbullah issued a statement that they had “discussed what actions should be taken by the resistance axis parties in this sensitive stage to achieve a real victory for the resistance in Gaza and Palestine”.

52. In December, the Hamas movement in Lebanon issued a call in the Palestine refugee camps to join “Al-Aqsa flood vanguards”, drawing criticism from Lebanese political leaders. Separately, there is a continued presence of armed actors in and around four of the eight United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) schools in the Ein El Hilweh Palestine refugee camp ([S/2023/879](#), para. 45). The security situation in the Palestine refugee camps remained largely calm during the reporting period.

III. Observations

53. I remain concerned at the lack of progress towards the implementation of the outstanding provisions of resolution 1559 (2004). I also continue to encourage relevant Lebanese actors to reinvigorate efforts towards an inclusive national dialogue to address the outstanding issues.

54. The intensified exchange of fire across the Blue Line during the reporting period between Hizbullah and other Lebanese and non-Lebanese militias and the Israel Defense Forces is gravely concerning. The maintenance and use by Hizbullah of sizeable and sophisticated military capabilities outside the control of the Government of Lebanon remains a matter of grave concern. The widespread presence of weapons outside the control of the State and the activity of several armed Lebanese and non-Lebanese militias continue to undermine security and stability in Lebanon. These developments underscore the urgent need to implement all provisions of resolution 1559 (2004). Calls from sections of the Lebanese population for the full implementation of resolution 1559 (2004) and for the rejection of the possession of arms outside State authority indicate that the maintenance of weapons by Hizbullah remains a divisive issue within Lebanese society.

55. The Lebanese State should increase its efforts to achieve a monopoly over the possession of weapons and the use of force throughout its territory. I continue to urge the Government and the armed forces of Lebanon to take all measures necessary to prohibit Hizbullah and other groups from acquiring weapons and building paramilitary capacity outside the authority of the State, in violation of resolutions 1559 (2004) and 1701 (2006).

56. I reiterate my call upon all parties concerned not to engage in any military activity inside or outside Lebanon, consistent with the requirements of the Taif Accords and resolution 1559 (2004). It is critical that the Accords be preserved and implemented by all to avoid the spectre of a renewed confrontation among Lebanese citizens and to strengthen the institutions of the State. All parties concerned must contribute to efforts to reinforce the institutions of the Lebanese State.

57. I stress the importance of increased international support for the Lebanese Armed Forces and other State security institutions, for the security and stability of Lebanon.

58. The continued, self-acknowledged involvement of Hizbullah in the conflict in the Syrian Arab Republic not only is in breach of the disassociation policy and the principles of the Baabda Declaration of 2012 but also carries a risk of entangling Lebanon in the regional conflicts and undermining the stability of Lebanon and of the region. Furthermore, it demonstrates the failure of Hizbullah to disarm and its refusal to be accountable to the very State institutions that the implementation of resolution 1559 (2004) was intended to strengthen. The reported involvement of Hizbullah and that of other Lebanese elements in fighting elsewhere in the region remains of concern.

59. Countries in the region that maintain close ties with Hizbullah should encourage the disarmament of that armed group and its transformation into a solely civilian political party in accordance with the requirements of the Taif Accords and resolution 1559 (2004), and in the best interests of Lebanon and of regional peace and security.

60. In that regard, it is important that decisions taken from the 2006 national dialogue be implemented, specifically those relating to the disarmament of non-Lebanese groups and the dismantling of the bases of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine-General Command and Fatah al-Intifada.

61. I strongly condemn all violations of the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Lebanon. The strikes by the Israel Defense Forces in Lebanese territory undermine security and exacerbate the tensions. The repeated alleged use of Lebanese airspace by the Israel Defense Forces to strike targets in the Syrian Arab Republic is deeply concerning, as it challenges State sovereignty and increases the risks for further regional escalation. I renew my calls upon Israel to adhere to its obligations under international law and relevant Security Council resolutions, including to withdraw its forces from the northern part of the village of Ghajar and an adjacent area north of the Blue Line, as well as to immediately cease its flights over Lebanese airspace. I also urge the Syrian Arab Republic and Israel to respond to the provisional definition of the Shab'a Farms contained in my report on the implementation of resolution [1701 \(2006\)](#) of 30 October 2007 ([S/2007/641](#), annex).

62. Lebanon has been without a president for over a year. The country's multipronged crisis can be addressed only through the election of a president of the Republic, the formation of a fully empowered Government and the implementation of comprehensive reforms that respond to the needs and aspirations of the Lebanese people. I call upon Lebanese leaders to prioritize the national interest and work together to break the protracted political impasse, in the interest of all communities and people in Lebanon. I appeal to Lebanese Members of Parliament to assume their constitutional duty to elect a new president without further delay, in a free and fair presidential election conducted according to Lebanese constitutional rules devised without foreign interference or influence, in line with resolution [1559 \(2004\)](#).

63. The independence of the judiciary in Lebanon must be respected. I therefore reiterate my call for a swift, impartial, thorough and transparent investigation, including into the Beirut port explosion, the assassination of Lokman Slim and the clashes in Tayyounah, to deliver justice to the victims and their families, to hold the perpetrators accountable and to restore people's confidence in the judicial system of Lebanon.

64. I thank Lebanon for continuing to host the largest number of refugees per capita in the world. I call upon the international community to continue to provide the necessary support, including through increased resettlement quotas. Application of legal and procedural safeguards, including the principle of non-refoulement, remains vital.

65. It is vital that UNRWA receive consistent and sufficient funding to meet the protection needs of the Palestine refugee community. The role of UNRWA in maintaining stability in the Palestine refugee camps in Lebanon is more critical now than ever and vital to the dignity and security of Palestine refugees. Such efforts are without prejudice to the need for a just resolution of the Palestine refugee question in the context of a comprehensive settlement in the region.

66. I count on the continued commitment of the Government of Lebanon to its international obligations, and I call upon all parties and actors to fully abide by resolutions [1559 \(2004\)](#), [1680 \(2006\)](#) and [1701 \(2006\)](#). The United Nations will continue its efforts towards the full implementation of those and all other resolutions pertaining to Lebanon.