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Report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of Security Council resolution 1701 (2006)

Reporting period from 27 June to 5 November 2014

I. Introduction

1. The present report provides a comprehensive assessment of the implementation of Security Council resolution 1701 (2006) since my last report of 26 June 2014 ([S/2014/438](#)).

2. In the first part of the reporting period, the prevailing stability along the Blue Line and in the area of operations of the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) was threatened by heightened tension in the area as a result of the outbreak of the Gaza conflict in July and August 2014. During this period, rockets were fired on nine occasions from Lebanon towards Israel, impacting in six instances across the Blue Line in Israel, with Israel responding with artillery fire on five occasions.

3. In addition, there were two serious incidents in the Shab'a Farms area (Sector East). On 5 October, one Lebanese Armed Forces soldier was injured by an Israel Defense Forces soldier in a shooting incident. On 7 October, also in the Shab'a Farms area, an Israel Defense Forces vehicle was hit by the explosion of an improvised explosive device south of the Blue Line, which reportedly injured two Israeli soldiers. The Israel Defense Forces retaliated with artillery fire into Lebanon in the Kafer Chouba area (Sector East).

4. In each instance, quick intervention by UNIFIL and positive engagement by both Lebanon and Israel through UNIFIL liaison and coordination channels helped to contain the situation. In spite of these serious incidents, both parties reaffirmed their commitment to the implementation of resolution 1701 (2006) and are working with UNIFIL to mitigate tensions and preserve the general calm along the Blue Line.

5. The security situation in the country was significantly challenged during the reporting period by attacks carried out by violent extremist groups, including the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) and the Nusra Front, in areas bordering the Syrian Arab Republic. The Lebanese Armed Forces and security forces were deployed to continue the implementation of security plans in Tripoli and the Bekaa, to contain violence and meet new threats in Lebanon. In Tripoli, there were no further clashes between armed groups in Jabal Mohsen and Bab al-Tabbaneh, but there were serious



clashes in late October between the Lebanese Armed Forces and militants. Elsewhere, the security forces discovered explosive materials and detained militant cells who were planning terrorist attacks. There were further air strikes by Syrian Government aircraft, which caused fatalities and injuries, as well as continued cross-border shelling, small arms fire and rockets fired from the Syrian Arab Republic into Lebanon.

6. In the Bekaa valley, there were recurrent serious incidents. On 2 August, there was a large-scale attack by violent extremist groups from the Syrian Arab Republic on Lebanese Armed Forces positions in the area of Aarsal. Militant groups, including elements from the Nusra Front and ISIL, entered the town, precipitating five days of deadly fighting with the Lebanese Armed Forces that ended with the withdrawal of the militants to the outskirts of Aarsal together with a number of captured security personnel. The families of the hostages have demonstrated and blocked roads, demanding intensified Lebanese and regional efforts to free them. The Lebanese Armed Forces have been deployed robustly around Aarsal to contain the militants in the hinterland around the town and to try to prevent a further incursion. There have since been a number of clashes between the Lebanese Armed Forces and the militants, as well as attacks by Nusra Front militants on Hizbullah positions.

7. On 14 August, the Government of Lebanon approved a grant of \$1 billion from Saudi Arabia to support the Lebanese security forces and combat terrorism. In addition, Member States stepped up assistance to the Lebanese Armed Forces following the attack on Aarsal.

8. There are now 1.124 million registered Syrian refugees in Lebanon who have fled the war in the Syrian Arab Republic, an increase of 30,000 since my last report. Lebanon hosts the largest number of Syrian refugees and has a higher proportion of refugees relative to its national population than any country in the world.

9. Since the end of President Michel Sleiman's term in office on 25 May, 14 sessions of Parliament have been scheduled to elect a new President, but each one has failed to take place owing to a lack of quorum. In the absence of a President, the Council of Ministers led by Prime Minister Salam has assumed the powers of the Presidency, in accordance with the Constitution. The Parliament's term is due to expire on 20 November and the political parties have been engaged in discussions about a further extension of the Parliament's mandate if the parliamentary elections due to be held by 16 November do not take place.

10. I chaired a ministerial meeting of the International Support Group for Lebanon in New York on 26 September in the margins of the General Assembly, in the presence of Prime Minister Salam. Participants underlined, on the first anniversary of the Group's formation, their continued and united commitment to mobilize support for Lebanon's sovereignty and State institutions and to promote efforts to help Lebanon to address the economic, social and security challenges it faces as a result of the conflict in the Syrian Arab Republic. Participants were concerned that the challenges facing Lebanon have become more severe over the past year and stressed the need for concerted effort to counter their impact. They looked to Lebanon's leaders to pave the way to the election of a President without further delay. At the invitation of the Government of Germany, the International Support Group reconvened on 28 October in Berlin in the presence of Prime Minister Salam to focus on the refugee situation in Lebanon.

II. Implementation of resolution 1701 (2006)

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

11. There were nine incidents of rockets launched from Lebanon towards Israel (on 11, 12 and 14 July (with two incidents on 14 July), 16 and 25 July and 1, 23 and 25 August). All but two of the rocket launches occurred from inside the UNIFIL area of operations towards Israel. Rockets impacted in Israel in six instances, falling short of the Blue Line inside the UNIFIL area of operations in the other cases. Two Israeli civilians sustained minor injuries from two rockets fired on 23 August that also caused material damage.

12. The Israel Defense Forces responded by firing artillery shells into Lebanon in each instance when rockets fell south of the Blue Line, with the exception of 16 July, when only illumination rounds were fired, and of 23 August, when no retaliation took place. There were no reported casualties from the Israeli retaliatory fire.

13. Throughout these incidents, UNIFIL maintained close contact with both sides in order to de-escalate the situation, restore the cessation of hostilities, mitigate potential threats and prevent further hostile activities. The liaison and coordination arrangements, including a real-time communication via videoteleconference, functioned well and demonstrated their vital role in preventing a potential further escalation.

14. UNIFIL investigated all the incidents and shared its findings and recommendations with both parties. An inspection of the launching sites revealed that the attacks were carried out by amateur operators which, in some instances, resulted in rockets either falling short of or being directed away from their apparent target. The Lebanese authorities arrested two suspects in relation to the incidents. While there was no public claim of responsibility for any of the rocket launchings, the information available to UNIFIL suggests that the attacks were likely individual initiatives aimed at expressing solidarity with Gaza during Israel's "Protective Edge" military operation from 8 July to 26 August.

15. On 14 July and 25 and 26 August, the Permanent Representative of Israel protested the incidents as flagrant breaches of resolution 1701 (2006), noting that Israel held the Government of Lebanon responsible for all such acts. On 17 July, the Permanent Representative of Lebanon protested the Israeli fire between 10 and 14 July as a flagrant violation of resolution 1701 (2006).

16. In the light of the developments in Gaza, UNIFIL increased its counter-rocket launching operations throughout the area of operations, both independently and in coordination with the Lebanese Armed Forces, which it further enhanced after the rocket attack of 12 July. For its part, on 15 July, the Lebanese Armed Forces deployed new units from its rapid intervention regiment to reinforce its troops south of the Litani River; it later withdrew them on 5 August, following clashes in Aarsal, outside the UNIFIL area of operations. The Lebanese Armed Forces command has reaffirmed its commitment to reinforce its presence in the UNIFIL area of operations with additional troops, should the need arise.

17. On 5 October, one Lebanese Armed Forces soldier was shot and wounded by an Israel Defense Forces soldier during a shooting incident near the Blue Line in the vicinity of a UNIFIL observation post, in the Shab'a Farms area. On 7 October, the

Israel Defense Forces informed UNIFIL that two of its soldiers had been wounded following an improvised explosive device attack in the same general area south of the Blue Line. The Israel Defense Forces retaliated with approximately 24 rounds of artillery fire into Lebanon in close proximity to a United Nations observation post (Sector East). There was no report of damage or casualties. Hizbullah publicly claimed responsibility for the explosion, which it linked to the death of one of its members, who was killed in the blast of an alleged Israeli monitoring device on 5 September in Adloun in Lebanon, outside the UNIFIL area of operations. On 8 October, the Permanent Representative of Israel protested this incident as a flagrant breach of resolution 1701 (2006), stating that Israel held the Government of Lebanon responsible for all such acts. On 15 October, the Permanent Representative of Lebanon protested the incident of 5 October as a further violation of the resolution. On both occasions, UNIFIL immediately contacted both sides to urge restraint and avoid any escalation of the situation. UNIFIL investigations into both incidents are ongoing.

18. The Israel Defense Forces continued its occupation of northern Ghajar and an adjacent area north of the Blue Line in violation of resolution 1701 (2006). UNIFIL is still awaiting a response from Israel regarding security arrangements to facilitate the withdrawal of the Israel Defense Forces from the area; the arrangements were proposed to both parties on 25 June 2011 and accepted by the Lebanese Armed Forces on 19 July 2011. Pending an agreement, UNIFIL is conducting bilateral consultations with the parties in an effort to facilitate the secure use by the local Lebanese population of the road lying north of the occupied area.

19. Violations of Lebanese airspace by the Israel Defense Forces continued, with almost daily overflights by unmanned aerial vehicles and fixed-wing aircraft, including fighter jets. On 20 September, an Israeli unmanned aerial vehicle fell in the area of Sarda (Sector East) without causing casualties or damage. The Lebanese Armed Forces recovered the aircraft. UNIFIL protested the air violations to the Israel Defense Forces, calling upon the authorities to cease them immediately. The Government of Lebanon also protested the violations, while the Government of Israel continued to claim that the overflights were necessary security measures.

20. Since my last report, UNIFIL has observed a significant increase in the number of Blue Line violations, including by members of the Israel Defense Forces on four occasions and by the Lebanese Armed Forces on one occasion.

21. On 5 July, Israel Defense Forces soldiers crossed north of the Blue Line in the vicinity of Shab`a (Sector East) by approximately 150 metres for about one hour, despite warnings by UNIFIL personnel on the ground. Several Israeli soldiers and their commander also crossed the Blue Line in the same area on 3 August. On 28 August, three Israeli soldiers briefly crossed the Blue Line near Rumaysh (Sector West). On 13 September, five Israeli soldiers briefly crossed the Blue Line. On 15 July, Lebanese Armed Forces soldiers crossed south of the Blue Line twice in the vicinity of Rumaysh (Sector West). UNIFIL strongly protested all the violations to the parties.

22. On numerous occasions during the reporting period, UNIFIL observed Lebanese farmers and shepherds with their flocks crossing the Blue Line, most often briefly, mainly in the vicinity of Bastara, Kafer Chouba, Meis el-Jebel, Shab`a (Sector East) and Rumaysh (Sector West). On at least two occasions, on 29 July and 19 August, the Israel Defense Forces apprehended shepherds who had crossed the Blue Line in the

areas of Kafer Chouba and Shab`a, before handing them over to UNIFIL. In both cases, UNIFIL launched an investigation. On 11 August, the Permanent Representative of Lebanon protested the 29 July incident. Swimmers and fishermen also violated the Blue Line in the Wazzani River (Sector East). At least two instances also involved civilians crossing the Blue Line while working with an excavator along the river. On a few occasions, the arm of an excavator that was being operated south of the Blue Line crossed the Line while cleaning vegetation. On 22 August, a man was repatriated from Lebanon to Israel, with the support of UNIFIL, after he had crossed into Lebanon from Israel on 20 August in the vicinity of Wazzani.

23. In the light of the increase in the number of Blue Line violations by shepherds and farmers, particularly in Sector East, UNIFIL, in close coordination with the Lebanese Armed Forces, made adjustments to its deployment and posture in order to curtail the trend.

24. The Israel Defense Forces continued to allege that Hizbullah maintains military infrastructure and equipment, including weapons, inside populated areas in southern Lebanon. The recent rocket-launching incidents demonstrate that weapons and hostile armed elements ready to use them are still present within the area of operations. However, UNIFIL has not been provided with, nor has it found, evidence of the unauthorized transfer of arms into its area of operations. In accordance with its mandate, UNIFIL does not proactively search for weapons in the south. Under its mandate, UNIFIL cannot enter or search private property unless there is credible evidence of a violation of resolution 1701 (2006), including an imminent threat of hostile activity from that location. Where specific information is received regarding the illegal presence of armed personnel or weapons inside its area of operations, UNIFIL, in cooperation with the Lebanese Armed Forces, remains determined to act with all means available within its mandate and to the full extent provided for in its rules of engagement.

25. UNIFIL observed civilians carrying hunting weapons south of the Litani River, in violation of resolution 1701 (2006), on several occasions. In each case, UNIFIL patrols moved to halt the hunting activity and informed the Lebanese Armed Forces, who took action. Armed persons and weapons are also present inside Palestinian refugee camps in the UNIFIL area of operations.

26. During the reporting period, there were incidents of serious concern involving Israel Defense Forces and Lebanese Armed Forces personnel aiming their weapons at peacekeepers. Two cases, on 15 July and 3 August, involved Israeli soldiers, and one case involved two men in civilian attire subsequently identified as members of the intelligence directorate of the Lebanese Armed Forces. UNIFIL strongly protested each incident to the concerned party.

27. On two occasions, UNIFIL witnessed shooting in the direction of its personnel or positions from south of the Blue Line. On 10 July, a UNIFIL patrol at point B46(2) (Sector West) was endangered by overflying small arms bullets from south of the Blue Line. UNIFIL investigated the incident and established that the Israel Defense Forces were conducting a shooting exercise in the area at the time. On 15 July, UNIFIL heard two small arms rounds and found one impact on the ground near one of its positions. UNIFIL called upon the Israel Defense Forces to prevent future such incidents.

28. There were four incidents across the Blue Line between Lebanese civilians and members of the Israel Defense Forces. On 22 August, in the area of Houla (Sector East), an Israeli soldier aimed his weapon at a man north of the Blue Line who was taking pictures of an Israel Defense Forces patrol. On 4 September, in response to verbal attacks by Lebanese civilians, several Israel Defense Forces soldiers cocked their weapons without aiming them at the civilians, near Kafer Kela (Sector East). In all cases, UNIFIL intervened to prevent a potential deterioration of the situation. On at least seven occasions, the Israel Defense Forces fired warning shots or threw sound grenades to prevent flocks of animals or shepherds from moving near or across the Blue Line, mainly in the area of Shab`a Farms. UNIFIL urged the Israel Defense Forces to refrain from such actions.

29. UNIFIL generally enjoyed full freedom of movement throughout its area of operations. However, on nine occasions, UNIFIL patrols encountered aggressive or unfriendly behaviour from civilians. In two cases in Zibqin (Sector West) and Shaqra (Sector East), the freedom of movement of UNIFIL was hampered. UNIFIL equipment was taken on two occasions in Safad al-Battikh (Sector West) and Shaqra. Of particular note, on 30 August in Shaqra, a group of civilians frisked UNIFIL soldiers before taking United Nations electronic assets and peacekeepers' personal items, most of which have been returned. On 3 September, in Aynata (Sector West), two civilians attempted to block a UNIFIL patrol and threw stones at the patrol vehicles, causing minor damage to one vehicle. UNIFIL protested all these incidents to the Lebanese authorities, requesting them to apprehend the perpetrators.

30. Notwithstanding these incidents, UNIFIL relations with the local population remained largely positive. UNIFIL undertook regular outreach and liaison activities with civilian local authorities and community leaders, including in coordination with international and Lebanese non-governmental organizations. From 1 to 3 September, UNIFIL, in cooperation with the United Nations Development Programme, organized a seminar as part of ongoing efforts to develop the civil-military coordination capacity of the Lebanese Armed Forces. Quick-impact projects continued to support capacity-building and improvements in social infrastructure. UNIFIL troops also provided medical, dental and veterinary assistance to the local population.

31. The strength of the Lebanese Armed Forces between the Blue Line and the Litani River remained at approximately two brigades. In September, the Lebanese Armed Forces redeployed two companies from the western part of the area of operations to the eastern area of Arkoub as part of its general reinforcements along the Syrian border.

32. UNIFIL and the Lebanese Armed Forces continued to carry out their coordinated activities. UNIFIL conducted on average 11,000 activities monthly (including patrols, checkpoints and observation tasks), approximately 10 per cent of which were carried out in close coordination with the Lebanese Armed Forces. Joint training activities were suspended for two weeks in August owing to demands on the Lebanese Armed Forces in Aarsal.

33. The UNIFIL Maritime Task Force continued to carry out its dual mandate of maritime interdiction operations in support of the Lebanese authorities and training of the Lebanese Navy. Since my previous report, the Maritime Task Force has hailed 2,235 ships and referred 447 vessels for inspection by the Lebanese Navy and Customs officials to verify that there were no unauthorized arms or related materiel

on board. The Maritime Task Force conducted 156 training activities with the Lebanese Navy at sea and on shore.

B. Security and liaison arrangements

34. The liaison and coordination arrangements between UNIFIL and the parties continued to serve as the foundation of the Force's work in implementing resolution 1701 (2006). The parties continued to engage daily with UNIFIL at the tactical, operational and strategic levels, as well as in tripartite and bilateral settings. There was, however, no progress in establishing a UNIFIL liaison office in Tel Aviv.

35. The tripartite forum chaired by the UNIFIL Head of Mission and Force Commander remained the key mechanism for addressing all security and military operational issues related to the implementation of resolution 1701 (2006). Both parties have repeatedly stressed the importance of the tripartite forum, which allows them to raise concerns related to the stability of the Blue Line and the implementation of resolution 1701 (2006), and whose constructive coordination and de-escalation role was welcomed by the Security Council in its resolution 2172 (2014). Two regular tripartite meetings were held on 23 July and 17 September. The UNIFIL Head of Mission and Force Commander also conducted a special tripartite discussion via videoteleconference on 25 August.

36. The tripartite discussions largely focused on the rocket launchings and, more generally, on each side's concerns emanating from the regional context, particularly in the Syrian Arab Republic, and its manifestations for Lebanon and Israel. At the centre of these discussions was the role of UNIFIL in maintaining stability in its area of operations and along the Blue Line, while enhancing cooperation and preventing the escalation of tensions between the parties, and building trust.

37. UNIFIL continues bilateral discussions with both parties on practical localized solutions for specific areas along the Blue Line, with the aim of further mitigating tensions and enhancing security.

38. UNIFIL continued to make progress with the parties in establishing visible markers along the Blue Line as one of the Force's main confidence-building activities. As at 14 October, UNIFIL had cleared access lanes to 311 points from mines and unexploded ordnance, measured 238 points, constructed 225 points and verified 203 points.

39. As part of the Force's strategic priorities, and complementing the efforts of the International Support Group to bolster the capacity of the Lebanese Armed Forces, UNIFIL continued to facilitate the capacity-building of the Lebanese Armed Forces for tasks mandated under resolution 1701 (2006) in the area of operations. To that end, UNIFIL and the Lebanese Armed Forces continued efforts, through the strategic dialogue, to enhance coordination with donors providing assistance to the Lebanese Armed Forces to enable it to fulfil its mandated tasks under resolution 1701 (2006).

C. Disarming armed groups

40. The maintenance of arms by Hizbullah and other groups outside the control of the Lebanese State, in violation of resolutions 1559 (2004), 1680 (2006) and 1701 (2006), continues to restrict the State's ability to exercise full sovereignty and authority over its territory. Hizbullah continued to acknowledge publicly that it maintains a substantial military capacity separate from that of the Lebanese State, which it claims serves as a deterrent against potential aggression from Israel. Following the end of President Sleiman's term in office, there have been no further meetings of the National Dialogue.

41. The Lebanese Armed Forces and security forces apprehended a number of suspects for allegedly preparing terrorist attacks and seized bomb-making materiel. On 28 June, the Lebanese Armed Forces discovered a cave in Fnideq in the Akkar region that contained explosive devices ready to be detonated. On 29 June, the security forces arrested three groups of individuals for allegedly belonging to cells preparing suicide bombers for attacks in Lebanon. The judicial authorities continued to charge and prosecute members of extremist groups. On 7 July, 28 people were charged with belonging to ISIL, seven of whom are already in custody. On 14 August, the so-called Free Sunnis of Baalbek Brigade, which had claimed responsibility for a number of attacks and had posted inciting, sectarian messages was exposed as being a Twitter account run by an individual from Baalbek.

42. The heavy deployment of the Lebanese Armed Forces in Tripoli and the continued implementation of the Government's security plan in that city eased tensions, but there were serious clashes with militants towards the end of the reporting period. An improvised explosive device targeting a Lebanese Armed Forces patrol exploded on 1 July without causing injury. Following the start of the events in Aarsal, there was an escalation in tensions and on 4 August, a child was killed by stray fire in Bab al-Tabbaneh during clashes between militants and the Lebanese army. On 5 August, a bus carrying Lebanese soldiers was attacked at Mallouleh and seven soldiers were injured. On 6 August, there was another improvised explosive device attack near a Lebanese Armed Forces position that killed one civilian. On 9 September, Fawaz Bazzi, a Shia resident of Bab al-Tabbaneh, was shot and killed after reportedly being accused of being a member of Hizbullah. On 23 September, a soldier was killed when gunmen opened fire on a Lebanese Armed Forces barracks in Al Beddawi. Faisal al-Aswad, a militant from Bab al-Tabbaneh, was also killed in a drive-by shooting. On 7 October, a soldier was killed as he tried to dismantle an improvised explosive device found in the city. Elsewhere in the north of Lebanon, on 9 October, a soldier was killed in a drive-by shooting in Akkar. Also in Akkar, a soldier was killed on 17 October when unknown gunmen fired on an army bus. On 23 October, the Lebanese Armed Forces undertook an arrest operation in Dinniyeh, which prompted three days of clashes with extremist Islamist militants in Tripoli and elsewhere in the north of Lebanon. The violence caused the deaths of at least 10 civilians, 12 soldiers and a number of militants. Over 90 soldiers and 60 civilians were injured. The Lebanese Armed Forces recovered three vehicle-borne improvised explosive devices and various types of ammunition and explosives and arrested over 160 militants.

43. There has been no progress on the dismantling of military bases maintained by the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine-General Command and Fatah al-Intifada. In 2006, it was decided in the National Dialogue that these bases should

be dismantled. The existence of the bases continues to compromise Lebanese sovereignty and impede the ability of the State to effectively monitor and control parts of the Lebanese-Syrian border.

44. The situation in the Palestinian camps was relatively stable during the reporting period. On 30 June, there was a clash involving Fatah al-Intifada and another armed group in the Shatila refugee camp that led to the deaths of three militants. A new security force drawing on various Palestinian groups, the “Joint Security Force”, was deployed on 8 July in the Palestinian refugee camp of Ein el-Helweh, with support from the Lebanese authorities. On 8 October, two people were killed and several bystanders reportedly wounded when gunmen opened fire on an unarmed civilian in the camp.

45. During the reporting period, and in particular following the events in Arsal, there were reports of local communities in some areas forming self-defence groups and some being provided with arms for that purpose.

D. Arms embargo and border control

46. Representatives of the Government of Israel continued to allege that there are significant, ongoing arms transfers to Hizbullah across the Lebanese-Syrian border. The United Nations takes these allegations seriously but is not in a position to independently verify them. Representatives of the Government of Israel have continued to express concern about the prospect of the transfer of advanced weapons systems to Hizbullah.

47. On 2 August, following the arrest in Lebanon of a commander of a Syrian group affiliated with Al-Qaida, militants from extremist groups, including the Nusra Front and ISIL, crossed from the Qalamoun region of the Syrian Arab Republic and attacked Lebanese Armed Forces positions around the town of Arsal and then seized control of the town. Clashes between the militants and the Lebanese Armed Forces continued for five days, resulting in the killing of at least 42 civilians, 19 soldiers and approximately 50 militants. On 7 August, the militants withdrew to positions in the hinterland of Arsal, taking over 30 Lebanese Armed Forces soldiers and personnel from the Internal Security Forces as hostages. At least 21 hostages continue to be held by the Nusra Front or ISIL. Seven of the hostages have been freed. The groups have murdered three hostages and have threatened to kill others. The Lebanese Armed Forces have been deployed robustly to contain the militants outside Arsal and to prevent them from returning or using the town for logistical support. There have been a number of clashes and reports of militants killed and, on 19 September, gunmen attacked a Lebanese Armed Forces patrol and killed two soldiers.

48. Syrian militant groups also have attacked Hizbullah positions in the Bekaa close to the Lebanese-Syrian border. On 20 September, the Nusra Front claimed responsibility for a vehicle-borne improvised explosive device at a Hizbullah checkpoint near Khraibeh that reportedly killed three people. On 5 October, Nusra Front militants coming from the Syrian town of Assal al-Ward attacked a fortified Hizbullah position near Brital and killed at least eight Hizbullah fighters; at least one Nusra Front militant was also killed.

49. During the reporting period, there were repeated incidents of shooting, cross-border shelling and rockets fired into Lebanon from the Syrian Arab Republic,

causing a number of injuries and material damage. There were over 48 air strikes by Syrian aircraft, which killed 6 Syrian nationals in separate incidents around Aarsal and injured over 38 others. There were over 100 incidents of shooting into Lebanon from the Syrian Arab Republic, over 45 incidents of shelling and 17 rockets fired into Lebanon, highlighting the danger to the communities living in the border areas.

50. Hizbullah publicly acknowledged its continued involvement in the fighting in the Syrian Arab Republic and funerals for members of the group killed there have been held in Lebanon. Other Lebanese have also participated in the fighting in the Syrian Arab Republic alongside the Syrian opposition and also reportedly for ISIL.

51. The incursions into Lebanon by violent extremist groups, reports of arms trafficking and the movement of armed militants across the Lebanese-Syrian border highlight the need of the Lebanese security authorities for greater capabilities to address such threats and to control the border. In response to the crisis in Aarsal, on 14 August, the Government of Lebanon approved a grant of \$1 billion from Saudi Arabia for immediate assistance to the Lebanese Armed Forces and other security agencies, additional to the previous commitment by Saudi Arabia of \$3 billion of assistance in cooperation with France. Immediate additional assistance for the Lebanese Armed Forces either bilaterally or within the framework of this new programme has been forthcoming from Member States and more is under discussion.

52. Since the clashes in Aarsal, there has been a series of raids by the security forces on informal refugee settlements to apprehend suspected militants following attacks against the security forces, which have resulted in the detention of Syrian refugees. On 25 September, the Lebanese Armed Forces conducted a raid on an informal settlement near Aarsal. The raid, during which numerous shelters were destroyed by fire, was followed by claims of abuse against civilians and civilian casualties.

53. Although most local communities continue to provide refuge peacefully to Syrian refugees, tensions have increased significantly in some locations, including in the UNIFIL area of operations. According to the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), some 1,200 refugees have been evicted from informal settlements in the Bekaa valley. Media speculation concerning Nusra Front and ISIL sleeper cells among area refugees has heightened feelings of insecurity, raising protection concerns. There have been isolated incidents of violence and increasing reports of locally enforced curfews for refugees.

54. The present number of 1.124 million registered Syrian refugees in Lebanon includes over 53,000 registered refugees in the UNIFIL area of operations. Since my last report and subsequent to the fall of Mosul, Iraq, in June, 8,500 Iraqi refugees are also registered in Lebanon. Since late September, restrictions on the entry and re-entry of Syrian nationals at official border crossings have been in effect, effectively barring entry to all Syrians seeking asylum except in acute humanitarian cases or for the purposes of outbound transit. At the same time, the Government has taken decisions to facilitate the renewal of residency from within Lebanon and, for a limited period, to waive fines imposed on those who are present illegally or have overstayed. The flow of humanitarian assistance to Lebanon remains substantial, but shortfalls have resulted in programme cuts. At the time of reporting, only 36 per cent of the \$1.7 billion sought for Lebanon at the start of 2014 as part of the Syria Regional Response Plan had been forthcoming.

55. The situation for Syrian women and girl refugees continues to be extremely difficult. Eighty-two per cent of refugees are women and children, and vulnerable women refugees continue to be exploited through coping mechanisms for survival, including prostitution, early marriage and sex in exchange for assistance.

56. There are approximately 43,000 Palestine refugees from the Syrian Arab Republic in Lebanon, a decrease of 10,000 from the previously recorded number. The restrictions imposed by the Government of Lebanon since May 2014 continue to result in the denial of entry to the majority of Palestine refugees fleeing the Syrian Arab Republic, including many seeking unification with family members already in Lebanon. Those seeking to transit through Lebanon often face obstacles and delays at the border.

E. Landmines and cluster bombs

57. Seven manual mine clearance teams, one explosive ordnance disposal team and one mechanical mine clearance team from UNIFIL, validated by the United Nations Mine Action Service, were deployed in the UNIFIL area of operations from 26 June to 14 October. UNIFIL cleared more than 535 square metres of hazardous areas to provide access to Blue Line points and found and destroyed 14 anti-personnel landmines. The Mine Action Service team conducted 7 training support events, 13 validation events, 33 quality assurance visits of operational sites and 10 explosive ordnance awareness training programmes.

58. The Lebanese Mine Action Centre reported that, from 1 May to 31 August, it had cleared 684,802 square metres of hazardous areas, mainly battle areas, and destroyed 923 cluster munition items, 77 unexploded ordnance and one anti-personnel mine.

F. Delineation of borders

59. No progress was made towards the delineation or demarcation of the Lebanese-Syrian border during the reporting period, including in areas where it is uncertain or disputed, as called for in Security Council resolutions 1680 (2006) and 1701 (2006). Extending the authority of the Government of Lebanon throughout all Lebanese territory and enabling the Lebanese security forces and Lebanese Armed Forces to secure borders to prevent the entry of arms or related materiel necessitates the delineation and demarcation of the border between Lebanon and the Syrian Arab Republic as soon as practicable.

60. There has also been no progress on the issue of the Shab`a Farms. There still has been no reaction from either Israel or the Syrian Arab Republic to the provisional definition of that area contained in my report of 30 October 2007 on the implementation of resolution 1701 (2006) ([S/2007/641](#)).

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

61. UNIFIL continuously reviewed its security plans and risk mitigation measures and carried out safety awareness training for its personnel and force protection works

for its installation and assets. Cooperation between UNIFIL and the Lebanese authorities in ensuring that all security threats are addressed appropriately continued.

62. UNIFIL continued to monitor proceedings at the Lebanese Military Court against individuals suspected of planning or perpetrating serious attacks against UNIFIL peacekeepers. A case of serious attack in 2007 remains open pending new evidence. In another case of serious attack in 2008, the next hearing at the Military Court of Appeal is scheduled for 11 November 2014. In two cases of serious attacks in 2011, the investigation is ongoing. In a case of terror intent opened in January 2014, a number of suspects were indicted and referred for trial before the Permanent Military Court.

IV. Deployment of the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon

63. As at 21 October, the total military strength of UNIFIL was 10,519, including 410 women, from 38 troop-contributing countries. The civilian component consisted of 277 international and 606 national staff, including 82 and 156 women, respectively. A total of 55 military observers of the United Nations Truce Supervision Organization, including one woman, deployed as Observer Group Lebanon, also are part of UNIFIL.

64. There are 59 operational positions in the area of operations. With a view to streamlining the Maritime Task Force requirements while maintaining its operational capability, the Department for Peacekeeping Operations of the Secretariat, in coordination with UNIFIL, carried out a desktop ship-to-task analysis and recommended reconfiguring the Maritime Task Force in phases by gradually substituting frigates with corvettes, depending on the status of the letters of assists with individual troop-contributing countries. A military capability study, planned for the fourth quarter of 2014, may recommend further adjustments.

V. Observations

65. Despite the growing regional security concerns and a number of serious incidents across the Blue Line, the situation in the UNIFIL area of operations remains relatively stable and I call upon Israel and Lebanon to make all efforts to ensure that this continues. This relative stability is in no small measure the result of the presence of UNIFIL and its existing liaison and coordination arrangements with the Lebanese Armed Forces and the Israel Defense Forces. I commend the Lebanese Armed Forces and the Israel Defense Forces for their continued commitment to safeguarding the cessation of hostilities through active engagement with UNIFIL and their willingness to participate in the deconfliction and confidence-building mechanisms in a constructive manner. It will be important to keep southern Lebanon stable and secure in the face of security threats to Lebanon and to the region as a whole.

66. The number of serious incidents along the Blue Line during the reporting period, which easily could have led to further escalation, underlines the precarious nature of the cessation of hostilities and of the calm along the Blue Line. Several months after the 14 March attack against the Israel Defense Forces in similar

circumstances, I condemn the new attack against an Israel Defense Forces patrol south of the Blue Line, claimed by Hizbullah, and the Israel Defense Forces retaliatory fire into Lebanon, both of which constitute serious breaches of the cessation of hostilities and of resolution 1701 (2006). Once again, I recall the obligations of the parties to respect the integrity of the Blue Line and protect the cessation of hostilities. Pending completion of the UNIFIL investigation into the firing incident of 5 October, I also condemn the shooting incident between the Israeli and Lebanese soldiers as a violation of the integrity of the Blue Line and of resolution 1701 (2006). I welcome the quick restoration of the cessation of hostilities thanks to the utilization by the parties of the UNIFIL liaison and coordination arrangements. I regret that three soldiers suffered injuries in these incidents.

67. I deplore the firing of rockets from southern Lebanon towards Israel between 11 July and 25 August, as serious breaches of the cessation of hostilities and of resolution 1701 (2006). Israel's retaliatory fire with artillery shells into Lebanon is both dangerous and in contradiction to the expectations of the United Nations in the context of the cessation of hostilities. Israel should immediately notify UNIFIL if it has been fired upon, refrain from responding except where clearly required in immediate self-defence, and allow, in the first instance, UNIFIL and Lebanese Armed Forces to deal with such attacks. I note the positive decision by the Israel Defense Forces to withhold return fire following the rocket attack on 23 August despite civilian injuries.

68. I urge the parties to take more tangible steps towards full compliance with resolution 1701 (2006), since the deployment of UNIFIL in southern Lebanon cannot substitute for a permanent ceasefire and a long-term solution. I remind the parties of the importance of the goal of a permanent ceasefire, as envisaged in the resolution, and encourage them to recommit to its implementation and to consider with my Special Coordinator and UNIFIL how best to make progress in that regard. At the same time, the parties must maintain their commitment to the cessation of hostilities, fully respect the Blue Line in its entirety, continue working with UNIFIL on pragmatic and constructive confidence-building measures, including visibly marking the Blue Line, and further strengthen the liaison and coordination arrangements.

69. There are also other actions that each party must undertake separately. For Israel, they include the withdrawal of Israel Defense Forces from northern Ghajar and the adjacent area north of the Blue Line, which is long overdue, and the full cessation of violations of Lebanese airspace, which exacerbate tensions in the UNIFIL area of operations and have the potential to trigger a serious incident.

70. It is important that Lebanon make further progress towards exercising effective authority over all Lebanese territory, preventing the use of its territory for hostile activities and ensuring the implementation of Government decisions and the stipulations of resolution 1701 (2006) with respect to an area free of armed personnel, assets and weapons other than those of the Government and of UNIFIL.

71. I am concerned in particular about violations of the Blue Line carried out by armed forces personnel, mainly by the Israel Defense Forces, during the reporting period. These actions, which can lead to dangerous incidents, are unacceptable. The significant increase in the number of Blue Line violations committed by Lebanese civilians in the Shab'a Farms area also is of concern. Full respect for the Blue Line in

its entirety is a critical factor in maintaining stability and calm in the area. I call upon the parties to do more to prevent violations from their respective sides of the Blue Line.

72. During the reporting period, there continued to be instances when the freedom of movement of UNIFIL was impeded and UNIFIL personnel were exposed to unfriendly and aggressive behaviour, including most notably by Israeli and Lebanese soldiers. I remind the parties of their obligations to ensure that UNIFIL is allowed unhindered and safe access in the conduct of its operations. While the number of incidents remains marginal compared with the overall level of UNIFIL activities, some of them could potentially compromise the effectiveness of UNIFIL and the safety and security of its personnel in executing their tasks under resolution 1701 (2006). The primary responsibility for ensuring the freedom of movement of UNIFIL personnel in the area of operations lies with the Lebanese authorities.

73. The maintenance of arms by Hizbullah outside the control of the State remains a clear obstacle to the latter's ability to ensure full authority over its territory and contravenes the country's obligations under resolutions 1559 (2004) and 1701 (2006). It is a matter of obvious and real concern that in the present circumstances, the National Dialogue is blocked, and that earlier decisions of the National Dialogue, including the disarmament of Lebanese and non-Lebanese groups, and the disarming of the military bases of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine-General Command and Fatah al-Intifada remain unimplemented.

74. Four years into the Syrian conflict, the impact of that crisis on Lebanon has never been as severe. The attacks on the Lebanese Armed Forces by violent extremist groups, including ISIL and the Nusra Front, from the Syrian Arab Republic, their incursions into Lebanese territory and the hostage-taking and acts of brutal murder for which they have been responsible are a particularly disturbing development. I reiterate the United Nations condemnation of such acts and look for the early release of all Lebanese security personnel held hostage. I deplore the shelling, shooting and aerial incursions into Lebanese border areas from the Syrian Arab Republic. I call upon the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic and all parties fighting in that country to cease violations of the border and to respect the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Lebanon. I note the positive steps to enhance the deployment of the Lebanese Armed Forces on the northern, and parts of the eastern, border of Lebanon and I encourage the Government of Lebanon, supported by bilateral partners, to work to extend such deployment along the length of the Lebanese-Syrian border.

75. I condemn the participation of Lebanese parties and citizens in the conflict in the Syrian Arab Republic in breach of the policy of disassociation adopted by the Government of Lebanon and of the principles of the Baabda Declaration, which was agreed by all of Lebanon's political leaders in the National Dialogue in June 2012. I again call upon Hizbullah and other Lebanese elements to step back from any involvement in the Syrian conflict, consistent with those commitments, for the sake of stability in Lebanon.

76. The efforts of the Government and the security forces in sustaining security in most parts of Lebanon, notwithstanding the serious developments in border areas and the tensions caused by the hostage crisis, are commendable. However, the pressures are real, including attacks on the Lebanese Armed Forces and incidents of a sectarian character there and elsewhere. I regret the loss of life among the Lebanese Armed Forces and security forces in the performance of their duties. It is vital that the unity

of the inclusive Government of Prime Minister Salam in the face of such challenges and in support of the security forces be sustained. I note the positive efforts of the Lebanese political and religious leaders who have worked to counter incitement and promote unity across political and sectarian divides, and encourage the continuation of such efforts. The reported formation of armed self-defence groups is a worrying development. I encourage all concerned in Lebanon to focus on strengthening State institutions and call upon Member States to uphold their obligation under resolution 1701 (2006) to prevent the sale or supply of arms or related materiel to entities or individuals in Lebanon.

77. I commend the Lebanese Armed Forces for their strong cooperation with UNIFIL. I note the ever more vital role they play in addressing the complex security challenges in the country, including combating terrorism and withstanding the grave pressures on the Lebanese-Syrian border. I welcome the support the security forces have received from Member States and, in particular, the immediate assistance now forthcoming, including through the generous additional commitment from Saudi Arabia. I stress the urgency of such assistance. I encourage Member States in a position to do so to continue to assist the Lebanese Armed Forces more broadly, drawing on the latter's development plan, and to move forward on commitments already made, including at the Rome ministerial meeting and within the coordination frameworks established by the Lebanese Armed Forces with the United Nations and donors, including in the context of the Strategic Dialogue.

78. I appeal to the international community to recognize fully the unique burden Lebanon bears in hosting the largest number of refugees from the Syrian Arab Republic and the need for sustained international efforts to assist them and to share the burden. I acknowledge the efforts of the Government to manage the situation, in close cooperation with United Nations partners. In doing so, it is important that humanitarian exceptions to border entry restrictions be honoured, that the dire plight of so many of the Syrian refugees continue to be recognized and that their rights and safety in Lebanon be fully respected. The heightened tensions that have arisen in some host communities are a cause for concern, as is the serious shortfall in funding and the impact that it is having on programmes both for refugees and the communities hosting them. I welcome the work in hand between United Nations agencies and partners in cooperation with the Government of Lebanon and donors to develop an integrated Lebanon crisis response plan for the coming year that focuses on the needs of the vulnerable and stabilization. I look to the international community to give Lebanon the support it needs, through the various channels available, which now include the Multi-Donor Trust Fund managed by the World Bank.

79. I welcome Palestinian efforts to work with the Lebanese authorities to maintain order in the Palestinian refugee camps. The need to improve the living conditions of Palestine refugees in Lebanon, without prejudice to the resolution of the refugee question within the context of a comprehensive peace settlement, remains pressing — not least given the further overcrowding of the camps. I encourage donors to be forthcoming in providing support to the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), including to enable it to effectively assist displaced Palestine refugees from the Syrian Arab Republic and to continue the reconstruction of the Nahr el-Bared camp, since half of the camp's population remains displaced since 2007.

80. I thank the Member States participating in the International Support Group for their continued commitment to supporting Lebanon and for their activities in that regard, including the recent high-level meetings in New York and Berlin. The challenges facing Lebanon are considerable and I look forward to continuing to work with the Group in support of stability in Lebanon and to highlight its urgent needs.

81. For both Lebanon and Israel, the exploration and development of their offshore oil and gas reserves is a national priority. I again encourage both Governments to proceed with efforts to address the delimitation of their respective maritime exclusive zones in a manner that facilitates this. The United Nations remains ready to assist in the matter, should both parties so request.

82. The unity reflected in the present Government of Lebanon is key to maintaining stability in the country in the present circumstances, and I pay tribute to the efforts of Prime Minister Salam and his colleagues in that regard. However, national unity is incomplete without a President of the Republic. I deeply regret the failure of the Lebanese Parliament, for more than five months now, to elect a successor to President Sleiman. The extraordinary challenges facing Lebanon at this time require a functioning Presidency, Parliament and Government, in the interest of all Lebanese communities. This is a Lebanese process and a responsibility of the Lebanese leaders that cannot afford to wait upon wider regional developments. I again urge Lebanon's leaders to show the sense of urgency and flexibility needed to pave the way to the election of a President without further delay and hope that all their friends in the international community will similarly encourage them.

83. Lebanon's resilience in the face of so many challenges remains impressive. The relative calm prevailing across the Blue Line is a stabilizing element for both sides and for regional peace and security. However, the recent involvement of ISIL and the Nusra Front in attacks in Lebanon, including against the Lebanese Armed Forces, reflects the very real danger of contagion to Lebanon arising from the Syrian conflict. International partners are responding to help to meet Lebanon's urgent security needs. Twenty-five years after the signing of the Taif Agreement, which ended the civil war, I encourage Lebanon's leaders across the political spectrum to do everything in their power to protect what has been achieved since and to strive to build on its principles of peaceful coexistence. In the longer term, stability and security in Lebanon, as elsewhere, call for an end to the conflicts in the region, including progress towards a just, lasting and comprehensive peace. However, working together, Lebanon and its friends in the international community can, I believe, continue to keep it safe.

84. I wish to express my appreciation to all the countries contributing troops and equipment to UNIFIL and Observer Group Lebanon of the United Nations Truce Supervision Organization. I thank Major General Paolo Serra of Italy, who completed his tour of duty as UNIFIL Head of Mission and Force Commander on 24 July, for his skilled leadership in successfully steering the Force in a difficult regional context, and I welcome the incoming UNIFIL Head of Mission and Force Commander, Major General Luciano Portolano, also from Italy, to whom I wish much success. I also commend the military and civilian personnel of UNIFIL, as well as the United Nations Special Coordinator for Lebanon, Derek Plumbly, and the staff of his Office, in their important roles in assisting Lebanon at a critical time for the country and the region.