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Implementation of Security Council resolution 1559 (2004)

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

I. Background

1. The present report is the thirty-fifth semi-annual report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of Security Council resolution 1559 (2004). It provides a review and an assessment of the implementation of the resolution since the issuance of the previous report on the subject (S/2021/873) on 14 October 2021, and covers developments until 4 April 2022.

II. Implementation of resolution 1559 (2004)

2. Since the adoption of resolution 1559 (2004) by the Security Council on 2 September 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

3. Through the adoption of resolution 1559 (2004), the Security Council sought to help to 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.

4. As stated in my report of 11 March 2022 on the implementation of Security Council resolution 1701 (2006) (S/2022/214), I visited Lebanon from 19 to 22 December 2021 and witnessed first-hand the suffering of the Lebanese people and the dire situation they were in.

5. Lebanon continued to experience severe economic and financial crisis conditions, shortages of electricity and fuel, food insecurity and the effects of the explosion of the port of Beirut on 4 August 2020. During the reporting period, there were heightened tensions between Lebanon and some Gulf countries and intensified



rhetoric as Lebanese political parties prepared for the upcoming parliamentary elections.

6. Political polarization also deepened during the reporting period. After the formation on 10 September 2021 of a new Government by the Prime Minister, Mohammad Najib Azmi Mikati, the Cabinet, in accordance with the priorities stated in the ministerial statement on 20 September, was to first resume immediate negotiations with the International Monetary Fund (IMF), increase the hours of and secure electricity for citizens, and hold the parliamentary elections on time. However, from 12 October 2021 to 23 January 2022, the Cabinet did not meet, owing to the refusal of ministers from the Amal Movement and Hizbullah to attend, citing discontent over the handling of the Beirut port explosion investigation by the lead investigative judge. On 11 October, the Secretary-General of Hizbullah, Hassan Nasrallah, accused the judge of “using the blood of the victims, the catastrophe and the misery to serve political ends and political targets.”

7. On 14 October, supporters of the Amal Movement, Hizbullah and the Marada Movement protested and demanded the dismissal of the judge for the handling of the Beirut port explosion investigation. During a march towards the Palace of Justice in Beirut, unidentified gunmen opened fire at protesters in the Tayyunah area. Armed clashes followed, involving the use of automatic weapons and rocket-propelled grenades, between the predominantly Shia protesters and affiliates of the majority-Christian neighbourhood of Ayn al-Rummanah. Seven individuals were killed and approximately 30 injured. The Lebanese Armed Forces, which were deployed in order to prevent further escalation, arrested 19 people and opened an investigation. On 24 October, the Lebanese Armed Forces referred the investigation to the Office of the Military Prosecutor. The Military Court pressed charges against 68 individuals, including for murder, attempted murder, instigation of sectarian strife, unauthorized possession of firearms and destruction of public and private property.

8. The Beirut port explosion investigation continued to face legal challenges, delaying its progress. Attempts by the lead investigative judge to question political figures led to the filing of lawsuits against him and other judges demanding their recusal, which resulted in the suspension of the investigation on multiple occasions, most recently on 23 December 2021. The loss of quorum in the General Assembly of the Court of Cassation on 13 January 2022 following the retirement of one of its members also prevented it from issuing rulings on the complaints filed against the investigative judge. With the commencement of the extraordinary parliamentary session on 10 January 2022, those parliamentarians summoned for questioning regained their parliamentary immunity.

9. On 21 March, families of the victims of the port explosion filed a lawsuit against two former ministers on charges of abusing their right to defence and status. Families of the victims held frequent rallies outside the Palace of Justice to demand faster court decisions. On 4 April, 20 months after the explosion, families of the victims marched towards the port, expressing frustration at the suspended investigation.

10. On 15 January 2022, citing the dire situation in the country, the Amal Movement and Hizbullah announced that they would end their boycott of Cabinet sessions. On 24 January, the Cabinet resumed its meetings to discuss the 2022 State budget. The President of Lebanon, Michel Aoun, opened the session by emphasizing “respect for the principle of separation of authorities in Lebanon between the executive, legislative and judicial authorities”.

11. On 10 February, the Cabinet finalized the budget and referred it to Parliament for consideration, despite objections from the Amal Movement and Hizbullah over the manner in which the budget had been discussed and passed by the Cabinet. Speaking at a press conference after the session, the Prime Minister indicated that,

after approving the State budget, the Government would follow up with IMF on the issue of the economic recovery plan, in parallel with internal work to accomplish the required reforms. Specialized Cabinet sessions were held to discuss reforms in the electricity sector.

12. In its 4 February press statement, the members of the Security Council noted that the Lebanese population was facing dire needs and had expressed legitimate aspirations for reforms, elections and justice. They urged the Government to take expeditious and effective decisions to initiate measures that would enable the quick conclusion of an agreement with the International Monetary Fund. They reiterated with urgency the need to implement previously outlined, tangible reforms, underlined the importance of holding free, fair, transparent and inclusive elections as scheduled and stressed again the need for a swift, independent, impartial, thorough and transparent investigation into the explosions which struck Beirut on 4 August 2020.

13. On 29 December, the President signed a decree setting 15 May 2022 as the date for parliamentary elections. Out-of-country voting was scheduled for 6 and 8 May. By 15 March, 1,044 candidates had registered, and, of those, 157 (or 15 per cent) were women. On 4 April, 718 of the candidates, 118 (or 16.4 per cent) of which were women, were able to form a total of 103 electoral lists and qualified to stand for election. On 29 March, Parliament accepted the Cabinet proposal to postpone the municipal elections to May 2023.

14. Proposals submitted in the past two years for a women's quota were still pending in Parliament. In February 2022, the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women urged Lebanon to adopt urgently amendments to establish a minimum quota of 30 per cent for women candidates on the electoral lists of political parties and noted with concern that women only represented 4.7 per cent of parliamentarians and were still underrepresented in ministries and municipal councils, as well as in leadership positions ([CEDAW/C/LBN/CO/6](#)). The United Nations in Lebanon, in partnership with women's organizations, has supported the development of options for a gender electoral quota based on the allocation of reserved seats in various electoral districts. The United Nations also advocates for Lebanese political parties to include women candidates on their electoral lists in order to enhance their political participation and representation.

15. On 24 January, the leader of the Future Movement, the former Prime Minister Saad Hariri, announced the suspension of his role in political life and confirmed that neither he nor his political movement would participate in the parliamentary elections in May. In reaction to that announcement, Future Movement supporters took to the streets and blocked roads in several regions across Lebanon to protest his decision.

16. Rhetoric intensified as Lebanese political parties prepared for their electoral campaigns. During a rally in northern Bīqā' on 22 February, the head of the political council of Hizbullah, Ibrahim Amin Al-Sayyed, compared the May elections to "a political July war" against Hizbullah, in a reference to the 2006 war between Hizbullah and Israel, because "they want our weapons, our resistance and our society". On 23 February, the former Prime Minister, Fouad Siniora, called on the Lebanese people, particularly the Sunni community, to participate in the upcoming elections. He referred to Mr. Hariri's 24 January speech, adding that, in terms of rebuilding the State, "there is no State with Hizbullah's weapons, but there is a possibility of a State with Hizbullah, without Hizbullah's weapons".

17. On 29 October 2021, Saudi Arabia, followed by Bahrain, Kuwait and the United Arab Emirates, took diplomatic measures against Lebanon over comments on the war in Yemen made by the then-Minister for Information, George Kordahi, before he assumed his ministerial position. On 1 November, the Lebanese Minister for Foreign Affairs, Abdallah Bouhabib, called for dialogue with Saudi Arabia to ease the

diplomatic tensions. He later described Hizbullah as a “regional problem”. On 3 December, Mr. Kordahi resigned.

18. On 22 and 23 January 2022, the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Kuwait, Sheikh Ahmad Nasser Al-Mohammed Al-Sabah, visited Beirut and met with the President, the Prime Minister and the Speaker of Parliament, Nabih Berri. He said that he was “carrying a Kuwaiti, Gulf, Arab and international message containing measures and ideas to build confidence again with Lebanon”. He presented a 12-point “confidence-building” paper regarding relations between Lebanon and the Gulf countries. On 30 January, on the margins of the consultative meeting of the Arab Ministers for Foreign Affairs held in Kuwait, Mr. Bouhabib delivered an official response to his Kuwaiti counterpart. Lebanon reportedly assured its commitment to respect all international resolutions in a manner that guaranteed civil peace and national stability and that guaranteed the Government’s commitment, in word and deed, to the policy of disassociation.

19. The President welcomed the Kuwaiti initiative to “restore normal relations between Lebanon and the Arab Gulf states”. On 3 February, the Speaker stated that, as long as Israel was present on “an inch” of Lebanese territory, “the resistance and its weapons will remain a national need to curb Zionist ambitions. The weapons of the resistance are a result of the enemy occupation, and not the other way around”. On 8 February, during an interview with the Iranian television station Al-Alam, the Secretary-General of Hizbullah said: “It is not right for anyone to impose dictates on [a sovereign State]”. He added that Hizbullah “is not against the Lebanese Government being part of a Lebanese-Gulf dialogue or a Lebanese-Arab dialogue to discuss with them reasonably our national interests”. In a 21 March statement, the Prime Minister reiterated his Government’s commitment to restoring relations between Lebanon and the Gulf countries and its commitment to all international resolutions. Kuwait and Saudi Arabia welcomed the statement.

20. To ease the electricity and fuel shortages in Lebanon, on 26 January 2022, Lebanon, Jordan and the Syrian Arab Republic signed an agreement to import 250 megawatts of electricity from Jordan through the Syrian Arab Republic. Discussions were ongoing with the World Bank, the United States of America and other countries regarding a regional arrangement to supply Lebanon with Egyptian natural gas through Jordan and the Syrian Arab Republic. On 24 February, a World Bank delegation visited Beirut and stressed that an electricity plan was a prerequisite for securing funds.

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, noting that such measures would constitute a significant step towards asserting the sovereignty, territorial integrity and political independence of Lebanon and improving the relations between the two countries.

22. The delineation and demarcation of the boundaries of Lebanon remained critical to enable proper border control and management and to prevent smuggling, including with regard to the movement of people, goods and, potentially, arms. They also remained essential to guarantee national sovereignty and territorial integrity. While border delineation was a bilateral matter, progress on the issue remained 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 Israel nor the Syrian Arab Republic had 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. During the reporting period, unmanned aerial vehicles and fixed-wing aircraft, including fighter jets, of the Israel Defense Forces continued to fly almost daily over Lebanon, in violation of Lebanese territorial sovereignty and resolutions 1559 (2004) and 1701 (2006).

26. Owing to funding constraints, the Special Tribunal for Lebanon was only able to continue the appeal proceedings of the prosecution against the acquittal of Hassan Habib Merhi and Hussein Hassan Oneissi in the main *Ayyash et al.* case. On 10 March 2022, the Appeals Chamber of the Tribunal unanimously reversed the acquittals of Merhi and Oneissi, convicted them in absentia and issued warrants for their arrest. A date for sentencing had not been scheduled.

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

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

28. In a televised address on 27 December 2021, the President called for a national dialogue between the ruling parties of Lebanon to reach an understanding on “expanded administrative and financial decentralization, a defence strategy to protect Lebanon and a financial and economic recovery plan, including the necessary reforms and the fair distribution of the losses.” While acknowledging the role of “the army, the people and the resistance” in defending the nation, he underlined that “the primary responsibility is for the State. Only the State sets the defence strategy and ensures its implementation”. The Amal Movement, the Free Patriotic Movement and Hizbullah welcomed the invitation and expressed readiness to participate. On 3 January 2022, the Secretary-General of Hizbullah affirmed “the importance of dialogue between the Lebanese, and the importance of any dialogue invitation”. However, Mr. Hariri and the leader of the Lebanese Forces, Samir Geagea, declined to attend. Mr. Hariri said that such an initiative should take place after the parliamentary elections. The leader of the Progressive Socialist Party, Walid Jumblatt, said that dialogue should happen inside the Cabinet. During the reporting period, no national dialogue took place.

29. On 11 October 2021, the Secretary-General of Hizbullah announced that “[a] number of shipments [of fuel from the Islamic Republic of Iran] have arrived so far, which we are transferring gradually to Lebanon.”. He added that “[w]e have also heard some saying that the Lebanese State should be the one purchasing fuel and diesel from Iran. This is in fact our demand. Let the Lebanese Government seek an exemption from the Americans to allow Lebanese companies to purchase from Iran...]. At that time, we...will no longer buy and then ship to Baniyas [in the Syrian Arab Republic] and then transfer to Baalbek [in eastern Lebanon].”. On 26 November, the Secretary-General of Hizbullah announced that “[w]e have so far imported four shipments [of fuel from the Islamic Republic of Iran]” and that, instead of bringing them to “Zahrani or Tripoli”, in order to avoid “embarrass[ing] the State...[w]e communicated with the Syrian authorities” to facilitate the transfer of the fuel from Baniyas to Baalbek. He noted that “another portion [of diesel] is reserved in Syria and needs to be transported and another shipment will be unloaded”.

30. The Lebanese Armed Forces received material support from donor countries, including the Gulf countries. Owing to inflation and currency depreciation, military personnel also faced a significant loss of income. A junior soldier's average monthly salary, which had been worth about \$800 before the crisis, was now worth less than \$100. To offset some of the erosion of purchasing power, discussions were under way with the United Nations and donors on how to lend emergency livelihood support to the Lebanese Armed Forces and other State security institutions in order to maintain operational readiness.

31. Approximately 50 young men from the northern city of Tripoli were reported to have joined Da'esh since August 2021. They had allegedly been lured into joining the group by the promise of a decent salary. At least eight had reportedly been killed in Iraq since December. On 23 February 2022, the Internal Security Forces thwarted an alleged plan by Da'esh to carry out three suicide attacks targeting Shiite religious compounds in the southern suburbs of Beirut, a Hizbullah stronghold. Separately, the Minister of the Interior and Municipalities informed the Cabinet on 31 January that the Internal Security Forces had "seized 17 spy networks [working] for the benefit of the Israeli enemy...and it was found that the role of these networks is local and regional".

32. Demonstrations and roadblocks continued intermittently throughout the country in protest against the dire living conditions. Tensions also rose among political groups. On 16 February, clashes broke out between students supporting the Amal Movement and Hizbullah and supporters of the Future Movement outside the Lebanese American University campus in Quraytam, Beirut. Inflammatory political rhetoric appeared on traditional and social media.

33. The dire living conditions also had a severe impact on refugees, with 9 out of 10 Syrian refugees living in extreme poverty, many of them unable to pay for rent and at risk of eviction from their homes. Refugees continued to resort to harmful coping strategies, including removing children from school, sending children to work, and undertaking perilous journeys to third countries in an irregular manner. The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights noted the negative trends of decreased civic space and freedom of expression and local curfews targeting Syrian refugees.

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

34. 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 which all Lebanese committed themselves to in the Taif Accords.

35. 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 possessed weapons outside government control, Hizbullah was the most heavily armed militia in the country.

36. There had 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, no specific steps had been taken to tackle that crucial issue, which lay at the heart of the question of the sovereignty and political independence of Lebanon. The maintenance by Hizbullah of a military arsenal outside of a legal framework and the group's involvement in the Syrian Arab Republic continued to be denounced by several voices in Lebanon, which considered that those issues were destabilizing factors in the country and undermined democracy.

Many Lebanese saw the continued presence of such arms as an implicit threat that the weapons could be used within Lebanon for political reasons.

37. The self-acknowledged maintenance of arms by Hizbullah and other groups and the alleged increase by Hizbullah of its arsenal posed a serious challenge to the ability of the State to exercise full sovereignty and authority over its territory. In identical letters dated 24 November 2021 addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council ([S/2021/976](#)), the Permanent Representative of Israel expressed alarm at the “precision-guided missile development programme” of Hizbullah and stated that, “[b]y purposely concealing its weapons and ammunition warehouses in the midst of civilian population centres in southern Lebanon, Hizbullah and its malign activities pose a threat not only to Israel and its citizens, but also to the people of Lebanon.” In a televised speech on 16 February, the Secretary-General of Hizbullah, Hassan Nasrallah, announced that “we now have the ability to transform the thousands of missiles that we have into precision missiles”. He added that “in Lebanon and for a long time we have started manufacturing drones. Those who want to buy are welcome.... The resistance decided to activate the air defence system that it owned for years...to confront at least the [Israeli] drones”. The following day, the Israel Defense Forces claimed that they had shot down a drone allegedly belonging to Hizbullah that had crossed into Israel.

38. On 18 February, Hizbullah stated that it had launched another drone, named “Hassan”, into Israeli airspace, where “it flew for 40 minutes...[and] returned safely despite all the Israeli measures and attempts to shoot it down”. The “Hassan” drone reportedly triggered the air defence system of Israel. Shortly afterwards, Israeli fighter jets flew over Beirut and other regions in Lebanon at low altitude. In identical letters dated 15 March 2022 addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council ([S/2022/229](#)), the Permanent Representative of Israel “condemns in the strongest terms these provocative attempts by [Hizbullah] to infringe upon [Israeli] sovereignty in blatant violation of Security Council resolutions.... Israel...will take all necessary steps to protect its citizens. Israel holds the Government of Lebanon accountable for these actions emanating from Lebanese territory.... Lebanon must not allow Hizbullah to adversely affect regional security and stability.” There was no official Lebanese response to the incident.

39. The presence of Palestinian armed groups outside the camps continued. Notwithstanding the decision taken in 2006 in the context of the national dialogue, confirmed at subsequent sessions, to disarm Palestinian militias outside the camps, 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. On 10 December 2021, a fire, followed by explosions, occurred in a building belonging to Hamas in the Burj Shemali Palestine refugee camp near Tyre in southern Lebanon. One Hamas member was killed and several were injured. During the funeral the following day, armed elements opened fire, killing three men and injuring several others in the funeral procession. Lebanese authorities opened investigations into the incidents. Tensions between Fatah and Hamas increased after the Burj Shemali incidents. On 3 April 2022, a member of the Palestinian National Security Forces was shot and killed in a market in the Ein El Hilweh refugee camp in Sidon in southern Lebanon.

III. Observations

40. The people of Lebanon are struggling daily to meet basic essential needs, which has a particular impact on women, children and other marginalized groups facing structural discrimination and inequality, including refugees and migrants. Public

frustration with the political situation and the economic and financial crisis has manifested itself in frequent protests across the country. I reiterate my appeal to Lebanese leaders to work together to resolve that crisis. Now is the time for unity and for all institutions to do everything possible to solve the challenges facing the country.

41. In that regard, I note the resumption of Cabinet sessions, the renewed talks with IMF, and the plan to reform the electricity sector to resolve the country's energy crisis. I also welcome the approval by the Parliament of the national elections budget. I reiterate the importance of holding free, fair, transparent and inclusive parliamentary elections as scheduled on 15 May 2022. I urge, after elections are held, the quick formation of a Government, with full participation of women and young people, that prioritizes the implementation of the reform agenda.

42. I remain concerned about the outstanding provisions of resolution [1559 \(2004\)](#). Security incidents between Lebanon and Israel are a reminder of the risks posed by the maintenance of weapons outside State authority, the continued presence of armed militias in Lebanon, and regular violations by Israel of Lebanese sovereignty and territorial integrity. They continue to undermine security and stability in the country. The dire living conditions also pose security risks by opening up space for non-State actors. In that regard, I stress the importance of continued international support for the Lebanese Armed Forces, as well as for other State security institutions, for the stability of Lebanon.

43. The self-acknowledged maintenance by Hizbullah of sizeable and sophisticated military capabilities outside the control of the Government of Lebanon remains a matter of grave concern. 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 institutions indicate that the maintenance of weapons by Hizbullah remains a divisive issue within Lebanese society.

44. I again call upon all parties not to engage in any military activity in 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 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.

45. 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 armed groups from acquiring weapons and building paramilitary capacity outside the authority of the State, in violation of resolutions [1559 \(2004\)](#) and [1701 \(2006\)](#).

46. The continued, self-acknowledged involvement of Hizbullah in the conflict in the Syrian Arab Republic is not only in breach of the disassociation policy and the principles of the Baabda Declaration of 2012, but also carries the risk of entangling Lebanon in 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 of other Lebanese elements in fighting elsewhere in the region remains of concern.

47. Countries in the region that maintain close ties with Hizbullah should encourage the disarmament of the 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.

48. In that regard, I note the call by the President of Lebanon for a national dialogue to address the issue of a national defence strategy. It is important that decisions taken from the earlier 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.

49. I strongly condemn all violations of the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Lebanon, as they undermine the credibility of Lebanese security and State institutions and give rise to anxiety among the civilian population. I renew my calls for Israel to adhere to its obligations under relevant Security Council resolutions and to withdraw its forces from the northern part of the village of Ghajar and the adjacent area north of the Blue Line, and to immediately cease its flights over Lebanese airspace. The repeated alleged use of Lebanese airspace by the Israel Defense Forces to strike targets in the Syrian Arab Republic is deeply concerning, owing to the risk that this poses for regional stability.

50. It has been more than one and a half years since the catastrophic explosion at the port of Beirut, with no one yet held accountable. The Lebanese people demand the truth and justice. The independence of the judiciary must be respected. I reiterate my call for Lebanon to conduct a swift, impartial, thorough and transparent investigation into the Beirut port explosion, in line with the demands of the Lebanese people for accountability. There is also the need for accountability regarding the deadly clashes in Tayyounah on 14 October 2021.

51. February 2022 marked one year since the assassination of Lokman Slim. His family is still waiting for justice and accountability. I once again urge the Lebanese authorities to conduct a thorough and transparent investigation to bring the perpetrators to justice.

52. As the Special Tribunal for Lebanon concludes its proceedings, I trust that Lebanon, in line with its obligations under international law, will ensure that those who are behind terrorist acts are held accountable, and that violence is not committed with impunity.

53. The dire situation of the Palestine refugees and the continued protests underline the urgent necessity to provide adequate and predictable funding to the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East. It is vital that donors continue to support the Agency, including its request for cash assistance to address the deteriorating economic situation, exacerbated by the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) crisis, so that it can continue to perform its essential role and deliver services. The role of the Agency in maintaining stability in the camps is more critical 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.

54. 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 in support of the full implementation of those and all other resolutions pertaining to Lebanon.