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SECCO documents

Report by the Sec. Gen. on the Implementation
to date of the Resolution of SECCO on the Complaint by
Lebanon
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Report by the Secretary-General on the Implementation
to date of the Resolution of the Security Council of
11 June 1958, on the Complaint by Lebanon

1. The resolution by the Security Council of 11 June 1958, on the complaint by Lebanon, requests the Observation Group authorized by that resolution "to keep the Security Council currently informed through the Secretary-General". The Observation Group, two of whose members have not yet arrived in Lebanon, will hold its first meeting in Beirut this week, probably on the nineteenth. As no information may be expected from the Group prior to that date, this report is submitted as an interim measure, to inform the Security Council of the steps that have been taken to date by the Secretary-General, under the authority given to him, toward implementing its resolution.
2. The three members of the Observation Group have been appointed. They are: Mr. Galo Plaza of Ecuador, Mr. Rajeshwar Dayal of India and Major-General Odd Bull of Norway. The Observation Group will constitute itself and determine its own procedures. Military officers in the capacity of Observers are assisting the Group. Major-General Bull has been designated as "Executive Member of the Observation Group, in Charge of Military Observers". Major-General Bull arrived in Beirut early on the morning of the fifteenth, Mr. Plaza is scheduled to arrive on the seventeenth, and Mr. Dayal is expected on the same day.
3. On 11 June, I appointed Mr. David Blickenstaff as Secretary of the Observation Group, and Mr. Shiv K. Shastri as Assistant Secretary. Mr. Blickenstaff arrived in Beirut on 12 June and Mr. Shastri on 14 June. In the days immediately following, the operation has been provided with the secretariat staff required. The United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East, from the beginning, on an emergency and temporary basis, has readily afforded all necessary administrative assistance and other co-operation. This has in no way involved an association of UNWRA

with the operation. The Headquarters of the Group was established in a Beirut hotel, close to its telecommunications facilities, where all of the staff members, including the Observers, are housed.

4. On 11 June, I requested the Chief of Staff of UNTSO, Major-General von Horn, to afford temporary assistance toward the execution of the Security Council's action by detaching ten United Nations Military Observers from UNTSO duty to the Observation Group operation in Lebanon, five of whom were to arrive on the twelfth and another five not later than the fourteenth, under the command of an officer of sufficient rank. The first five military observers arrived in Beirut on the afternoon of the twelfth and a second group of five arrived there on the afternoon of the thirteenth. They were under the command of Lieutenant Colonel W.M. Brown. On 14 June, the Chief of Staff in Jerusalem agreed to provide another five United Nations Military Observers.

5. The United Nations Observers, in vehicles painted white with United Nations insignia, began active reconnaissance on the morning of 13 June in Beirut and its environs. Officials of the Group in Beirut, from the beginning, requested of the Lebanese authorities that the United Nations Observer teams be accorded complete freedom of movement throughout Government-held areas. Beirut Headquarters informs us that in a few initial trips "of uncertain and dangerous nature", pilot jeeps manned by Lebanese troops have been used to check roads half an hour in advance of the UN teams and half an hour behind them. The Observer teams have in each subsequent instance proceeded without pilot vehicles. We are also advised that the initial purpose of the patrols and road reconnaissances have been to have United Nations Observers and vehicles appear in as many areas as possible as soon as possible. In consequence, the UN Observer teams have covered most main road areas in Government-held regions, and have reached and entered areas not held by Government forces. The Observer teams are now working according to a schedule, and the plan being followed is to have them probe further each day in the direction of the frontier. Their observation task in connexion with any "illegal infiltration of personnel or supply of arms or other material across the Lebanese borders" is greatly complicated by the fact, as reported by the Observation Group Headquarters in Beirut, that only a small part of the total frontier appears to be controlled by Government forces. The Observer teams are

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composed of two Observers, each with a radio-equipped vehicle, and one radio officer with a communication jeep. The three members of the team in their vehicles operate in a convoy at safe intervals and keep in constant communication with each other.

6. As of the fifteenth, the Observer teams had proceeded as far as Tripoli, Baalbec, the Syrian border on the main Beirut-Damascus road, Marjayoun and Rashaya, some places having been visited several times and some twice daily. The immediate aim, we are informed, is to establish field stations; one to be at Tripoli, for the northern border areas, in the expectation that freedom of movement will be obtained in the area not under the control of government forces; one in the Baalbec area, and one at Marjayoun. From each of these places the Observers are attempting to proceed into the frontier areas. In the initial and unavoidably hazardous stage, it has been of great value to have the services of the experienced Observers of UNTSO. It is reported that so far the UN Observers have generally met with a good reception, particularly in Beirut.

7. Communication and transportation for the immediate needs are adequate but will have to be considerably expanded. The operation thus far has received from UNTSO fourteen jeeps, thirteen of which are radio-equipped, and a Military Observer-Base radio system, which has been in operation since 13 June. For communications beyond Lebanon, UNTSO radio facilities in Beirut are employed.

8. On the basis of a careful assessment of needs by the members of the operation now in Beirut, and in view of the planned method of operation of the Observers, as described above, the number of military observers is being increased to one hundred, and an urgent request has been made of fourteen Governments to provide officers for the purpose.

9. Immediately upon arrival in Beirut, the UN representatives in the operation, both civilian and military, established contact with the appropriate Lebanese authorities with a view to facilitating its work. The Lebanese Government has designated a Minister to be in charge of relations between the Government and the Observation Group, and has set up a five-man commission to assist in this purpose, as indicated in the letter of 15 June from the Prime Minister of Lebanon to Major-General Bull (Annex I).

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10. The status of the UN Observation Group in Lebanon, its privileges and immunities, etc., has been defined in a letter of 13 June from the Secretary-General to the Foreign Minister of Lebanon (Annex II).

11. Members of the operation have indicated from Beirut the need for a small number of light aircraft of reconnaissance type, together with helicopters. Steps have been taken to meet this need.

12. In view of the urgency of the situation in Lebanon, I considered that it would involve an unwarranted loss of time to request the three members of the Observation Group to assemble in New York prior to their arrival in Lebanon. For only one of them was it convenient to visit UN Headquarters en route. The other two were to proceed directly to Beirut. In view of all the circumstances, and the character of the task of the Observation Group, I have decided that I should give assistance to the Group by being present when the three members assemble in Beirut and attending the Group's first meetings there.

ANNEX I

Letter of 15 June from the Prime Minister of Lebanon
to Major-General Odd Bull

I have the honour to inform you that the Lebanese Government at a meeting held on June 12, 1958, has taken a decision nominating His Excellency Dr. Albert Moukheiber, Minister of Health, as Minister in charge of relations between the Government of Lebanon and the United Nations Group of Observers.

A Commission has also been formed to assist Dr. Moukheiber in the fulfillment of this mission, composed of: Emir Farid Chehab Director General of the Surete Generale, Edward Chorra, Director of International Relations in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Captain Francois Ginadrh, Representative of the Lebanese Army Headquarters, Mr. Raja Hamady, Representative of the Ministry of Finance.

The mission of this Commission is to take all necessary measures to facilitate the task of the U.N. Group of Observers and to supply said Group with all information coming to the knowledge of the Lebanese Government about the infiltration of arms and armed men and other material from across the Lebanese border and to assure the contact between the various sections of the Lebanese Administration and your Group.

The Office of this Commission will be in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. I would be very grateful if you would channel all communications with the various departments of the Lebanese Government through this Commission which stands ready at all times to answer your requests and to facilitate your work.

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ANNEX II

Letter of 13 June from the Secretary-General to the Foreign Minister
of Lebanon concerning the Status of the United Nations Observation
Group in Lebanon

Sir,

I have the honour to refer to the resolution of 11 June 1958, by which the United Nations Security Council decided to dispatch urgently an "observation group to proceed to Lebanon so as to ensure that there is no illegal infiltration of personnel or supply of arms or other material across the Lebanese borders", and authorized the Secretary-General to take the necessary steps to that end.

In view of the special importance and difficult nature of the functions which this Observation Group will perform, I would propose that, with the operation as now envisaged, your Government might agree to extend to the Observation Group consisting of three senior members, the United Nations military observers and the United Nations Secretariat - over and above the status which they enjoy under the Convention on the Privileges and Immunities of the United Nations - the privileges and immunities, exemptions and facilities which are enjoyed by diplomatic envoys in accordance with international law. The privileges and immunities necessary for the fulfilment of the functions of the Observation Group also include freedom of entry, without delay or hindrance, of property, equipment and spare parts; freedom of movement of personnel, equipment and transport; the use of United Nations vehicle registration plates; the right to fly the United Nations flag on premises, observation posts and vehicles; and the right of unrestricted communication by radio, both within the area of operations and to connect with the United Nations radio network, as well as by telephone, telegraph or other means.

It is my understanding that the Lebanese Government will provide at its own expense, in agreement with the Representative of the Secretariat, all such premises as may be necessary for the accommodation and fulfilment of the functions

His Excellency

Dr. Charles Malik

Minister for Foreign Affairs

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of the Observation Group, including office space and areas for observation posts and field centres. All such premises shall be inviolable and subject to the exclusive control and authority of the Observation Group. I likewise understand that your Government will in consultation with the Observation Group provide for necessary means of transportation and communication.

If these proposals meet with your approval, I should like to suggest that this letter and your reply should constitute an agreement between the United Nations and Lebanon, to take effect from the date of the arrival of the first members of the Observation Group in Lebanon.

Accept, Sir, the assurances of my highest consideration.

Dag Hammarskjöld
Secretary-General

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Further Report by the Secretary-General on the Implementation
of the Resolution of the Security Council of 11 June 1958 on
the Complaint of Lebanon

1. This progress report on implementation of the resolution of the Security Council of 11 June 1958, on the complaint of Lebanon, is further to my first such report of 16 June (S/4029). It is submitted by the Secretary-General, but is based on information received from the Beirut Headquarters of the United Nations Observation Group in Lebanon. The Observation Group itself has in preparation a first report on findings, in discharge of its responsibilities under the Security Council resolution, and this may be expected before long.

2. With the arrival of Mr. Rajeshwar Dayal in Beirut on 18 June, the organization of the Observation Group was completed. On that date, the Group met informally and was briefed by its Secretary on developments since the arrival in Beirut of the first Secretariat members and Military Observers on 12 June. At the same time, attention was also given to administrative arrangements and the activities of the Military Observers.

3. On 19 June, the Group held a further informal meeting, with the Secretary-General presiding. Later the same day, it held its first formal meeting and organized its work. At this meeting, Mr. Galo Plaza was designated Chairman of the Group. The first meetings of the Group were devoted to an exchange of views on the methods and procedures which it would follow in carrying out its mandate with regard to illegal infiltration of personnel or supply of arms or other material across the Lebanese borders, under the resolution of the Security Council, and in keeping the Security Council "currently informed through the Secretary-General". The Secretary-General was in close consultation with the Group throughout his stay in Beirut.

4. As of 26 June, ninety-four officers from eleven countries were serving as Military Observers in Lebanon. They have established a regular patrolling system of areas accessible and, since the implementation report of 16 June have advanced further into areas outside Government control. Areas being regularly patrolled by the Observer teams are the following: around Tripoli and south of that city; the coastal road from Naqura to Demour, and roads branching off toward the interior; the Marjayoun area; the Chtaura area and northeast beyond Baalbec; the area north and east of Beirut and south of the city, except in the vicinity of Beit El Dine.

5. Observer outstations have been established in the following areas: Tripoli (with a sub-station at the Cedars), Chtaura, Zahle, Marjayoun, Saida, and at Saghbine southeast of Beirut. From these outstations, patrol activities are extended into the surrounding countryside. Outstations in several other places are now being established or are under consideration.

6. In visiting areas outside Government control, the Observers have met local leaders and have discussed with them freedom of movement in the Bekaa area north of Baalbec, the Chouf area south of Beit El Dine, and the area north of Tripoli. It was reported from the Headquarters of the Group on 25 June that for the time being further efforts at moving deeper into such areas were deferred at the following main points: the area north and northeast of Tripoli (where firing is in close vicinity and the roads are mined), the Beit El Dine area, and the north Bekaa area.

7. The basic items of equipment for the Observer teams are transport and communications, and arrangements have worked well for the delivery of jeeps and supporting transport at a rate compatible with the arrival in the area of the Military Observers. Thus, as of 26 June, there were seventy-four vehicles to ninety-four Observers. A fully operating radio communication system has been installed for contact between UNCGIL Headquarters, Observer outstations and jeeps circulating within the areas assigned for observation.

8. At the request of the Group, United Nations Headquarters has obtained two small helicopters. The helicopters arrived in Beirut on 23 June and, with Norwegian pilots, are now in operation. Four light observation planes have also been requested and will be on hand soon. These, as the helicopters, will be

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used solely for aerial observation in pursuance of the Group's task under the Security Council resolution. The Governments of neighbouring countries have been notified by the Secretary-General of these observation flights over Lebanese territory in the proximity of the borders.

9. Arrangements have been made by the Group for receiving from the Ministry in charge of relations between the Government of Lebanon and the Group, written communications on cases which the Lebanese Government desires to bring to the attention of the Group. The Group in turn submits these to independent study through its own means and in the light of supporting evidence provided. The Group has received information concerning prisoners, said to be Syrians, taken by Lebanese authorities. Such prisoners, when made available to the Group, are being interrogated by the Executive Member of the Group, Major-General Bull, with the assistance of qualified Military Observers, concerning matters covered by the Security Council resolution.

10. Since the previous report on implementation, additional personnel have been added to the Secretariat of the Group and the basic staffing requirements for the secretariat and administrative services to meet the needs of an operation involving one hundred Military Observers are about to be completed. The Headquarters of the Group continues to be located in the Biarritz Hotel in Beirut, although consideration is being given to the acquisition of new quarters in that city affording more adequate physical conditions.
