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INTERIM REPORT OF THE UNITED NATIONS OBSERVATION GROUP IN LEBANON

Submitted through the Secretary-General in pursuance of the resolution of the Security Council of 11 June 1958 (S/4023)

1. The Group wishes to take the earliest opportunity to report to the Security Council that on 15 July 1958 it completed the task of obtaining full freedom of access to all sections of the Lebanese frontier.
2. The first of these frontier areas held by the opposition --- the Akkar Plain --- extends from Tripoli North and East to the Syrian border. On 2 July the Group was able to report that it had obtained freedom of access to this area. In the succeeding few days, some patrols penetrated into the area. From 9 July patrols began reaching the frontier at several points in the roads leading to it from South to North. On the morning of 15 July, the Group received the fullest assurances of complete freedom to patrol throughout the area North of Tripoli, and to establish permanent observation posts anywhere in the area, and in particular, at the intersections of the North-bound roads with the frontier. At the same time arrangements were made for the inspection by Military Observers of all vehicles and cargoes entering Lebanon across the Northern frontier. Again on the same day an outstation was established at the important road junction of Halba.
3. The second of the border areas held by opposition forces is that part of the Bekat Valley North and East of Baalbek. The northern frontier is crossed by a main road leading to Homs, (Syria) and a minor road running north from Hermel. Until 11 July patrols were not able to penetrate beyond El-Labous. On that day U.N. Military Observers at a meeting with the local opposition leader obtained freedom of movement to patrol up to the border by day, but were not yet enabled to establish permanent stations. On the morning of 15 July 1958, at a further meeting, arrangements were concluded to establish permanent stations at Konssair on the border and at Baalbek with effect from 16 July.

(more)

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4. The next section of the border East of the centre of the Bekaa Valley consists of hilly country, through which pass two main communication routes -- the Beirut-Damascus Railway East of Rayak and the Beirut-Damascus Road East of Masnaa. Further south, near Deir-El-Atchayer, two subsidiary roads provide a more difficult road connexion between Lebanon and Syria. The main centres of this region are under Government control, but almost all of the border is under opposition control. This region is covered by Chtaoura outstation and its network of sub-stations. This network had already been established at the time of the last report, but consistent success has been achieved in pushing eastwards from the main roads up to the frontier. Observation posts are manned by day on a regular basis at the following points on or close to the frontier: Yafoufa, near the Beirut-Damascus Railway, Masnaa on the Beirut-Damascus road, and Deir-El-Aachayerce. The remaining section of the border with Syria is covered by outstation at Marjayoun, from which a good road leads to Kun Itra in Syria. This section of the frontier is held by opposition forces. Observers from Marjayoun outstation finally penetrated into Chebba, the main opposition village in this area, on 12 July.

5. The remainder of the land frontier of Lebanon and the sea frontier continue to be accessible to the Group. Thus the Group is able to report to the Security Council that it has, as of 15 July, access to all parts of the frontier.

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