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Middle East conflict 1958 - July 24

Press Release

Chronology of the Lebanese Question in the United Nations 1958

L 179: 101

CHRONOLOGY OF THE LEBANESE QUESTION
IN THE UNITED NATIONS* 1958

<u>Date</u>	<u>Action by</u>	<u>Details of Action</u>
22 May	Lebanon	<p>Letter dated 22 May from the Permanent Representative of Lebanon to the United Nations, Karim Azkoul, addressed to the President of the Security Council, requested urgent meeting of the Security Council to consider: "Complaint by Lebanon in respect of a situation arising from the intervention of the United Arab Republic in the internal affairs of Lebanon, the continuance of which is likely to endanger the maintenance of international peace and security."</p> <p>The intervention, the letter said, included, among other things, "infiltration of armed bands from Syria into Lebanon," participation by UAR nationals in "acts of terrorism ... against the established authorities in Lebanon," and supply of arms to rebels. (Doc. S/4007)</p>
27 May	Security Council	<p>Inscribed Lebanese complaint on its agenda; then adjourned until 3 June to permit League of Arab States to consider the same complaint (Press Release SC/1990).</p> <p>Meeting scheduled for 3 June postponed until 5 June after receipt of a letter from Lebanon forwarding a request of League of Arab States (Doc. S/4018).</p>
5 June	Security Council	<p>Met briefly but agreed, at Lebanon's request, to postpone further discussion until 6 June (Press Release SC/1996).</p>
6 June	Security Council	<p>Heard Foreign Minister of Lebanon, Charles Malik, accuse United Arab Republic of "massive, illegal and unprovoked intervention" in his country's</p> <p>(more)</p>

*On 17 July, at the request of Jordan, the Security Council agreed to discuss, concurrently with the Lebanese complaint, an item entitled, "Complaint by Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan of interference in its domestic affairs by the United Arab Republic."

internal affairs; Omar Loutfi of the UAR replied that the charge was "slander" and that the Lebanese troubles were an "internal matter" (Press Release SC/1997).

10 June

Security
Council

Received Swedish proposal (Doc. S/4022) asking the Council 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 materiel across the Lebanese borders" and to authorize the Secretary-General "to take the necessary steps to that end." The meeting lasted from 3:55 p.m. on 10 June until 12:28 a.m. on 11 June (Press Release SC/1999).

11 June

Security
Council

Adopted Swedish proposal (Doc. S/4023 as adopted) 10 in favor, none against, 1 abstention (USSR). Heard US statement expressing hope that Secretary-General would "have someone in Lebanon in 24 hours."
Heard Secretary-General Dag Hammarskjold state that "the necessary preparatory steps" had already been taken. The "observation group proper" would be made up of "highly qualified and experienced men," to be "collected from various corners of the globe." There would also be a group of observers servicing them, some of whom--recruited from the United Nations Truce Supervision Organization in Palestine--could "be in Lebanon tomorrow" (Press Releases SC/2000, SG/686).

11 June

Secretary-
General

Announced, through a spokesman's statement, further details for carrying out the resolution adopted by the Security Council. Invitations had been sent to "three persons of wide political or military experience" to become members of the Observation Group. David Blickenstaff, Director of the UN

(more)

Note No. 1849
25 July 1958

- Information Center in Paris, had been designated as Secretary of the Observation Group and representative of the Secretariat. (Note to Correspondents No. 1820)
- 12 June UN Observers First five military observers arrived in Beirut on the afternoon of 12 June, one day after adoption of the Security Council resolution. A second group of five arrived on 13 June. These 10 were detached from the UN Truce Supervision Organization (UNTSO) for temporary duty with the UN Observation Group in Lebanon (UNOGIL). Mr. Blickenstaff, Secretary of the Group, also arrived on 12 June. (Doc. S/4029).
- 12 June Secretary-General In reply to questions at a press conference, gave additional information on plans for UNOGIL. Among other things, he said the observers were "not a police force" in the sense of the UN Emergency Force, as he interpreted the resolution. They were "an observer team the presence of which has been considered essential and useful as a contribution to the preventing of possible illegal traffic" and not "people who are supposed to intervene through direct action." (Note to Correspondents No. 1821)
- 13 June UNOGIL United Nations Observers, in vehicles painted white with UN insignia, began active reconnaissance on the morning of 13 June in Beirut and its environs (Doc. S/4029).
- 14 June Secretary-General Announced appointment of three members of UN Observation Group in Lebanon: Galo Plaza (Ecuador), Rajeshwar Dayal (India) and Major General Odd Bull (Norway). General Bull would be executive member in charge of military observers (Press Release SG/687); he arrived in Beirut on 15 June (Doc. S/4029).

(more)

15 June
et seq.

Secretary-
General

Announced plans to attend first meetings of UNOGIL (Press Release SG/688); left New York for Beirut on 17 June (for transcript of press conference before his departure, see Note No. 1824); arrived in Beirut on 19 June, conferred with the Observation Group, visited President Camille Chamoun of Lebanon, and welcomed newly arrived observers (Press Release SC/2003); continued conferences on 21 June (Press Release SG/691); returned to Beirut on 24 June after visits to UNEF headquarters in Gaza and Cairo (Press Releases SG/692, 693, 694); and left Beirut for New York on 25 June (Press Releases SG/695-696).

16 June

Secretary-
General

A report by the Secretary-General (Doc. S/4029) gave details on implementation of the Security Council resolution. Besides noting the arrival of the first observers and the beginning of their activities, mentioned above, the report said among other things that the number of military observers was being increased to 100 and that 14 governments had been requested to provide observers.

Annex I to the document (a letter from the Prime Minister of Lebanon to General Bull) describes action taken by the Lebanese Government to facilitate the work of UNOGIL; Annex II reproduces a letter from the Secretary-General to the Foreign Minister of Lebanon regarding privileges and immunities of UNOGIL.

19 June

UNOGIL

The Observation Group "began its work as a fully constituted body on 19 June" when the UN Secretary-General opened its first meeting at UNOGIL Headquarters in Beirut, a communique issued by the Group on 26 June stated (Press Release LEB/9). Mr. Plaza was named Chairman.

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20 June UNOGIL
et seq.

At a press briefing Lt. Col. Maurice Brown, Chief Military Observer with UNOGIL, announced that, by 22 June, 69 observers would have joined the Observation Group from nine countries (Canada, Denmark, Finland, India, Italy, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway and Sweden). Observation field posts had been set up in four areas. (Press Release LEB/1)

In the following days, UNOGIL requested observation aircraft (Press Release LEB/2); the number of military observers reached 81 and two helicopters arrived (LEB/3); the Chief Military Observer met with two Druse leaders (LEB/5); the helicopters went into service (LEB/6); and an observer from India was slightly injured when a jeep struck a land mine (LEB/8).

26 June UNOGIL

With 94 observers in the field supported by 74 vehicles and administrative staff, arrangements representing the "first organizational stage have now been completed," UNOGIL announced in a communique issued on 26 June (Press Release LEB/9). "Regular reports are being received from the observers in the field," it added. Observers from Peru and Burma had joined those mentioned above.

The communique said UNOGIL "believes that the progressive implementation" of the mandate given to it by the Security Council "will contribute greatly to the creation of conditions within Lebanon which will make possible the solution by the Lebanese people themselves of the internal problems which face the country at the present time."

26 June UNOGIL
Chairman

Answering questions of news correspondents in Beirut, UNOGIL Chairman Galo Plaza recalled that the Group's task was only to determine whether there was any infiltration; the mission was not concerned with the civil war aspects of the situation (Note No. 1831).

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26 June Secretary-General

Arriving in New York from Beirut, the Secretary-General told reporters that he considered that the Observation Group had "got off to a very satisfactory start, indeed." He said it was hoped that "by the introduction of these observers we will improve on the situation about which there were complaints in the Security Council." (Note No. 1830)

In response to reports from Beirut that Lebanon's Premier had asked the Secretary-General for a UN emergency force similar to that on the Egyptian-Israel border, a spokesman for the Secretary-General said no such request had been given to the Secretary-General (Press Release SG/697).

After the Lebanese delegation issued a statement saying that "illegal infiltration" of men and arms into Lebanon was continuing, a spokesman for the Secretary-General said "Lebanese authorities will undoubtedly wish to provide" UNOGIL with all the evidence they might have on the problem so that it could be covered in a UNOGIL report expected shortly (Press Release SG/698).

28 June Secretary-General

Issued a further report on the implementation of the Security Council resolution. It stated, among other things, that the military observers had established a regular patrol of accessible areas and had advanced further into areas outside government control. Aerial observation had begun. Arrangements had been made to receive from the Lebanese Government written communications on the cases which the government wished to bring to the attention of the Group. (Doc. S/4038)

28 June - UNOGIL
3 July

In Beirut, UNOGIL reported it had a total of seven main outposts; aerial observation was expanding; the number of observers had reached 100 (Press Release LEB/10). Contact was established with one of the opposition leaders, in the northeast (LEB/11). Four Swedish observation planes,

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with pilots and air crewmen, arrived (LEB/12). The three members of the Group made their first visit to a field observation post; and observers established contact with additional opposition leaders to arrange patrols in areas under their control (LEB/13).

3 July Secretary-General In reply to a question at a press conference, the Secretary-General said that use of the phrase "mass infiltration" "is not warranted for the present" (Note No. 1838).

4 July UNOGIL First report of UNOGIL (Doc. S/4040) outlined problems of observation, especially in frontier areas under opposition control, and described methods of operation, including dawn-to-dusk patrols. It stated that weapons used by opposition forces had been seen, but it was not possible to establish where they were acquired. Nor was it possible to establish whether "any of the armed men observed had infiltrated from outside; there is little doubt, however, that the vast majority was in any case composed of Lebanese."

Government
of Lebanon

The official comments of the Government of Lebanon on the first report of UNOGIL were circulated as a Security Council document (Doc. S/4043) on 8 July. The Government of Lebanon wished to place on record the conclusion that the claims it had made on 6 June before the Security Council "concerning the massive intervention in the internal affairs of Lebanon by the United Arab Republic are in no way impaired or invalidated by the report of the Observation Group; that in so far as any positive warranted conclusions can be drawn from the report these claims have, on the contrary, been substantiated."

5 July UNOGIL Chairman At a press conference in Beirut, UNOGIL Chairman Galo Plaza expressed belief that the presence of UN observers in Lebanon was slowing down infiltration. He said the observers were moving into opposition-controlled areas with increasing freedom. (Press Release LEB/15)

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- 5 July UNOGIL
et seq. Four more reconnaissance planes arrived, making a total of 10 aircraft (supplied by Sweden and the US, and manned by Swedish and Norwegian personnel) at UNOGIL's disposal (Press Release LEB/14). Regular all-night air patrols by UN reconnaissance planes began in border areas of Lebanon on 6 July (LEB/16). A communique regarding a meeting with the Lebanese Government Liaison Committee was issued by UNOGIL on 9 July (LEB/17). Members of UNOGIL visited two outstations on 9 July and explained operations to press representatives (LEB/18). Arrangements for UN observers to travel in the opposition-controlled northeastern area were made on 11 July (LEB/19).
- 13 July UNOGIL A communique recalled that UNOGIL observers first appeared on the roads of Lebanon one month ago (on 13 June); stated that personnel and equipment had increased from five observers with five jeeps to 138 observers with 89 vehicles and 10 aircraft; and said the Secretary-General had been asked to send 25 additional observers to replace UNTSO personnel (who were being returned to their original duty stations) and to aid in UNOGIL's expanding operations (LEB/20).
- 15 July UNOGIL On 15 July UNOGIL "completed the task of obtaining full freedom of access to all sections of the Lebanese frontier," the Group stated in an interim report (Doc. S/4051) circulated on 16 July.
- 15 July Security Council Met at the request of the United States. Was informed by the United States that it had "responded positively" to a request for assistance by the Government of Lebanon "in the light of the need for immediate action"; US forces which landed in Lebanon on the morning of 15 July were "not there to engage in hostilities of any kind" but only to help the Lebanese Government in its efforts to stabilize the situation "brought about by threats from outside" until the UN could take the steps necessary to protect the independence and integrity of Lebanon.

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Note No. 1849
25 July 1958

Received USSR draft resolution (Doc. S/4047) under which the Security Council would call upon the US "to cease armed intervention in the domestic affairs of the Arab States and to remove its troops from the territory of Lebanon immediately."

In the debate, Lebanon stated that infiltration of men and arms into Lebanon was on the increase; that Lebanon's situation had been worsened by events in Iraq; and asked the Council urgently to take more effective measures to prevent the entry of armed men or materiel from outside.

Heard two statements by the Secretary-General. The first (Press Release SG/702) concerned credentials of the representative of Iraq. The second (Press Release SG/703) gave an account of the Secretary-General's action under the Council's mandate of 11 June. He had, he said, "acted solely" with the aim of carrying out the Council's directive "to ensure that there is no illegal infiltration of personnel or supply of arms or other materiel"; his actions had had "no relation to developments which must be considered as the internal affairs of Lebanon."

(Morning and afternoon meetings are summarized in Press Releases SC/2009 and 2010.)

16 July Security
 Council

Received United States draft resolution (Doc. S/4050) under which the Council would, among other things, request the Secretary-General "immediately to consult the Government of Lebanon and other member states as appropriate with a view to making such additional arrangements, including the contribution and use of contingents, as may be necessary to protect the territorial integrity and independence of Lebanon and to ensure that there is no illegal infiltration of personnel or supply of arms or other materiel across the Lebanese borders." The US stated that the resolution would make it possible for US forces to withdraw promptly from Lebanon if these measures were quickly carried out.

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Heard a statement by the Secretary-General drawing attention to the interim report of UNOGIL (Doc. S/4051, cited above) "setting out the complete success with which they have met in their arrangements for inspection all along the Lebanese border." He said he hoped no later developments would "cause a setback" and that the Observation Group would retain "its key position." (Press Release SG/704)

(Morning and afternoon meetings are summarized in Press Releases SC/2011 and 2012.)

16 July UNOGIL

Issued an announcement in Beirut to clarify its position on its "relationship with the foreign forces on Lebanese soil" (Press Release LEB/21).

17 July UNOGIL

A second interim report of UNOGIL (Doc. S/4052) listed observation posts established and others planned; said that additional observers would be required, bringing the total to about 200; and suggested the possibility of obtaining non-commissioned personnel to assist the observers. In a letter transmitting the report to the Security Council, the Secretary-General endorsed the plans outlined.

As of 17 July, 113 military observers, 20 airmen and one medical officer were serving with UNOGIL; they had been provided by 14 countries: Burma, Canada, Chile, Denmark, Finland, India, Ireland, Italy, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Peru, Sweden (Note to Correspondents No. 1846).

17 July Security Council

Agreed, at Jordan's request, to include on the Council's agenda the complaint of Jordan "of interference in its domestic affairs by the United Arab Republic" (Doc. S/4053).

Heard the United Kingdom report that British troops had entered Jordan, at that government's request, solely to "aid the King and Government of Jordan to preserve the political independence and territorial integrity" of that country.

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Received a revised draft of the USSR resolution (Doc. S/4047/Rev.1), adding a demand that the United Kingdom withdraw its troops from Jordan immediately.

Received a revised draft of the US resolution (Doc. S/4050/Rev.1) which among other things added a phrase "commending the efforts of the Secretary-General."

(The afternoon meeting is summarized in Press Release SC/2013.)

At a night meeting, received a Swedish draft resolution (Doc. S/4054) stating that "the action now taken by the United States Government has substantially altered the conditions under which the Security Council decided on 11 June 1958 to send observers to Lebanon" and requesting the Secretary-General therefore "to suspend the activities of the observers in Lebanon until further notice" (Press Release SC/2014).

18 July Security Council

Continued debate on USSR, US and Swedish resolutions at the morning meeting (Press Release SC/2015) and voted in the afternoon (Press Release SC/2016). The votes were as follows:

USSR draft -- Rejected by a vote of 1 in favor (USSR), 8 against, 2 abstentions (Japan, Sweden).

United States draft -- Failed of adoption because of negative vote of a Permanent Member of the Council: 9 in favor, 1 against (USSR), 1 abstention (Sweden).

Swedish draft -- Rejected by a vote of 2 in favor (Sweden, USSR) to 9 against.

The United States then introduced a draft resolution (Doc. S/4056) which would have the Council call an emergency special session of the General Assembly in order to make "appropriate recommendations" concerning the Lebanese complaint. The special session would be called under the

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"Uniting-for-Peace" resolution (for procedure, see Note to Correspondents No. 1845). However, the US representative said that, as Japan intended to introduce another resolution, he would withhold the US proposal until afterward.

The USSR also proposed (Doc. S/4057) that the Council call an emergency special session of the Assembly "to consider the question of the intervention of the United States and the United Kingdom in Lebanon and Jordan."

The Council also discussed the credentials of the representative of Iraq. The Secretary-General made a statement (Press Release SG/705) and issued a report on the subject (Doc. S/4060).

21 July Security Council

Received Japanese draft resolution (Doc. S/4055/Rev.1) requesting the Secretary-General "to make arrangements forthwith for such measures, in addition to those envisaged by the resolution of 11 June 1958, as he may consider necessary in the light of the present circumstances, with a view to enabling the United Nations to fulfill the general purposes established in that resolution, and which will, in accordance with the Charter, serve to ensure the territorial integrity and political independence of Lebanon, so as to make possible the withdrawal of United States forces from Lebanon."

Replying to a question, the Secretary-General made a statement on "how I see the limits for possible action" in carrying out the Security Council's mandate of 11 June. He recalled that he had "fully endorsed" the recommendations of the Observation Group for augmentation of its members and facilities, and he expressed belief that a "strengthened and expanded UNOGIL...could meet adequately the responsibilities properly falling upon the United Nations as indicated in the Japanese draft resolution." (Press Release SG/707)

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In the course of the debate the USSR representative drew attention to a proposal of 19 July by N.S. Khrushchev, President of the Council of Ministers of the USSR, for a meeting of heads of government, with the participation of the UN Secretary-General, at Geneva on 22 July in connection with the Middle East situation. (The proposal, with a letter transmitting it to the Secretary-General, is given in Doc. S/4059.) (Meeting summarized in Press Release SC/2018).

21 July Secretary-General

In reply to the message transmitting the Soviet proposal of 19 July, the Secretary-General stated in a letter (Doc. S/4062) that he would not express a personal opinion on the substance or judge whether a high-level meeting would provide the best means of improving on the situation. If the heads of governments concerned agreed on the desirability of a meeting, with the participation of the Secretary-General, he would consider it within his rights and duties to accept.

22 July Security Council

Received a series of USSR amendments (Doc. S/4063) to the Japanese draft resolution. Among other things a new paragraph would ask the Security Council to recognize that the landing of United States forces in Lebanon constituted interference in the internal affairs of that country, contrary to the UN Charter, and would call upon the US immediately to withdraw its forces. (The meeting is summarized in Press Release SC/2019.)

In the afternoon (Press Release SC/2020), the Soviet amendments were rejected by a vote of 1 in favor (USSR), 8 against, 2 abstentions (Japan, Sweden).

The Japanese draft resolution then failed of adoption because of the negative vote of a Permanent Member of the Council. The vote was 10 in favor, 1 against (USSR).

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The Secretary-General, in a statement to the Council, said that, although the Council had failed to take additional action "in the grave emergency facing us," the responsibility of the UN "to make all efforts to live up to the purposes and principles of the Charter remains." As there was need for "practical steps to be taken without any delay," he would "use all opportunities" offered him within the limits set by the Charter "so as to help prevent a further deterioration of the situation in the Middle East." This would mean, "first of all," the further development of UNOGIL "so as to give it all the significance it can have, consistent with its basic character." (Press Release SG/708)

The President of the Council, Dr. Alfonso Araujo (Colombia), said the Secretary-General's statement demonstrated that the United Nations would "not remain a passive spectator." He also drew attention to the proposal for a meeting of heads of government, with the participation of the Secretary-General; and to the separate draft resolutions of the United States and the USSR calling for an emergency special session of the General Assembly. In view of these various factors, he proposed that the Security Council adjourn to be reconvened at any time that it might be requested to do so, following consultation with all members. His motion was adopted by 10 votes to 1 (USSR).

23 July

Security
Council

A Security Council document (Doc. S/4064) contained the text of a letter from the Permanent Representative of the USSR to the UN Secretary-General stating "that the Soviet Government notes with satisfaction your agreement to participate" in the meeting of heads of government proposed by the USSR. It transmitted to the Secretary-General copies of messages sent by the USSR to various heads of governments on 23 July with further proposals for such a meeting.

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24 July

Secretary-General

Invited seven-man group to meet for consultation on plans for development of UNOGIL, "in view of the growth, in size and significance, of the United Nations operation in Lebanon."

The members, who will meet with the Secretary-General in their personal capacity as individuals, are:

Cyro de Freitas-Valle
C.S.A. Ritchie
Sir Claude Corea
Dr. Alfonso Araujo
Arthur S. Lall
Hans Engen
Prince Aly Khan

The geographical composition is the same as in the Advisory Committee on the UN Emergency Force established by the General Assembly in 1956. (Members of the UNEF Advisory Committee are Brazil, Canada, Ceylon, Colombia, India, Norway and Pakistan, with the Secretary-General as Chairman.)

The first meeting was scheduled for 25 July. (Press Release SG/709).

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(Note: Subsequent events relating to the situation in Lebanon will be issued as addenda to this release.)