

**Middle East conflict -  
Lebanon. Correspondence,  
statements, resolutions:  
Mi...**

*HS L 179:104*



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Dag Hammarskjöld's sand.

Beirut, 1958 - July 2-3

- 1) Abba Eban (Deleg. of Israel to the U.N.)  
- to Sec. Gen.
- 2) Sec. Gen - to Abba Eban - July 3.

מדינת ישראל

ISRAEL

נציגות ישראל  
באומות המאוחדות  
DELEGATION OF ISRAEL  
TO THE UNITED NATIONS

11 EAST 70TH STREET  
NEW YORK 21, NEW YORK  
TRAFALGAR 9-7600

CONFIDENTIAL

2 July, 1958.

DN 8700010

Dear Mr. Secretary-General,

May I make one parting observation. You may have seen how I gasped at the 15,000-20,000 estimate. Surely this overestimates the military stature of the rebellion and underestimates the psychologically stabilising effect which the density of United Nations presence would achieve. It is doubtless based on sincere military advice. But, this advice may perhaps proceed from an austere, mechanistic approach without reference to the psychological and political elements which are, after all, decisive. I do not see who is going to organise a guerilla warfare against a United Nations force such as would take 15,000 troops to quell.

It is by no means certain that a broader United Nations approach will not become necessary, even if it is deemed premature to raise it now. It would be somewhat depressing to have the whole idea killed by a bludgeon stroke: yet this, I fear, would be the result of diffusing the impression that an impossibly vast problem is involved.

Yours very sincerely,

The Secretary-General,  
United Nations,  
New York.

*Abba Eban*

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July 3, 1958

Dear Mr. Secretary General:

Thank you for giving me the clarification contained in your letter of 3 July 1958.

Our interest in the United Nations operation in Lebanon derives not only from our membership in the Organization, but also from our unique proximity to the scene, and the great detriment to our security which would follow a successful assault on Lebanon's Charter rights. I hope, therefore, that we may continue to be kept in close touch with your appraisals at every stage, as we have so far.

I naturally respect the judgment on which your calculation is based. It is, however, possible to believe that the position could be beneficially influenced by a U.N. role much greater than the present one, but much less than that involved in the 20,000 estimate.

If the matter becomes politically relevant (i.e. if there is an actual request and a U.N. consideration) - we may perhaps wish to offer our ideas in more detail.

Sincerely yours,

Secretary General  
United Nations  
New York, N.Y.

*Albert Eban*

3 July 1958

Dear Mr. Eban,

I have received your letter which seems to be based on a misunderstanding. Fifteen to twenty thousand men were considered necessary in order to establish "a sealing" of the border by military means, not for quelling disturbances within the country. I do not think that the figure should surprise you when between five and six thousand men are considered "thin" for a corresponding operation on the very much shorter and much simpler Gaza line - and under conditions in which the operation is fully accepted by both parties.

However, we will shortly receive a detailed study by the people on the spot and I am sure you agree with me that this will be valuable as wishful thinking in these matters certainly is worse than a show of some professional prudence.

As you, by your letter, demonstrate such interest in this matter, I am sure you have also given further thought to the other element which makes the suggested operation entirely different from the UNEF, that is to say that these men must at least be authorized and prepared, if necessary, to take initiative in the use of force against combat groups which are likely to be of Lebanese nationality.

Of course, a UN operation would take on an entirely different character were it a question of stationing in the area - with deployment on both sides of the frontier, as already mentioned by the Lebanese - a half symbolic UN frontier guard as a guarantee for Lebanese "independence", as might be done without more than a right of self defense once we are out of the present conflict.

Yours sincerely,

Dag Hammarskjöld.

His Excellency,  
Mr. Abba Eban,  
Permanent Representative to  
the United Nations,  
Permanent Mission of Israel to  
the United Nations,  
11 East 70th Street,  
New York 21, N.Y.