

The Israeli-Lebanese Border Dispute and Resolution 425: Recent Declarations by the United States and the United Nations

Nov 3, 2000



Brief Analysis

The Arab leaders affirm that just, comprehensive peace will not be achieved except with . . . the restoration of all the occupied Arab territories, including full Israeli withdrawal from . . . southern Lebanon to the internationally recognized borders, including Shebaa farms, the release of Arab prisoners in Israeli prisons in implementation of the relevant UN resolutions. . . ." –Final Statement by the Arab summit in Cairo, October 22, 2000

"Egypt and all Arabs [support] the resistance and Hizballah in their struggle to liberate the remaining occupied territories. Israel is the one that kept some territories and did not release prisoners. Therefore, it is responsible for what is happening." –Egyptian foreign minister Amre Moussa, October 24, 2000

Israeli Withdrawal from Southern Lebanon and Compliance with UNSC Resolution 425

"I am delighted to tell you that the United Nations force in Lebanon [United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon or UNIFIL] today reported to me that Israel has withdrawn from the country in full compliance with Security Council resolution 425 (1978)." –UN secretary-general Kofi Annan, June 16, 2000

"I established three principal requirements for confirming an Israeli withdrawal in compliance with resolution 425 (1978): (a) the withdrawal of Israeli military and civilian personnel from Lebanese territory; (b) the dismantling of Israel's auxiliary force, known as the South Lebanon Army (SLA); and (c) the freeing of all detainees from Al-Khiam prison. I can today confirm that those requirements, endorsed by the Security Council, have been met." –Report of the secretary-general, June 16, 2000

"The Security Council welcomes the report of the Secretary-General of 16 June 2000 and endorses the work done by the United Nations as mandated by the Security Council, including the Secretary-General's conclusion that as of 16 June 2000 Israel has withdrawn its forces from Lebanon in accordance with resolution 425 (1978) of 19 March 1978. . . ." –Statement by the president of the Security Council, June 18, 2000

Lebanese Responsibilities after the Israeli Withdrawal

". . . those with authority in Lebanon now have a clear responsibility to ensure that the area bordering Israel is not used to launch attacks." –U.S. secretary of state Madeleine Albright, June 18, 2000

"I stated in my report of 22 May that the Lebanese armed forces should ensure that all national territory falls under the effective authority of the Government. . . . The deployment of the armed forces is an essential element of the return of the effective authority of the Government in the area. This deployment should be conducted in coordination with UNIFIL's redeployment in its area of operations. Now that I can confirm Israel's withdrawal, I anticipate that the government of Lebanon will systematically address this matter." –Report of the secretary-general, June 16, 2000

"The Security Council, recalling resolution 425 (1978) and resolution 426 (1978) of 19 March 1978, calls on the government of Lebanon to ensure the return of its effective authority and presence in the south. The Council notes

that the United Nations cannot assume law and order functions which are properly the responsibility of the government of Lebanon. In this regard, the Council welcomes the first steps taken by the government of Lebanon and calls upon it to proceed with the deployment of the Lebanese armed forces as soon as possible, with the assistance of UNIFIL, into the Lebanese territory recently vacated by Israel." –Statement by the president of the UN Security Council, June 18, 2000

"The Security Council . . . calls on the government of Lebanon to ensure the return of its effective authority and presence in the south, and in particular to proceed with a significant deployment of the Lebanese armed forces as soon as possible, welcomes the establishment of checkpoints by the government of Lebanon in the vacated area, and encourages the government of Lebanon to ensure a calm environment throughout the south, including through the control of all checkpoints. . . ." –UN Security Council Resolution 1310 (2000), July 27, 2000

"Border security is essentially the responsibility of the state of Lebanon. This is a national [Lebanese], not international [UNIFIL], duty." –UNIFIL spokesman Timor Goksel, August 13, 2000

"I believe that the time has come to establish the state of affairs envisaged in the Resolution [425]. This requires, first and foremost, that the government of Lebanon take effective control of the whole area vacated by Israel last spring and assume its full international responsibilities, including putting an end to the dangerous provocations that have continued on the Blue Line." –UN secretary-general Kofi Annan, November 1, 2000

Status of Shebaa Farms

"We supported the UN Secretary-General's report, which was submitted to the Security Council and unanimously endorsed that Shebaa Farms is part of a territory that Israel occupied in 1967, so the UN has stated very clearly that Shebaa Farms does not fall within the scope of the UN Security Council Resolutions 425 and 426 which regard to the withdrawal from Lebanon." –U.S. State Department deputy spokesman Philip Reeker, May 31, 2000

". . . it was also agreed that the Shebaa Farms was not part of the UNIFIL area and the area that had to be vacated in compliance with 425. . . . And I think in the report and in the understandings with the governments we indicated that Shebaa Farms for our purposes was in Syria and that it was covered by UNDOF [United Nations Disengagement Observer Force] not by UNIFIL. This does not exclude whatever arrangements Lebanon and Syria will make in the future as to the status of that particular territory." –UN secretary-general Kofi Annan, October 12, 2000

Kidnapping of Israeli Soldiers by Hizballah

"We are very concerned about the fact that three Israeli soldiers were kidnapped by the Hizballah [on October 7, 2000]. I've been speaking to Kofi Annan because this is a violation of Resolution 425." –U.S. secretary of state Madeleine Albright, October 8, 2000

"Our information is that those who picked up the three soldiers crossed the Blue Line and it is a violation. And just as when Israelis cross the Blue Line, I call it a violation. I think it is legitimate to indicate that it is a violation." –UN secretary-general Kofi Annan, October 12, 2000

◆ This report was compiled by Liat Radcliffe.

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