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Implementation of Security Council resolution [1701 \(2006\)](#) during the period from 27 October 2018 to 17 February 2019

Report of the Secretary-General

I. Introduction

1. The present report provides a comprehensive assessment of the implementation of Security Council resolution [1701 \(2006\)](#) since my previous report of 15 November 2018 ([S/2018/1029](#)), including on the specific provisions of resolutions [2373 \(2017\)](#) and [2433 \(2018\)](#). The situation in the area of operations of the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) remained generally calm, notwithstanding increased tensions owing to the discovery by the Israel Defense Forces of tunnels built across the Blue Line and construction work carried out by the Israel Defense Forces south of the Blue Line in an area of Lebanese “reservation” near Misgav Am. UNIFIL and the Office of the United Nations Special Coordinator for Lebanon maintained permanent liaison with both parties to de-escalate tensions and continued to urge them to utilize established channels to address concerns and to refrain from any action threatening the cessation of hostilities. Outstanding obligations remain for both parties under resolution [1701 \(2006\)](#) and there was no progress towards a permanent ceasefire between Lebanon and Israel.

II. Implementation of resolution [1701 \(2006\)](#)

A. Situation in the area of operations of the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon

2. On 4 December, the Israel Defense Forces informed the UNIFIL Head of Mission and Force Commander, announced in a letter to the President of the Security Council ([S/2018/1082](#)) and notified the media that it had launched “Operation Northern Shield” to expose and neutralize tunnels allegedly built across the Blue Line by Hizbullah. In that connection, the Israel Defense Forces conducted drilling activities in multiple areas south of the Blue Line to locate the tunnels. Between 4 December and 13 January, the Israel Defense Forces announced the discovery of a total of six tunnels: three near Metulla, across the Blue Line from Kfar Kila (Sector East), two near Zar‘it, across the Blue Line from Ramiyah, and one near Shetula, across the Blue Line from Ayta al-Sha‘b (Sector West). UNIFIL was able to independently verify the existence of five of the six tunnels south of the Blue Line. While the Israel Defense Forces informed UNIFIL that it had used explosives on



26 December to neutralize the tunnel it had identified near Shetula, the existence of this tunnel was not independently confirmed by UNIFIL. Following technical assessments carried out by UNIFIL, the Force was able to conclude that at least two of the five confirmed tunnels crossed the Blue Line (one in Metulla and one in Zar‘it) and thus constitute violations of resolution [1701 \(2006\)](#). Low visibility inside the tunnels, coupled with the presence of obstacles, including cement blocks and fencing material, obstructed the technical assessments carried out by UNIFIL at the remaining three confirmed tunnel sites.

3. On 20 December, the Israel Defense Forces neutralized one of the tunnels in Zar‘it by explosive means. On 24 December, the Israel Defense Forces neutralized the tunnels in Metulla, south of Kfar Kila, by pouring liquid cement through the shafts south of the Blue Line. Two days later, UNIFIL and Observer Group Lebanon observed liquid cement seeping from premises (formerly a concrete factory and currently a poultry farm) in Kfar Kila, some 100 metres north of the Blue Line. As the cement became visible north of the Blue Line, roads leading to the premises were blocked by individuals in civilian clothes, hindering UNIFIL from properly observing the location. In coordination with the Lebanese Armed Forces, UNIFIL visited the location on 26 and 27 December. Entry to the premises was subsequently denied however by the Lebanese Armed Forces on the basis that it constituted private property. Despite repeated requests to the Lebanese authorities, the Force has not been granted access to the premises. On 29 December, UNIFIL confirmed in a statement that the factory had an opening to the tunnel, which crossed the Blue Line, and underlined that it was working in close coordination with the Lebanese Armed Forces to take appropriate steps to address the violation of resolution [1701 \(2006\)](#). On 13 January, the Israel Defense Forces announced the completion of “Operation Northern Shield” but noted that it would continue monitoring areas along the Blue Line.

4. UNIFIL urged the Lebanese authorities to ensure immediate follow-up actions in accordance with Lebanon’s responsibilities pursuant to resolution [1701 \(2006\)](#). To date, there has been no demonstrated follow-up action by Lebanese authorities in relation to the tunnels. UNIFIL will continue to convey to the Lebanese authorities the importance of adequate follow-up.

5. UNIFIL continued to observe construction works being carried out by Israeli Defence Forces south of the Blue Line. On 10, 16 and 21 December, groups of Lebanese civilians, including local officials, gathered at Mays al-Jabal (Sector East) to protest the activities of the Israel Defense Forces close to the Blue Line, and groups of protestors briefly crossed south of the Blue Line during the demonstrations.

6. On 10 January, the Israel Defense Forces began installing T-wall blocks south of the Blue Line in the area of Misgav Am across from Udaysah (Sector East), entering into one of the Lebanese “reservation” areas. Both sides reinforced their military positions on their respective sides of the Blue Line at that location, leading to heightened tensions. UNIFIL maintained troops deployed between the two parties throughout the day. Although UNIFIL called on the Israel Defense Forces to suspend their construction works in the Lebanese “reservation” area until an agreement had been reached between the parties, construction works continued.

7. In this regard, on 10 January the Lebanese Higher Defence Council convened and issued a statement, in which it “considered what [was] happening to be an aggression on Lebanese territory”. On the same day, Lebanon also submitted identical letters addressed to the President of the Security Council and to me ([A/73/714-S/2019/36](#)), stating that “Israel has committed a new violation of Lebanese sovereignty by proceeding with construction of a wall and other installations inside Lebanese territory at points along the Blue Line with regard to which Lebanon

maintains a claim, near the settlement called Misgav Am”. In identical letters addressed to the President of the Security Council and to me dated 18 January (S/2019/61), the Permanent Representative of Israel stated that “...Israel is continuing its ongoing efforts to counter the threat of Hezbollah above ground by building a physical land barrier entirely on the Israeli side of the Blue Line”. In the same letter the Permanent Representative further stated that “...Israel’s construction of this barrier is both entirely warranted and justified” and explained that Israel’s actions “– are purely defensive measures”.

8. In eight separate incidents, UNIFIL observed weapons pointed by the Israel Defense Forces towards the north, including, on five occasions, towards the Lebanese Armed Forces in connection with works south of the Blue Line. On one occasion, UNIFIL observed a weapon pointed by the Lebanese Armed Forces towards Israel Defense Forces soldiers. In each case, UNIFIL troops were deployed between the two forces to de-escalate the situation.

9. From 27 October to 17 February, UNIFIL recorded 175 ground violations of the Blue Line, 172 of which were committed by civilians crossing south of the Blue Line, including 74 violations mainly by shepherds and farmers in the Shab‘a Farms area and Kfar Kila, and by farmers cultivating their fields near Rumaysh, as well as 70 violations in connection with the Shu‘ayb well near Blida (Sector East). Armed hunters crossed south of the Blue Line on four occasions. One Lebanese Armed Forces officer crossed the Blue Line on 20 November in Kfar Kila (Sector East). Members of the Israel Defense Forces crossed the Blue Line in Sector East on two occasions, both in connection with the clearance of vegetation, in Aytarun, on 6 November, and in Mays al-Jabal on 7 November.

10. Israel continued to violate Lebanese airspace almost daily, in violation of resolution 1701 (2006) and Lebanese sovereignty. From November to February, UNIFIL recorded an average of 96.5 air space violations each month, with an average of 262 overflight hours. Unmanned aerial vehicles accounted for approximately 77 per cent of the violations, while the remaining violations involved fighter jets or unidentified aircraft. UNIFIL continued to protest all air violations to the Israel Defense Forces and to urge their immediate cessation.

11. On 10 December and on 7 and 21 January, UNIFIL noted that all frequencies of its airspace radar in Burj Qalawiyah (Sector East) were jammed by unknown operators, with each incident lasting for about one hour.

12. On 30 January, UNIFIL observed a small unmanned aerial vehicle crossing the Blue Line, flying from a Lebanese Armed Forces position close to Blida towards an adjacent Israel Defense Forces position. The vehicle returned north of the Blue Line shortly thereafter.

13. The occupation of northern Ghajar and an adjacent area north of the Blue Line by the Israel Defense Forces continued. While the Government of Lebanon has welcomed the UNIFIL proposal, shared with the parties in 2011, for the facilitation of the withdrawal of the Israel Defense Forces from the occupied area, the Government of Israel has yet to respond.

14. In a letter dated 6 December 2018 addressed to me and to the President of the Security Council (A/73/631–S/2018/1091), the Permanent Representative of Lebanon condemned “...the political and diplomatic campaign being waged by Israel against Lebanon,” including by breaching the “...Lebanese communications grid by hacking into the telephone network and sending recorded messages to peaceable civilian inhabitants of the southern part of the village of Kafr Kila, warning them of imminent explosions to take place on Lebanese territory that might put their lives at risk”.

15. Pursuant to resolution [1701 \(2006\)](#), UNIFIL continued to assist the Lebanese Armed Forces in establishing an area between the Blue Line and the Litani River free of unauthorized armed personnel, assets and weapons other than those belonging to the Government of Lebanon and of UNIFIL. To that end, UNIFIL, in close coordination with the Lebanese Armed Forces, maintained 16 permanent and an average of 156 temporary checkpoints and conducted an average of 298 counter-rocket-launching operations each month. From 27 October to 17 February, UNIFIL observed 305 instances of the carrying of unauthorized weapons, 303 of which were hunting weapons, in the UNIFIL area of operations.

16. UNIFIL maintained its high operational tempo, in line with resolution [2373 \(2017\)](#), as reiterated in resolution [2433 \(2018\)](#). From November to February, it conducted an average of 14,386 monthly military operational activities, including an average of 7,080 patrols.

17. UNIFIL vehicle, foot and air patrols maintained an operational footprint in all municipalities and villages in its area of operations. UNIFIL conducted numerous visits to areas in which the Force had previously experienced restrictions on its movements or incidents. Air reconnaissance patrols continued to be concentrated over areas with limited access for ground patrols, such as private properties, rugged terrain or land contaminated by explosive remnants of war or anti-personnel mines. Following the announcement by the Israel Defense Forces on 4 December about the discovery of tunnels (see para. 2 above), UNIFIL increased its foot patrols and night observation activities along the Blue Line.

18. While the freedom of movement of UNIFIL was generally respected, some restrictions were encountered, as detailed in annex I to the present report. Restrictions on the freedom of movement of the Force increased near the Blue Line in the second half of December.

19. Individuals in civilian clothes seized UNIFIL property on two occasions. On 25 December, individuals took a bag containing a camera from a UNIFIL vehicle in Kfar Kila (Sector East). On 26 December, the Observer Group Lebanon team that was monitoring the former cement factory, as described in paragraph 3 above, physically struggled with individuals who were pulling bags out of their vehicle. UNIFIL followed up with the Lebanese Armed Forces regarding all of these cases. Although UNIFIL succeeded in retrieving some of the stolen items, some of which were damaged, the perpetrators remain unidentified.

20. UNIFIL continued to follow up with the Lebanese authorities regarding the incident on 4 August, in which some 20 individuals in civilian clothes attacked a four-vehicle UNIFIL patrol in the village of Majdal Zun (Sector West) detailed in my report of 15 November 2018 ([S/2018/1029](#), paras. 16–17). On 26 October, UNIFIL provided the findings of its investigation into the incident to the Lebanese Armed Forces. In a letter dated 17 December, the Lebanese Armed Forces, through the Permanent Representative of Lebanon to the United Nations, provided a report to the United Nations outlining the findings of its investigation. These findings diverged from those of the UNIFIL investigation, which had concluded that organized civilians, some of whom were illegally carrying assault weapons, were responsible for the violent attack on UNIFIL peacekeepers who were conducting a routine patrol in Majdal Zun. The report provided by the Lebanese Armed Forces did not attribute responsibility for the attacks. To date, no criminal proceedings have been launched to bring the perpetrators to justice. The United Nations continues to engage with the Lebanese authorities in this regard. Since the incident, UNIFIL has resumed regular patrolling in Majdal Zun in close coordination with the Lebanese Armed Forces without further incident.

21. UNIFIL and Observer Group Lebanon continued their patrols to areas surrounding the sites of the Lebanese non-governmental organization Green Without

Borders that are located close to the Blue Line. In response to the allegation made by the Israel Defense Forces on 25 October that Hizbullah was using a Green Without Borders site in Udaysah for surveillance purposes, UNIFIL conducted a second inspection of that site on 30 October (following a first inspection in July 2018). UNIFIL also inspected the newly-confirmed Green Without Borders site in Yarun (Sector West) on 3 November. Given that these sites are located on private property, the inspections were carried out in close coordination with the Lebanese Armed Forces. The inspections did not reveal any violations of resolution 1701 (2006). UNIFIL continues to monitor these sites.

22. UNIFIL and the Office of the United Nations Special Coordinator for Lebanon continued to engage with the Lebanese authorities to ensure appropriate follow-up to the ministerial-level meeting known as the Rome II conference, held in March 2018, including the commitment of Lebanon: to increase the strength and presence of the Lebanese Armed Forces in the UNIFIL area of operations through the deployment of the Lebanese Armed Forces model regiment; and to build the capacity of the Navy (see also para. 57 below). In December 2018, the European Union announced that it would contribute six million euros for the renovation of a building identified by the Lebanese Government in Bayt Lif (Sector West) to be used as the headquarters of the model regiment, including accommodation and training facilities. Two joint working groups with the Lebanese Armed Forces and UNIFIL on training and on accommodation have been established. Several Member States have already pledged additional support for the deployment of the model regiment.

23. Further to paragraph 7 of resolution 2433 (2018), in which the Security Council called on the Government of Lebanon to develop a plan to increase its naval capabilities, with the goal of ultimately decreasing the responsibilities of the UNIFIL Maritime Task Force and transitioning them to the Lebanese Armed Forces, the Council also requested me to provide an assessment, including recommendations. Since 2006, the Lebanese Armed Forces has enhanced its naval capabilities, including through contributions by the international community and training by the UNIFIL Maritime Task Force. Currently, the Lebanese Navy effectively operates radar stations along its coast, integrated with the central operations centre of the Lebanese Armed Forces, allowing a constant surface picture of Lebanese territorial waters (12 nautical miles). It also possesses the capability to fully operate along the Lebanese coast up to three nautical miles, and partially up to six nautical miles. Some of its assets are certified to operate with the UNIFIL Maritime Task Force in Lebanese territorial waters for up to 48 hours, under good weather conditions.

24. However, the Lebanese Armed Forces lacks the resources and capacity to operate independently throughout Lebanese territorial waters for long durations, even under moderate weather conditions. Dedicated and trained personnel, as well as enhanced logistical structures and maintenance capacities, are needed to sustain the operations of Lebanese naval assets. To address these multiple challenges in the short- and medium-term, the Lebanese Navy requires the support of international partners.

25. Pursuant to resolution 2433 (2018), I recommend that the Lebanese Armed Forces and UNIFIL, in the framework of the strategic dialogue mechanism, continue to participate in the joint working group that has been established to develop a strategy for a phased transition of the responsibilities of the Maritime Task Force to the Lebanese Armed Forces, in conjunction with the strategic plan for the Lebanese Armed Forces. The strategy should consider, for each phase, the required capabilities, including the level of trained Navy personnel, appropriate infrastructure, number and type of vessels and effective logistical support, in order to allow a partial assumption of responsibilities by the Lebanese Navy in Lebanese territorial waters, aiming for progress within the next 12 months. Beyond this time frame, the transition strategy

should seek synergies with bilateral initiatives by international partners, with the aim of ultimately decreasing the responsibilities of the Maritime Task Force.

26. The Office of the United Nations Special Coordinator for Lebanon and UNIFIL are engaging with Member States to promote a broader consensus and to encourage a coordinated approach to support capacity-building of the Lebanese Navy.

27. During the reporting period, in support of Lebanese efforts to build capacity and in close coordination with the Lebanese Armed Forces, including the Lebanese Navy, the UNIFIL Maritime Task Force carried out maritime interdiction operations throughout the maritime area of operations, hailing an average of 21 vessels per day. Of the 2,292 vessels hailed during the reporting period, 649 were inspected and cleared by the Lebanese authorities. The UNIFIL Maritime Task Force also continued to support the capacity-building of the Lebanese Armed Forces, including the Lebanese Navy, by conducting 362 training sessions aimed at improving common operational standards for monitoring and hailing activities.

B. Security and liaison arrangements

28. UNIFIL convened tripartite meetings on 5 December, 10 January and 13 February, during which liaison and coordination mechanisms and violations of resolution 1701 (2006) were discussed. UNIFIL also facilitated a dedicated tripartite meeting on 17 January to discuss practical solutions to contentious areas along the Blue Line. In addition, UNIFIL held frequent bilateral exchanges with the Lebanese Armed Forces and the Israel Defense Forces, including on arrangements aimed at reducing tensions along the Blue Line.

29. The possibility of the establishment of a UNIFIL liaison office in Tel Aviv, Israel, continues to be raised with Israeli authorities. Despite their agreement to the UNIFIL proposal in 2008, the establishment of the office remains pending.

30. UNIFIL continued to liaise with the Government of Lebanon, non-governmental organizations and United Nations agencies assisting in building the capacity of national institutions to protect civilians. UNIFIL also continued to train its personnel to ensure preparedness to protect civilians under imminent threat of physical violence.

31. During the reporting period, over 2,220 military and civilian personnel, including over 215 women, were trained on gender mainstreaming. UNIFIL and United Nations Headquarters continued to emphasize the importance of increasing the number and seniority of women serving in UNIFIL, particularly among military personnel where women currently make up only 5 per cent of troops and serve at no higher rank than Lieutenant Colonel. UNIFIL, in collaboration with the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women), organized a one-day mediation training on 26 November, benefitting 45 women, including municipal council members in Tyre and Abbassiyah (both Sector West). In addition, UNIFIL organized workshops on manufacturing and marketing of agricultural products for 45 rural women in Dayr Mimas (Sector East) in December and in Abbassiyah in January, respectively.

C. Disarming armed groups

32. No progress was achieved with respect to the disarmament of armed groups. Hizbullah continued to acknowledge publicly that it maintains a military capacity. On 26 January, the Secretary-General of Hizbullah, Hassan Nasrallah, remarked, "Of course we possess precision missiles, and with a sufficient number to confront [Israel] in a future war, to strike any target we want in the course of our war plan... We possess

precision missiles in the amount we need, and what we need no longer needs to be transferred”.

33. The maintenance of arms outside the control of the State by Hizbullah and other groups continues to restrict the ability of the Government of Lebanon to exercise full sovereignty and authority over its territory.

34. The Lebanese Armed Forces and security forces continued counter-terrorism operations, including the arrests of individuals suspected of affiliation with or support to extremist groups. From 1 November to 19 February, 43 terrorism-related arrests were reported, including of suspected affiliates of Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) and Jabhat Fath al-Sham (formerly the Nusrah Front). This figure marks a significant decline from the same period last year (November 2017 to March 2018) when 122 terrorism-related arrests were documented. This decrease is attributable largely to the improved security situation in Lebanon since 2017, as well as to the progress made by the State security forces in enhancing border security and control along the border with the Syrian Arab Republic.

35. On 2 and 9 January and on 13 February, in Aarsal, Lebanese authorities arrested a total of eight Syrian nationals on terrorism charges, including forming an ISIL cell and planning attacks against the Lebanese Armed Forces. Explosive materials were also confiscated from the home of one of the suspects. On 24 January, the Lebanese Armed Forces, on a raid in Aarsal, eastern Lebanon, arrested a man wanted for his participation in the 2014 terrorist attacks on the Army in Aarsal. Weapons and ammunition were also confiscated during the raid. On 16 February, in Hirmil, north-eastern Lebanon, the Lebanese Armed Forces arrested two ISIL leaders, both Syrian nationals, including one senior commander, coming from Dayr al-Zawr in the Syrian Arab Republic.

36. On 30 November, 57 individuals were arrested for firing shots into the air in the Shuf area, On 3 February, an unidentified gunman shot at and then threw a grenade at the vehicle of an Internal Security Forces corporal, killing him, in Zahlah, eastern Lebanon.

37. Further to my account on the October 2018 clashes in the Mieh Palestine refugee camp near Sidon, contained in my previous report ([S/2018/1029](#), para. 34), an assessment carried out by the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) concluded that 278 shelters were damaged and some destroyed as a result of the fighting. The UNRWA Health Clinic in Mieh was hit by an explosive device. In addition, UNRWA schools in Mieh, as well as in the nearby Ein el Helweh Palestine refugee camp, were hit by stray bullets. UNRWA reminded the parties of the need to respect international law, including the inviolability of United Nations premises, and closed its installations in the camp between 16 October and 12 November owing to security concerns. The Agency used alternative schools during the emergency and provided psychosocial support when classes resumed.

38. Following the ceasefire between Fatah and Ansar Allah in the Mieh Palestine refugee camp, which went into effect on 28 October 2018, a subsequent agreement on 6 November resulted in the departure of Ansar Allah leader Jamal Sleiman and several of his loyalists, reportedly to the Syrian Arab Republic.

39. On 13 January, a Palestinian national was shot and killed by the Lebanese Armed Forces at the Rashidieh military checkpoint at the entrance of Rashidieh Palestine refugee camp near Tyre, allegedly for failing to stop at the security checkpoint. The incident fomented tensions in the camp, but Palestinian factions intervened to prevent an escalation.

40. On 31 January, the Lebanese Armed Forces announced the arrest in Wadi Khaled, northern Lebanon, of a Palestinian fugitive wanted for affiliation with Fatah al-Islam and the Abdallah Azzam Brigades. The individual was also suspected of fighting with the Bilal Badr militant group in the 2017 clashes at the Ein el Helweh Palestine refugee camp near Sidon.

41. There was no progress in dismantling the military bases maintained by the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine-General Command and Fatah al-Intifada, which continue to compromise Lebanon's sovereignty and impede the ability of the State to monitor and effectively control parts of the border.

D. Arms embargo and border control

42. Allegations of arms transfers to non-State armed actors continued and are of serious concern. On 24 November 2018, the Prime Minister of Israel, Benjamin Netanyahu, stated that Israel continues "to act to prevent Iran's military build-up in Syria and Hizbullah's precision weapons project in Lebanon". On 23 January 2019, the President of Israel, Reuven Rivlin, was reported to have said, "So long as Iran and its proxies continue to establish their presence, Israel will act to defend its security, including acting against the transfer of advanced armaments from Iran via Syria to Hizbullah in Lebanon," adding that "Lebanon bears sovereign responsibility for all of Hizbullah's actions." On 26 January, Hizbullah Secretary-General Hassan Nasrallah said it was "especially after our experience in Syria" that Hizbullah had acquired precision missiles.

43. While taking allegations of arms transfers seriously, the United Nations is not in a position to substantiate them independently. Were the allegations proved to be correct, they would constitute a violation of resolution [1701 \(2006\)](#) (see annex II to the present report).

44. In identical letters addressed to the President of the Security Council and me, dated 26 December ([A/73/695-S/2018/1162](#)) and 27 December ([A/73/713-S/2018/1170](#)), the Permanent Representative of Lebanon to the United Nations conveyed her Government's message that, on 25 December, "...Israeli warplanes violated Lebanese airspace to carry out air strikes against the territory of the Syrian Arab Republic", noting that "...this serious violation posed a threat to civilian aircraft traffic in Lebanese airspace and almost caused a major air catastrophe".

45. Reports of Hizbullah's engagement in the fighting in the Syrian Arab Republic continued. Several Lebanese nationals also allegedly continued to fight with anti-Government armed groups in the Syrian Arab Republic.

46. The deployment of the four Lebanese Armed Forces land border regiments and the construction of watchtowers along Lebanon's border with the Syrian Arab Republic neared completion. No cross-border fire from the Syrian Arab Republic into Lebanon was reported during the period. It is reported that a total of 141 Syrian nationals were apprehended by the Lebanese Armed Forces for illegally entering Lebanon from the Syrian Arab Republic during the reporting period, a significant decrease from the 1,006 Syrians apprehended during the previous reporting period ([S/2018/1029](#), para. 42). The decrease is primarily attributed to the difficulty of crossing in winter conditions. From the end of October until mid-February: (a) the Lebanese authorities arrested 22 individuals complicit in human smuggling activities; (b) the Lebanese Armed Forces and security forces conducted counter-terrorism operations in informal Syrian settlements in Lebanon, resulting in 521 arrests in and around Aarsal, mainly because of a lack of proper documentation; and (c) human smuggling activities in Lebanese waters on the route towards Cyprus were also intercepted by Lebanese authorities, with 74 persons rescued by the Lebanese Armed

Forces and security forces. On 11 February, the Lebanese Armed Forces announced that a smuggler was killed and another injured in a shootout following a foiled smuggling attempt by boat from Akkar, northern Lebanon, on route to Cyprus.

47. In the context of large-scale counter-terrorism and anti-trafficking operations in the Baalbek-Hirmil region, northern Biqa', the Lebanese Armed Forces reinforced its deployments following repeated armed clashes. On 30 November 2018, four suspects were killed and several apprehended in a Lebanese Armed Forces raid in Baalbek. On 14 December, one Lebanese soldier was killed by unidentified gunmen while patrolling in Baalbek. On 31 December, two Lebanese soldiers were wounded in a raid against criminal gangs in Brital near Baalbek, eastern Lebanon.

48. During the reporting period, alleged weapons suppliers in northern and eastern Lebanon were arrested along the eastern border and in the Mount Lebanon area. On 23 November 2018, the Lebanese Armed Forces conducted raids and confiscated narcotics and weapons in Baalbek. On 5 December, the Internal Security Forces arrested a Lebanese weapons smuggler and confiscated ammunition in Hirmil. On the same day, in a separate operation, the Internal Security Forces arrested a Lebanese arms dealer and confiscated large quantities of weapons, ammunition and other military equipment from a weapons cache on the outskirts of Laqluq, Jubayl, Mount Lebanon.

49. The Arms Trade Treaty, the international agreement on conventional arms adopted by the General Assembly in its resolution [67/234 B](#), which the Lebanese Parliament authorized for ratification on 25 September 2018, has yet to be ratified.

E. Landmines and cluster bombs

50. UNIFIL continued to mitigate the threat of explosive hazards throughout its area of operations. Six UNIFIL mine clearance teams cleared a total of 6,879 square metres of land and found and destroyed 1,481 anti-personnel mines along UNIFIL's main patrol roads and in the vicinity of Amrah (Sector East). The Mine Action Service of the United Nations conducted 73 quality assurance monitoring visits to the Force's demining teams to ensure the safety and effectiveness of UNIFIL demining operations. It also delivered five safety and awareness briefings on landmines/explosive remnants of war and improvised explosive devices, benefiting 50 United Nations military and civilian personnel.

F. Delineation of borders

51. No progress was made towards the delineation or demarcation of the border between Lebanon and the Syrian Arab Republic. The Syrian Arab Republic and Israel have yet to respond to the provisional definition of the Shab'a Farms area proposed in my report of 30 October 2007 on the implementation of resolution [1701 \(2006\)](#) ([S/2007/641](#), annex).

52. No progress took place during the reporting period towards resolution of the dispute between Lebanon and Israel over their exclusive economic zones.

G. Political and institutional stability

53. On 31 January, nearly nine months after the parliamentary elections, Prime Minister Saad Hariri announced the formation of Lebanon's new Government. The 30-minister Cabinet includes four women ministers, one of whom is the first woman Minister of the Interior in the Arab region. On 2 February, Prime Minister Hariri

convened representatives of his new Government from a cross-section of political parties for consultations on the drafting of a ministerial statement. On 7 February, the Cabinet approved the ministerial statement, in which the Government reiterated Lebanon's commitment to: strengthening State institutions, independence, sovereignty, territorial integrity and the exclusive authority of the State; the Taif Accords; the policy of disassociation; and international resolutions, including resolution 1701 (2006). In the statement, the Government also emphasized the promotion of economic growth and the importance of reform and underlined its commitment to continuing to work with the international community on the presence of Syrian refugees. The new Government gained a majority vote of confidence on 15 February, with 111 out of 128 votes in Parliament.

54. Marking 19 years since the end of the civil war in Lebanon, on 12 and 13 November 2018, Parliament passed a new law on forced disappearances. The law established a commission with an investigative mandate to access and collect information, carry out exhumations and identifications of burial sites and hand over remains to relatives.

55. On 21 February, the Constitutional Council announced its final decision regarding the 17 appeals challenging several outcomes of the parliamentary elections. The Council accepted only one of the appeals, annulling the election in Tripoli of a Member of Parliament from the Future Movement party, and called for a special parliamentary election within two months to fill the seat.

56. With no government in place for most of the reporting period, progress stalled in the implementation of the outcome of the *Conférence économique pour le développement, par les réformes et avec les entreprises* and the establishment of the agreed follow-up mechanism. With the formation of the new Government, however, whose ministerial statement focused extensively on the reform agenda set out in the outcome document of the conference, there were signals of a new momentum. Meanwhile, there was a further deterioration in economic indicators from 2017 to 2018, with the debt to gross domestic product (GDP) ratio increasing by 1.6 percentage points to 155 per cent.

57. In the year since the Rome II conference, Lebanon's implementation of its commitments has been slow, despite several subsequent bilateral announcements of financial contributions. To revive the international momentum in support of strengthening the Lebanese Armed Forces and Internal Security Forces in line with their strategic plans, on 19 February 2019, the Office of the United Nations Special Coordinator for Lebanon co-chaired with the Lebanese Armed Forces a meeting of the Executive Military Committee, which was attended by 26 countries. Organized around the three priority areas of enhancing land mobility, improving maritime security through the build-up of the Lebanese Armed Forces-Lebanese Navy and deploying the model regiment, the meeting provided an opportunity for the Lebanese Armed Forces to demonstrate progress on Lebanon's commitments under the Rome II framework, as well as to align international contributions with national priorities.

58. With a view to enhancing accountability of the Lebanese Armed Forces, on 29 January 2019, the Commander of the Lebanese Armed Forces, Joseph Aoun, in collaboration with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, launched the code of conduct of the Army to mainstream human rights principles into the tasks undertaken by Army personnel.

59. The Government has not yet allocated funding for the national human rights institution or the related national preventive mechanism against torture, whose members were appointed by the Cabinet on 7 March. Members of both the national human rights institution and the national preventive mechanism against torture have yet to be sworn in by the President of the Republic.

60. On 2 January 2019, the United Nations Development Programme signed a project document with the Office of the Prime Minister in order to support the operationalization of the national strategy for preventing violent extremism through the elaboration of a national action plan.

61. On 20 January 2019, Lebanon hosted the Fourth Arab Economic and Social Development Summit in Beirut. The Summit drew the participation of 19 of the 22 members of the League of Arab States, including three Heads of State. President Michel Aoun opened the Summit, which concluded with the adoption of the Beirut Declaration, outlining a 29-item economic agenda for the region. Qatar subsequently announced a contribution of \$500 million in Lebanese Government bonds in support of Lebanon's economy.

62. On the margins of the Summit, on 19 January, the World Bank, together with the Governments of Lebanon and Canada, convened the first high-level Mashreq Conference on Women's Economic Empowerment in Beirut. In presenting its women's economic empowerment action plan, Lebanon committed to boosting its female labour force participation by 5 percentage points over the next five years.

63. As at 31 December, 967,040 refugees and asylum seekers were registered with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) in Lebanon, including 948,849 Syrian refugees and 18,200 refugees and asylum seekers of other nationalities. New registrations of Syrian refugees by UNHCR have been suspended by the Government since 2015. The decrease in the number of registered Syrian refugees since my previous report ([S/2018/1029](#), para. 56) was mainly the result of natural deaths, onward movements, resettlement and spontaneous returns to the Syrian Arab Republic.

64. Individual spontaneous returns of Syrian refugees have continued, with thousands of individuals returning between January and December 2018 through formal and informal border crossings. Another 11,133 individuals returned during the same period in group movements, facilitated by the General Directorate of General Security of Lebanon in coordination with the Syrian authorities. While UNHCR was not involved in organizing those returns, it coordinated with the General Directorate and was present at each departure point. UNHCR provided guidance to returning refugees on the importance of bringing their civil and other documentation to support their re-establishment in the Syrian Arab Republic.

65. According to UNHCR estimates, 11 boats originating from Lebanon carrying approximately 268 passengers, mainly Syrians, reached Cyprus during 2018, while at least 10 attempts to cross were intercepted or failed. Eight persons, including one child, drowned when a boat capsized. Syrians cited the dire socioeconomic situation in Lebanon, as well as fear of harassment and freedom of movement restrictions owing to their lack of legal residency, as reasons for making the journey. The situation for vulnerable Syrian refugees living in informal settlements in Lebanon became even more difficult during the first half of January 2019, when Lebanon was hit by two heavy winter storms. More than 47,000 refugees living in over 670 of the most precarious informal tented settlements in the country were impacted by the strong winds, flooding and snowfall. A humanitarian emergency response was subsequently launched by the Government-led inter-agency mechanism.

66. As at 31 December 2018, international support for Lebanon reflected a continued high-level of donor support in 2018, which amounted to around \$1.57 billion, in addition to \$380 million carried over from 2017. It is reported that funding committed for 2019 and beyond amounts to around \$516 million.

67. The Lebanon Crisis Response Plan (2017–2020) was 53 per cent funded in 2018, at \$1.4 billion, including \$310 million carried over from 2017. On 31 January 2019,

the Government of Lebanon and the United Nations jointly launched the 2019 update of the plan in Beirut. The 2019 appeal calls for \$2.62 billion to deliver critical humanitarian assistance and investment in Lebanon's public infrastructure, services and local economy, targeting 3.2 million people in need living in Lebanon, including 1.5 million vulnerable Lebanese, 1.5 million Syrian refugees and more than 208,000 Palestinian refugees. Separately, on 29 January, UNRWA launched its appeal for \$1.2 billion to maintain operations in 2019 across the region.

III. Security and safety of the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon

68. UNIFIL continually reviewed its security plans and risk mitigation measures, in close coordination with the Lebanese authorities. Security exercises were conducted to test the readiness of civilian and military personnel in the event of evacuation during a crisis. In the Arqub area (Sector East), strict security measures remained in place, including the use of armed escorts for official movements by United Nations personnel. During the reporting period, UNIFIL facilitated 35 missions to the Arqub area by members of United Nations agencies.

69. UNIFIL continued to monitor ongoing proceedings in Lebanese military courts against individuals suspected of planning or perpetrating serious attacks against UNIFIL. The Permanent Military Court held hearings on 12 February regarding the attack against UNIFIL peacekeepers serving with the Spanish contingent in 2007 and in the case of terror intent opened in January 2014. The next hearings for both cases are scheduled for 5 March. In the case of the attempted serious attack against UNIFIL in 2008, in which one of the four convicted perpetrators filed an appeal, the next hearing is scheduled on 21 May 2019. Three investigations into the serious attacks perpetrated against UNIFIL on 27 May, 26 July and 9 December 2011 are continuing, pursuant to additional instructions issued by the investigating judge. In the case of the homicides committed in 1980, when two UNIFIL peacekeepers from Ireland were shot dead and one was injured, the next hearing is scheduled for 22 March 2019. UNIFIL also followed up with the Lebanese Armed Forces on the incident of 4 August in Majdal Zun (see para. 20 above).

IV. Deployment of the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon

70. As at 17 February, UNIFIL comprised 10,315 military personnel, including 522 women (5 per cent), from 43 troop-contributing countries; 239 international staff, including 83 women (35 per cent); and 576 national civilian staff, including 153 women (27 per cent). The UNIFIL Maritime Task Force comprised six vessels, two helicopters and 768 of the Force's total military personnel, including 29 women (4 per cent). In addition, 57 military observers, including five women (9 per cent), from the United Nations Truce Supervision Organization serve with Observer Group Lebanon, under the operational control of UNIFIL.

V. Conduct and discipline

71. During the reporting period, neither UNIFIL nor the Office of the United Nations Special Coordinator for Lebanon received allegations of sexual exploitation or abuse. They continued to implement and enhance measures to prevent sexual exploitation and abuse, including by briefing military commanders on their

accountability in respect of conduct and discipline matters. The prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse network in Lebanon operated by United Nations country team continued to inform local communities of expected standards of conduct for United Nations personnel and how to report misconduct. UNIFIL and the Office of the United Nations Special Coordinator for Lebanon continued to promote a productive, harmonious and inclusive working environment, with emphasis on protection against sexual harassment and other forms of prohibited conduct.

VI. Observations

72. I welcome the formation of Lebanon's new Government. I congratulate Prime Minister Saad Hariri on this achievement and Lebanon's political leadership. The inclusion of four women in the new Government is notable and I join others in encouraging the Lebanese authorities to pursue further efforts to ensure the full and effective participation of women in Lebanese politics. It is important that the incoming Council of Ministers address the manifold economic, political and security challenges facing Lebanon. The spirit of shared compromise that was required to form the Government, coupled with decisive and responsible leadership, will be essential for Lebanon to successfully tackle those challenges. The United Nations looks forward to working with the new Government and stands ready to support Lebanon in addressing the challenges that lie ahead.

73. With the new Government now in place, I urge Lebanon to accelerate progress on implementing the fiscal and structural reforms, notably those agreed at the *Conférence économique pour le développement, par les réformes et avec les entreprises*, to address the deteriorating economic situation.

74. I call on the new Government to abide by Lebanon's policy of disassociation, consistent with the Ba'abda Declaration of 2012, and for all Lebanese parties and nationals to cease their involvement in the Syrian conflict and other conflicts in the region. I condemn all alleged movement of fighters and war materiel across the Lebanese-Syrian border in violation of resolution [1701 \(2006\)](#).

75. I urge both parties to redouble their efforts towards the full adherence to resolution [1701 \(2006\)](#) in order to sustain and consolidate the period of calm of the past years. The United Nations will continue supporting efforts to defuse tensions through dialogue, pursue opportunities for confidence-building and create a conducive environment for resolving underlying grievances in support of a permanent ceasefire.

76. Continued commitment by all sides to resolution [1701 \(2006\)](#) remains essential for the stability of Lebanon and the region. Non-compliance increases the risk of tensions and the possible escalation into hostilities. I am extremely concerned about the existence of tunnels that cross the Blue Line in violation of resolution [1701 \(2006\)](#), and the resulting tensions on the ground. I encourage the Lebanese Armed Forces to undertake all necessary investigations on the Lebanese side in regard to the tunnels and to ensure that they no longer pose a security risk. UNIFIL stands ready to assist as required. I am also concerned by the inflammatory statements by both sides in connection with the situation along the Blue Line, which heighten the risk of miscalculation and escalation into conflict.

77. I strongly encourage the parties to find an agreement on the way forward to resolving existing points of contention along the Blue Line. Unilateral actions in these areas escalate tensions along the Blue Line and must be avoided. I reiterate my call upon the parties to continue to avail themselves of the UNIFIL liaison and coordination arrangements to the fullest extent possible. My Special Coordinator for

Lebanon and the UNIFIL Head of Mission and Force Commander will continue to explore opportunities with the parties for progress to that end.

78. The freedom of movement of UNIFIL in its entire area of operations and along the full length of the Blue Line remains critical. I note with concern that UNIFIL was not able to access all locations north of the Blue Line in connection with the discovery of tunnels south of the Blue Line. I call on the Lebanese authorities and the Lebanese Armed Forces to ensure that UNIFIL is fully able to implement its mandate. I am also concerned that the findings of the Lebanese Armed Forces' investigation into the events in Majdal Zun on 4 August 2018 diverge from the findings of the UNIFIL investigation. I further note that the United Nations has not been informed of any criminal proceedings launched against any of the attackers. I reiterate my call on the Lebanese authorities to fulfil their responsibility to ensure the unimpeded freedom of movement of UNIFIL personnel and full accountability for those who attack peacekeepers.

79. I am also seriously concerned that Israeli overflights of Lebanese territory continue to be a frequent occurrence, including by fighter aircraft. Such overflights constitute a violation of resolution 1701 (2006) and of Lebanese sovereignty. The Israel Defense Forces also continue to occupy northern Ghajar and an adjacent area north of the Blue Line in a long-standing violation of the resolution. I reiterate my condemnation of all violations of Lebanese sovereignty and my call for Israel to cease its violations of Lebanese airspace and to withdraw its forces from northern Ghajar and the adjacent area north of the Blue Line.

80. I encourage the continued efforts of the Lebanese Armed Forces in support of the State's authority throughout the territory of Lebanon, including through the model regiment. I call on the Government of Lebanon, with continued support from UNIFIL and the international community, to operationalize the regiment. I also urge the Government of Lebanon to prioritize efforts to increase the capability of the Lebanese Armed Forces-Lebanese Navy, as outlined in the present report, and pledge the continued support of UNIFIL and my Special Coordinator in this regard. One year after the Rome II conference, I encourage Member States to continue implementing existing commitments of support to the Lebanese Armed Forces and security institutions.

81. I welcome the engagement of the Lebanese Armed Forces with UNIFIL in the development of a transition strategy for the Lebanese Navy to gradually assume the responsibilities of UNIFIL's Maritime Task Force, and I strongly encourage quick progress in this process. The implementation of a feasible and pragmatic transition strategy will provide an effective basis for an eventual further gradual decrease in the strength of UNIFIL's Maritime Task Force without creating a vacuum that could result in additional security challenges in a complex regional environment. I also strongly encourage Member States to coordinate support for the implementation of this transition strategy, in line with the provisions of resolution 2433 (2018).

82. The repeated self-acknowledged maintenance of unauthorized weapons outside of State control by Hizbullah and other non-State armed groups, in violation of resolution 1701 (2006), is deeply troubling and endangers the stability of Lebanon and the region. Allegations of illegal arms transfers to non-State armed groups in Lebanon also continue and warrant serious concern. While the United Nations is not in a position to verify these reports independently, if substantiated, the transfers would constitute a grave violation of resolution 1701 (2006). I call upon Member States to uphold their obligations under resolution 1701 (2006) to prevent the sale or supply of arms or related materiel to entities or individuals in Lebanon.

83. Furthermore, I call upon the Government of Lebanon to take all actions necessary to ensure the full implementation of the relevant provisions of the Taif

Accords and of resolutions 1559 (2004) and 1680 (2006), which require the disarmament of all armed groups in Lebanon so that there will be no weapons or authority in Lebanon other than those of the Lebanese State, in line with the decision of the Lebanese Cabinet of 27 July 2006 and earlier decisions of the national dialogue.

84. The dispute over the maritime exclusive economic zones of Lebanon and Israel continues to be a source of tension. I encourage the parties to explore avenues to lower tensions, which will create conditions conducive to dialogue and for an eventual solution. The United Nations stands ready, and I am prepared to exercise my good offices, to support the parties in such efforts.

85. In strengthening Lebanon's ability to exercise effective State authority, I reiterate the importance of moving forward with the commitment of the President to convene a national dialogue to determine a national defence strategy. It is important that such a process be Lebanese-owned and Lebanese-led, inclusive, comprehensive and sustainable, and in line with the country's international obligations. Earlier decisions of the national dialogue pertaining to the disarmament of non-Lebanese groups and the dismantling of the military bases of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine-General Command and Fatah al-Intifada should be implemented.

86. While I am relieved that the situation in the Mieh Mieh Palestine refugee camp has stabilized, I regret the loss of life and displacement, as well as the materiel damage. I call on all Palestinian factions to refrain from such violence to protect both Palestinian and Lebanese communities.

87. Palestine refugees in Lebanon welcomed the generosity of donors during 2018 to ensure that UNRWA services were maintained throughout the year. I thank the donors for their critical support in 2018 and take this opportunity to encourage them to recommit their support to UNRWA, including through multi-year funding agreements, so that UNRWA can sustain its operations in 2019 and beyond.

88. I welcome the launch of the code of conduct of the Lebanese Armed Forces to mainstream human rights principles into the tasks undertaken by Army personnel as an important step towards further enhancing accountability in the Lebanese Armed Forces.

89. I reiterate my appeal to the Government of Lebanon to ensure that the national human rights institute and the related national preventive mechanism against torture are adequately resourced to carry out their mandates in an independent and effective manner and appeal to the President to swear in its members.

90. I commend the Government of Lebanon for its demonstrated commitment to women's economic empowerment at the Mashreq Conference on Women's Economic Empowerment. Together with the proposed national action plan on the implementation of Security Council resolution 1325 (2000), Lebanon has formulated an ambitious and comprehensive approach to gender equality. I encourage all stakeholders to take measurable steps towards implementing this priority agenda.

91. Lebanon continues to exercise remarkable generosity and hospitality in temporarily hosting Syrian refugees. The United Nations will continue to support Lebanon in this effort, in line with international standards, including the principle of non-refoulement, and to ensure the protection and dignity of the refugees while in Lebanon, as well as their ability to take individual free and informed decisions regarding their voluntary return.

92. The United Nations continues to engage with the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic and other key stakeholders to address the concerns that refugees identify as

hindering their return, with a view to working towards a safe, voluntary, dignified and sustainable return process.

93. The response of the United Nations in Lebanon to the refugee crisis would not have been possible without the enduring commitment of donors. I call on donors to sustain their generosity, including through multi-year commitments, at the third Brussels Conference on 13 and 14 March 2019.

94. I welcome the arrival of my Special Coordinator for Lebanon, Ján Kubiš, and thank Pernille Dahler Kardel, who completed her tenure as Acting Special Coordinator in early February 2019, for her dedicated service. I would also like to reiterate my gratitude to the civilian and military personnel in UNIFIL under the leadership of the Head of Mission and Force Commander of UNIFIL, Major General Stefano Del Col. Further to my letter addressed to the President of the Security Council of 31 December 2018 (S/2018/1182), UNIFIL and the Office of the United Nations Special Coordinator for Lebanon are taking steps to increase their coordination and enhance their efficiency and effectiveness in line with my recommendations. I extend my appreciation to all countries contributing military personnel and equipment to UNIFIL and Observer Group Lebanon and encourage them to increase the number of women among military personnel in UNIFIL. Finally, I thank all personnel in UNIFIL, the Office of the United Nations Special Coordinator for Lebanon and the United Nations country team for their continued efforts and dedication.

Annex I

Restrictions on the freedom of movement of the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon from 27 October 2018 to 17 February 2019

1. On 14 December 2018, the Lebanese Armed Forces stopped an Observer Group Lebanon patrol and one United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) liaison team from approaching Blue Line at point BP 12(1) near Ayta Al-Sha'b (Sector West). Following consultations with Lebanese Armed Forces liaison officers, the Observer Group Lebanon patrol and the UNIFIL team were able to enter the area. In the afternoon of the same day, a second Observer Group Lebanon patrol was stopped by the Lebanese Armed Forces while heading towards the same point on the Blue Line. The Lebanese Armed Forces informed the Observer Group Lebanon patrol that only a particular UNIFIL battalion could independently access point BP 12(1) and that all other units required prior authorization from the Lebanese Armed Forces. The Observer Group Lebanon patrol continued its patrol without accessing the location. The Lebanese Armed Forces subsequently informed UNIFIL that the incident was caused by a lack of coordination among Lebanese Armed Forces units and promised to address the issue. UNIFIL resumed patrols in the area the following day and did not experience any further incidents.

2. On 22 December, a UNIFIL patrol comprising five vehicles entered a narrow residential street and was surrounded by six individuals in civilian clothes in the vicinity of Yarun (Sector West). The individuals walked around the UNIFIL vehicles in a threatening way, with wooden sticks and iron bars in their hands. Approximately 20 minutes later, Lebanese Armed Forces personnel arrived and escorted the UNIFIL patrol out of the village. There were no injuries to personnel or damages to UNIFIL vehicles. UNIFIL resumed patrols in the area the following day and did not experience any further incidents. UNIFIL also met with the Mayor of Yarun who stated that the residents did not oppose UNIFIL patrolling in Yarun.

3. On 23 December, approximately 20 individuals approached a UNIFIL vehicle transiting through Kunin (Sector West) and told the peacekeepers that UNIFIL was not allowed to enter the village. Shortly thereafter, a Lebanese Armed Forces patrol arrived and escorted the UNIFIL vehicle back to the main road. UNIFIL patrolled in the area the following day and did not experience any further incidents.

4. Shortly after the event on 26 December described in paragraph 3 of the main report, when liquid cement which had been injected into tunnel shafts south of the Blue Line was observed leaking from premises north of the Blue Line in Kfar Kila (Sector East), a UNIFIL patrol conducted in close coordination with the Lebanese Armed Forces was threatened by approximately 10 individuals in civilian clothes east of Udaysah (Sector East). The individuals held stones and made insulting gestures towards the UNIFIL patrol, which left the area. In nearby Kfar Kila, 30 individuals in civilian clothes with five cars blocked the main road. There were also two police vehicles and three policemen blocking the path to the premises from which the cement was oozing. Two Lebanese Armed Forces vehicles with approximately 10 Lebanese soldiers were also present, but they did not intervene to facilitate UNIFIL's access. About 40 minutes later, the crowd dispersed, but three vehicles remained blocking the main road. UNIFIL was able to observe the premises, but entry was denied by the Lebanese Armed Forces on the basis that it constituted private property. UNIFIL resumed patrols in the area the following day and did not experience any further incidents.

Annex II

Implementation of the arms embargo

1. In its resolution 2433 (2018), the Security Council recalled paragraph 15 of resolution 1701 (2006), according to which all States should take the necessary measures to prevent, by their nationals or from their territories or using flag vessels or aircraft, the sale or supply of arms and related materiel to any entity or individual in Lebanon other than those authorized by the Government of Lebanon or the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL), and requested the Secretary-General to include in his reporting to the Council an annex on the implementation of the arms embargo. Resolution 1701 (2006) does not stipulate a United Nations role for monitoring and verifying the implementation of the arms embargo. UNIFIL, the Office of the United Nations Special Coordinator for Lebanon and the Secretariat have limited authority and capacity in this regard. The United Nations remains, however, committed to supporting overall compliance by the parties with resolution 1701 (2006) in all of its provisions and to advancing its implementation.

2. During the reporting period, the United Nations continued to engage with Member States on allegations of weapons transfers and efforts to address those allegations and other violations of resolution 1701 (2006). Since my previous report (S/2018/1029), a Member State informally reiterated to the Secretariat the information it had provided in a letter dated 25 October 2018, emphasizing the importance of including more detailed information in the present report. The information provided by the Member State, which cites Western and Middle Eastern media, Western think-tank analysis, academic studies and Iranian Revolutionary Guard Corps-affiliated press, alleges that, “since 2006, Iran has provided Hezbollah with surface-to-air missiles, surface-to-surface missiles, anti-ship cruise missiles, unmanned aircraft systems, light vehicles and various small arms” by land and air routes. According to the information provided, “Hezbollah’s rocket arsenal has expanded from approximately 15,000 in 2006 to 130,000 systems” and “contains rockets and missiles with varying ranges up to 550 kilometres, in addition to potentially armed-unmanned aircraft systems able to travel up to 2,000 kilometres”. The United Nations is not in a position to verify the information provided.

3. In a letter dated 28 February 2019 addressed to the Under-Secretary-General for Political and Peacebuilding Affairs, the Deputy Permanent Representative of the Permanent Mission of Israel to the United Nations presented “a detailed analysis from the Israel Defense Forces of some of the weapons transferred to Hezbollah since 2006”. The list included: various anti-tank weapons, with a range of up to 5.5 kilometres; surface-to-surface missiles, with a range of up to 300 kilometres; surface-to-surface rocket, with a range of over 100 kilometres; and explosives, artillery and unmanned aerial vehicles of “various capabilities”. The letter stated that “the Iranian regime continues to bolster Hezbollah’s weapons capabilities in various ways, including through the precision-guided missile conversion programme it has established inside civilian population centres across Lebanon, and the proliferation of mass weapons manufacturing capabilities to Hezbollah in Lebanon and the Syrian Arab Republic”. The letter further stated that the “Iranian regime is also providing Hezbollah with technical training and assistance to manufacture, maintain and use these weapons and advanced capabilities independently”. The United Nations is not in a position to verify the information provided.

4. With a view to assisting the Government of Lebanon in strengthening container and cargo controls at ports in Lebanon, including the airport and sea ports in Beirut and Tripoli, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime and the World Customs Organization launched a global Container Control Programme at the end of 2018. The

programme aims at preventing the exploitation of the container and cargo trade for illicit purposes, including the trafficking of firearms, drugs, counterfeit products, conventional weapons and chemical, biological, radioactive, nuclear or explosive materials. The programme will enhance risk management and the trade supply chain at Lebanon's ports of Beirut and Tripoli, as well as at Rafic Hariri International Airport in Beirut. The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime and the World Customs Organization undertook assessments of the ports, with strategic recommendations aimed at improving security and ensuring systematic control. Training was also undertaken for customs personnel at the airport on the profiling and selection of high-risk cargo to prevent illicit trafficking. Efforts are also under way to prepare for the establishment of port control units at the two above-mentioned ports that will undertake profiling, selection and inspection of high-risk containers. The Container Control Programme will continue to be rolled out throughout 2019 and beyond.

5. Member States continued efforts in support of more effective border control along Lebanon's eastern land border with the Syrian Arab Republic. Bilateral support helped increase the operational capacity of regiments of the Lebanese Armed Forces along the eastern land border to effectively monitor, observe and protect the mountainous frontier. The establishment of the four land-border regiments, with the support of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, the United States of America and other international donors (Canada, Germany), has largely been completed. With the support of the United Nations, the provision of winter equipment has made it possible for the land-border regiments to conduct patrols and run protracted operations in austere conditions during the winter season. These interventions contributed to the reduction of security threats, including from terrorism, in Lebanon. Such progress in consolidating security along the Lebanese-Syrian border was discussed at a meeting of the High-level Steering Committee held on 11 December 2018 between the United Kingdom, the United States and the Lebanese Armed Forces Commander. It was also announced that, by March 2019, more than 11,000 soldiers deployed in the various land-border regiments would be trained, including in combat and integrated border management, at the training centre in Riyaq in eastern Lebanon. Lebanese authorities are continuing to work towards addressing remaining gaps to secure the border with the Syrian Arab Republic.

6. Pursuant to the request from Lebanon's Prime Minister to the United Nations on 6 September 2006, UNIFIL's Maritime Task Force supports the Lebanese Navy in monitoring Lebanon's maritime border and entry points, inter alia, by carrying out maritime interdiction operations and assisting in preventing the unauthorized entry of arms or related materiel into Lebanon by sea, in accordance with paragraph 14 of resolution [1701 \(2006\)](#). During the reporting period, Maritime Task Force vessels have conducted over 2,292 hailing procedures, leading to some 649 inspections by the Lebanese Armed Forces-Lebanese Navy and Lebanese Customs Administration. No smuggling attempts were detected during these activities.