



Statement

by

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at the

Security Council open debate

“The situation in the **Middle East**, including the **Palestinian question**”

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***Permanent Mission of Lebanon to the United Nations
866 United Nations Plaza, Suite 531, New York, NY 10017***

Mr. President,

I thank you for organizing this open debate, and through you we extend our appreciation for the efforts deployed by Mr. Tor Wennesland, Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process in thoroughly and ably fulfilling his mission in such a complicated area as ours.

Mr. President,

Away from sounding pessimistic, however every month we witness that the realization of the long-standing desired peace in the Middle East is getting even harder to achieve.

Israeli policies of expanding settlements building in the West Bank and East Jerusalem, uprooting Palestinians from their homes and lands, splitting their cities particularly in East Jerusalem, those policies and practices are exacerbating aversion, aggravating the deadlock in which the process is stalemating and definitely are tarnishing all attempts or efforts towards two-state solution.

Mr. President,

Only a comprehensive and just solution based on United Nations Security Council resolutions 242, 338 and 2334 among others can be a basis for a political settlement that gives the Palestinians their long overdue political rights and right of self-determination.

Nevertheless, we cannot but call upon this August body and through it solicits the International community to put pressure on the adamant party in this conflict, Israel, to engage in sound peace process. Efforts by the Quartet are highly required to convince parties to come back to negotiating table in constructive spirit and embark in a peace process with aim to attain the two-state solution.

We furthermore note with concern that not all situations of conflicts have received the same attention. It is necessary that we devote equal attention to the long-standing conflicts where UN Charter and human rights are being violated.

Mr. President,

The lack of long-term funding of UNRWA risks suspending the essential services it provides to millions of Palestinian Refugees, including those living in Lebanon. UNRWA's services are essential to a dignified life its recipients deserve to enjoy, and a pillar of stability to the whole region. This is why we implore this Council and all peace loving nations to guarantee a predictable and sustained funding for the UNRWA, by providing regular and multi-year contributions, and by allocating expenses for UNRWA's operational costs from the regular budget of the United Nations to secure continuation of UNRWA's mandate which is foreseen to be renewed for 3 years in December, and to empower its capacity to deliver.

Mr. President,

Lebanon highly values the important role that UNIFIL plays in peace and security in south Lebanon and is grateful to the troop contributing countries for decades-long commitment to peacekeeping in Lebanon.

The daily Israeli violations of Lebanon's sovereignty and territorial integrity in violation of resolution 1701 increase tensions in the area and represent a threat to peace and security. But the presence of UNIFIL and its role in de-escalation and reducing tension are essential to create an enabling environment for stability.

The Lebanese Government remains committed to the implementation of Security Council resolution 1701 in its entirety as we consider it to be the mother resolution setting UNIFIL's mandate. And we call on the Council to force Israel to refrain from further airspace violations and aggressions on the territory of Lebanon and any acts escalation, which would make the full implementation of 1701 resolution's provisions at stake.

Lebanon reaffirms the importance of coordination of UNIFIL's activities with the Lebanese Government as stipulated in the Status of Forces Agreement, with the aim of implementing resolution 1701 in full.

Mr. President,

Yesterday (Thursday, October 27, 2022), Lebanon signed the agreement to delineate its southern maritime border. The event was hosted by the United Nations.

We thank all the parties that facilitated this agreement under the auspices of the United Nations.

We hope as well that this agreement will bring stability and prosperity to the people of Lebanon.

We hope we may capitalize on this momentum to explore tangible avenues for viable solutions with regard to other pending issues.

While turmoils are outbreaking in all continents, allow me to end on a positive note, a quote from our President of the Republic, General Michel Aoun:

"As my mandate as a president is about to expire, my present to the Lebanese people is the demarcation of the maritime borders. Now the borders in the South are stable, there will be no war nor instability".

I thank you Mr. President.