

Full Text: UN Security Council Resolution 1680 on Lebanon

Security Council, 5440th Meeting, May 17, 2006

Security Council strongly encourages Syria to respond to Lebanon's request to delineate border, establish diplomatic relations

Resolution 1680 (2006) Adopted by 13-0-2 (China , Russian Federation); Says Steps Would Be Significant Assertion of Lebanon's Political Independence

The Security Council today (May 17) strongly encouraged Syria to respond positively to the request made by Lebanon to delineate their common border and establish full diplomatic relations, as such measures would be a significant step towards asserting Lebanon's sovereignty, territorial integrity and political independence.

Reiterating its call for the full implementation of resolution 1559 (2004) through the adoption of resolution 1680 (2006) by a vote of 13 in favour with 2 abstentions (China, Russian Federation), the Council said that those steps would also improve the relations between Syria and Lebanon, thus contributing positively to regional stability. It urged both parties to make efforts through further bilateral dialogue towards that goal, bearing in mind that the establishment of diplomatic relations between States was by mutual consent.

Noting with concern the movements of arms into Lebanese territory for militias over the last six months, the Council commended the Lebanese Government for undertaking measures against those arms movements and called on the Syrian Government to take similar measures.

The Council, meanwhile, welcomed the decision of the Lebanese national dialogue to disarm Palestinian militias outside refugee camps within six months, supported its implementation and called for further efforts to disband and disarm all Lebanese and non-Lebanese militias and to fully restore the Lebanese Government's control over all its territory.

It reiterated its support to the Secretary-General and his Special Envoy in their efforts and dedication to facilitate and assist in the implementation of all provisions of resolution 1559 (2004).

Speaking after the vote, the representative of the Russian Federation said that he had consistently advocated a strengthening of stability in Lebanon and a normalization of the situation in Syria, aimed at developing genuine harmony between those countries in the interests of both their peoples and strengthened security in the region. Helping to strengthen Lebanon's sovereignty, its unity and territorial integrity must be done by dialogue between Damascus and

Beirut. Recent positive progress in settling a number of border issues had demonstrated that opportunities existed for further progress.

He said that the text adopted today was a departure from established norms and did not help a constructive settlement of the pending issues between the two countries. He had not seen a particular need at this stage for any further substantive reaction on the Council's part. Moreover, he had expressed his willingness to agree to official presidential statements, and he had made some amendments and proposals, but the co-sponsors had not taken those on board as he had hoped. Their approach had not been in accordance with the Council's established practice and should not become a rule of that important body. Based on that, he had found it impossible to support the resolution.

Argentina's representative, having voted in favour of the resolution, said he supported implementation of all provisions of "1559", which remained the basic text guiding the Council's work on the issue. He had not believed it was necessary to reinterpret the operative portion of that resolution, nor continue to remind the parties of their obligations. Implementation of that text must continue and a satisfactory solution must be found to the issues, such as the disarmament and disbanding of the militias and the extension of Lebanese authority throughout the territory.

He said that operative paragraph 4 of today's text should be seen in the context of international law and diplomatic relations, which was decisive on the point that mutual diplomatic relations was by mutual consent of the States involved. The Council should not become involved in matters solely of a bilateral nature. The fourth operative paragraph should not set a precedent to be invoked in the future. Establishment of diplomatic relations and delimitation of borders should be done by the countries involved without external interference. He encouraged Syria and Lebanon to move forward in that regard in the coming months.

In the negotiating process, he said that he, too, had submitted several amendments to spell out his position; several had been accepted by the co-sponsors. Thus, he had been able to support the text, but in the future, and fully in line with international law, the Council's actions on the matter under consideration today should not exceed the framework defined in operative paragraph 1 of resolution 1559, he said.

It was the consistent view of China, stated its representative, that in international relations, the principle of respect for sovereignty, territorial integrity and non-interference should be upheld. He fully understood and supported the desire of Lebanon to establish diplomatic relations and define its borders with its neighbours. He hoped Lebanon and Syria would continue their bilateral dialogue for a solution.

He had hoped that the co-sponsors of the text would make changes in order to send out a balanced message. While he appreciated their efforts, the changes made did not solve fundamental concerns. Therefore, China could not but have abstained on the vote. Lebanon was presently at a historical turning point. He congratulated the people and Government of Lebanon on the progress made and hoped that stability could be maintained in the country. That would facilitate peace and stability among its neighbours and the entire Middle East region. All external help should be offered taking into account the complexities of the situation, and avoiding adding new elements of instability.

Qatar's representative said he voted in favour of the draft resolution. His country's firm position had been respect of the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Lebanon. Its position also called for the full respect of Lebanon's efforts to resolve difficult issues. He welcomed the dialogue that was taking place and encouraged all parties to push forward. The depth of historical relations and common geography between Lebanon and Syria could not allow tension to overcome the friendly relations between them. The parties to the national dialogue were unanimous in calling for positive and friendly relations between the two States.

On another front, he regretted that the resolution did not mention any breaches by Israel of the "Blue Line", which was among the elements hampering the full implementation of resolution 1559 and a breach of Lebanese sovereignty and territorial integrity, as stated by the Secretary-General in his reports.

The meeting, which began at 10:19 a.m., was adjourned at 10:35 a.m.

Resolution

The full text of resolution 1680 (2006) reads as follows:

"The Security Council,

"Recalling all its previous resolutions on Lebanon, in particular resolutions 1559 (2004), 425 and 426 (1978), resolution 520 (1982) and resolution 1655 (2006), as well as the statements of its President on the situation in Lebanon, in particular the statements of 18 June 2000 (S/PRST/2000/21), of 19 October 2004 (S/PRST/2004/36), of 4 May 2005 (S/PRST/2005/17) and of 23 January 2006 (S/PRST/2006/3),

"Reiterating its strong support for the territorial integrity, sovereignty and political independence of Lebanon within its internationally recognized borders,

"Noting positively that further significant progress has been made towards implementing in full all provisions of resolution 1559 (2004), in particular through the Lebanese national dialogue, but noting also with regret that other provisions

of resolution 1559 have not yet been fully implemented, namely the disbanding and disarming of Lebanese and non-Lebanese militias, the extension of the control of the Government of Lebanon over all its territory, the strict respect of the sovereignty, territorial integrity, unity and political independence of Lebanon, and free and fair presidential elections conducted according to the Lebanese constitutional rules, without foreign interference and influence,

“Noting with concern the conclusion of the Secretary-General’s report (S/2006/248) that there had been movements of arms into Lebanese territory for militias over the last six months,

“Expressing full support for the Lebanese National Dialogue and commending all Lebanese parties for its conduct and for the consensus reached in this context on important matters,

“Having heard the Prime Minister of Lebanon’s address to the Security Council on 21 April 2006 (S/PV.5417),

“1. *Welcomes* the third semi-annual report of the Secretary-General to the Security Council of 18 April 2006 on the implementation of resolution 1559 (2004) (S/2006/248);

“2. *Reiterates* its call for the full implementation of all requirements of resolution 1559 (2004);

“3. *Reiterates also* its call on all concerned States and parties as mentioned in the report, to cooperate fully with the Government of Lebanon, the Security Council and the Secretary-General to achieve this goal;

“4. *Strongly encourages* the Government of Syria to respond positively to the request made by the Government of Lebanon, in line with the agreements of the Lebanese national dialogue, to delineate their common border, especially in those areas where the border is uncertain or disputed and to establish full diplomatic relations and representation, noting that such measures would constitute a significant step towards asserting Lebanon’s sovereignty, territorial integrity and political independence and improving the relations between the two countries, thus contributing positively to the stability in the region, and urges both parties to make efforts through further bilateral dialogue to this end, bearing in mind that the establishment of diplomatic relations between States, and of permanent diplomatic missions, takes place by mutual consent;

“5. *Commends* the Government of Lebanon for undertaking measures against movements of arms into Lebanese territory and calls on the Government of Syria to take similar measures;

“6. *Welcomes* the decision of the Lebanese national dialogue to disarm Palestinian militias outside refugee camps within six months, supports its implementation and calls for further efforts to disband and disarm all Lebanese and non-Lebanese militias and to restore fully the Lebanese Government’s control over all Lebanese territory;

“7. *Reiterates* its support to the Secretary-General and his Special envoy in their efforts and dedication to facilitate and assist in the implementation of all provisions of resolution 1559 (2004);

“8. *Decides* to remain seized of the matter.”

Background

When the Security Council met this morning, it had before it a letter of the Secretary-General dated 18 April transmitting his third semi-annual report on the implementation of Security Council resolution 1559 (2004) (document S/2006/248).

He recalls in the report that, in resolution 1559 (2004), the Council had reiterated its strong support for Lebanon’s territorial integrity, sovereignty and political independence, and called on all parties concerned to cooperate fully and urgently with it for full implementation of the text, which defined a number of provisions, among them: the withdrawal of all remaining foreign forces from Lebanon; the disbanding and disarmament of all Lebanese and non-Lebanese militias; the extension of the control of the Lebanese Government over all Lebanese territory; and strict respect of the sovereignty, territorial integrity, unity, and political independence of Lebanon under the sole and exclusive authority of the Lebanese Government throughout Lebanon.

Since his last report to the Council of 26 October 2005 (document S/2005/673), the Secretary-General notes in the present report that the Lebanese have made further significant progress towards implementing in full all provisions of resolution 1559, in particular with the agreements reached in the national dialogue. However, the provisions of the text calling for the disbanding and disarmament of all Lebanese and non-Lebanese militias; the extension of the control of the Lebanese Government over all Lebanese territory; and strict respect for the sovereignty, territorial integrity, unity and political independence of the country under the Government’s sole and exclusive authority have not yet been fully implemented. There has not been a presidential election process, as called for in the resolution and the Security Council presidential statement of 23 January 2006 (document S/PRST/2006/3).

The report goes on to say that the recent national political dialogue in Lebanon has forged consensus on how to consolidate the political integrity of the

country, but further progress requires the cooperation of Syria. With the agreements unanimously reached in the National Dialogue and their initiative to work proactively and constructively with Syria, a united Lebanon has “offered an outstretched hand to Syria”. Although there has been progress in implementing the resolution -- including the withdrawal of Syrian forces and the holding of legislative elections -- many of its requirements have not yet been met.

With regard to the militias, the Secretary-General welcomes the agreement on the arms of Palestinian militias outside of refugee camps and calls on all parties who have the ability to influence Hizbollah and other militias to support the full implementation of the resolution. Implementation is part of a wider process of historical transformation, which also encompasses the investigations into the terrorist assassination of former Prime Minister Rafik Hariri and 22 others in downtown Beirut and into other acts of assassination and terror in Lebanon over the past period, the ongoing work to reform electoral processes in Lebanon more broadly and the ongoing preparations and subsequent implementation of economic reforms.

Lebanon has continued its journey into a new era of its history, the report says further. Yet, the new Lebanon is still fragile. There is an urgent need to take tangible measures in order to retain the momentum and maintain Lebanon’s progress towards full reaffirmation of its sovereignty, territorial integrity, unity and political independence, consistent with the 1989 Taif Agreement and resolution 1559 (2004).

In particular, the report says, the implementation of the agreements reached in the national dialogue now urgently necessitates and depends on the cooperation of parties other than the Lebanese themselves for the full implementation of resolution 1559. The Secretary-General emphasizes that the text explicitly calls on all parties concerned to cooperate fully and urgently with the Council for the full implementation of this and all relevant resolutions concerning the restoration of the territorial integrity, full sovereignty and political independence of Lebanon, and that the Council in its presidential statement of 23 January 2006 (document S/PRST/2006/3), called on all other parties concerned, particularly the Syrian Government, to cooperate in the implementation of resolution 1559.

The Secretary-General calls on Syria to accept the Lebanese offer of cooperation and to take measures to establish embassies and delineate the border between the two countries. Diplomatic representation in other States and the existence and clear delineation of national boundaries are basic indicators and intrinsic elements of the sovereignty, territorial integrity and political independence of any State.