

S/2017/591:

Report of the Secretary-General:

On the Implementation of the Security Council Resolution 1701 (2006)

Date: 11 July 2017

Period: 9 March 2017- 21 June 2017

MANDATE

The report provides an update on the implementation of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Lebanon (UNIFIL), pursuant to [Resolution 1701 \(2006\)](#), for the reporting period of 9 March 2017 to 21 June 2017. The Security Council has ordered: the immediate cessation of hostilities between Israeli and Lebanese forces, including Hizbullah; the return of control over all Lebanese territories to the Government of Lebanon; increased financial and humanitarian support from the international community, with particular concern for the plight of more than 1 million refugees currently hosted by the state of Lebanon; and further support to the United Nations Assistance Mission in Lebanon (UNIFIL) to monitor the situation on the ground, assist Lebanese forces enforcing the Blue Line, and ensure humanitarian access.

GENERAL ANALYSIS

While the report notes the situation along the [Blue Line](#) has remained relatively calm, the Secretary-General expresses concerns about the continuing presence of unauthorised armed personnel and weapons in the area, in violation of [Resolution 1701 \(2006\)](#). Specifically, the Secretary-General denounces continued Hizbullah activity and calls on the Government of Lebanon to take all actions necessary to ensure the disarmament of all armed groups in Lebanon. In addition, the conflict in Syria and the resulting refugee crisis continue to pose daunting challenges to Lebanon. In this context, the Secretary-General calls upon all Member States to provide the means necessary to ensure the provision of urgently needed basic assistance to the [Lebanon Crisis Response Fund](#). On the political front, the Secretary-General reports that an agreement of a new electoral law was reached, with parliamentary elections to be held in May 2018. Moreover, the Secretary-General calls upon all factions to unite against extremist group violence. While the Lebanese Armed Forces have completed 127 terrorism-related arrests since 1 March 2017, there was no progress dismantling the military bases of the Population Front for the Liberation of Palestine and Fatah al-Intifada (paras. 31, 32).

Of 82 paragraphs in the report, 4 (nearly 5 per cent) included references to Women, Peace and Security. Too focused on collecting mutual accusations by Lebanon and Israel of violations of Resolution 1701 (2006), the report failed to integrate a much-needed gender analysis of the current situation in Lebanon and of Lebanese women's status in the political process. Indeed, as Resolution 1701 (2006) is gender-blind and the UNIFIL mandate includes a single aim relevant to the Women, Peace and Security (WPS) agenda - compliance with the Secretary-General's zero-tolerance policy on sexual exploitation and abuse (SEA) - it should be reports' responsibility to ensure a gender analysis is included in UNIFIL's efforts to work towards a permanent ceasefire. Specific attention must be paid to women's participation in all security-related matters, including disarming non-state armed groups, as well as gender-sensitive needs assessments to effectively coordinate humanitarian assistance.

GENDER ANALYSIS

Participation

The Secretary-General noted the absence of a quota for women in the recent law which established a new electoral framework in Lebanon (para. 59). This comprises a key failure from the Lebanese government to promote the full and effective participation of women in political life. By failing to include gender-sensitive measures in its new electoral framework, Lebanon impedes women's potential as agents of change. As we can see, when women have less political power, they have a far less secure platform from which to advance claims of gender justice. Ultimately the Government of Lebanon ought to advocate for such measures more firmly in order to demonstrate women are an important constituency for peace and democracy.

Protection

Women's different experience of conflict and displacement was only briefly and indirectly mentioned in the report. "Early marriage" was cited as a "negative coping mechanism" for Syrian in refugee camps, along with begging and child labour (para. 47). Such reference created space to discuss women's more vulnerable situation in armed conflict, yet this opportunity was not exploited. Lebanon currently hosts the highest number of refugees per capita in the world, and as it stands, Syrian and Palestinian refugee women suffer significant human rights violations in Lebanon, including sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) and trafficking. In view of women's increased vulnerability in refugee environments, [reports](#) have highlighted the need for UNIFIL to increase access to technical and vocational education and training for women in order to help reduce their socioeconomic vulnerability.

Prevention

The Secretary-General reported that UNIFIL continued providing training courses for municipal police and civil defense in rescue mission in order to enhance local capacity and support community resilience. While UNIFIL's stabilisation activities are paramount to the implementation of Resolution 1701 (2006), the Secretary-General did not report on the gendered dimensions of continued arms transfers between armed groups on Lebanese territory. The linkages between arms flows and women's human security are such that gender perspectives cannot be excluded from such discussions if the mission is to achieve success. It is crucial that women be engaged in preventing the emergence, spread and re-emergence of conflict through [participation in disarmament and stabilisation efforts](#).

Relief and Recovery/ Implementation

The report presents no progress regarding the monitoring of social, economic, or political developments in the lives of women since the last Secretary-General report [S/2017/201](#). This is especially concerning as it indicates a failure from UNIFIL to monitor the progress or efficacy of gender advisement and training initiatives disseminated by UNIFIL staff among local populations. Moreover, the newly established national human rights institution and its mechanisms to prevent torture, pursuant of Lebanon's commitments under the [Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment](#) will be an important element to the stability and justice agenda for Lebanon. Its work will require systematic and regular assessment.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Participation

Electoral gender quotas are a key measure - recognised by CEDAW ([Article 4](#)) - to ensure both the numeric and substantive representation of women in politics. While quotas have been criticised to be illegitimate tools to "fast track" women's equal representation in politics, or have been criticised for not being based on merit, it is essential that quotas be recognised as windows of opportunity for women's meaningful participation. Not only do women simply have the right to equal representation, but these measures are meant to be temporary, and compensate for already existing inequalities. Moreover, these measures lead to a "role model effect": they allow women to make themselves relevant to the political process and inspire other women to do so as well. The inclusion of grassroots women's organizations from civil society in political life can also provide inroads for the increased participation of women in national decision-making.

Protection

The victimisation of women in conflict situations is strongly exacerbated by arms proliferation. Future reports must note the disproportionate impact which mines and arms have on women in Lebanon. The Mission should facilitate gender analysis regarding the impact of weapons, including the use of explosive weapons in populated areas, small arms and light weapons and nuclear weapons on women. In this context, the Council should exert pressure on Member States to uphold their obligations under Resolution 1701 (2006) to prevent the sale or supply of arms to entities or individuals in Lebanon beyond the control of the State. Moreover, women should be included in the development of protection programmes for refugees, and for survivors of SGBV. Further, the mission should ensure that any humanitarian assistance is in line with existing obligations under international humanitarian law.

Prevention

UNIFIL must continue supporting local and national capacity-building of security forces in Lebanon. It must ensure UNIFIL's training courses and strategic framework in general includes a gender analysis, with a special focus on monitoring and evaluation processes which identify the differential impacts of conflict, extremism, and arms proliferation on the lives of women. Providing broader training programs for women participation in disarmament and stabilisation efforts is especially essential to shift power and support real and sustained change within the community. Moreover, the mission should identify and allocate sufficient resources from the regular budget for implementing these activities and support.

Relief and Recovery/ Implementation

Future reporting must include specific examples of mission efforts to facilitate women's full participation in peacebuilding and post-conflict reconstruction processes, including in monitoring and evaluating implementation. Where specific gender-sensitive provisions in peacebuilding are not mandated, the Secretary-General should press the Security Council to include WPS indicators throughout future mission tasks relevant to reconciliation and reconstruction. Access to justice and recognition for example, if not compensation for past violations, are important elements of post-conflict reconciliation, and need to be taken into account.