



## General Assembly

### GA/10505

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Sixty-first General Assembly  
Plenary  
14<sup>th</sup> & 15<sup>th</sup> Meetings (AM & PM)

#### ADDRESSING GENERAL ASSEMBLY, LEBANON'S PRESIDENT QUESTIONS CREDIBILITY OF SECURITY

#### COUNCIL FOR FAILURE TO QUICKLY STOP FIGHTING BETWEEN ISRAEL, HIZBOLLAH

#### Leaders Stress Need for Security Council Reform To More Effectively Secure Peace, Promote, Rule of Law

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#### Background

The General Assembly met today to continue the general debate of its sixty-first session. For background, see Press Release [GA/10500](#) of 19 September.

#### Statements

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EMILE LAHOUD, President of [Lebanon](#), said he had come before the General Assembly representing his "ravaged" country. From 12 July to 14 August, Lebanon had been subjected to "a barbarous aggression and to a rarely seen campaign of savage dismemberment" that saw bombs fall, mostly on civilians, and destroying all that made Lebanon a viable State. "This was a premeditated Israel sentence to destroy my country and everything it stood for ... This aggression became even more cruel when it won the tacit approbation of certain great Powers."

He regretted that the Security Council had looked powerless to stop the fighting, as it had taken more than a month to achieve a "mere" cessation of hostilities. He said: "It becomes self-evident for us to question the credibility of the United Nations ... Moreover, we cannot but have serious doubts as to this Organization's ability to safeguard world peace, when its resolutions are subjected to the vagaries of a very few world powers."

He said it was time to ask Israel, which owed its existence to a United Nations resolution, to fully abide by Security Council resolutions. While Lebanon had deployed soldiers on its southern border, Israel had been "daily" breaching resolution 1701 (2006), imposing a humiliating siege on Lebanon and refusing to withdraw from the Shebaa Farms. Israel had been treating the Lebanese people as "hostages", kidnapping scores of its citizens, in breach of Resolution 1701. It also refused to give to the United Nations maps of the landmines it had laid on Lebanese soil. He hoped that the United States would not use its veto in the Security Council to forestall an indictment of Israel's use of "smart", cluster, phosphorous and depleted uranium bombs.

He said Lebanon retained the "right of action" to prosecute Israel before competent bodies, including the General Assembly or the international tribunal. He asked the Assembly to stand by his country, and "to differentiate between him who defends his country against Israeli aggression and occupation ... and those elements who perpetuate acts of wanton slaughter against their countrymen and others equally". Lebanon had been left "scarred and terribly afflicted", with thousands of its people killed or injured. But, the will of its people to live and move forward was strong, and it would beat the odds towards a stellar rebirth.

He said that no permanent and comprehensive peace in the Middle East could be achieved without addressing the Arab-Israeli dispute and its core issue of Palestine. Despite events in Lebanon, a window of opportunity had been opened, and it ought to be fully exploited in order to reinvigorate the peace

process. The Arab Peace Initiative that came out of a Summit in Beirut in 2002 remained the best way forward, as it called for implementation of all United Nations resolutions pertaining to an Israeli withdrawal from occupied Arab lands and a return of Palestinian refugees. Only such a settlement could give Lebanon and its neighbours the stability they longed for, and give Israel a sense of security. It would also end "the haemorrhage in the Palestinian territories" and foster moderation where despair had bred extremism and violence, notably in Iraq. If that conception of peace in the Middle East were to become a reality, the need for conferences, studies and discussions of terrorism would become moot.

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SIDI MOHAMED OULD BOUBACAR, Prime Minister of Mauritania, ...

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He said negotiations on the basis of international resolutions, the Arab peace initiative and the "Road Map", were the only way to end the Middle East conflict, guaranteeing an Israeli withdrawal from all occupied Arab lands in Palestine, Syria and Lebanon and allowing the Palestinian people to enjoy their legitimate rights, starting with an independent State with Jerusalem as its capital. ...

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ABDOULAYE WADE, President of Senegal, ...

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... Concerning Palestine, Senegal would see to it that the United Nations continued to work for a durable end to the conflict. He also advocated dialogue, without prior conditions, with Iran.

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PAKALITHA BETHUEL MOSISILI, Prime Minister of Lesotho, ...

... He also expressed solidarity with the struggles for self-determination by the peoples of Palestine and Western Sahara.

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ROBERT FICO, Prime Minister of Slovakia, ...

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On the topic of world conflict, Slovakia remained concerned about the situation in the Middle East, especially Lebanon and the Palestinian territories, as well as the situation in Darfur. ...

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SERGEI V. LAVROV, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, ...

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... On the Arab-Israeli conflict, the Minister welcomed the prospect for the gradual resumption of Palestinian-Israeli talks. Regarding Lebanon, the initiative of the League of Arab States to convene a conference should help find parameters, and the Quartet should also make a key contribution. ...

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BERNARD RUDOLF BOT, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands, ...

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There were reasons for optimism about peace in the Middle East, and the new UNIFIL was a symbol of hope, he said. He hoped United Nations peacekeepers would also be deployed in Darfur, and noted that the Netherlands was considering contributing to the maritime component of UNIFIL. He called on Syria and Iran to act in accordance with Security Council resolution 1701 (2006), and sought serious dialogue by Israel, Palestine and Syria, as well as the outline of a comprehensive Middle East settlement by the Quartet.

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URSULA PLASSNIK, Federal Minister for Foreign Affairs of Austria, ...

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Turning to the Middle East, she said that civilians in that war-torn region still suffered from the disastrous consequences of terror attacks and the indiscriminate use of force. Men, women and children on all sides must be given a real chance to live in peace and an atmosphere of increasing mutual trust. "We know that the path towards that goal is rocky, but we now have reached a turning point", she said, noting that in the aftermath of the armed conflict in Lebanon, all parties in the region had accepted the need for a new, substantive engagement of the international community. Austria was convinced that the work of the diplomatic Quartet on the Middle East peace process should now pave the way towards a major peace initiative in the region.

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MIGUEL ANGEL MORATINOS, Minister of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation of Spain, said countries working within multilateral organizations would help clear up the many questions raised in the current century, since old conflicts continued to erode international security in "the new age". Indeed, a coalition of peace was required in the Middle East and, to that end, the world should commit itself to the creation of a Palestinian State; the end of violence against Israel; a reactivation of the Madrid Process that had begun 20 years ago; and a global peace that included Syria and Lebanon. Hopefully, all actors in the region would commit themselves to implementing Resolution 1701 and supporting UNIFIL, of which Spanish troops were a part.

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AHMED ABOUL GHEIT, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Egypt, ...

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... On the Arab-Israeli conflict, Egypt was making efforts to improve the security situation through direct engagement with both parties, and sought to resume progress on the three tracks of the settlement process. The Quartet's Road Map for peace was a cornerstone in achieving peace in the region with a focus on peaceful coexistence.

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MOCTAR OUANE, Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of Mali, ...

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... The recent outbreak of violence in the Middle East recalled the need for the international community to take appropriate measures to create lasting peace. Mali was actively in solidarity with the peoples of Lebanon and Palestine.

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AICHATOU MINDAOUDOU, Minister for Foreign Affairs, Cooperation and African Integration of Niger, ...

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... The situation in the Middle East, particularly in Lebanon, proved that the United Nations would always be the prime forum for promoting consultations on international peace and security. The same attention should be given to the resurgence of the Israeli-Palestinian crisis, with the goal of bringing the parties back to the negotiating table and advancing on the Road Map and towards the creation of a sovereign Palestinian State. ...

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MAHMOUD ABBAS, Executive Chairman of the Palestine Liberation Organization and President of the Palestinian Authority, commended the effective and successful intervention of the international community to stop the "fire of war" in Lebanon just weeks ago. He hoped that that intervention would extend politically and practically to resolve the root of all conflicts and wars that had plagued the Middle East over many decades. Without resolving the question of Palestine and the continued occupation of Palestinian and Arab lands since 1967, the door would remain open to all forms of violence, terrorism, regional confrontations and global crises, he said.

It was unfortunate to see that international plans and initiatives, foremost among them the Road Map endorsed by the United Nations Security Council, had reached a state of stagnation and even regression, he said. Calls for the resumption of negotiations were faced with preconditions. Meanwhile, despair and frustration thrived with the roar of bulldozers building illegal settlements and erecting the "apartheid separation wall" inside occupied land. They thrived on the continuation of the frightful siege, through military checkpoints, that had turned cities and regions into reservations. Despair and frustration thrived on the persistent saga of killings and assassinations that had claimed hundreds of civilian lives, and on home demolitions and ongoing arrests. Under such conditions, he asked how the international community could expect extremism to retreat or the waves of violence to ebb. He also wondered how leaders could convince the public that the option of negotiation and international legitimacy would be fruitful and have a real chance of success.

He called upon the international community, particularly influential Powers, to provide tangible evidence that they would support the unconditional resumption of negotiations, and ensure their success, through the cessation of settlement activity, collective punishment and separation walls. That would provide a positive atmosphere for launching negotiations and achieving a just peace, based on a two-State solution, as called for by the President of the United States. Such a solution must be based on international legitimacy, as upheld by the Arab Peace Initiative, through the establishment of the independent State of Palestine, with the 4 June 1967 borders and East Jerusalem as its capital, and through reaching a just solution for the problem of refugees, who constituted more than half the Palestinian people, in accordance with United Nations General Assembly resolution 194.

The Government of Israel had said it would abandon its policy of unilateralism, he said. That was encouraging provided that the alternative was not stagnation, but a return to the negotiating table to reach a comprehensive solution, which would ensure a secure future for Palestinian and Israeli children.

He said he sought to establish a Government of National Unity that was consistent with international and Arab legitimacy, and that corresponded to the principles established by the Quartet. Any future Palestinian Government would commit to all agreements to which the Palestine Liberation Organization and the Palestinian National Authority had agreed. Any future Government would also commit to imposing security and order, to ending the phenomenon of multiple militias, indiscipline and chaos, and to strengthening the rule of law. Negotiations with Israel would remain the responsibility of the Palestine Liberation Organization. The outcome of the talks would then be presented to the Palestinian National Council, or to a national public referendum.

He had a vision for the future, where Palestine would be a homeland and not a prison, where Jerusalem would be the capital of two neighbour States that lived in peace and equality, he said. Echoing the late President Yasser Arafat's call from the same platform 32 years ago, he implored: "Do not let the olive branch fall from my hand, do not let the olive branch fall from my hand."

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