



General Assembly

A/63/2
1 January 2008

Official Records
Sixty-third Session
Supplement No. 2

Report of the Security Council

1 August 2007-31 July 2008

/...

Introduction

/...

The situation in the Middle East, including the Palestinian question, received the Council's close attention, including at the Council's monthly briefings. While continuing to be fully engaged with the situation, apart from the briefings, urgent meetings, debates and open debates, the Council was not able to reach the unanimity needed for it to take any action during the current 12-month reporting period, despite the seven attempts that were presented by different delegations in due course.

/...

Middle East

The situation in the Middle East, including the Palestinian question

The situation in the Middle East during the year under review was a mixture of positive and negative developments. The Annapolis conference in November 2007 that brought the Palestinians and Israelis back to the negotiating table was followed by the ceasefire agreement in Gaza between Hamas and Israel under Egypt's mediation, the humanitarian exchange between Israel and Hizbullah, the new round of indirect peace talks between the Syrian Arab Republic and Israel, and the efforts to conduct dialogue for national reconciliation among Palestinian parties. Yet continued violence, new Israeli settlement in the Occupied Palestinian Territories and the humanitarian crisis in Gaza continued to hinder progress in the Palestinian-Israeli talks. The Council continued to follow the situation closely, with monthly briefings by senior Secretariat staff and updates on the activities of the Quartet. The Council failed to adopt any resolutions or presidential statements on the matter.

On 29 August 2007, the Council held an open debate on the Middle East, during which 34 speakers took the floor. Most representatives expressed the hope that the diplomatic initiatives launched in recent months, particularly the in-depth dialogue between the Palestinian President, Mahmoud Abbas, and the Prime Minister of Israel, Ehud Olmert, and the international conference on the Middle East to be held in November 2007 at the initiative of the President of the United States of America, would lead to progress towards a definitive solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. They considered, however, that the fragile situation on the ground, if not carefully managed, could hinder the diplomatic process.

On 20 September, the Council heard a presentation by the Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs and thereafter held consultations on the situation in the Middle East, particularly concerning the Palestinian issue. The Under-Secretary-General indicated that Prime Minister Olmert and President Abbas continued their bilateral dialogue and had agreed to set up negotiating teams to assist them in transforming their discussions into an agreed text, indicating that a new push for peace in the Middle East was being made and held genuine promise. He also noted that the situation on the ground remained of deep concern.

On 24 October, the Council heard a further briefing by the Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs. At the informal consultations that followed, members of the Council expressed support for the international meeting on the Middle East to be held in Annapolis in November under the auspices of the United States of America. Members of the Council further commended efforts undertaken by the Quartet and countries in the region, and urged all parties to refrain from the use of violence and help to ease the humanitarian situation in the occupied territories.

On 29 and 30 November, the Council held closed consultations on the Middle East peace process, specifically addressing the joint understanding that had been reached at the Annapolis conference. On

30 November, at a public briefing, the Council was updated by the Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs on the outcome of the Annapolis conference, at

which the Prime Minister of Israel and the Palestinian President had reached an agreement to launch immediate good-faith bilateral negotiations to conclude a peace treaty, resolving all outstanding issues without exception before the end of 2008, an agreement on a joint steering committee which would meet continuously, and a commitment to implement immediately their respective obligations under the road map. The Under-Secretary-General said that the Annapolis conference had also included extensive discussions on international support for building the institutional capacity of the Palestinian Authority, setting the stage for the upcoming donors' conference in Paris.

On 21 December, the Council heard a briefing by the Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs on the situation in the Middle East, followed by consultations of the whole. The Under-Secretary-General remarked on the latest developments in the peace process, stressing that, since the Annapolis conference, bilateral negotiations between Israel and the Palestinian Authority had commenced and that strong international engagement had been reflected in a landmark donors' conference, a Quartet meeting, and a meeting of the Quartet and members of the League of Arab States, all held in Paris on 17 December. At the same time, he stated that developments on the ground, including new settlement activity and ongoing violence, had been a cause of concern.

On 22 January 2008, the Council held a debate on the situation in Gaza following a request for an urgent meeting submitted by Saudi Arabia, in its capacity as the Chairman of the Group of Arab States (S/2008/31). The representatives of Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, the Syrian Arab Republic, Pakistan (on behalf of the Organization of the Islamic Conference), Saudi Arabia (on behalf of the Group of Arab States), Slovenia (on behalf of the European Union) and Cuba (on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement), as well as the Permanent Observers of Palestine and the League of Arab States, were invited by the Council to participate in the meeting. The Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs briefed the Council on the latest developments, stressing the deterioration in the humanitarian situation in the Gaza Strip and southern Israel, and urged Israel to allow regular and unimpeded delivery of fuel and basic necessities to the Palestinian area. Over the following days, members of the Council held a series of thorough consultations. Although the consultations provided the opportunity for a useful exchange of views, no agreement on a draft presidential statement could be reached.

On 30 January, at a debate, the Council received an update on the humanitarian and economic situation in Gaza from the Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs. The representatives of Israel, Lebanon and the Syrian Arab Republic, as well as the Permanent Observer of Palestine, also participated and delivered statements at the meeting.

On 26 February, the Council heard a briefing by the newly appointed Special Coordinator of the United Nations for the Middle East Peace Process and Personal Representative of the Secretary-General, Robert H. Serry. The Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator also briefed the Council on his visit to the region from 14 to 18 February and voiced concerns over the current situation.

On 28 February, the Council held consultations to continue the discussion of ongoing violence in Gaza and southern Israel.

On 1 March, the Council, in response to letters from the Permanent Representative of the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya and the Permanent Observer of Palestine (S/2008/142 and S/2008/144, respectively), convened an emergency meeting. Addressing the Council, the Secretary-General expressed his deep concern about the escalation of violence in Gaza and southern Israel, which had resulted in a terrible civilian death toll, and called on both parties to stop the violence and restore order. The representatives of Palestine and Israel also made statements at the meeting. At the end of the informal consultations which followed, the President of the Council delivered a summary of the meeting to the media, in which he stated that members of the Council expressed deep concern about the loss of civilian lives in southern Israel and Gaza, condemned the escalation of violence, called upon all parties to respect their obligations under international law and underlined the need for all parties to immediately cease all acts of violence. In addition, members of the Council reaffirmed their support for the political process aimed at establishing two States — Israel and Palestine — living side by side in peace and security. During those consultations, one delegation proposed a draft resolution on the situation in the Middle East for the Council's consideration but members of the Council were unable to reach agreement.

On 6 March, the Council did not manage to take action on the draft statement to the press proposed by one delegation condemning the attack on a Jewish seminary in West Jerusalem on the same date.

On 25 March, the Council held a debate in the presence of the Secretary-General and with the participation of the representatives of Palestine, Israel, Cuba (on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement), Lebanon, Pakistan (on behalf of the Organization of the Islamic Conference), Slovenia (on behalf of the European Union), the Sudan (on behalf of the Group of Arab States), and the Syrian Arab Republic. In his regular briefing to the Council, the Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs stated that recent efforts to advance the political process had again been overshadowed by violence, resulting in high numbers of civilian casualties and a lack of concrete improvements on the ground. He urged the international community and all regional parties to strongly support efforts to end the violence in and around Gaza and to reopen border crossings.

On 23 April, the Council was briefed by the Assistant Secretary-General for Political Affairs, Angela Kane, who indicated that Palestinians and Israelis were now engaged in the most intensive negotiations on the final status of their disputed area since the breakdown of the Israeli-Palestinian political process nearly eight years previously, and reiterated the Secretary-General's repeated calls for a cessation of all acts of violence and for all parties to comply with international humanitarian and human rights law.

On 28 May, in a public briefing to the Council, the Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process indicated that there were now various processes under way that had the potential to bring lasting change to the conflict-fraught Middle East, although important gaps and underlying sources of tension remained and further visible progress was needed.

On 27 June, the Council heard a presentation from the Director of the Asia and the Pacific Division of the Department of Political Affairs, Lisa Buttenheim, who said that efforts to advance the political process through direct negotiations, including those mediated by the Quartet and countries in the region, should be promoted to find common ground on the core issues. Reiterating the United Nations condemnation of all deliberate or indiscriminate attacks on civilians and any disproportionate or excessive use of force, she added that measures to support the Palestinian Authority and the economy in the West Bank must be intensified by donors fulfilling pledges for budgetary support, that the road map obligations needed to be acted upon, particularly an Israeli settlement freeze, and that the Gaza calm should be respected by all parties concerned. Regarding Lebanon, she reported that the area of operations of the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon had remained generally quiet, although significant numbers of Israeli violations continued to be recorded. Her briefing was followed by closed consultations of the Council, during which one delegation proposed a draft resolution on the Israeli settlements for the Council's consideration, which is still pending.

On 22 July, the Council convened an open debate on the situation in the Middle East, during which it received a briefing by the Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs, who indicated a number of encouraging developments across the region and stressed the importance of achieving further visible progress in peaceful negotiations, consolidating the ceasefire and resolving the humanitarian crisis in Gaza, and improving the livelihood of Palestinians in the Occupied Territories.

Lebanon

/...

On 15 April, the Council adopted a presidential statement (S/PRST/2008/8), in response to the Secretary-General's report of 28 February 2008 (S/2008/135) on the implementation of resolution 1701 (2006), in which it called upon all concerned parties, in particular those in the region, to intensify their efforts in implementing resolution 1701 (2006), including by fully cooperating with the Secretary-General in this regard. The Council also stressed the importance of and the need to achieve a comprehensive, just and lasting peace in the Middle East, based on all its relevant resolutions, including its resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973).

/...

Implementation of resolution 1559 (2004)

On 5 November 2007, the Council was briefed in consultations of the whole by the Special Envoy for the implementation of Security Council resolution 1559 (2004), Terje Roed-Larsen, about the Secretary-General's recent report on the implementation of resolution 1559 (2004) (S/2007/629). In an oral statement to the press thereafter, the President of the Council indicated that members of Council stressed the need to successfully organize a free and fair presidential election in Lebanon and called upon all concerned parties to resolve all political issues on the basis of reconciliation and national dialogue.

On 8 May 2008, at an open meeting, the Special Envoy briefed the Council on the seventh semi-annual report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of resolution 1559 (2004) (S/2008/264). In the consultations of the whole that followed, members of the Council shared their concern about the prolonged political and security crisis in Lebanon, including the intensification of violence in Beirut and some other areas since 5 May. While supporting the efforts by Lebanon to fully restore its sovereignty, territorial integrity and political independence pursuant to resolution 1559 (2004), members of the Council called on the parties to strengthen national reconciliation and inclusive political dialogue as set out in the Taif agreement and to organize the presidential election without delay. They reaffirmed the important role of the United Nations, the League of Arab States, countries in the region and the international community at large in helping Lebanon to overcome the crisis and bring the country back to normal development. They also concurred with the Secretary-General in calling on all parties to fully abide by resolutions 1559 (2004), 1680 (2006) and 1701 (2006), and supported the full implementation of those and all other relevant Security Council resolutions with a view to achieving a just, lasting and comprehensive peace throughout the Middle East region.

/..

Part II

Questions considered by the Security Council under its responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security

Chapter 1

Items relating to the situation in the Middle East

A. The situation in the Middle East, including the Palestinian question

Meetings of the Council

5736 (29 August 2007); 5746 (20 September 2007); 5767 (24 October 2007); 5788 (30 November 2007); 5815 (21 December 2007); 5824 (22 January 2008); 5827 (30 January 2008); 5846 (26 February 2008); 5847 (1 March 2008); 5859 (25 March 2008); 5873 (23 April 2008); 5899 (28 May 2008); 5927 (27 June 2008); 5940 (22 July 2008)

Consultations of the whole

20 September; 24 October; 29 and 30 November; 21 December 2007; 21-25 and 29 January; 26 and 28 February; 6 March; 23 April; 28 May; 27 June 2008

Reports of the Secretary-General

| <i>Symbol</i> | <i>Date submitted</i> | <i>In response to</i> |
|---------------|-----------------------|-----------------------------------|
| S/2007/553 | 20 September 2007 | General Assembly resolution 61/25 |

Communications dated from 1 August 2007 to 31 July 2008

| | | |
|------------|----------------|---|
| S/2007/656 | 30 May 2007 | Letter from the representative of Pakistan to the Secretary-General* * Circulated after the issuance of the previous annual report of the Security Council (1 August 2006-31 July 2007). |
| S/2007/475 | 6 August 2007 | Identical letters from the observer of Palestine to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council |
| S/2007/495 | 15 August 2007 | Identical letters from the observer of Palestine to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council |
| S/2007/504 | 22 August 2007 | Identical letters from the observer of Palestine to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council |
| S/2007/507 | 22 August 2007 | Letter from the Secretary-General to the President of the Security Council |
| S/2007/508 | 24 August 2007 | Letter from the President of the Security Council to the Secretary-General |

| | | |
|------------|-------------------|--|
| S/2007/514 | 24 August 2007 | Letter from the observer of Palestine to the President of the Security Council |
| S/2007/512 | 27 August 2007 | Identical letters from the observer of Palestine to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council |
| S/2007/524 | 4 September 2007 | Identical letters from the representative of Israel to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council |
| S/2007/536 | 7 September 2007 | Identical letters from the observer of Palestine to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council |
| S/2007/537 | 9 September 2007 | Identical letters from the representative of the Syrian Arab Republic to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council |
| S/2007/554 | 19 September 2007 | Identical letters from the observer of Palestine to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council |
| S/2007/571 | 24 September 2007 | Letter from the representative of Cuba to the Secretary-General |
| S/2007/574 | 27 September 2007 | Identical letters from the observer of Palestine to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council |
| S/2007/581 | 26 September 2007 | Letter from the representative of Cuba to the Secretary-General |
| S/2007/599 | 9 October 2007 | Identical letters from the observer of Palestine to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council |
| S/2007/636 | 18 October 2007 | Letter from the representative of Pakistan to the Secretary-General |
| S/2007/628 | 23 October 2007 | Identical letters from the observer of Palestine to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council |
| S/2007/630 | 23 October 2007 | Letter from the representative of the Syrian Arab Republic to the Secretary-General |
| S/2007/634 | 26 October 2007 | Identical letters from the observer of Palestine to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council |
| S/2007/646 | 2 November 2007 | Identical letters from the representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council |
| S/2007/685 | 26 November 2007 | Letter from the representative of Bahrain to the Secretary-General |
| S/2007/690 | 28 November 2007 | Letter from the Secretary-General to the President of the Security Council |
| S/2007/691 | 30 November 2007 | Letter from the President of the Security Council to the Secretary-General |
| S/2007/707 | 4 December 2007 | Identical letters from the observer of Palestine to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council |
| S/2007/724 | 10 December 2007 | Identical letters from the representative of the Syrian Arab Republic to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council |
| S/2007/728 | 11 December 2007 | Identical letters from the observer of Palestine to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council |
| S/2007/733 | 12 December 2007 | Identical letters from the representative of Israel to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council |
| S/2007/741 | 17 December 2007 | Identical letters from the representative of Israel to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council |
| S/2007/750 | 18 December 2007 | Identical letters from the observer of Palestine to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council |
| S/2007/766 | 28 December 2007 | Identical letters from the observer of Palestine to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council |
| S/2007/767 | 28 December 2007 | Identical letters from the representative of Israel to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council |
| S/2008/3 | 2 January 2008 | Identical letters from the representative of Israel to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council |

| | | |
|---------------------|------------------|--|
| S/2008/8 and Corr.1 | 4 January 2008 | Identical letters from the observer of Palestine to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council |
| S/2008/23 | 15 January 2008 | Identical letters from the observer of Palestine to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council |
| S/2008/24 | 15 January 2008 | Identical letters from the representative of Israel to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council |
| S/2008/28 | 17 January 2008 | Letter from the representative of Cuba to the Secretary-General |
| S/2008/31 | 21 January 2008 | Letter from the representative of Saudi Arabia to the President of the Security Council |
| S/2008/32 | 21 January 2008 | Letter from the observer of Palestine to the President of the Security Council |
| S/2008/35 | 21 January 2008 | Identical letters from the observer of Palestine to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council |
| S/2008/37 | 22 January 2008 | Letter from the representative of Malaysia to the President of the Security Council |
| S/2008/51 | 22 January 2008 | Letter from the observer of Palestine to the President of the Security Council |
| S/2008/42 | 23 January 2008 | Identical letters from the representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council |
| S/2008/47 | 24 January 2008 | Letter from the representative of Cuba to the Secretary-General |
| S/2008/55 | 28 January 2008 | Identical letters from the representative of Israel to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council |
| S/2008/57 | 30 January 2008 | Letter from the representative of Cuba to the President of the Security Council |
| S/2008/62 | 31 January 2008 | Letter from the representative of Cuba to the President of the Security Council |
| S/2008/70 | 31 January 2008 | Letter from the representative of Cuba to the Secretary-General |
| S/2008/72 | 4 February 2008 | Identical letters from the representative of Israel to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council |
| S/2008/73 | 4 February 2008 | Identical letters from the representative of Israel to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council |
| S/2008/81 | 7 February 2008 | Identical letters from the observer of Palestine to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council |
| S/2008/88 | 7 February 2008 | Letter from the observer of Palestine to the President of the Security Council |
| S/2008/86 | 8 February 2008 | Identical letters from the representative of Israel to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council |
| S/2008/90 | 11 February 2008 | Identical letters from the representative of Israel to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council |
| S/2008/96 | 11 February 2008 | Identical letters from the representative of Pakistan to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council |
| S/2008/110 | 19 February 2008 | Identical letters from the representative of Israel to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council |
| S/2008/117 | 19 February 2008 | Identical letters from the representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council |
| S/2008/131 | 25 February 2008 | Letter from the representative of Israel to the President of the Security Council |
| S/2008/132 | 27 February 2008 | Identical letters from the representative of Israel to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council |
| S/2008/149 | 28 February 2008 | Identical letters from the observer of Palestine to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council |
| S/2008/152 | 29 February 2008 | Letter from the representative of Cuba to the Secretary-General |
| S/2008/14 | 21 March 2008 | Letter from the representative of the Libyan |

| | | |
|------------|---------------|--|
| | | Arab Jamahiriya to the President of the Security Council |
| S/2008/143 | 1 March 2008 | Letter from the observer of Palestine to the President of the Security Council |
| S/2008/144 | 1 March 2008 | Identical letters from the observer of Palestine to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council |
| S/2008/150 | 3 March 2008 | Identical letters from the observer of Palestine to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council |
| S/2008/153 | 4 March 2008 | Letter from the representative of Pakistan to the President of the Security Council |
| S/2008/169 | 10 March 2008 | Identical letters from the representative of Israel to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council |
| S/2008/170 | 11 March 2008 | Identical letters from the observer of Palestine to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council |
| S/2008/184 | 19 March 2008 | Letter from the observer of Palestine to the President of the Security Council |
| S/2008/189 | 20 March 2008 | Letter from the representative of Israel to the President of the Security Council |
| S/2008/198 | 25 March 2008 | Letter from the representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran to the President of the Security Council |
| S/2008/201 | 25 March 2008 | Letter from the representative of Yemen to the President of the Security Council |
| S/2008/209 | 27 March 2008 | Identical letters from the representative of Israel to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council |
| S/2008/223 | 4 April 2008 | Identical letters from the representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council |
| S/2008/228 | 7 April 2008 | Letter from the representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran to the Secretary-General |
| S/2008/232 | 7 April 2008 | Note verbale from the Permanent Mission of the Syrian Arab Republic to the President of the Security Council |
| S/2008/233 | 7 April 2008 | Identical letters from the representative of Israel to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council |
| S/2008/256 | 16 April 2008 | Identical letters from the observer of Palestine to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council |
| S/2008/261 | 18 April 2008 | Letter from the representative of Israel to the President of the Security Council |
| S/2008/269 | 22 April 2008 | Identical letters from the representative of Israel to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council |
| S/2008/275 | 22 April 2008 | Letter from the representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran to the Secretary-General |
| S/2008/311 | 22 April 2008 | Identical letters from the representative of Israel to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council |
| S/2008/296 | 23 April 2008 | Letter from the observer of the League of Arab States to the President of the Security Council |
| S/2008/277 | 25 April 2008 | Identical letters from the representative of Israel to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council |
| S/2008/282 | 29 April 2008 | Identical letters from the observer of Palestine to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council |
| S/2008/316 | 12 May 2008 | Identical letters from the representative of Israel to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council |
| S/2008/328 | 14 May 2008 | Identical letters from the representative of Israel to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council |
| S/2008/335 | 21 May 2008 | Letter from the observer of Palestine to the President of the Security Council |
| S/2008/365 | 3 June 2008 | Identical letters from the observer of Palestine to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council |

| | | |
|------------|--------------|--|
| S/2008/367 | 5 June 2008 | Identical letters from the representative of Israel to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council |
| S/2008/396 | 17 June 2008 | Letter from the representative of Cuba to the President of the Security Council |
| S/2008/404 | 18 June 2008 | Identical letters from the observer of Palestine to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council |
| S/2008/420 | 24 June 2008 | Letter from the representative of Israel to the President of the Security Council |
| S/2008/421 | 25 June 2008 | Identical letters from the observer of Palestine to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council |
| S/2008/430 | 2 July 2008 | Letter from the representative of Israel to the President of the Security Council |
| S/2008/440 | 3 July 2008 | Letter from the representative of Pakistan to the President of the Security Council |
| S/2008/455 | 11 July 2008 | Letter from the representative of France to the President of the Security Council |
| S/2008/473 | 18 July 2008 | Letter from the observer of Palestine to the President of the Security Council |
| S/2008/482 | 22 July 2008 | Letter from the representative of Israel to the President of the Security Council |

/...