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Identical letters dated 30 August 2004 from the Permanent Representative of Lebanon to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

On instructions from my Government, I have the honour to transmit a letter from the Government of Lebanon addressed to you regarding an initiative to submit to the Security Council a draft resolution on Syrian-Lebanese relations (see annex).

I should be grateful if you would arrange to have this letter and its annex circulated to members of the Security Council and issued as an official document of the General Assembly, under agenda item 37, and of the Security Council.

(Signed) Sami Kronfol
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

* Reissued for technical reasons.

Annex to the identical letters dated 30 August 2004 from the Permanent Representative of Lebanon to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

The Permanent Mission of Lebanon to the United Nations has informed us of the existence of an initiative to submit a United States-French draft resolution urging the Syrian Arab Republic to withdraw its troops from Lebanon, to refrain from interfering in the Lebanese presidential elections and to cease supporting terrorist groups in Lebanon.

May we point out that proceeding with such a draft resolution would set a dangerous precedent, in violation of international law and norms, for the following reasons:

1. The submission of this draft resolution coincides with the forthcoming presidential elections in Lebanon. It is therefore to be feared that the timing of its submission could adversely affect the electoral process and that the Security Council could subsequently be seen as a tool of intervention in Lebanon's internal affairs.
 2. The presence of Syrian troops in Lebanon is linked to the Taif Treaty and other bilateral agreements between the Governments of Lebanon and the Syrian Arab Republic. This presence is under the auspices and supervision of the competent legitimate institutions in each country. No external entity is entitled to intervene with regard to its modalities or to impose changes. In our view, this presence serves the many common interests of the two countries, which alone must determine the extent, limits, necessity and development thereof.
 3. The allegation that the Syrian Arab Republic is backing terrorist organizations in Lebanon defies the truth. The Syrian Arab Republic's role in Lebanon has always been to support and strengthen the official security institutions. It is contributing to the maintenance of security in Lebanon, as is clearly demonstrated by the stability prevailing in Lebanon, which is internationally recognized, and the general calm, except for the daily Israeli violations of Lebanon's airspace and borders.
 4. The attempt made by certain States to interfere in Lebanon's internal affairs under the pretext of respect for the Constitution on the eve of the presidential elections is a cover for political intentions of no relevance to such claims, aimed at manipulating the domestic situation and creating conditions of instability which would only expose the country to grave dangers.
 5. We hope that the Secretary-General of the United Nations will intervene with the Security Council to prevent this draft resolution from going forward and avert this grave precedent which could lead the United Nations to abandon its fundamental role and become involved in the internal affairs of a Member State.
- I should be grateful if you would arrange for the text of this letter to be circulated as a document of the General Assembly and the Security Council.