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LETTER DATED 29 MARCH 1985 FROM THE SECRETARY-GENERAL ADDRESSED
TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

I have the honour to transmit to you herewith a letter dated 28 March 1985 addressed to me by the representatives of the troop-contributing countries for the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL).

I fully appreciate and understand the views expressed by those representatives regarding the functioning of UNIFIL and the necessity to ensure the security of its troops in the performance of their difficult and important tasks. This is an objective to which I and my colleagues devote a great deal of time and attention.

I wish to take this opportunity to express once again my deep appreciation to the troop-contributing countries for their steadfast and generous support of UNIFIL during the past years and to pay tribute to their contingents which have carried out their tasks with exemplary dedication and courage in extremely difficult circumstances.

(Signed) Javier PEREZ DE CUELLAR

Letter dated 28 March 1985 from the representatives of the troop-contributing countries
for the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon addressed to the Secretary-General

In view of recent developments in southern Lebanon, the Member States participating in UNIFIL deem it appropriate to express to you their deep concern at these events, which not only have made it even more difficult for UNIFIL to fulfil its mandate, but, which also pose serious security risks to the members of the Force. This element of risk is causing increasing concern in their countries.

For more than two years now, UNIFIL has carried out interim tasks entrusted to it by the Security Council following the Israeli invasion of Lebanon. This had become necessary because UNIFIL was unable to carry out the original mandate, given to it by the Security Council in its resolution 425 of 1978, which decided to establish the Force "for the purpose of confirming the withdrawal of the Israeli Forces, restoring international peace and security and assisting the Government of Lebanon in ensuring the return of its effective authority in the area".

In spite of the difficult circumstances under which UNIFIL has been forced to operate during these past few years, the troop-contributing countries are convinced that UNIFIL has had a stabilizing effect on the situation in southern Lebanon. Moreover, the Force has been able to play a useful humanitarian role, and its presence symbolizes the will of the international community to restore international peace and security and to re-establish Lebanese authority in the area in accordance with the relevant resolutions of the Security Council.

The troop-contributing countries wish to recall that the mandate of the Force, contained in document S/12611 of 19 March 1978 and approved by the Security Council in its resolution 426 (1978), speaks of "three essential conditions that must be met for the Force to be effective".

"Firstly, it must have at all times the full confidence and backing of the Security Council". In this respect the troop-contributing countries think it incumbent on the Security Council to insist that all parties concerned respect the integrity of UNIFIL in all its component parts, as well as of other United Nations personnel operating in southern Lebanon under the present difficult circumstances.

"Secondly, the Force must operate with the full co-operation of all parties concerned". UNIFIL can only hope to fulfil its mandate on the basis of an understanding between all parties concerned on the role of the Force and the security situation in the area. This applies a fortiori to a situation in which the absence of the necessary co-operation would endanger the personal safety of the members of the Force.

"Thirdly, it must be able to function as an integrated and efficient military unit". In the opinion of the troop-contributing countries, UNIFIL will only be able to carry out its original mandate if the Force is allowed to be deployed and operate effectively in an area that forms one uninterrupted whole up to the internationally recognized boundary.

The troop-contributing countries take note of the declaration by the Government of Israel that it will fully implement the withdrawal of the Israeli Defence Force from Lebanese territory, thus complying with the relevant resolutions of the Security Council. They call for the strict observance of the Fourth Geneva Convention of 1949. At the same time, they deplore all acts of violence presently occurring in the area. As far as UNIFIL is concerned, they consider that the Force, in performing its functions, should continue to act with complete impartiality and in accordance with the provisions laid down in the mandate.

The troop-contributing countries urgently call upon the Governments of Israel and Lebanon to meet the requirements necessary to ensure security for all concerned in the area in the wake of a full Israeli withdrawal behind international borders. They continue to support Your Excellency in your efforts to bring about this goal, thereby acting on the basis of resolution 523 (1982). For their part, the troop-contributing countries have shown great patience thus far in the expectation that positive events in the near future would allow UNIFIL to play the role originally envisaged for the Force. They expect that the above-mentioned principles will apply to the future operation of UNIFIL, and on that basis they indicate their willingness to continue to support the Force with a view to the implementation of the mandate given to it by the Security Council.

The Member States participating in UNIFIL should be grateful if Your Excellency could bring this letter to the attention of the Security Council and they have the honour to request that it be circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Bal RAM
for the Permanent Representative of Fiji

(Signed) Keijo KORHONEN
Permanent Representative of Finland

(Signed) Philippe LOUET
Acting Permanent Representative of France

(Signed) James Victor GBEHO
Permanent Representative of Ghana

(Signed) Robert McDonagh
Permanent Representative of Ireland

(Signed) Maurizio BUCCI
Permanent Representative of Italy

(Signed) Uddhav Deo BHATT
Permanent Representative of Nepal

(Signed) Hans MEESMAN
Acting Permanent Representative of the Netherlands

(Signed) Sverre J. BERGH JOHANSEN
Acting Permanent Representative of Norway

(Signed) Anders FERM
Permanent Representative of Sweden
