



Statement

by

**Ms. Caroline Ziadé
Chargé d’Affaires a.i. of Lebanon
to the United Nations**

**at the
Security Council**

“The situation in the Middle East, including the Palestinian question”

New York, July 25, 2017

CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

***Permanent Mission of Lebanon to the United Nations
866 United Nations Plaza, Suite 531, New York, NY 10017***

Mr. President,

The difficult realities in the State of Palestine have been somberly summarized in the report of Human Rights Watch (HRW) issued on the occasion of fifty years of Israeli occupation, and I quote “at least five categories of major violations of international human rights law and humanitarian law characterize the (Israeli) occupation: unlawful killings; forced displacement; abusive detention; the closure of the Gaza Strip and other unjustified restrictions on movement; and the development of settlements, along with the accompanying discriminatory policies that disadvantage Palestinians.” End of quote.

And lately, we were also reminded of the extent of the shocking Israeli practices in Jerusalem and Al Aqsa mosque: Killings, closure, and disproportionate use of force against worshipers and civilians, in a clear attempt to escalate an occupation into a “war of religions”. These practices are not only blatant violations of the United Nations charter, principles of international law and resolutions adopted by this council, but also of article 4 of the Hague convention, article 38 of the Geneva convention and article 27 of the international covenant on civil and political rights to respect people’s right to observe and practice their own religion.

Suffice to mention that these are deliberate attempts to create new realities on the ground making the two state solution an objective practically impossible to attain. It is time to hold Israel accountable and to compel it to seize and rescind all measures to tamper with the historic status quo of Al Aqsa mosque and its esplanade.

Today, the international community should be biased to upholding the principles of international law. It is high time to turn our commitment to the principle of “land for peace” into realities by ending the Israeli occupation and heeding the calls for peace and implement the Arab peace initiative adopted in my country Lebanon in 2002, and reiterated by several summits and meetings, the latest being the Arab summit hosted by Jordan last March 2017.

Mr. President,

Turning to my country Lebanon, since the adoption of resolution 1701(2006), there has not been a single day during which Israel has not continued to breach Lebanon’s sovereignty by land and sea in total disrespect of its obligation under resolution 1701. Let me only mention the daily violations of the Lebanese airspace by Israeli fighter jets.

Despite all these flagrant violations, multiple smearing campaigns, false allegations, and salves of threats by Israel to set my country back into “dark ages”, the government of Lebanon remains firm in its commitment to the full implementation of resolution 1701, not only to preserve the gains of our collective investment in security and stability but rather to multiply them.

It is in this context, that my government encourages yet again the Secretary-General to expedite his good offices efforts and looks forward to receiving the results of the efforts of the Special Coordinator on the delineation of the disputed maritime border and Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) between Lebanon and Israel, emphasizing that the non-resolution of this issue” shall remain a source of conflict that threatens peace and security in our region”.

Furthermore, my government will also submit a request to renew UNIFIL's mandate for one year without any changes. Only a capable and efficient UNIFIL could maintain stability and security in the South of Lebanon in particular in light of the volatile situation in region. For the partnership between LAF and UNIFIL, My delegation would like to seize this opportunity to express deep appreciation to all TCCs, a good number of them are around the table or present in this August body, for their sacrifices, and noble determination to protect civilians and to ensure full respect of Lebanon's sovereignty.

Our meeting today coincides also with the visit of the President of the Council of Ministers to Washington, preceded by visits to the European Union and other friendly countries, with a sole objective to emphasize the economic, social and security challenges facing my country, and most importantly, to reiterate our calls to assist Lebanon in its efforts to address the situation of refugees and their host communities and to strengthen LAF's capabilities in their commendable fight against terrorism.

All these efforts are deeply rooted in the importance of protecting and preserving Lebanon as a model for the region: promising democracy, liberal system, forefront for combating terrorism, beacon of diversity and coexistence in a region raging with fear and exclusion.

Let the right prevail in the Middle East and its peoples.

Thank you Mr. President.