LEBANON:

Displaced return amidst growing political tension

A profile of the internal displacement situation

15 December, 2006

About the Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre

The Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre, established in 1998 by the Norwegian Refugee Council, is the leading international body monitoring conflict-induced internal displacement worldwide.

Through its work, the Centre contributes to improving national and international capacities to protect and assist the millions of people around the globe who have been displaced within their own country as a result of conflicts or human rights violations.

At the request of the United Nations, the Geneva-based Centre runs an online database providing comprehensive information and analysis on internal displacement in some 50 countries.

Based on its monitoring and data collection activities, the Centre advocates for durable solutions to the plight of the internally displaced in line with international standards.

The Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre also carries out training activities to enhance the capacity of local actors to respond to the needs of internally displaced people. In its work, the Centre cooperates with and provides support to local and national civil society initiatives.

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Lebanon: displaced return amidst growing political tension

Some 200,000 people are estimated to remain in a situation of internal displacement in Lebanon following the hostilities between the Shiite militant and political organisation Hizbollah and Israeli security forces in summer 2006. Nearly one million people were displaced at the height of the conflict – the vast majority of them within Lebanon. Most of the displaced returned to their homes in south Lebanon and the southern suburbs of Beirut immediately following a UN-brokered ceasefire in August 2006. However the destruction of homes and infrastructure, the presence of cluster bombs, and loss of livelihoods are significant obstacles to the return and sustainable reintegration of displaced people. In addition, the overall stability of the country is in doubt as disputes have intensified between Lebanon's diverse political parties.

Internal displacement is not a new phenomenon in Lebanon. A significant number of people remain displaced from the Lebanese civil war of 1975-1990 and as a result of Israeli invasions and occupation of part of south Lebanon. No updated reliable survey exists to determine the current number and estimates range hugely, between 16,750 and 600,000. Lack of adequate compensation and reconciliation are among the key factors preventing this group of displaced people from returning.

Background and main causes

Internal displacements in Lebanon have not been continuous, but occurred in separate periods of the civil war (1975-1990) due to internal strife and Israeli military operations in Lebanon between 1978 and 2000. More recently, Israeli military operations in Lebanon following clashes between Israeli security forces and Hizbollah, the Lebanese militant and political organisation, caused a new wave of displacement in the summer of 2006.

Civil war and Israeli invasions

It is estimated that at the height of the civil war up to one million people were displaced. A first wave of population displacement occurred in 1975 when Beirut was divided into Muslim and Christian sectors, although the fragmentation was more complex than a Muslim-Christian split and included divisions between sects within the two religions (Stamm, 2006). In 1985, an estimated 367,000 people were displaced in the Mount Lebanon region. Hundreds of thousands more people were displaced as a result of Israeli military invasions of Lebanon in 1978 and 1982. In 1989, violent fighting between Lebanese militias and Syrian troops and between militias themselves led to further displacement. A ceasefire was declared in October 1989 when Lebanese parliamentarians signed the Document of National Understanding (the "Taif Agreement") which was drafted following extensive negotiations between the different militias along with Syria in an attempt to reach consensus on internal political reform. In 1990, it was estimated that approximately 450-500,000 people were internally displaced (UNDP 2002). In 1996, Israeli air raids and rocket attacks on Beirut and southern Lebanon caused displacement of still hundred of thousands more people (Assaf and El-Fil, April 2000; LNF 2001; ILO, 1997).

The most affected areas of internal displacement were the Mount Lebanon region, specifically in the provinces (cazas) of Aley, Chouf and Baabda where an estimated 62 per cent of IDPs originated, and south Lebanon, where an estimated 24 per cent of the IDP population originated

(USCR 2003; UNDP 2002). Although the civil war ended in 1990, the far south and southeast of Lebanon remained occupied by Israel for another ten years. During this period, hundreds if not thousands of Lebanese were ordered to leave their homes in the occupied zone, many expelled for suspected or admitted participation in attacks on Israeli military personnel (Harik, 7 December 2006; HRW, 1 July 1999). Displaced people from the south began to return home when Israeli troops withdrew from the area in May 2000 (UNSC Resolution 425 (1978)). Syria maintained a military presence in Lebanon until April 2005 when it withdrew its troops under national and international pressure following the assassination of Prime Minister Rafik Hariri in February 2005 (UNSC Resolution 1559 (2004)).

There are large disparities in estimates of people internally displaced, IDP population movements and geographical distribution because the conflict caused both temporary and permanent displacements over an extended period of time (ILO, 1997). There is no international or national non-governmental organisation monitoring the situation of people displaced during this period. For a number of years, the US Department of State has reported that there continued to be 600,000 IDPs in Lebanon (US DOS, 8 March 2006). The US Committee for Refugees reported half this number in 2005 and 50,000–500,000 the year before (USCR, 2005 and 2004). However, the methodology underlying these figures is not clear. The government figure is significantly lower than these estimates. The government estimates that there are currently 16,750 people who continue to be in a situation of internal displacement as a result of the civil war and Israeli invasions up to 2000 (MoD, 10 July 2006).

Hostilities of July-August 2006

Cross-border clashes and exchanges of fire between Hizbollah and Israeli security forces along the Blue Line, the UN-established demarcation line separating Israel and Lebanon, have taken place regularly since 2000. Heavy exchanges of fire occurred in February and May 2006 and Israeli air incursions into Lebanese airspace continued to be regularly reported throughout the year (UNSC, 21 July 2006).

In July 2006, Hizbollah abducted two Israeli soldiers during cross-border clashes with Israeli security forces which led Israel to respond with major military operations including aerial bombardments causing massive displacement. Hizbollah retaliated with rocket attacks on northern Israel. The conflict affected the entire country, especially southern Lebanon and the southern suburbs of Beirut as well as the Bekaa valley in eastern Lebanon. According to the Lebanese authorities, the conflict resulted in 1,191 deaths and 4,409 injuries (HRC, 13 December 2006). Human rights and humanitarian organisations have called into question the proportionality of Israel's response and noted that the consistent failure of Israel to distinguish between combatants and civilians is in contravention with international law, calling for investigation into particular incidents such as Israeli air strikes that killed 28 persons in their home in Qana (HRW, 30 July 2006; MSM, 12 October 2006).

The main causes of internal displacement were indiscriminate attacks by Israel on civilians and civilian property and infrastructure, as well as a general climate of fear and panic among the civilian population caused by warnings, threats and attacks by the Israeli Defense Forces (COI, 10 November 2006). In addition, Israel imposed a blockade on the country and launched large-scale air strikes on key infrastructure such as the Beirut airport and port, strategic roads and bridges. Israeli forces occupied some areas of southern Lebanon (UNSC, 21 July 2006). Throughout the conflict, Israel regularly dropped leaflets across Lebanon warning the population to flee ahead of air strikes although in some cases people were unable to leave their homes, notably in southern Lebanon, for reasons including the destruction of bridges and roads or because they lacked transport or were physically unable to flee (UNSC, 21 July 2006; COI, 10 November 2006; OHCHR, 31 July 2006).

Displaced people were also targeted by Israeli military as they fled their villages. On 15 July, a group of displaced people leaving the village of Marwaheen were killed by Israeli fire as they fled their village. A convoy of displaced people evacuated by the United Nations Interim Forces in Lebanon (UNIFIL) from the same village was also targeted the following day (UNSC, 21 July 2006). On 17 July, a convoy of displaced people fleeing the village of Rmayleh were killed by air raids (LHRA, 8 August 2006). Another convoy of people fleeing the town of Marjayoun, led by the UNIFIL, came under attack on 11 August (Ibid).

Nearly one million Lebanese were displaced between 12 July and 14 August, almost one quarter of the population. The government estimates that 974,184 people were displaced in total of which approximately 730,000 were displaced internally while some 230,000 fled the country (HRC, November 2006). This figure includes the secondary displacement of an estimated 16,000 Palestinian refugees (UNRWA, 3 August 2006). Some people were displaced several times during the conflict because the areas they fled to were subsequently shelled. At the height of the conflict as many as 128,000 displaced people were sheltering in public schools around the country, while others sought shelter in public buildings, garages and parks (OCHA, 4 August 2006). The majority of displaced sheltered with family and extended relatives or were taken in by host communities.

An internationally-brokered ceasefire led to a cessation in fighting on 14 August and prompted the return of most displaced people. The total destruction of entire towns such as Bint Jbeil or Khiam in the south, and of large neighbourhoods in the southern suburbs of Beirut, has however resulted in the continued displacement of around 200,000 people, most of whom are living with relatives and host families, according to the government (GoL, 31 August 2006). However, no registration or assessment has been undertaken to assess the number and location of the displaced.

 Protection concerns and challenges to return

The cessation of hostilities prompted large-scale population return, but in many affected areas, the conditions are not in place to allow for safe and sustainable return of IDPs to their homes. Secondary displacements are occurring and agencies such as UNHCR, the UN refugee agency, suggest that there is a strong likelihood that secondary displacements will continue in the next 12-24 months because of factors including destroyed homes, presence of unexploded ordnance in homes and fields, lack of livelihoods, and the upcoming winter (UNHCR, 15 November 2006).

A significant obstacle to the safety of displaced people, returnees and local communities is the widespread presence of unexploded ordnance and mines, notably in south Lebanon. Demining organisations estimate up to one million cluster bombs are scattered in more than 800 locations in the area between the Litani River and the Lebanese-Israeli border (MACC SL, 4 November 2006). According to figures in November, cluster bombs have killed 22 people and caused more than 130 injuries (Ibid). The majority of deaths have occurred while returnees have been examining the extent of damage to their homes. The highest numbers of victims have been men, as in many cases they have been the first to return to assess the damage done to the home before the rest of the family returned (NDO, 6 November 2006).

Cluster bombs are also having a devastating impact on the economic livelihoods of returning displaced people and local communities of southern Lebanon, as many farmers are unable to access fields and collect harvests. In some villages of south Lebanon and especially in the southern districts of Beirut, the conflict has worsened the situation of communities already affected by poverty (COI, 10 November 2006; IRIN, 25 October 2005). Several hundred thousand landmines and unexploded ordnance also remain in the area, which were planted by Israeli

forces prior to Israel's withdrawal in 2000. UN Security Council Resolution 1701 calls on Israel to provide the UN with all maps of remaining landmines and locations of cluster bombs in order to facilitate their removal (UNSC, 12 September 2006); as of December 2006, there were no indications that Israel had complied fully with this request.

Widespread destruction of homes poses a further impediment to returns. Many families have returned to their homes only to find them demolished or damaged. The government estimates that 30,000 homes were destroyed and a similar number of houses have been assessed as having major damage (HRC, November 2006). The government has indicated its intention to provide prefabricated housing as a temporary solution for people whose homes have been completely destroyed; despite criticism by international organisations that deem it unpractical and an unsustainable solution (HRC, 1 September 2006). Many villages have suffered extensive destruction of public infrastructure, including damage to basic services like electricity and water, hospitals and fuel reservoirs. UN and local organisations also report a widespread need for psychosocial support for people suffering from trauma as a result of the war, in particular children (UNHCR, 15 November 2006).

Ultimately, the identification of durable solutions for the displaced in Lebanon is dependent on stability and security in the country, but while the ceasefire has remained, with some infractions, there has been an increase in tensions between political parties in Lebanon. The security situation has been volatile following renewed debates on the achievement of a national political consensus and calls for the reform of political and administrative structures (UNSC, 18 August 2006). The resignation of several ministers along with the assassination of a prominent minister in November and disputes between the various political groups indicates the fragility of the current government. Lebanon's domestic disputes are also strongly linked to issues which have an international stake, including the establishment of an international court for the trial of suspects of the killing of Prime Minister Hariri, international pressure for the disarmament of armed groups in Lebanon, violations of Lebanese sovereignty by Israel, an Israel-Lebanese prisoner exchange, and the broader Arab-Israeli conflict that is linked to the delineation of disputed borders like the Sheba'a Farms territory, considered by the UN as Israeli-occupied Syrian territory but claimed by Lebanon, and Ghajar village, a Lebanese village that remains partly occupied by Israel.

Complexity of property compensation and distribution of assistance

Due to the widespread destruction of private property during the recent conflict, compensation for damages and reconstruction assistance will be paramount to enable sustainable return of the displaced. In the aftermath of the conflict, Hizbollah through its reconstruction arm, Jihad Al-Bina, began making payments in cash to assist displaced people whose homes had been demolished to pay rent in temporary accommodation. Jihad Al-Bina also conducted damage assessments and began making compensation payments to people for demolished and damaged houses; however these payments were suspended owing to disputes with local people but are scheduled to begin again. In October 2006, the government established a compensation mechanism to compensate for damage to private property (Decision No.130/2006 Presidency of the Council of Ministers) which will work through the Council of the South, a regional governmental office established in the 1990s to determine the needs of people in the south. The government is also establishing a second separate mechanism to compensate property damage in southern Beirut. Property compensation in the southern districts of Beirut will be particularly challenging as much construction took place without a legal basis. As of the end of October, the government had started making compensation payments to people in south Lebanon but the process is extremely slow (GoL, 21 November 2006). In addition, some donors, mainly Arab countries, have started an "Adopt a Village" approach, whereby donors assist specific villages with reconstruction; this includes distribution of reconstruction assistance payments to property owners (Ibid).

Conflicting assessments done by the Council of the South and Jihad Al-Bina and competing compensation schemes have resulted in confusion for people awaiting money to rebuild their homes and raise the possibility of duplication of assistance (COI, 10 November 2006; UNHCR, 6 December 2006). There is growing evidence that political divisions at the municipal level have impeded the distribution of assistance and may eventually endanger the entire reconstruction process (UNHCR, 6 December 2006). For example, the selection of some villages to rebuild by donors also means that others will be left out which may in practice amount to discrimination (COI, 10 November 2006, p.72). Similarly, with several organisations working on reconstruction and compensation, there is a strong risk of overlap (Ibid). In south Lebanon, the authorities and other organisations have in part tried to address these concerns by establishing guidelines to ensure coordination between partners and to avoid discrimination (Ibid). However, it is likely that people may not have full and equal access to assistance because of inadequate monitoring of aid distribution to displaced people and other affected communities (UNHCR, November 2006).

Unresolved issues for civil war displaced

There is little information about the situation of those who remain displaced because of fighting during the civil war period. The laggardly return process of these communities has been identified as an unresolved post-civil war issue in Lebanon (Assaf and El-Fil, April 2000; USCR, 24 May 2004). The stalemate in returns has been attributed to a number of factors including mishandling of funds and political rivalries between government officials, budgetary problems and the lack of suitable economic and social conditions in rural areas (US DOS, 25 February 2004; Caritas, August 2004; UNDP 2002). NGO and news reports suggest that in many areas only 20-30 per cent of the displaced have returned (Lebanon Wire, 8 July 2002; Daily Star, 1 June 2005; Caritas, 2004; IRIN, 5 January 2006). According to the government, 470,510 people have been able to return to their area of origin with financial assistance (MoD, 10 July 2006). The primary areas where IDPs have not returned are Kfar Selouan, Ain Drafil, Kfar Matta, Aabey, and Breeh (MoD, Ibid).

An outstanding issue for the civil war displaced is the payment of compensation (MoD, 10 July 2006; IRIN, 5 January 2006). Many displaced people say that they have only received partial compensation and are unable to return permanently because their homes are uninhabitable (Caritas, August 2004; Daily Star, 29 September 2006). Other obstacles to return include the occupation of properties by other displaced, and lack of job opportunities and basic infrastructure in affected areas (UNDP, 9 June 2006; IRIN, 5 January 2006; MoD, 10 July 2006). The lack of reconciliation between displaced and host communities in certain areas caused by sectarian divisions created by the civil war also pose a barrier to return (Ibrahim, 7 February 2001; MoD, 30 June 2004; Daily Star, 29 April 2004). This has been the case in Breeh in Chouf, Kfar Selouan in Metn, and Kfar Matta, among others (Monday Morning, 30 April 2003; GoL, 30 June 2004; ILO, 1997; Daily Star, 28 July 2005). In June 2006, the national authorities announced that reconciliation between Druze and Christians was needed in several villages to facilitate return (Daily Star, 7 August 2005).

Many people who fled south Lebanon during the Israeli occupation of parts of the area moved to the southern suburbs of Beirut. With the bombing of these districts in the recent conflict, the distinctions between these people and the new Shiite displaced communities are blurred. Prior to the 2006 conflict, the southern suburbs of Beirut were overcrowded and suffered severe infrastructural problems due to the influx of displaced people to the area and destruction caused by civil war battles. The extensive demolition of the southern suburbs in the recent conflict poses obstacles to the return for both groups (Harik, 7 December 2006).

National response

The Lebanese government was not prepared for the sudden onset and magnitude of displacement caused by the recent war and the bulk of the response came from local NGOs, political organisations, local authorities and volunteers who supported the displaced, ranging from basic provision of relief to running IDP sites. In the aftermath of the war, the government has put together a recovery plan, with the support of the international community, and has begun implementation of a broad range of assistance, recovery and reconstruction activities. The slow pace of the government efforts has attracted criticism in comparison with the more efficient reconstruction and assistance efforts of Hizbollah although the whole process of assisting the displaced risks failure because of duplication and growing political tensions in the country (Schenker, 14 September 2006; UNHCR, 6 December 2006). The Higher Relief Commission (HRC) is the government office responsible for humanitarian coordination, including assistance to the newly internally displaced. The HRC coordinates with key ministries, including the Central Fund for the Displaced, the Ministry for Social Affairs and the Council of the South. Political organisations, notably Hizbollah, remain key actors in the distribution of assistance, social services and reconstruction. The government has deployed 15,000 troops to south Lebanon in accordance with UN Security Council Resolution 1701.

There is no revised national IDP strategy and it is not yet apparent how the government will coordinate its response to the differing situations of the recently displaced and those displaced over a decade ago. In the 1990s the government had designed a comprehensive return programme, including compensation to IDPs to rebuild their homes, support for the reconciliation process between residents and returnees, and socio-economic rehabilitation to address the civil war situation of displacement (MoD, 10 July 2006). The 1989 Taif Agreement codified the return of IDPs as an essential condition for reconciliation and peace and binds the authorities to establish legislation that safeguards the right to return and ensures the means for return and reconstruction (GoL, 30 June 2004; Assaf and El-Fil, April 2000; Taif Agreement 1989). A Ministry for the Displaced was established to rehabilitate infrastructure and housing, improve the economic sector, and to achieve national reconciliation, and a Central Fund for the Displaced was created to finance the return of the displaced. Both institutions are also involved in the response to the displacement caused by the recent conflict.

According to government representatives, the absence of funds has prevented the development of a national strategy for the return of people displaced by the civil war and as a result of the Israeli occupation (GoL, 30 June 2004; MoD, 10 July 2006). In October 2005, the Minister of the Displaced threatened to resign if his ministry was not granted the necessary funds for the return of the remaining internally displaced (Daily Star, 10 October 2005). However, the ministry has also come under criticism for mismanagement of funds and political corruption (ILO 1997; Caritas, August 2004; Assaf and El-Fil, 7 April 2000; Daily Star, 18 February 2004 and 29 September 2006). Prior to the recent breakout of hostilities, the ministry continued to focus its efforts on reconciliation agreements between communities including resolution of disputes between individual families in order to facilitate returns, including in several towns around Aley, east of Beirut (Daily Star, 17 June 2005 and 28 July 2005; MoD, 10 July 2006).

International response

Prior to 2006, international agencies focused their efforts on broader development work and security in Lebanon and for the most part have not been involved in responding to the needs of displaced and returnee populations from the civil war period. Since 1978, the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) has been present in south Lebanon to maintain peace and security in the area (UN Security Council Resolutions 425 and 426 (1978)). No international organisation has been monitoring or advocating for the rights of displaced people. The United Nations Development Programme was the only UN agency implementing a return programme for

displaced people in the Mount Lebanon region. The programme was launched over ten years ago and is expected to continue in 2007, although no up-to-date information is available on the impact of this programme.

In contrast, the recent conflict initiated widespread mobilisation and financial support among UN and international humanitarian agencies and donors; however, on the ground many international organisations faced difficulty in assisting IDPs due to factors including the highly politicised environment, the lack of a presence in the country, security restrictions and widespread destruction of infrastructure which severely limited free movement. In addition, the Israeli military forces refused to ensure safety for aid convoys and on several occasions targeted humanitarian convoys, thereby obstructing agencies from providing assistance to displaced and host communities (ICRC, 10 August 2006; WFP, 10 August 2006; COI, 10 November 2006, p.41).
The "cluster approach" was applied in Lebanon; this is a humanitarian coordination mechanism whereby certain UN agencies are assigned lead roles by sector in order to improve the efficiency of humanitarian response by ensuring greater cooperation, accountability and partnership between the UN, the Red Cross and Crescent Movement and national and international non-governmental organisations. The cluster leadership role in protection and emergency shelter for IDPs was assumed by UNHCR. Although on the whole successful, an evaluation of the application of the mechanism in Lebanon also points to a number of areas for improvement (UNHCR, October 2006). In addition, while there were supportive local NGOs and government representatives who participated actively in the clusters, a concern that emerged was that many of the key local NGOs and government ministries did not participate because of lack of information of the benefits of the mechanism.

At the political level, the international response to the conflict between Hizbollah and Israel was widely criticised as a belated one given the consequences for civilians. Nor did it resolve the underlying causes of the conflict. However consensus on a ceasefire was reached with UN Security Council resolution 1701 which also provides for an expanded UN peacekeeping force in southern Lebanon, tasked among other things with supporting the safe return of displaced persons.

In response to extensive criticism that Israeli military operations in Lebanon were in contravention of international law, a High Level Commission of Inquiry was established by the UN in August 2006 in the context of the Human Rights Council. The Commission is mandated to investigate the systematic targeting and killing of civilians by Israel in Lebanon, examine the types of weapons used by Israel and their conformity with international law; and assess the extent and impact of Israeli attacks on human life, property and the environment. In the first draft of its report, the Commission found that the internal displacement which occurred in Lebanon constituted in itself a violation of international law and human rights, given that displacement was the result of indiscriminate attacks on civilians and civilian property that were, in many cases, disproportionate in nature and could not be justified on the basis of military necessity (COI, 10 November 2006, p.48).

CAUSES AND BACKGROUND

Background

From the independence of Lebanon to the aftermath of the 1967 Israeli-Arab war (1920-1973)

- Independence of Lebanon was declared in 1941
- The U.S. sent marine troops to re-establish the government's authority in 1958, at the Lebanese government's request
- Following the 1967 Arab-Israeli War, Palestinians used Lebanon as a base for activities against Israel
- Instability of Lebanese government in the context of Palestinian and Israeli attacks against one another

"**1920** 1 September - After the League of Nations grants the mandate for Lebanon and Syria to France, the State of Greater Lebanon is proclaimed. It includes the former autonomous province of Mount Lebanon, plus the provinces of north Lebanon, south Lebanon and the Biqa, historically part of Syria.
1926 23 May - […] Lebanese Republic is declared.
1940 - Lebanon comes under the control of the Vichy French government.
1941 - After Lebanon is occupied by Free French and British troops in June 1941, independence is declared on 26 November. […]
1943 December - France agrees to the transfer of power to the Lebanese government with effect from 1 January 1944.
1957 - President Kamil Sham'un accepts the Eisenhower Doctrine, announced in January, which offers US economic and military aid to Middle Eastern countries to counteract Soviet influence in the region.
1958 14 July - Faced with increasing opposition which develops into a civil war, President Sham'un asks the United States to send troops to preserve Lebanon's independence.
1958 15 July - The United States, mindful of Iraq's overthrow of its monarchy, sends marines to re-establish the government's authority.
1967 June - Lebanon plays no active role in the Arab-Israeli war but is to be affected by its aftermath when Palestinians use Lebanon as a base for activities against Israel.
1968 28 December - In retaliation for an attack by two members of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP) on an Israeli plane in Athens, Israel raids Beirut airport, destroying 13 civilian planes.
1969 November - The Commander-in-Chief of the Army, Emile Bustani, and Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) Chairman Yasir Arafat sign an agreement in Cairo which aims to control Palestinian guerrilla activities in Lebanon.
1973 10 April - Israeli commandos raid Beirut and kill three Palestinian leaders, close associates of Arafat. The Lebanese government resigns the next day." (BBC News 18 March 2002)

For more details, see Al Mashriq's website

Beginning of Lebanese civil war and intervention of Syria and Israel (1975-1982)

- In 1975, clashes between Phalangists and Palestinians marked the beginning of Lebanese civil war and Syrian troops entered Lebanon in 1976 to restore order
- Israel launched a major invasion of Lebanon in 1978 to retaliate against Palestinian attacks and then again in 1982 following an assassination attempt of an Israeli ambassador (Operation Peace for Galilee)
- That same year, the Lebanese president was assassinated, the Phalangist militia killed Palestinians in Sabra and Chatila refugee camps in West Beirut, while Israeli troops occupied that part of the city
- International peacekeeping force then arrived in Lebanon at the government's request

"From 1975 to 1991, Lebanon witnessed persistent internal conflict, fomented by wider regional conflict, which resulted in the fragmentation of the country. In the civil war (1975/6), Maronite-dominated militias and army units fought an alliance of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) and the Lebanese National Movement (LNM), whose constituency was largely among the Lebanese Muslims and Druze. The armed Palestinian presence in Lebanon was a major catalyst for the war. The intervention of Syria, initially on the side of the Christian militias, imposed something of a stalemate, consolidating the cantonization of the country into confessional districts. Syria has remained the dominant force in Lebanon ever since." (Dammers 1998, p.185)

"Civil war begins
1975 13 April - Phalangist gunmen ambush a bus in the Ayn-al-Rummanah district of Beirut, killing 27 of its mainly Palestinian passengers. The Phalangists claim that guerrillas had previously attacked a church in the same district. (These clashes are regarded as the start of the civil war).
1976 June - Syrian troops enter Lebanon to restore peace but also to curb the Palestinians.
1976 October - Following Arab summit meetings in Riyad and Cairo, a cease-fire is arranged and a predominantly Syrian Arab Deterrent Force (ADF) is established to maintain it.

Israel controls south
1978 14/15 March - In reprisal for a Palestinian attack into its territory, Israel launches a major invasion of Lebanon, occupying land as far north as the Litani River.
1978 19 March - The United Nations Security Council (UNSC) passes Resolution 425, which calls on Israel to withdraw from all Lebanese territory and establishes the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) to confirm the Israeli withdrawal, restore peace and help the Lebanese government re-establish its authority in the area.
1978 - By 13 June Israel hands over territory in southern Lebanon not to UNIFIL but to its proxy mainly Christian Lebanese militia under Maj Sa'd Haddad.

Israel attacks
1982 6 June - Following the attempted assassination of Shlomo Argov, Israeli ambassador to the United Kingdom, Israel launches a full-scale invasion of Lebanon, "Operation Peace for Galilee".
1982 14 September - President-elect, Bashir al-Jumayyil, is assassinated. The following day, Israeli forces occupy West Beirut, and from 16 to 18 September, the Phalangist militia kill Palestinians in Sabra and Shatila refugee camps in West Beirut.
1982 21 September - Bashir's elder brother, Amin al-Jumayyil, is elected president.
1982 24 September - The first contingent of a mainly US, French and Italian peacekeeping force, requested by Lebanon, arrives in Beirut. " (BBC News 18 March 2002)

See UN Security Council's resolutions 425 [Internet] and 426 [Internet] of 19 March 1978, which called upon Israel to cease its military action and withdraw its forces from all Lebanese territory and decided on the establishment of the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL).

For more in-depth materials on the war in Lebanon, see Al Mashriq's website

Country plagued by violence and instability until the formation of a national unity government (1983-1991)

- In 1983 Israel and Lebanon signed an agreement on Israeli withdrawal and on the establishment of a security zone in the south but Lebanon abrogated it in 1987
- Christian South Lebanese Army continued to operate in the South, with Israel's support
- The Lebanese government was marked by instability: a Prime Minister and a President were assassinated and for a few years, Lebanon had two governments, a Muslim one in West Beirut, and a Christian one in East Beirut
- In 1989, the National Assembly endorsed a Charter of National Reconciliation, known as the Tai'f Agreement

"Buffer zone set up
1983 17 May - Israel and Lebanon sign an agreement on Israeli withdrawal, ending hostilities and establishing a security region in southern Lebanon.
1983 23 October - Twenty-four US marines and 58 French paratroopers are killed in two bomb explosions in Beirut, responsibility for which is claimed by two militant Shi'i groups.
1985 - By 6 June most Israeli troops withdraw but some remain to support the mainly Christian South Lebanon Army (SLA) led by Maj-Gen Antoine Lahd which operates in a 'security zone' in southern Lebanon. […]
1987 21 May - Lebanon abrogates the 1969 Cairo agreement with the PLO as well as officially cancelling the 17 May 1983 agreement with Israel.
1987 1 June - After Prime Minister Rashid Karami is killed when a bomb explodes in his helicopter, Salim al-Huss becomes acting prime minister.

Two governments, one country
1988 22 September - When no candidate is elected to succeed him, outgoing President Amin al-Jumayyil appoints a six-member interim military government, composed of three Christians and three Muslims, though the latter refuse to serve. Lebanon now has two governments - one mainly Muslim in West Beirut, headed by Al-Huss, the other, Christian, in East Beirut, led by the Maronite Commander-in-Chief of the Army, Gen Michel Awn.
1989 14 March - Awn declares a "war of liberation " against the Syrian presence in Lebanon.
1989 28 July - Shaykh Abd-al-Karim Ubayd, Hezbollah leader in Jibshit, is abducted by Israeli forces.
1989 22 October - The National Assembly, meeting in Ta'if, Saudi Arabia, endorses a Charter of National Reconciliation, which reduces the authority of the president by transferring executive power to the cabinet. The National Assembly now has an equal number of Christian and Muslim members instead of the previous six to five ratio.
1989 November - President-elect Rene Mu'awwad is assassinated on 22 November and succeeded by Ilyas al-Hirawi on 24 November. The following day, Salim al-Huss becomes Prime Minister and Gen Emile Lahud replaces Awn as Commander-in-Chief of the Army on 28 November.

Civil war ends
1990 13 October - The Syrian airforce attacks the Presidential Palace at B'abda and Awn takes refuge in the French embassy. This date is regarded as the end of the civil war.
1990 24 December - Umar Karami heads a government of national reconciliation.
1991 - The National Assembly orders the dissolution of all militias by 30 April but Hezbollah is allowed to remain active and the South Lebanon Army (SLA) refuses to disband.

1991 22 May - A Treaty of Brotherhood, Cooperation and Coordination is signed in Damascus by Lebanon and Syria and a Higher Council, co-chaired by their two presidents, is established.
1991 1 July - The Lebanese army defeats the PLO in Sidon so that it now confronts the Israelis and the SLA in Jazzin, north of the so-called "security zone".
1991 26 August - The National Assembly grants an amnesty for all crimes committed during the civil war, 1975-1990. Awn receives a presidential pardon and is allowed to leave for France.
1991 30 October - Lebanon participates in the Middle East Peace Conference launched in Madrid. " (BBC News 18 March 2002)

To view the Lebanese Charter of National Reconciliation, the "Taif Agreement" (1989) [External Link]
For more in-depth materials on the war in Lebanon, see Al Mashriq's website

The 1989 national reconciliation agreement (the "Taif Accord") ends civil war in Lebanon and guarantees the right of all IDPs to return

- The Taif Agreement is officially known as the "Document of National Accord"
- The agreement was endorsed at a Lebanese National Assembly meeting in Taif, Saudi Arabia on 22 October 1989
- The accord restructured the political system in Lebanon by dividing political power equally between Muslims and Christians
- The accord also called for government sovereignty over all Lebanese territory
- The right of all internally displaced people to return to their place of origin was also specified in the agreement

"The Taif Agreement (officially, the Document of National Accord) was the document that provided the basis for the ending of the civil war and the return to political normalcy in Lebanon."(Krayem, "2003")
[…]
"On October 22 1989 the Lebanese National Assembly meeting in Taif Saudi Arabia endorsed an accord for national reconciliation.The Taif accord restructured the political system in Lebanon by transferring power away from the traditionally Maronite presidency to a Cabinet divided equally between Muslims and Christians.

The Taif accord also maps out a security plan for extending government sovereignty over all Lebanese territory. The accord calls for disbanding militias and strengthening of Lebanese government forces. It also calls for a withdrawal of Syrian forces inside Lebanon and the establishment of a joint Syrian-Lebanese mechanism for making future decisions about the positioning and functions of the Syrian troops. The accord contains a Syria-Lebanese security agreement and calls for taking steps to bring about a withdrawal of Israeli forces from Lebanese territory. The security-related parts of the accord are here translated.

The accord was rejected by General Michel Aoun but was accepted by other Maronite leaders. While Syria voiced support for the accord some Syrian-backed militia leaders such as Walid Jumblatt and Nabi Berri expressed disappointment over the accord which they considered superficial and overly favorable to the Sunni Muslim minority." (Al Mashriq, 2002)

View the peace agreement [Internet]

See also:

"The Lebanese Civil War and the Taif Agreement", Hassan Krayem, American University of Beirut, "2003"

Israeli troops pulled out of South Lebanon (1992-2000)

- On several occasions, Israel launched heavy attacks in Lebanon to end threats against its civilians from Hezbollah, the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine and Amal
- In 1996, one of the attacks resulted in the death of over 100 displaced civilians
- In May 2000, Israeli troops withdrew from Lebanon, without the assurance that Lebanon would guarantee the security of Israel's northern border

" **1992** 16 February - Shaykh Abbas al-Musawi, Secretary-General of Hezbollah, is killed when Israeli helicopter gunships attack his motorcade on a road south-east of Sidon
By 17 June all Western hostages held by Shi'i groups have been released.
1992 20 October - After elections in August and September (the first since 1972), Nabih Birri, Secretary-General of the Shi'i Amal organization, becomes speaker of the National Assembly.
1991 31 October - Rafiq al-Hariri, a rich businessman, born in Sidon but with Saudi Arabian nationality, becomes prime minister, heading a cabinet of technocrats.
1993 25 July - Israel attempts to end the threat from Hezbollah and the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine-General Command (PFLP-GC) in southern Lebanon by launching "Operation Accountability", the heaviest attack since 1982.
1994 21 May - Mustafa Dib al-Dirani, head of the Believers' Resistance, a breakaway group from the Shi'i Amal organization, is abducted by Israeli commandos from his house in eastern Lebanon.

Israel bombs Beirut
1996 11 April - The start of 'Operation Grapes of Wrath' in which the Israelis bomb Hezbollah bases in southern Lebanon, the southern district of Beirut and the Biqa.
1996 18 April - An Israeli attack on a UN base at Qana results in the death of over 100 Lebanese refugees [displaced civilians] sheltering there.
1996 26 April - The United States negotiates a truce and an "understanding" under which Hezbollah and Palestinian guerrillas agree not to attack civilians in northern Israel, and which recognizes Israel's right to self-defence but also Hezbollah's right to resist the Israeli occupation of southern Lebanon. Lebanon and Syria do not sign the 'understanding' but the Israel-Lebanon Monitoring Group (ILMG), with representatives from the United States, France, Israel, Lebanon and Syria, is established to monitor the truce.
1998 1 April - Israel's inner cabinet votes to accept United Nations Security Council (UNSC) Resolution 425 of 1978 if Lebanon guarantees the security of Israel's northern border. Both Lebanon and Syria reject this condition.

Lahhud is president
1998 24 November - Commander-in-Chief of the Army, Emile Lahhud, is sworn in as president, succeeding Ilyas al-Hirawi.
1998 4 December - Salim al-Huss becomes prime minister heading a cabinet which includes no militia leaders and only two ministers from the previous administration.
1999 3 June - The South Lebanon Army (SLA) completes its withdrawal from the Jazzin salient (north of the 'security zone') occupied since 1985.
2000 5 March - The Israeli cabinet votes for the unilateral withdrawal of Israeli troops from southern Lebanon by July 2000.
2000 18 April - Israel decides to release thirteen Lebanese prisoners held without trial for over 10 years but the detention of Shaykh Abd-al-Karim Ubayd and Mustafa Dib al-Dirani is extended.

2000 24 May - After the collapse of the South Lebanon Army (SLA) and the rapid advance of Hezbollah forces, Israel withdraws its troops from southern Lebanon, more than six weeks before its stated deadline of 7 July.

2000 25 May - Lebanon declares 25 May an annual public holiday to be called "Resistance and Liberation Day." (BBC News 18 March 2002)

For an analysis of Hizbollah in a local and regional setting, see International Crisis Group (ICG), 30 July 2003: "Hizbollah: Rebel Without a Cause?"

For more in-depth materials on Lebanon's civil war, see Al Mashriq's website

Renewed violence in South Lebanon after withdrawal of Israeli army (2001-2002)

- Lebanese soldiers and police force deployed to former security zone, while the United Nations Interim Forces in Lebanon (UNIFIL) increased its area of operations
- Hezbollah guerrillas were not disarmed and continued to patrol along the border with Israel
- The "Shebaa farms", a group of farms close to the poorly-defined border of Lebanon and Syria, have emerged as a potential new flashpoint for conflict between Israel and Hezbollah
- Fear of escalation of conflict between Israel and Hezbollah as of mid-2002
- Lebanese paper warned that instability in the south may discourage investment and slow down reconstruction

U.S. DOS February 2001

"Following the withdrawal [of Israeli troops], the [Lebanese] Government deployed over 1,000 police and soldiers to the former security zone. After the withdrawal, Hizballah guerrillas maintained observation posts and conducted patrols along the border with Israel. The United Nations Interim Forces in Lebanon (UNIFIL) also increased its area of operations following the Israeli withdrawal. Palestinian groups operate autonomously in refugee camps throughout the country. The Government did not attempt to reassert state control over the Palestinian camps or to disarm Hizballah."

UN SC 31 October 2000, para.16-18

According to the UN Secretary General, "[t]he sequence of steps in Security Council resolution 425 (1978) is clear and logical: the Israeli forces must withdraw, there must be no further hostilities, and the effective authority of the Lebanese Government must be restored. Thereafter, the Government of Israel and Lebanon are to be fully responsible, in accordance with their international obligations, for preventing any hostile acts from their respective territory against that of their neighbour. It is relevant to recall in this connection that both Governments have committed themselves, despite misgivings, to respect the Blue Line established by the United Nations for the purposes of confirming the Israeli withdrawal in accordance with resolution 425 (1978).

I believe that the time has come to establish the state of affairs envisaged in the resolution. This requires, first and foremost, that the Government of Lebanon take effective control of the whole area vacated by Israel last spring and assume its full international responsibilities, including putting an end to the dangerous provocations that have continued on the Blue Line."

BBC News 3 January 2001

"The Lebanese government has ignored UN requests to send its army to establish security in the area, saying it will not serve as Israel's body guard."

BBC News 25 May 2000

The Shebaa farms
"A group of farms close to the poorly-defined border of Lebanon and Syria has emerged as a potential new flashpoint for conflict between Israel and Lebanese Muslim guerrillas. The Syrian-backed guerrilla group, Hezbollah, says Israel must withdraw from the area of the Shebaa farms - which it says lies on Lebanese territory - or face continued attacks. Israel says most of the area lies on the Syrian side of the Lebanon/Syria border and that it will only withdraw from the part marked as Lebanese territory on the United Nations maps. […]

Timur Goksel, a spokesman for the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL), told the BBC that the area amounted to little more than 10 square kilometers. He said no-one disputed that the village of Shebaa itself was in Lebanon, but most of the farms fell into an undefined area that may be either in Lebanon or Syria. […] [UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan] proposed that all sides should adopt the line drawn after the 1974 Yom Kippur war, pending a permanent delineation of the border. This line forms the limit of the area currently monitored by the UNIFIL forces. […]

Syria agrees with Lebanon that the Shebaa farms area is part of Lebanon. However, Israel points out that it seized the territory from Syria, during the 1967 Middle East War. Mr. Goksel said: 'The UN is saying that on all maps the UN has been able to find, the farms are seen on the Syrian side.' […]

Despite Israel's withdrawal of troops from Lebanon, Syria still has 35,000 soldiers in the country, mostly near Beirut, in the north, and in the eastern Bekaa Valley. Analysts say that peace between Hezbollah and Israel would not be in Syria's interests, because it would increase pressure on Damascus to withdraw its forces and slacken its control over Lebanon."

Daily Star 17 February 2001

"Hizbullah is walking a very fine line dividing legitimate attempts to liberate the Shebaa Farms from plunging Lebanon into a renewed cycle of violence. […]
The Shebaa Farms is a powderkeg waiting for a match. Every time Hizbullah attacks Israeli troops in the disputed area, it is flicking lighted matches at that powder keg. […]

One can argue the merits for and against trying to liberate the Shebaa Farms. But there is one certainly: the country can ill afford at this juncture to juggle both a resistance campaign with a drive to revitalize the economy and inspire renewed investor confidence in Lebanon."

Blanford in Daily Star 20 February 2001

"Since his return to power in November [2000], Hariri has visited several countries to drum up foreign investment to revitalize the moribund economy. However, continued instability in the South threatens to undermine his efforts to encourage new investment. Hariri's dilemma is having to balance his drive to rebuild the economy with what, at times, must seem an incompatible public support for the resistance and its efforts to liberate Shebaa."

BBC News 3 April 2002

"Fears are growing of a new military front opening in the Middle East, across Israel's northern border with Lebanon. Such a development would turn the conflict into a more dangerous regional war, probably drawin in both Lebanon and Syria, and perhaps other nations."

Lackey 15 April 2002

"Alarmed by the growing influence of an armed militia in an already splintered country, UN Secretary General Kofi Annan has repeatedly called on the Lebanese government to provide a viable military presence in the south to supplant UN Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL). The government has been unable, or unwilling, to do this."

Purdum, 15 June 2002

A senior Western diplomat "said there were indications of new weapons shipments from Iran to Hezbollah, the milita in southern Lebanon that has ties to both Iran and Syria. He said these included longer-range rockets that could be launched deep into Israeli territory, perhaps within the next several days. The diplomat said such an attack could prompt a severe Israeli reprisal that could include an invasion of Lebanon."

For information on the UN endorsement of Israel's withdrawal from southern Lebanon and the reinforcement of the peacekeeping force, UNIFIL, please see "Background information on UNIFIL"

For more information on the conflict between Israel and Lebanese guerrilla movements, see an October 2000 study by the Center of Strategic and International Studies (CSIS)

For more information on Lebanese guerilla groups – Hisballah and Amal, see A.R. Norton's 1999 report for the Council of Foreign Relations, "Hisballah of Lebanon: Extremist Ideals vs. Mundane Politics"

Former MPs draft new declaration for the implementation of the peace agreement (2004)

- The former MPs belong to a group formed in 2001 called the "Gathering for the Constitution and National Accord"
- The Declaration raises various issues about the implementation of the Taif Accord including the continued presence of Syrian troops in Lebanon
- A number of the former MPs present made statements alluding to the fact that the peace agreement has not been implemented though 14 years have passed since it was drafted

Daily Star, 15 July 2004

"Lebanese-Syrian relations should be redressed, the Constitution should not be amended for the sake of a presidential extension, and the next president should rule the country and not be ruled by others.

These were the main points in a declaration issued by the Gathering for the Constitution and National Accord, on Wednesday, during a press conference at the Press Federation.

The gathering, most of whose members are former MPs who participated in the 1989 Taif Accord, said its new declaration joins 'more than 82' statements issued over the past three years, since the gathering's creation in August 2001.

'But they have been met by deaf ears with no response from officials,' said gathering member Edmond Rizk, a former MP and minister, adding that '14 years, nine months and 20 days have passed since the drafting of the Taif Accord, and it has yet to be implemented.'

He added that 'national conciliation didn't take place ... and no official showed a real intention of adopting Taif's resolutions.'

Among the various points it raises, the Taif Accord called for a redeployment of Syrian forces to the Bekaa, within two years after it was passed as well as deploying the Lebanese Army to the South. The accord also pushed for a gradual phase-out of sectarian representation in politics and in public office.

Rizk, who read the declaration, mentioned that 'the current and previous political establishment lacks legality,' because 'tens of MPs were appointed in a manner that contradicts the Taif Accord.

Rizk also said that amending the Constitution to extend or renew the presidential term 'over the past eight decades has led to severe splits among the Lebanese, causing damage to the country and the people.'

He added that the next president should not do what is imposed on him, but must 'express his own beliefs ... listen to his citizens, accept advice, and serve his people without using them.'

As for the Parliament's role in imposing checks and balances on the government, the gathering said it was 'blocked, just like the Cabinet's decision-making powers,' due to the fact that officials 'rush to get positions in power, which in turn leads to the breakdown of the principle of power separation and the idea of a unified state.'

The declaration also reiterated that the continued Syrian presence on Lebanese territory violates the Taif Accord. 'The Syrian Army entered Lebanon in a six-month mission 29 years ago,' said Rizk. The ongoing Syrian presence, 'contradicts the Taif Accord ... and the fundamental principles of relations between independent countries.' "

Situation in south Lebanon along Lebanon-Israeli border is "fragile" according to the United Nations (July 2004)

- The Secretary General reported that in the last six months there has been considerable risk of hostilities escalating in the area of South Lebanon (July 2004)
- The Secretary General reiterated the Security Council's call for the government of Lebanon to extend measures to return its effective authority throughout the South
- The Secretary General also expressed concern that Israel persists in its provocative and unjustified air violations of sovereign Lebanese territory
- Likewise, the SG expressed concern that Hezbollah's retaliatory firing of anti-aircraft rounds across the Blue Line is a violation that poses a direct threat to human life
- The SG stressed that the use of live fire across the Blue Line occurs in violation of the ceasefire and poses serious danger to civilians
- On the positive side, the whole of southern Lebanon, including all villages in the formerly Israeli occupied zone down to the Blue Line, successfully took part in municipal elections
- The situation along the Blue Line is also susceptible to volatile regional developments

UNSC, 21 July 2004, p.5-7

"The situation in south Lebanon over the past six months can be described as being replete with contradictions. While both Israel and Lebanon proclaimed their aspirations to avoid destabilization of the area, only one month passed without confrontation. Furthermore, single incidents often sparked a chain reaction of violence to which both sides contributed. Importantly, none of those events spiraled out of control, and for this the parties and UNIFIL all deserve credit. Nevertheless, the considerable risk remains that hostile acts will escalate and lead the parties into conflict. I cannot stress enough the need for the parties to abide by their obligations under the relevant Security Council resolutions, to respect the withdrawal line in its entirety and to exercise the utmost restraint. Neither side can afford to discount the risks attendant to ignoring their obligations.

The whole of southern Lebanon, including all villages in the formerly Israeli occupied zone down to the Blue Line, successfully took part in municipal elections. The free exercise of the democratic process is a universally acknowledged marker of stability. It is also a clear assertion of the exercise of authority by the Government of Lebanon. The Government of Lebanon also demonstrated its capacity to exercise its authority through the activities of the Joint Security Force. Nevertheless, events demonstrated that further efforts were required to maintain calm in the south and to halt violations of the Blue Line, especially violations of the ceasefire. I reiterate the Security Council's call for the Government of Lebanon to extend measures to ensure the return of its effective authority throughout the south, including the deployment of Lebanese armed forces, and to do its utmost to ensure calm. I urge the Government to exert control over the use of force on its entire territory.

It remains a matter of deep concern that Israel persists in its provocative and unjustified air violations of sovereign Lebanese territory. Hezbollah's retaliatory firing of anti-aircraft rounds across the Blue Line is a violation that poses a direct threat to human life. While Hezbollah use of anti-aircraft weaponry continued the decline noted in my previous report, there were a number of recent occasions when overflights were countered with Hezbollah fire. The use of live fire across the Blue Line should not be permitted. This prohibition also pertains to retaliatory Israeli air strikes on Hezbollah or other positions inside Lebanon, which also pose a serious danger to civilians. One violation of the Blue Line cannot justify another.
[…]
The situation along the Blue Line continues to be susceptible to volatile regional developments. This again underscores the need to achieve a comprehensive, just and lasting peace in the Middle East, based on all the relevant resolutions of the Security Council, including resolutions 242 (1967), 338 (1973), 1397 (2002) and 1515 (2003).

In a letter dated 9 July 2004 (S/2004/560), the Permanent Representative of Lebanon to the United Nations conveyed to me his Government's request that the Security Council extend the mandate of UNIFIL for a further period of six months. In the light of conditions prevailing in the area, I recommend that the Security Council extend the mandate of UNIFIL until 31 January 2005."

UNIFIL is mandated to maintain peace and security in South Lebanon. For news coverage of clashes along the border, see:
"Extension for UN Lebanon mission urged as tension mounts at withdrawal line", UN, 21 July 2004
"Lebanon: UN officials work to restore calm after clashes across withdrawal line", UN, 20 July 2004
"UN envoy calls for end to violations of withdrawal line between Israel, Lebanon", UN, 8 June 2004
"UN envoy calls for halt to Israeli violations of withdrawal line, retaliatory fire from Lebanese side", UN, 5 May 2004

"Southern Lebanon more fragile after six months of tension: Annan", UN, 21 January 2004

Syria withdraws troops from Lebanon after almost 30 years presence (2005)

- Syria's military troops left Lebanon in April 2005 in line with UN Security Council Resolution 1559 (2004)
- The United States and some European countries pushed for Syria to leave Lebanon
- UNSC 1559 underlines Lebanon's sovereignty, territorial integrity, unity and political independence

UNSC, 26 October 2005, paras. 14

"In its resolution 1559 (2004), the Security Council placed central emphasis on the sovereignty, territorial integrity, unity and political independence of Lebanon under the sole and exclusive authority of the Government of Lebanon throughout Lebanon, reiterating this concern repeatedly. In its presidential statement of 4 May 2005 (S/PRST/2005/17) related to my report of 26 April 2005, the Council underlined the fact that Lebanon's full political independence and full exercise of its sovereignty was the ultimate goal of resolution 1559 (2004)."

BBC, 26 April 2005

"Syria has announced that all of its military forces have left Lebanon in line with United Nations demands.

It informed the UN of the withdrawal after a parade of about 200 Syrian soldiers in the Bekaa Valley to mark the end of the 29-year deployment.

Soldiers received medals and shouted support for Syria's president before marching off to a Lebanese army band.

Pressure for Syria to leave grew after the assassination of former Lebanese PM Rafik Hariri in February.

Damascus has denied any role in the death of Hariri who was killed by a car bomb in Beirut but the event prompted giant protests calling for the Syrians to go.

BBC Beirut correspondent Kim Ghattas says the Syrians stayed on long after Lebanon's civil war ended and Damascus effectively became the political master of its tiny neighbour.

Lebanese caretaker Prime Minister Najib Mikati said "a new political era in the relations between the two brethren countries" had started with the completion of the troop withdrawal.

Pierre Gemayel, a Christian Maronite opposition MP, said: "We consider this a first step towards regaining Lebanon's full and real sovereignty.""

Middle East Online, 7 June 2004

"The United States and several European countries have been pressing Damascus to withdraw from Lebanon and the US Congress has passed the Syria Accountability and Lebanese Sovereignty Act, which calls on Syria to end what it terms the occupation of Lebanon."

US Government, 11 May 2004

"Syrian troops entered Lebanon in 1976. Today, Syria maintains a military presence in Lebanon inconsistent with the spirit of the 1989 Taif Accords, which called for the extension of Lebanese government control over the entire territory of Lebanon."

See UN Security Council Resolution 1559 in which the Council affirmed Lebanon's soveirgnty

New government formed in July 2005

- The new government is led by the Future Movement (Saad Hariri) and the Progressive Socialist Party of Jumblatt
- For the first time, a member of Hizbollah obtained a ministerial portfolio

UNSC, 26 October 2005, paras. 8-9

"On 7 May 2005, General Michel Aoun returned after 14 years in exile and formed the Free Patriotic Movement (FPM) to participate in the legislative elections that began on 29 May and concluded after four rounds on 19 June. The elections resulted in a clear victory of a coalition of the Future Movement, led by Saad Hariri, and the Progressive Socialist Party, led by Walid Jumblatt, which gained 72 seats. An alliance of the Amal party and Hizbollah gained 35 seats and FPM, led by Michel Aoun, won 21 of the 128 parliamentary seats.

On 19 July, a new Government was formed after intense discussions and negotiations between the political parties and President Lahoud, and not without difficulty, by Prime Minister Fouad Seniora, a former Minister of Finance who belongs to the Future Movement. Mr. Seniora's Cabinet consists of 24 members, including 15 from the Future Movement and 5 representing the Shiite alliance that includes Hizbollah. For the first time, a member of Hizbollah, Mohammed Fneish, obtained a ministerial portfolio as Minister of Water and Energy. On 31 July, the new Government passed the parliamentary vote of confidence comfortably. Earlier, on 18 July, the newly elected Parliament had also approved a motion to pardon Samir Geagea, leader of the Lebanese Forces, who had spent the past 11 years incarcerated."

Assassination of Prime Minister Rafik Hariri leads to extensive UN-led inquiry (2006)

- In June 2006, the UN Security Council extended for one year the mandate of the international commission set up to investigate the death of the former prime minister
- The UN International Independent Investigation Commission (IIIC) was set up in 2005 based on an initial mission
- An initial report led by Mehlis found that Syria was involved in the assassination but also suggestes Lebanese involvement

UN News, 12 June 2006

"Expressing its willingness to continue to assist Lebanon in the search for the truth surrounding the killing of former Prime Minister Rafik Hariri and 22 others, the United Nations Security Council today extended for one year the mandate of the international commission probing the deadly 2005 car bomb attack.

Coming just a day after the UN International Independent Investigation Commission (IIIC) reported "considerable progress" into the probe, the 15-member Council voted unanimously for

the extension until 15 June 2007 that had been called for among others by the Prime Minister of Lebanon.

In the resolution, the Council reaffirmed its "strongest condemnation of the 14 February 2005 terrorist bombing, as well as of all other attacks in Lebanon since October 2004, and reaffirming also that those involved in these attacks must be held accountable for their crimes."

The Council also supported the Commission's intention to extend further technical assistance to the Lebanese authorities regarding their investigations into the other terrorist attacks in Lebanon since 1 October 2004, and also requested the Secretary-General to provide the IIIC with the resources needed for this.

In his detailed report yesterday to the Security Council on the investigation into the killings, the head of the Commission Serge Brammertz, said the "fundamental building blocks for the investigation into the crime" were now largely understood "and provide the basis for investigative progress with regard to those who perpetrated the crime."

UNIIIC was established by the Security Council in April 2005 after an earlier UN mission found Lebanon's own investigation seriously flawed and Syria primarily responsible for the political tension preceding Mr. Hariri's murder."

UN News, 21 October 2005

"Converging evidence" points at both Lebanese and Syrian involvement in the assassination of former Lebanese Prime Minister Rafik Hariri, according to a report by a United Nations investigating panel, which concluded that the "terror" attack on 14 February had been carried out by a group with an extensive organization and considerable resources.

"It is a well known fact that Syrian Military Intelligence had a pervasive presence in Lebanon at the least until the withdrawal of the Syrian forces (in April)," the head of the UN International Independent Investigation Commission (UNIIIC), Detlev Mehlis, said in the report to the Security Council on the bomb attack. The bombing killed 22 others, leading to renewed calls for the withdrawal of all Syrian troops and intelligence agents who had been in Lebanon since the early stages of the country's 1975-1990 civil war.

"The former senior security officials of Lebanon were their appointees. Given the infiltration of Lebanese institutions and society by the Syrian and Lebanese intelligence services working in tandem, it would be difficult to envisage a scenario whereby such a complex assassination plot could have been carried out without their knowledge," the 63-page report said."

Further relevant documentation in Sources below:
UN Security Council Resolution 1595 (2005)
The UNIIIC Investigation into Prime Minister Hariri's death (October 2005)

Confrontations between Hezbollah and Israeli soldiers have broken out regularly since 2000 (2006)

- Incidents of clashes between Hizbollah fighters and Israel have been regularly reported prior to the 12 July outbreak of hostilities
- In November 2005, BBC reported the "heaviest fighting" in theShebaa Farm area since 2000
- Israel is reported to continue flying over South Lebanon despite UN warnings

- Ground violations of the Blue line occured mostly by crossings by Lebanese shepards
- Serious violations of the blue line with exchange of fire between Hezbollah and IDF occured in February and May 2006
- In Febuary IDF troops fired at a young Lebanese shepard
- In May Hezbollah was accused of firing 8 rockets into Israel although the organisation denied any involvement in the act
- IDF responded with air strikes against military installations of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine on 28 May
- UNIFIL mandate renewed in 2005 and 2006 through UNSC Resolutions 1583 and 1655

UNSC, 12 September 2006, p.4

"Since it was drawn by the United Nations in 2000, the Blue Line has remained tense, with violations from both sides"

UNSC, 21 July 2006, paras. 16-26

"Prior to the outbreak of hostilities across the Blue Line on 12 July, the situation in the UNIFIL area of operation during most of the reporting period was tense and volatile, although generally quiet. The ceasefire was breached and heavy exchanges across the Blue Line occurred at the beginning of February and at the end of May. One Lebanese civilian and one Hizbollah member were reportedly killed, and three Israeli soldiers, three Lebanese civilians and a number of Hizbollah members were wounded in the fighting. Tension along the Line was elevated, and IDF troops were on a high state of alert during the months of March, May, June and July. Israeli air violations decreased during the first half of the reporting period, but occurred again more frequently during the second half of May. Ground violations of the Line were attributable primarily to crossings by Lebanese shepherds and continued on analmost daily basis.

On 1 February, IDF opened fire and killed a young Lebanese shepherd inside Lebanese territory in the general area of the Shab'a farms. IDF clainled that the shepherd had been armed and that he had crossed the Blue Line on two earlier occasions that day. A UNIFIL investigation found no evidence to suggest .that the shepherd had had any hostile intentions or that his weapon had been used. The shooting incident underlined the need for IDF to act with maximum restraint and to respect fully the Blue Line. It also illustrated the necessity for the Government of Lebanon to make additional efforts to prevent ground violations of the Blue Line, including in the Shab'a farms area.

On 3 February, Hizbollah launched rocket attacks on a number of IDF positions in the Shab'a farms area, wounding one soldier. The attack was reportedly in retaliation for the killing of the shepherd two days earlier. IDF responded with air strikes and artillery, mortar and tank fire against Hizbollah positions in the area from which Hizbollah fire had emanated. Hizbollah responded with rocket and mortar fire in the area. UNIFIL recorded one incident of IDF firing close to a UNIFIL position near Kafr Shuba. One Lebanese civilian was wounded in the air strike. After a one-and-a-half-hour exchange, UNIFIL succeeded in brokering a ceasefire through the liaison channels with the parties.

In a serious breach of the ceasefire in the early morning of 28 May, unidentified armed elements launched at least eight rockets from the general area of Aynata across the Blue Line into Israel. Three rockets impacted inside an IDF position on Mount Meron, in Upper Galilee, some 8 kilometres south of the Line, causing material damage and lightly wounding one soldier. Hizbollah denied any involvement in the attack. Palestinian Islan~ic Jihad in Lebanon initially claimed responsibility in retaliation for the killing of a leading member in Lebanon and his brother on 26

May in a car bomb explosion in Saida. The claim was retracted later that day. The Lebanese authorities have taken an official position against attacks emanating from their territory. In a letter dated 1 June 2006, they informed me that the Lebanese Army Command, in conjunction with UNIFIL, would conduct the investigations necessary to ascertain the circumstances of the firing of missiles from Lebanese territory with a view to putting an end to them. The Lebanese Government subsequently alleged that Israel was involved in the attack in Saida; Israel denied it.

Later in the morning of 28 May, IDF retaliated with air strikes against military installations of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine - General Command in Naameh, 15 kilometres south of Beirut, and in the Sultan Yacoub area in the Bekaa Valley. One member was reportedly killed and eight were wounded in the air strikes.

In the afternoon of the same day, ilnidentified armed elements fired small arms from the general area of Hula on the Lebanese side, directed at Manara village on the Israeli side. One IDF soldier was reportedly seriously wounded. There was no claim of responsibility, and Hizbollah denied any involvement in the shooting. The incident triggered a major exchange of fire in different areas along the Blue Line, from the coast to the Shab'a farms in the east. IDF retaliated with a significant number of air strikes and artillery, mortar and tank fire, causing extensive damage to a number of Hizbollah positions. One Hizbollah member was killed and several more were injured. Two Lebanese civilians were also wounded, and several houses of civilians were damaged. Hizbollah responded with rocket, mortar and small-arms fire. UNIFIL was in close contact with the parties during the exchange of fire with a view to arranging a ceasefire and preventing further escqlation. After approximately two hours of heavy exchanges, UNIFIL and my senior representatives in the area succeeded in brokering a cessation of hostilities.

In the course of the exchange of fire, UNIFJL recorded a number of cases of IDF firing close to UNIFIL positions 8-32, 8-32A and 8-33 in the general area of Hula, position 1-31, in the vicinity of Alma ash Shab, and patrol base Hin of Observer Group Lebanon. Position 8-32 suffered significant material damage as a result of a bush fire ignited by the IDF fire. UNIFIL also recorded a number of incidents of Hizbollah small-arms fire from the vicinity of the same United Nations positions. These incidents are of serious concern because they endanger the lives of United Nations personnel and property. UNIFIL strongly protested the incidents to both sides.

Persistent 'and provocative Israeli air incursions, occasionally reaching deep into Lebanese airspace and generating sonic booms over populated areas, remained a matter of serious concern. The pattern identified in my previous reports continued, whereby the aircraft would sometimes fly out to sea and enter Lebanese airspace north of the UNIFIL area of operation, thus avoiding direct observation and verification by UNIFIL. The air incursions violate Lebanon's sovereignty and territorial integrity, elevate tension and disrupt the fragile calm along the Blue Line. **A** reduction in the number of air incursions in April contributed to an atmosphere of relative calm along the Blue Line, but this trend was reversed in May.

There were no instances of Hizbollah anti-aircraft fire across the Blue Line during the reporting period. 25. UNIFIL recorded a number of Lebanese ground violations of the Blue Line, primarily by shepherds. Such violations had become an almost daily routine, often involving the same local shepherds. On I February; IDF killed a Lebanese shepherd.. UNIFIL had urged the Lebanese authorities to take concrete measures on the ground to prevent such violations, particularly by shepherds in the Shab'a farms area. Meanwhile, UNIFIL and Observer Group Lebanon patrols warned the local population about the danger of crossing the Blue Line.
Demonstrations on the Lebanese side of the Blue Line occurred periodically at points of friction identified in my previous reports, namely Sheikh Abbad Hill, east of Hula, and Fatima gate, west of Metulla. The demonstrators occasionally threw stones and other objects at IDF positions. These incidents caused apprehension among IDF personnel but did not escalate further."

Aljazeera, 28 May 2006

"United Nations peacekeepers in the region have managed in the past few hours to negotiate a cease-fire despite sporadic gunfire, officials said.

Local reports said the two dead were a fighter from Lebanon's Hezbollah group and a Palestinian fighter.

The clashes began at dawn on Sunday, after Palestinian fighters fired rockets at northern Israel and Israeli aeroplanes responded with air strikes on Palestinian bases near the Lebanese capital, Beirut.

Witnesses saw black smoke rising from a military base outside Beirut and another in the eastern Bekaa Valley, both run by the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine-General Command (PFLP-GC) which is based in Damascus.

Later, Hezbollah fighters opened fire on Israeli soldiers along the border and fired more rockets into Israel, with Israeli forces returning fire, the army said.

One Israeli soldier was wounded in the rocket attacks, the Israeli army added, while Israeli civilians living in towns along the border were also ordered into bomb shelters.

Ehud Olmert, the Israeli prime minister, warned of a "clear and harsh response" if the attacks did not stop.

Islamic Jihad has since claimed responsibility for the rocket attacks in a statement.

Revenge

The barrage is the first to have been fired into Israel since February 3, an Israeli military spokeswoman said.

It came two days after a senior Islamic Jihad official and his brother were killed in a car bombing in southern Lebanon that the Palestinian group blamed on Israel.

Lebanon's Hezbollah group, which controls the Lebanese side of the border, also blamed Israel for the assassination and Islamic Jihad officials swore revenge."

UNSC, 18 January 2006, p.1

"During the reporting period a tense and fragile quiet generally prevailed in the UNIFIL area of operation, interrupted by a few serious clashes across the Blue Line. In the most serious incident, a heavy exchange of fire between Hizbollah and the Israel Defense Forces (IDF) across the Blue Line took place on 21 November, surpassing any activity level since Israel's withdrawal from Lebanon in May 2000. On 27 December, unidentified armed elements fired four Katyusha rockets from the general area of Addaisseh village towards Israel. There was an additional incident of exchange of fire between IDF and Hizbollah later in November. On two occasions, unidentified armed elements fired rockets from Lebanese territory across the Blue Line towards Israel. Recurrent Israeli air violations were a continuous source of tension. There were almost daily violations of the line of withdrawal by Lebanese shepherds and frequent incidents of stone throwing from the Lebanese side."

BBC, 28 December 2005

"Two Palestinian militants have been wounded in an Israeli air strike on their base in Lebanon, hours after rockets hit two Israeli border towns.

The Israeli warplanes targeted the base of the pro-Syrian Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine-General Command in the al-Naima area, south of Beirut.

"This is in response to the firing of projectile rockets last night toward Israeli communities," the army said.

A PFLP-GC spokesman denied his group had carried out the rocket attacks.

"Israel wants to blame us for the rocket attacks to provoke a hostile reaction against us in Lebanon," Anur Raja told the AFP news agency."

BBC, 21 November 2005

"Israeli troops have killed three Hezbollah fighters during a guerrilla attack near the Lebanese border, which also left several Israelis wounded.

It was the heaviest fighting in the Shebaa Farms area since 2000, when Israeli troops left south Lebanon.

Hezbollah fighters launched a major assault on Israeli army posts, triggering retaliatory air strikes.

Israel captured the area from Syria in the 1967 war but it is now claimed by Lebanon with Syria's backing.

Eyewitnesses reported at least 250 explosions in an intense two-and-a-half hours of rocket duels.

Scores of fighters were observed taking part in the Hezbollah operation, which Lebanese security sources said was aimed at taking Israeli hostages.

Overflights

Israeli aircraft overflew south Lebanon as far north as Tyre, in defiance of repeated calls by the United Nations for an end to violations of Lebanese air space.

Israeli TV said Hezbollah's artillery barrage was designed to divert attention from a raid on the Druze village of Ghajar to capture Israeli soldiers.

The majority of residents in Ghajar are reported to have taken Israeli nationality after Israel captured the Golan Heights from Syria in 1967.

The water-rich Shebaa Farms area lies at the convergence of Lebanon and Syria and the Israeli-occupied Golan Heights.

The UN has ruled that the area belongs to Syria - not Lebanon - and says its fate is linked to the Golan Heights.

In 2004, UN Resolution 1559 called for the disarmament of Hezbollah, but the Lebanese government has so far refused to act."

BBC, 7 May 2004

"Israeli aircraft have bombed suspected Hezbollah outposts in south Lebanon, Lebanese security sources say.

The raid in the Shebaa Farms area seems to have been a response to Hezbollah rocket attacks on Israeli army bunkers.

Hezbollah says it has killed several Israeli army infiltrators in the area, where Israel, Lebanon and Syria meet.

This is the third day of fighting in an area claimed as Lebanese by Hezbollah but described by the UN as Israeli-occupied Syrian land.

Cross-border skirmishes have been taking place since Wednesday, punctuated by Israeli air raids on Lebanese territory.

Israel says the Shebaa Farms are part of the Golan Heights, which it captured from Syria in the 1967 war and later annexed.

Hezbollah says it intends to recover the area for Lebanon.

The hostilities come amid reports that a breakthrough is likely in hostage-swap negotiations between Israel and Hezbollah, in which Germany is a mediator.

The latest fighting appears to have started when Hezbollah rockets struck Israeli military positions.

Israel responded with air-raids over suspected Hezbollah outposts near the Lebanese border village of Kfarshuba, Lebanese police said.

Hezbollah meanwhile says it killed several Israeli soldiers who had crossed the border into Lebanon.

Israel has confirmed at least one of its soldiers was killed. There was no word on casualties suffered by Hezbollah.

Save for the disputed Shebaa Farms area, the Israel-Lebanon border region has been largely peaceful since Israel withdrew its troops in 2000, after a long and bloody occupation."

Delineation of borders still unresolved: the cases of the Shebaa and Ghanjar (2006)

- The Security Council has requested proposals for the delineation of the international borders of Lebanon, especially in those areas where the border is disputed or uncertain, including by dealing with the Shebaa Farms area
- In light of the Syrian Arab Republic statements indicating that the Shab'a Farms area is Lebanese
- Prime Minister Siniora has proposed a commitment from the Security Council to place the Shab'a Farms area and the adjacent Kafr Shuba hills under United Nations jurisdiction until border delineation and Lebanese sovereignty over them are fully settled
- Lebanese President has condemned Israel's refusal to withdraw from the Ghajar village in southern Lebanon, saying it is a clear violation of UN resolution 1701, a presidential statement said on Monday.

UNSC, 19 October 2006

"In addition to its call contained in resolution 1680 (2006) on the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic to respond positively to the request made by the Government of Lebanon to delineate their common border, the Council again emphasized the importance of the extension of the control of the Government of Lebanon over all Lebanese territory in its resolution 1701 (2006).

In the context of the general need for a delineation of the Syrian-Lebanese border, the Government of Lebanon has informed me that Syrian border police maintained sand barriers and positions inside Lebanese territory in several locations during the last six months. The Government of Lebanon further informed me that there were mobile positions, some of which were also manned by Syrian border police on occasion. The apparent uncertainty over the border in the areas concerned highlights, once again, the need for a comprehensive border delineation agreement between Lebanon and the Syrian Arab Republic, in the best interest of both countries.

As regards delineation of the border in the Shab'a Farms area, Prime Minister Siniora enquired in a meeting between us on 21 April 2006 as to possible steps to be undertaken, from the perspective of the United Nations, for the sovereignty of the Shab'a Farms to be transferred from the Syrian Arab Republic to Lebanon. I responded to the Prime Minister in a letter dated 5 June 2006. Prime Minister Siniora and I have discussed the matter further, including when I visited Beirut during my recent mission to the region and in connection with the Government of Lebanon's seven-point plan.

In the light of Syrian statements indicating that the Shab'a Farms area is Lebanese and considering the alternative path suggested by the Government of Lebanon in its seven-point plan, I continue to investigate carefully the complicated cartographic, legal and political implications of such an approach and will revert to the Council in due course.[4] In the meantime, I wish to reiterate my urgent call on the Syrian Arab Republic and Lebanon to undertake the necessary steps to delineate their common border, in fulfilment of resolutions 1559 (2004), 1680 (2006) and 1701 (2006). Such steps would significantly contribute to the stability of the region."

UNSC, 12 September 2006

"In its resolution 1701 (2006), the Security Council emphasized the importance of the extension of the control of the Government of Lebanon over all Lebanese territory. The Council also requested me to develop proposals for the delineation of the international borders of Lebanon, especially in those areas where the border is disputed or uncertain, including by dealing with the Shab'a Farms area.

I have previously noted the repeated statements by representatives of the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic that the Shab'a farms area is Lebanese and not (Israeli-occupied) the Syrian Arab Republic territory, as determined by the United Nations on the basis of the Blue Line, and my caveat that the determination by the United Nations of the status of the Shab'a Farms is without prejudice to any border delineation agreement between the Syrian Arab Republic and Lebanon. I have previously called on both Governments to urgently take steps in keeping with international law to reach such an agreement. I have also noted Lebanon's readiness to deal with this issue and urgently called for the cooperation of the Syrian Arab Republic.

It is important to emphasize that the issue of the Shab'a Farms area continues to be put forward — in contradiction to the repeated resolutions of the Security Council — to justify the existence and activities of Hizbollah insofar as militant activity across the Blue Line is concerned. In light of the Syrian Arab Republic statements indicating that the Shab'a Farms area is Lebanese, clarifying the status of the area is likely to facilitate the Government of Lebanon's efforts to fully

implement the relevant provisions of the Taif Accords and of Security Council resolutions 1559 (2004), 1680 (2006) and 1701 (2006). A permanent solution of this issue, however, remains contingent upon the delineation of the border between the Syrian Arab Republic and Lebanon.

I am encouraged by my talks with the Governments of the Syrian Arab Republic and Lebanon on this issue and note that the Lebanese remain committed to the agreement they reached in their national dialogue earlier in 2006. I also note that President Assad informed me that the Syrian Arab Republic was prepared to go ahead with the delineation of its border with Lebanon and that he was ready to meet with Prime Minister Siniora at any time to discuss all issues of common interest. I reiterate my strong expectation of speedy steps towards an agreement on the delineation of the border as an important means to help fully restore the sovereignty, territorial integrity and political independence of Lebanon in fulfilment of Security Council resolution 1701 (2006).

In this context, I have taken careful note of an alternative path, suggested by the Government of Lebanon, to achieve progress on clarifying, in particular, the status of the Shab'a Farms. In his Seven Point Plan, Prime Minister Siniora proposed that, together with an immediate and comprehensive ceasefire, agreement would be declared on a number of elements, including a commitment from the Security Council to place the Shab'a Farms area and the adjacent Kafr Shuba hills under United Nations jurisdiction until border delineation and Lebanese sovereignty over them are fully settled. Implementation of such a measure would still require the determination of the precise geographic scope of the Shab'a Farms area, which I have previously identified as an essential element to be addressed in a letter I sent to Prime Minister Siniora on 5 June 2006 regarding his question about the possible steps to be undertaken, from the perspective of the United Nations, for the sovereignty of the Shab'a Farms area to be transferred from the Syrian Arab Republic to Lebanon. I am now studying carefully the complicated cartographic, legal and political implications of such an approach and will revert to the Council in due course."

Xinhua, 10 October 2006

"Lebanese President Emile Lahoud has condemned Israel's refusal to withdraw from the Ghajar village in southern Lebanon, saying it is a clear violation of UN resolution 1701, a presidential statement said on Monday.

"Lebanon still holds on to all its occupied territories including the town of Ghajar and the Shebaa Farms. Lebanon will also exert all efforts to set free its Lebanese detainees in Israeli jails. Lebanon also demands Israel to hand over all landmines maps to the UN," said the president in an interview with Kuwaiti daily "Anbaa" which will be published Tuesday.

Despite pulling out from the rest of southern Lebanon on October 1, Israeli troops continue to occupy the Lebanese part of the divided village of Ghajar, which borders the Syrian Golan Heights that Israel has held since 1967.

Lahoud added that Israel failed to accomplish its goals in Lebanon and was not able to wipe out the Lebanese resistance, stir sectarian strife, and occupy Lebanese territory.

He also expressed his hope that national dialogue among various Lebanese parties would lead to the establishment of a cabinet of national unity.

Such a cabinet would lead the country, boost national economy and resolve all pending matters, he added, saying "the present cabinet does not represent all segments of the society, and is unable to rally popular support."

Israel launches military operations and blockade on Lebanon after Hezbollah abduction of Israeli soldiers (12 July 2006)

- According to news sources, Hezbollah launched the attck, Israel responded with large-scale airstrikes
- In border clashes between Israeli military forces and Hezbollah, Hezbollah fighters seize two Israeli soldiers in a cross-border raid, saying it will release them only if Israel frees Palestinian prisoners held in Israeli jails
- Ehud Olmert, Israel's prime minister, says the attack is an "act of war" by Lebanon and said he would make the country pay a "heavy price"
- Israel imposes a sea, air and ground blockade and begins systematic bombing
- Israeli Defense Forces also conduct small-scale incursions into Lebanese territory with bulldozers and tanks
- Some of the heaviest fighting occured in the last 48 hours prior to the ceasefire

UNSC, 18 August 2006, para. 8

"Meanwhile, some of the heaviest fighting of the month-long conflict occurred during the 48-hour period prior to the cessation of hostilities coming into effect. Israel Defense Forces (IDF) intensified shelling and aerial bombardment across Lebanon. Hizbollah launched a barrage of rockets into northern Israel. The two sides exchanged heavy fire on the ground, in particular in the area of Bayyadah, Al Jibbayn and Tayr Harfa in the western sector, and Mays al Jabal and Markaba in the central sector."

UNSC, 21 July 2006, p.2

"The situation in the UNIFIL area of operation remained tense and volatile, although it was generally quiet during most of the reporting period. This situation completely changed on 12 July, when the current hostilities broke out and the area was plunged into the most serious conflict in decades.

The crisis started when, around 9 a.m. local time, Hizbollah launched several rockets from Lebanese territory across the withdrawal line (the so-called Blue Line) towards Israel Defense Forces (IDF) positions near the coast and in the area of the Israeli town of Zarit. In parallel, Hizbollah fighters crossed the Blue Line into Israel and attacked an IDF patrol. Hizbollah captured two IDF soldiers, killed three others and wounded two more. The captured soldiers were taken into Lebanon. Subsequent to the attack on the patrol, a heavy exchange of fire ensued across the Blue Line between Hizbollah and IDF: While the exchange of fire stretched over the entire length of the Line, it was heaviest in the areas west of Bint Jubayl and in the Shab'a farms area. Hizbollah targeted IDF positions and Israeli towns south of the Blue Line. Israel retaliated by ground, air and sea attacks. In addition to airstrikes on Hizbollah positions, IDF targeted numerous roads and bridges in southern Lebanon within and outside the UNIFIL area of operations. IDF has stated that those attacks were to "prevent Hizbollah from transferring the abducted soldiers". At least one IDF tank and an IDF platoon crossed into Lebanon in the area of the Hizbollah attack in an attempt to rescue the captured soldiers. An explosive device detonated under the tank, killing four more IDF soldiers. An eighth IDF soldier was reportedly killed in fighting that ensued during an attempt to retrieve the four bodies. That night, the IDF issued a warning to UNIFIL that any person - including United Nations personnel - moving close to the Blue Line would be shot at.

In the afternoon of 12 July local time, the Government of Lebanon requested UNIFIL to broker a ceasefire. Israel responded that a ceasefire would be contingent upon the return of the captured soldiers.

Hostilities within and outside the UNIFIL area of operations have continued without interruption since 12 July. Israel continues to conduct large-scale airstrikes on infrastructure and strategic targets throughout Lebanon, including the Beirut international airport, which has since remained closed, the port, various Beirut suburbs and towns further north along the coast and in the Bekaa Valley. The Beirut- Damascus highway and other routes connecting Lebanon to the Syrian Arab Republic have also been bombed. Many fuel depots and petrol stations have been destroyed. Within the UNIFIL area of operations, IDF bombings have damaged or destroyed Hizbollah positions in addition to most roads and bridges, obstructing movement throughout the south of the country.
[...]
IDF has conducted small-scale temporary incursions into Lebanese territory with bulldozers and tanks near Rosh HaNiqra and Ghajar to destroy Hizbollah positions. It has also erected concrete blocks around the northern part of Ghajar village, and its troops are reported to be operating in the northern part of the village."

The Guardian, 12 July 2006

"Israeli tanks and troops today invaded southern Lebanon after Hizbullah captured two soldiers and killed several others.

The Israeli prime minister, Ehud Olmert, described the capture of the soldiers an "act of war" by Lebanon, with today's developments compounding the ongoing political crisis over an abducted Israeli soldier being held in Gaza.

Palestinian militants holding Corporal Gilad Shalit have demanded that all Palestinian women and young people held in Israeli jails be freed in exchange for his release.

The Bush administration blamed Syria and Iran for today's kidnappings and violence, calling for the immediate and unconditional release of the two soldiers.

Hizbullah said it would not release them until Israel agreed to set free all Arab prisoners.

Its capture of the soldiers is a huge political embarrassment to Mr Olmert, coming only weeks after the seizure of Cpl Shalit last month.

He will be concerned that Hamas and Hizbullah could start working together to demand the release of prisoners as a condition for freeing the missing soldiers.

Several Israeli soldiers were killed in fighting after Mr Olmert ordered his forces into Lebanon in an attempt to rescue the abducted soldiers.

"These are difficult days for the state of Israel and its citizens," he said. "There are people ... who are trying to test our resolve. They will fail, and they will pay a heavy price for their actions."

Aljazeera, 24 July 2006

"Hezbollah fighters seize two Israeli soldiers in a cross-border raid. Three Israeli soldiers are also killed in the attack.

It says it will release them if Israel frees Palestinian prisoners held in Israeli jails.

"Fulfilling its pledge to liberate the prisoners and detainees, the Islamic Resistance ... captured two Israeli soldiers at the border with occupied Palestine," a Hezbollah statement said.

Ehud Olmert, Israel's prime minister, said the attack was an "act of war" by Lebanon and said he would make the country pay a "heavy price".

Later that day, Israel launches a small cross-border raid in the area where the two soldiers were abducted. Hezbollah destroyed one Israeli tank, killing its four-man crew. Another Israeli was killed in an operation to recover the tank.

"This affair is between Israel and the state of Lebanon," Major-General Udi Adam, head of Israel's Northern Command says. "Where to attack? Once it is inside Lebanon, everything is legitimate - not just southern Lebanon, not just the line of Hezbollah posts."

Lieutenant-General Dan Halutz, Israel's chief of staff, says: "If the soldiers are not returned, we will turn Lebanon's clock back 20 years."

BBC, 13 July 2006

"Israel is imposing an air and sea blockade on Lebanon as part of a major offensive after two soldiers were seized by the militant group Hezbollah.

Israeli warships have blocked Lebanese ports, and its international airport was closed after Israeli bombing.
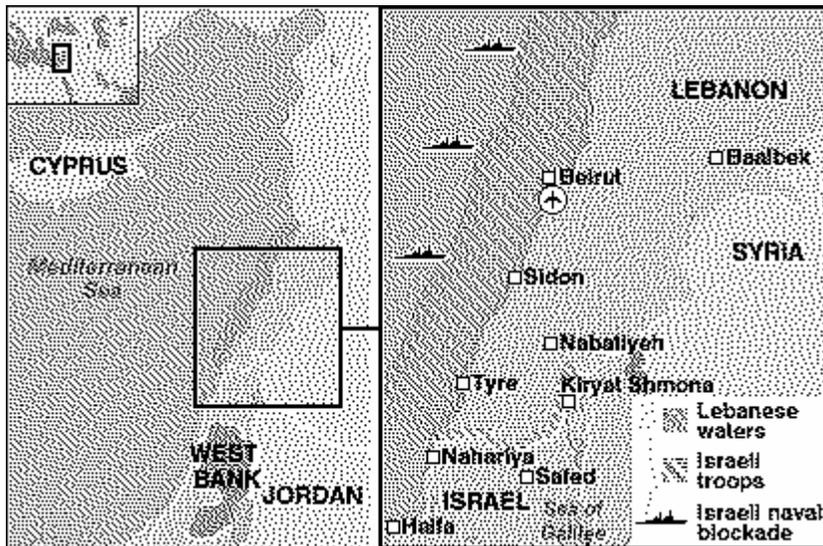
Israel targets Lebanon by land, air and sea: enforcing naval blockade, bombing Beirut airport and shelling Lebanese towns"

Ceasefire and adoption of UNSC Resolution 1701 (August 2006)

- The Resolution calls for an immediate cessation to the hostilities
- It calls for the deployment of Lebanese troops and an expanded UN peacekeeping presence across Southern Lebanon and the withdrawal of Israel
- The UN force, UNIFIL, will be tasked with monitoring the ceasefire, helping ensure humanitarian access to civilians and the safe return of IDPs
- The resolution also calls for an arms free zone between the Blue Line and the Litani and for the disarmament of all armed groups in Lebanon
- It calls for full implementation of the Taif Accords, as well as resolutions 1559 and 1680
- A ceasefire went into effect on 14 August

AFP, 14 August 2006

"A UN-brokered ceasefire to end the month-old conflict in Lebanon came into force on Monday but intense fighting continued right up to the deadline for the guns to fall silent.
Israel launched an 11th-hour wave of air strikes on Lebanon and Hezbollah fighters unleashed a barrage of rockets just hours before the agreed "cessation of hostilities" took effect at 0500 GMT.
Israeli forces shelled areas around Tyre and Khiam in the war-battered south of the country, while combat jets flew over Beirut, dropping warning leaflets, and bombarded the ancient eastern city of Baalbek. "

UNSC, 11 August 2006

"The Security Council voted tonight to halt the deadly conflict that has engulfed Lebanon and northern Israel for the past month, passing a resolution that calls for an immediate cessation of hostilities followed by the deployment of Lebanese troops and a significantly expanded United Nations peacekeeping presence across southern Lebanon as well as the withdrawal of all Israeli forces from the same area.

In a unanimous vote, conducted after weeks of intensive diplomacy with Secretary-General Kofi Annan pushing for action, the 15-member Council called for Hizbollah to stop all attacks immediately and for Israel to cease "all offensive military operations."

Welcoming the Lebanese Government's plan to deploy 15,000 troops across the south of the country as Israel withdraws behind the Blue Line "at the earliest," the Council backed the simultaneous deployment of a UN force with an enhanced mandate, equipment and scope of operation.

The expanded UN Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) will be authorized to have a maximum of 15,000 peacekeepers and its mandate has been extended by 12 months until August next year. The mission will be tasked with monitoring the cessation of hostilities, helping to ensure humanitarian access to civilians and the safe return of displaced persons, and supporting the Lebanese armed forces as they deploy in the south and enforce their responsibilities under the resolution.

The Council said it reserved the right to make further enhancements to UNIFIL's mandate in a later resolution.

Underlining its desire "to help secure a permanent ceasefire and a long-term solution to the conflict," the Council urged Israel and Lebanon to work towards those goals while respecting several principles, including:

Respect for the Blue Line;
Ensuring the area between the Blue Line and the Litani river in southern Lebanon is free of any armed personnel and weapons other than those of the Lebanese armed forces and UNIFIL; and
Full implementation of the relevant provisions of the Taif Accords, as well as resolutions 1559 and 1680, that require the disarmament of all armed groups in Lebanon.

The text stressed the importance of not just ending the violence, but the causes that gave rise to the current crisis, including "the unconditional release of the abducted Israeli soldiers."

It said the Council, "mindful of the sensitivity of the issue of prisoners," encouraged efforts aimed at settling the issue of the hundreds of Lebanese prisoners detained in Israel.

Council members also emphasized how vital it is that the Lebanese Government is able to extend its authority across all of the country's territory through the deployment of its armed forces.

The resolution also urged Member States to consider contributing to the expanded UNIFIL force while calling on the international community to offer financial and humanitarian aid to the Lebanese people, and to help displaced persons return safely to the country. The Secretary-General was asked to develop proposals within the next month on several issues, including the delineation of Lebanon's border and the Shebaa farms area."

See the full text of UNSC 1701

Ceasefire generally upheld by both parties though some violations reported (September 2006)

- The UN reports some violations by the Israeli Defense Forces which it terms "minor"
- While most violations have not been of "an offensive and hostile character" the UN notes one severe violation of the cease fire by Israel
- Israeli forces carried out a raid in eastern Lebanon on 19 August
- There have also been several air violations by Israeli military aircraft

UNSC, 12 September 2006, p.4

"In paragraph 4 of its resolution 1701 (2006), the Council reiterated its strong support for full respect for the Blue Line. In paragraph 8 of the same resolution, the Council also affirmed full respect for the Blue Line as one of the principles and elements of a permanent ceasefire and long-term solution. As I have outlined in a number of reports to the Council, both sides in the past have failed to respect the Blue Line. Since it was drawn by the United Nations in 2000, the Blue Line has remained tense, with violations from both sides.

Since my previous report of 18 August (S/2006/670), the parties have largely complied with the cessation of hostilities. UNIFIL has, however, observed numerous minor incidents and violations in its area of operation between the Litani River and the Blue Line. These have primarily been ground violations related to the fortifying of IDF positions and the technical fence. IDF has also continued to resupply and rotate troops inside Lebanon. UNIFIL has taken particular note of daily

Israeli air incursions over Lebanese air space. From the Lebanese side, shepherds have resumed their practice of crossing the Blue Line in the Shab'a farms vicinity. There has been little visible activity by Hizbollah in the UNIFIL area of operations, other than some reported attempts to salvage equipment from its previous positions and transport it northwards.

On the whole, the ground violations have not been of an offensive and hostile character and the parties seem determined to uphold the agreement. There was, however, one severe violation of the cessation of hostilities, when Israeli forces carried out a raid in eastern Lebanon on 19 August. The assessment that the parties seem generally determined to uphold the cessation of hostilities converges with the fact that both the Government of Lebanon and the Government of Israel have assured me of their commitment to fully respect the Blue Line. In order to aid the parties in honouring their obligation to respect the Blue Line in its entirety, UNIFIL intends to place visible markers on the ground along its full length."

UN, 19 August 2006

"United Nations Secretary-General Kofi Annan today spoke with top Israeli and Lebanese officials following an Israeli raid in eastern Lebanon which he warned endangers the fragile calm that has generally held in the region since Monday.

"The Secretary-General is deeply concerned about a violation by the Israeli side of the cessation of hostilities as laid out in Security Council resolution 1701", a UN spokesman said in a statement. Adopted on 11 August, that text mandated a halt to the fighting which took effect three days later.

There have also been several air violations by Israeli military aircraft, according to the UN Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL), which is helping to support and coordinate the Israeli withdrawal.

Mr. Annan said violations of Security Council resolution 1701 such as the Israeli raid today "endanger the fragile calm that was reached after much negotiation and undermine the authority of the Government of Lebanon."

He called on all parties "to respect strictly the arms embargo, exercise maximum restraint, avoid provocative actions and display responsibility in implementing resolution 1701."

UNSC, 18 August 2006, para. 13

"UNIFIL has reported only a handful of isolated violations of the cessation of hostilities since it came into effect. In one incident on 15 August, UNIFIL learned that IDF and Hizbollah had exchanged fire in the area of Haddathah in the central sector. It immediately dispatched patrols to the scene, to find the dead bodies of four Hizbollah members, which were later taken away in an ambulance. In another incident on 16 August, an IDF tank positioned on the Israeli side fired one round across the Blue Line into Lebanese territory towards the village of Markaba in the central sector. There was no response from the other side and the situation in the area remained calm. UNIFIL observed one to four Israeli violations of Lebanese airspace daily. On 17 August 2006, a group of 100 armed elements in vehicles crossed into one of the sectors vacated by IDF near Al Qalay in the Marjayoun area and moved to the south. Also on 17 August, UNIFIL reported shepherds having crossed the Blue Line in the Shab'a farms area. UNIFIL strongly protested these incidents to both sides."

Causes of displacement

Sustained Israeli military operations and cause people to flee (July-August 2006)

- Much of the displacement in Lebanon was the resultof indiscriminate attacks on civilians and civilian property and infrastructure
- People also fled due to climate fear and panic caused by the warnings, threats and attacks by the IDF
- Heavy shelling and air strikes by the Israeli Defense Forces, particularly in southern Lebanon, have forced people to flee the southern suburbs of Beirut and the Beqaa valley
- As of 31 August: one million Lebanese were displaced, the majority inside Lebanon, including 16,000 Palestinian refugees secondarily displaced
- 200,000 Lebanese sought refuge outside the country
- More than 1,000 people were killed and 4,000 injured

COI, 10 November 2006

"Much of the displacement in Lebanon was the result, either direct or indirect, of indiscriminate attacks on civilians and civilian property and infrastructure, as well as the climate of fear and panic among the civilian population caused by the warnings, threats and attacks by the IDF. Furthermore, in many cases, the attacks were disproportionate in nature and could not be justified on the basis of military necessity. Taking into account all of these facts, the Commission notes that the displacement itself constitutes a violation of international law."

UNSC, 21 July 2006, para.13

"UNIFIL estimates that approximately 50 per cent of the local population has left the villages in the south."

UNSC, 12 September 2006, para.3

"As of 31 August 2006, official Lebanese figures showed that 1,187 people had died and 4,092 had been injured in Lebanon as a result of the conflict. Many of these victims were children. The Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs estimates that one million Lebanese were displaced between 12 July and 14 August, with some 735,000 seeking shelter within Lebanon and 230,000 outside; this included the secondary displacement of approximately 16,000 Palestinian refugees."

UN OCHA, 24 July 2006, p.4

"Sustained, heavy shelling and air strikes by the IDF, which have particularly targeted southern Lebanon, southern suburbs of Beirut and the Beqaa Valley, have caused widespread destruction of the country's public infrastructure, including hospitals, schools and road networks preventing the humanitarian community from accessing vulnerable populations and civilians fleeing war-affected areas. The IDF's sea, air and land blockade of Lebanon is worsening the already-mounting hardships confronting the civilian population, and has had devastating consequences."

Israel leaflets and warnings to the Lebanese population to leave their homes (July-August 2006)

- Warnings were issued by speakers and flyers
- Many people were unable to leave southern Lebanon for reasons including that they did not have transport, destroyed roads, because they are ill or elderly
- People may also have been afraid to flee for fear of the physical danger they might face while they fled
- There were several cases of people who when warned by the IDF to evacuate did so only to be attacked on their way out
- Leaflets were also dropped in Beirut and other places but in the main they were of an anti-Hezbollah propaganda nature rather than warnings

COI, 10 November 2006

"From mid-July the IDF began warning villagers in the south to evacuate their towns and villages. The warnings sere given by leaflets dropped by aircraft, through recorded messages to telephones and by loudspeaker.
[...]
On 25 July 2006 the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs published on its official website[...] the following example of a warning to Lebanese civilians to leave areas allegedly being used to launch rockets and not to travel by truck:

> "To the people of Lebanon
> Pay attention to these instructions!!
> The IDF will intensity its activities and will heavily bomb the entire area from which rockets are being launched against the State of Israel.
> Anyone present in these areas is endangering his life!
> In addition, any pickup truck or truck travelling south of the Litani River will be suspected of transporting rockets and weapons and may be bombed.
> You must know that anyone travelling in a pickup truck or truck is endangering his life.
> The State of Israel."

IHL requires that warring parties give "effective advance warning" of attacks which may affect the civilian population. It is also generally accepted that a warning is not required when circumstances do not permit, such as in cases where the element of surprise is essential."[...] State practice establishes this rule as a norm of customary international law. Obligations with respect to the principle of distinction and the conduct of hostilities remain applicable even if civilians remain in the zone of operations after a warning has been given. Threats in the past, for example that all remaining civilians would be considered liable to attack, have been condemned and withdrawn.

IHL also prohibits "acts or threats of violence the primary purpose of which is to spread terror among the civilian population".[...] Statements calling for the evacuation of areas that are not genuine warnings, but are intended to frighten or cause panic among residents or compel them to leave their homes for reasons other than their safety, could fall under this prohibition.

Military planning staff should pay strict attention to the requirement for any warning to be *"effective"*. The timing of the warning is of importance. In some cases the IDF are reported to have dropped leaflets or given loudspeaker warnings[...] only two hours before a threatened attack. Having given a warning, the actual physical possibility to react to it must be considered.

As the High Commissioner for Human Rights has pointed out, "Many people are simply unable to leave southern Lebanon because they have not transport, because roads have been destroyed, because they are ill or elderly, because they must care for others who are physically unable to make the journey, or because they simply have nowhere to go"

Also of great concern was the physical danger they might face if they heeded the warning and took to the roads. There were number of civilians who when warned by the IDF to evacuate did so only to be attacked on their way out. On 15 July, for example, a number of families fled the southern Lebanese village of Marwaheen after the IDF warned them to evacuate. On the road leading to the coast through Chamaa the convoy was attacked leaving 23 dead (see detailed report earlier). On 7 August, Israeli warplanes dropped leaflets over southern Lebanon with the following wording: "Any vehicle of any kind travelling south of the Litani River will be bombarded, on suspicion of transporting rockets, military equipment and terrorists. Anyone who travels in any vehicle is placing his life in danger".[...] This obviously made further evacuation from the area extremely difficult if not impossible."
[...]

In Beirut and other places, leaflets were also dropped but in the main they were of an anti-Hezbollah propaganda nature rather than warnings. The same applies to the computer-generated telephone calls many people received. An example of this type of leaflet is as follows and further examples given in at Annex VI. The IDF tells the people of Lebanon that they are in conflict with the Hezbollah terrorists, not the people of Lebanon, and that they should not allow themselves to be used as human shields (Aug 3, 2006)[…]**:**

> "To the people of Lebanon
> IDF forces operated with daring and force in Baalbek, the centre of operations of the Hezbollah terror band, in the framework of its defense of the citizens of the State of Israel and the return of the abducted IDF soldiers.
> Know that the IDF will continue to send its long arm to wherever Hezbollah terrorists are found, in order to strike at them forcefully and with determination, and to neutralize their options to execute their criminal ideology against the citizens of Israel.
> Citizens of Lebanon,
> The IDF forces are not acting against the Lebanese people, but against the Hezbollah terrorists, and will continue to act as long as it deems necessary.
> Do not allow Hezbollah elements to hold you as prisoners and use you as a human shield for the sake of foreign interests.
> The State of Israel."

It also appears that the IDF dropped propaganda leaflets after the conflict. An example given to the Commission by UNMACC[...] is as follows:

> "To the citizens of South Lebanon
> Now that you have returned to your villages, and you are facing a big crisis: destruction, devastation and death
> *how did you arrive at this situation?*
> Nasrallah claims that it is his right to kidnap Israeli soldiers - was this a worthwhile decision?
> Nasrallah claims that he is not serving the interests of Iran and Syria - is that true?
> Nasrallah claims that he is a deterrent for Israel - is that true?
> *Was all this worth the price you paid?*
> Be aware that the Israeli Defense Force will come back and act with the required force any time the terrorist elements carry out their operations against the citizens of the State of Israel from inside Lebanese territory.
> You have the possibility to prevent this by bringing calm, security, and prosperity in your region.
> State of Israel"

ABC, 22 July 2006

"Israel has warned Lebanese civilians to leave border villages and called up 3,000 reserves in a possible prelude to a ground offensive that would expand its 10-day-old campaign against Hezbollah guerrillas.

[…]
Israeli planes dropped leaflets over south Lebanon warning civilians to flee for safety north of the Litani river, about 20 kilometres from the frontier.

An estimated 300,000 mostly Shiite Muslim Lebanese normally reside south of the Litani."

UNSC, 21 July 2006, p.2

"Early in the conflict, Israeli planes also dropped leaflets across Lebanon warning the population to avoid areas known for Hizbollah's presence."

AFP, 16 July 2006

"Israel's military ordered residents to flee villages in southern Lebanon Sunday, warning of air and artillery operations following the deadliest cross-border rocket attack on Israel in decades.

Internal Security Minister Avi Dichter said the move was aimed at forcing an exodus of tens of thousands of civilians in order to put pressure on the Lebanese Shiite Hezbollah militia."

Two main causes of internal displacement result from civil war and Israeli interventions in the 1970s and 1980s

- Internal displacement resulted from internal conflict and civil war as well as from the Israeli interventions in 1978 and 1982

LNF, 2002

"Two categories of IDPs have to be distinguished

- IDPs from the persistent internal conflict and the civil war, which entailed the fragmentation of the country into confessionally based districts.

- IDPs resulted from the Israel invasions in 1978 and 1982. The Israeli invasion of 1978 displaced about 200,000 Lebanese (mostly Shi'a Muslims) and 65,000 Palestinians from the south of the country."

USCR, 2003

"Lebanon's civil war caused the violent fragmentation of a pluralistic society into fairly distinct sectarian areas. At the height of the conflict, up to 1 million people were internally displaced for long periods of time, and many people were often displaced briefly during the course of the fighting. When the civil war ended in 1991, some 90,000 families, or about 450,000 persons, remained displaced. Some 86 percent originated from the Mount Lebanon governorate (62 percent) and southern Lebanon (24 percent). Many of the displaced, particularly from the south, settled in Beirut.

Internally displaced persons in Lebanon include those from the internal conflict and civil war, which broke Lebanon into sectarian districts, and those displaced by the Israeli invasions of 1978 and 1982. The 1978 invasion displaced about 200,000 mostly Shi'a Muslims and 65,000 Palestinians from the south of the country."

Displacement due to civil war and Israeli interventions (1975-1990)

- First large-scale displacement in 1975 was sparked by clashes between Christians and Muslims
- Israeli interventions of 1978 and 1982 caused massive temporary and long-term displacements
- After 1982, conflicts between Shi'a militias and Palestinians, as well as between Christian and Druze militias caused further displacement, particularly in Mount Lebanon
- Disagreements over the 1989 Ta'if accords caused the eruption of heavy fighting between Christian militias and Syrian troops, and between the militias themselves, and led to extensive displacement

Assaf & El-Fil 7 April 2000

"The first large-scale displacement began in 1975 and was characterized by confessional divisions. A quasi homogeneity of religious affiliation was violently imposed in different regions of the country and the capital was divided into Christian and Muslim sectors. In 1985 the largest and most destructive wave of forced internal migration (displacing an estimated 367,000 people) took place in Mount Lebanon. The displacement occurred in tragic conditions and struck a sever blow to the national unity of the country. Further massive displacement was caused by repeated Israeli invasions. The Israeli military operations in 1978 displaced more than 120,000 persons from the south to Beirut's suburbs where they often illegally occupied vacant houses, hotels and plots of land. The Israeli invasion of 1982 caused a temporary massive wave of displacement especially from the capital. While the withdrawal of Israeli forces from Beirut permitted a significant return movement, their withdrawal from Mount Lebanon was followed by severe internal clashes and further displacement."

Dammers 1998, p.185

"The Israeli invasion of 1978 displaced about 200,000 Lebanese (mostly Shi'a Muslims) and 65,000 Palestinians from the south of the country. Although most of this displacement was temporary, some became effectively permanent, with many people resettling indefinitely, particularly in the southern suburbs of Beirut. […] The Israeli invasion of 1982 was on a very much larger scale than in 1978, leading to the occupation of the whole of the southern half of Lebanon, up to and including Beirut. Though primarily against the PLO, the invasion also aimed to restructure Lebanese politics. […] The war saw further displacements from south Lebanon and from west Beirut, which was besieged for more than two months. […]

The aftermath of the 1982 invasion saw further conflict, mainly between Shi'a militias and Palestinians (who were increasingly besieged in their camps), as well as between Christian and Druze militias in the mountains east and southeast of Beirut (Bhamdoun, Aley and the Shouf). Massacres and atrocities were committed on all sides. The oucome of the latter conflict in particular was further displacement and cantonization, with many Christians (some of whom had been displaced earlier and had returned after the Israeli invasion) expelled from Druze-dominated areas, and later too from other areas further south. […]

The fragmentation of Lebanon into confessionally based districts was accompanied by growing Syrian hegemony (except over the border districts controlled by Israel). The Syrians, like the Israelis before them, aimed to reconstitute the country politically, efforts that eventually bore fruit in the Ta'if accords of 1989. A key aspects of these accords was the abolition of the constitutional Christian domination of parliament and state. Though divided among themselves, many Christian politicians (and the militias under their control) were hostile to Syria and opposed the Ta'if accords. In 1989 and 1990 there was heavy fighting between Christian militias and Syrian troops, and between the militias themselves, leading to further extensive displacement, estimated at about 150,000 people. These displacements were mainly from and within the Christian areas comprising east Beirut and the region to the east and north. The defeat of forces of General Aoun, later followed by the 1992 elections, seemed to many to herald the end of a decade and a half of civil war. Freedom of movement returned to the country, but most of the displaced found they could still not go home."

Israeli intervention causes massive temporary displacement (1996)

- Israeli air raids and rocket attacks on Beirut and in southern Lebanon displaced between 400,000 and 600,000 people in April 1996

"In April 1996, following Hizballah rocket attacks on northern Israel, Israel launched extensive air raids and rocket attacks on Beirut and on a reported 54 villages in southern Lebanon. Estimates of those displaced, many from Beirut itself, were put at 600,000 by the government, but 400,000 or fewer by most independent sources. An informal cease-fire was declared after 16 days and most of the displaced returned home. Undoubtedly, some stayed on in Beirut or in areas they considered safer, but the long-term impact of such large-scale temporary displacement is not so much the immediate creation of permanent IDPs, as that of accelerating rural-urban drift and depopulation of the south, which has seen neither peace nor stability for more than 20 years." (Dammers 1998, p.187)

For more information on the activities of Israeli military forces and Lebanese guerillas during the escalation of military activities that raged in Lebanon and parts of northern Israel in April 1996, see Human Rights Watch's report of September 1997, "Operation Grapes of Wrath", the Civilian Victims [External Link]

South Lebanese Army and Israel expelled a number of civilians from the south (1999-2000)

- Human Rights Watch reported that families in South Lebanon have been collectively punished by being expelled for the acts or suspected activities of their relatives
- Alleged activities included participation in attacks on Israeli military, membership in military wings of Hizballah and Amal, desertion from or refusal to serve in South Lebanese Army

HRW 10 November 1999

"'Since 1985, hundreds if not thousands of Lebanese civilians have been ordered to leave their homes and villages without notice and with no means of appeal. They have been summarily dumped in a no man's land without any possessions save the clothes on their backs,' said Hanny Megally, executive director of the Middle East and North Africa division of Human Rights Watch. "

HRW May 2000

"Human Rights Watch has documented how Lebanese men and boys have been forced to serve in the SLA against their will. Their families have been punished, sometimes with expulsion from their homes in the occupied zone, if they evaded or deserted from service in the SLA militia. […] Human Rights Watch has documented cases of SLA militiamen and their families living rent-free in the homes of residents who were expelled."

HRW July 1999

"The use of expulsion as a weapon to punish the civilian population in the occupied zone has received scant attention in Israel and internationally during the two decades that it has quietly made a shambles of the lives of the men, women, and children forced to leave their homes and communities. Human Rights Watch documented cases of individuals and entire families who have been collectively punished by being expelled for the acts or suspected activities of their relatives. These have included admitted or suspected participation in attacks on Israeli military personnel and installations in the zone, membership in the military wings of Lebanese political organizations such as Hizballah and the Amal Movement, refusal to cooperate with the occupation security apparatus, and desertion from or refusal to serve in the SLA.

The expulsions come in the context of Israel's long occupation of part of southern Lebanon, and the ongoing confrontation between Israeli and SLA military forces and Lebanese guerrillas fighting to oust the occupiers. Historically, it is Lebanese territory, which has been the primary stage for this military conflict, and it is in Lebanon where the bulk of the military activity and civilian casualties have occurred. Both sides have carried out indiscriminate attacks on civilians in violation of international humanitarian law. […]

The expulsions and other forcible transfers of Lebanese civilians from the occupied zone are just one of the methods that the occupation authorities utilize to control the civilian population in that territory and thwart the anti-occupation guerrilla forces. The expulsion of civilians from their homes and villages in the zone, like the indiscriminate attacks launched by both sides, cannot be justified by reference to security threats. International humanitarian law categorically prohibits forcible transfers and deportations, which constitute grave breaches of the Geneva conventions and as such are war crimes. […]

In villages throughout the occupied zone, members of some families have been hounded for months or years to serve as informers for the ubiquitous security apparatus that is maintained by the occupation authorities through the SLA and with the participation and oversight of Israeli

intelligence. For those men and women who refused to succumb to the pressure, expulsion has been a last and punishing resort. […]

The SLA practice of forced conscription of teenaged boys who live in the zone has also been a long-standing nightmare for families who are opposed to the occupation and despise Israel's surrogate militia. Some families moved out of the zone on their own initiative to ensure that their sons would not be forced into SLA service. Others stayed in their villages but sent their sons out when they reached fourteen or fifteen years of age. According to testimony, children have been forcibly pressed into service."

As little information is available on the treatment of displaced persons in other regions, please see the following reports for a general picture of the human rights situation in Lebanon: Amnesty International, Annual Report 2001, Lebanon [External link]

POPULATION FIGURES AND PROFILE

Global Figures: July-August 2006 conflict

Around 200,000 people remain displaced according to government and UN figures (as of November 2006)

- 200,000 people remain displaced according to estimates by the government and UN
- Most are believed to be living with friends or relatives

Note on figures: At the height of the July-August 2006 war, more than 800,000 people were displaced inside Lebanon. A majority of these people have returned. It is estimated by the Lebanese government that 200,000 people remain in a situation of displacement following the July-August 2006 war. In addition, it is estimated that there continue to be a significant number of IDPs in Lebanon who were displaced during the civil war and Israeli invasions of 1978 and 1982. There has been no assessment of this caseload and estimates range from 68,000 by the government to as high as 600,000 as cited in secondary sources. Click here for further information on this caseload.

IRIN, 1 November 2006

"Up to 200,000 people could still be displaced in Lebanon nearly three months after the Israel-Hezbollah conflict ended, the United Nations Refugee Agency (UNHCR) said on Tuesday.

"We don't have the precise number of IDPs [internally displaced people] since there has been no formal registration, but we can estimate their number to 150,000 - 200,000," Stephane Jaquemet, UNHCR regional representative in Lebanon, told IRIN.

He added that the vast majority of the displaced live with friends or relatives and not in collective centres. This has made it harder for relief workers and authorities to work out an exact figure for the numbers displaced and to assess their needs."

HRC, October and November 2006

	Internally Displaced Persons	Other Information
Estimated	200,000	Sheltered with host families, friend etc.

Nearly one quarter of Lebanon's population displaced at the height of the conflict, the majority within the country (2006)

- More than 700,000 people were displaced within Lebanon while over 230,000 Lebanese fled the country to seek refuge in neighboring countries
- This includes secondary displacement of approximately 16,000 Palestinian refugees
- Up to one half of the displaced were children

- Hundreds of thousands of people returned within a few days of the cessation of hostilities
- Around 200,000 remain displaced as of November 2006

UN OCHA, 31 August 2006

The Lebanon Crisis: Population Movements
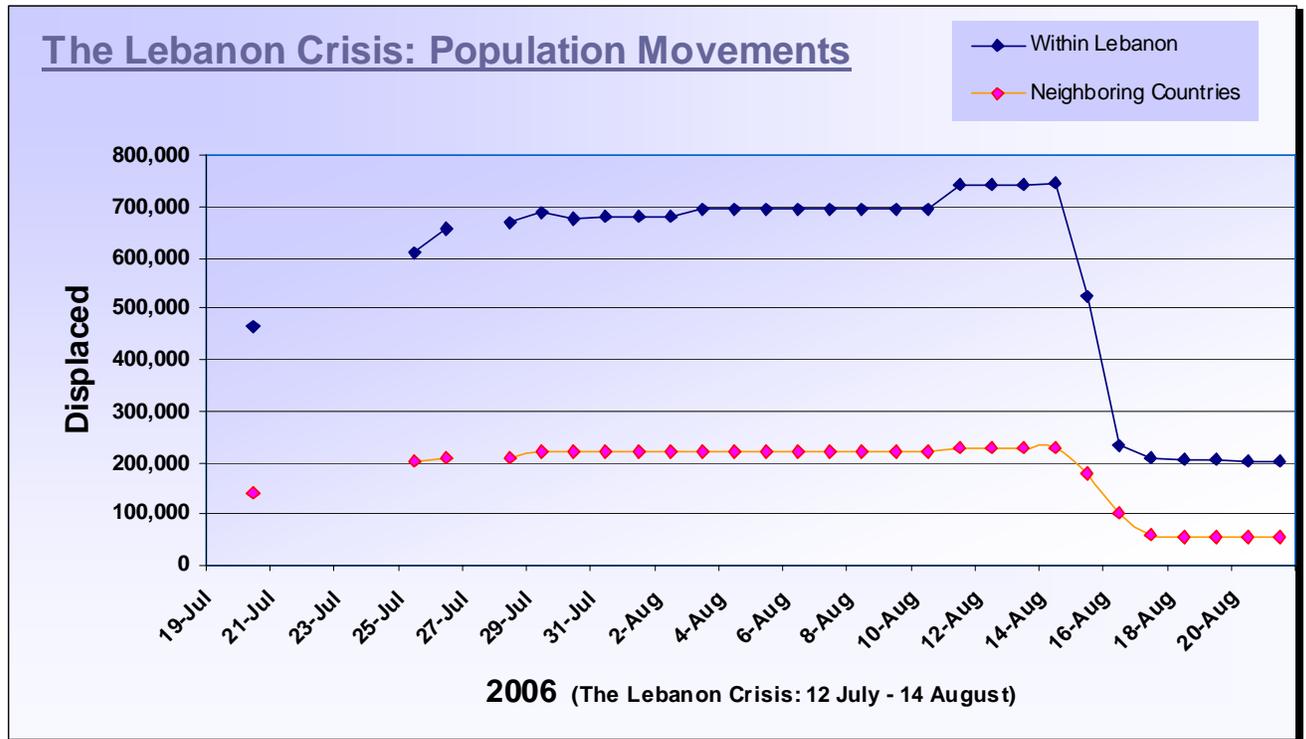
Graph II: The Lebanon Crisis: Population Movements

As can be seen, high volumes of population movement were encountered during and immediately post-conflict. Well over 100,000 Lebanese returned to Lebanon from Syria in the first few days of the cessation of hostilities. Additionally, over the same time period it can be seen that over 400,000 people returned from areas of temporary shelter to their places of origin

Source: United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR)

"Almost one million Lebanese were reportedly displaced between 12 July and 14 August, with an estimated 735,000 seeking shelter within Lebanon and 230,000 to neighbouring Syria, Cyprus, Jordan, and the Gulf and beyond. This includes secondary displacement of approximately 16,000 Palestinian refugees. Of those displaced within Lebanon, approximately 135,000 sought shelter in schools, and over 600,000 resided with host families. Within hours of the cessation of hostilities on 14 August, the displaced populations were returning in large numbers to conflict-affected communities."

COI, 10 November 2006

"Up to one half of the displaced were children. These figures must be considered against the demographic reality in Lebanon, where many people had already been displaced as a result of previous conflicts and communities still were in the process of recovery and rebuilding. The figures also include the secondary displacement of approximately 16,000 Palestinian refugees."

Global Figures: Civil war

Other estimates of people still in a situation of displacement in Lebanon: 50,000-600,000 (prior to 2006 crisis)

IDMC Note: See "Global figures 12 July Conflict" for information about people displaced by the recent conflict

Organisation	Year of public ation	Estimated figure used indicating number of people still in a situation of displacement
US Department of State "The government encouraged the return to their homes of over 600 thousand persons internally displaced during the civil war." (US DOS, 8 March 2006) "The Government encouraged the return to their homes of over 600,000 persons internally displaced during the civil war." (US DOS, 25 February 2005) "The Government encouraged the return to their homes of over 600,000 internally persons displaced during the civil war. " (US DOS, 25 February 2004) "The Government encouraged the return to their homes of over 600,000 persons displaced internally during the civil war." (US DOS, 31 March 2003) "The Government encouraged the return to their homes of over 600,000 persons displaced internally during the civil war" (US DOS, 4 March 2002)	2006	600,000
US Committee for Refugees "IDPs in Lebanon included those from the civil war, which broke Lebanon into sectarian districts, and the Israeli invasions of 1978 and 1982. [...] The Government set the end of 2002 as the target for the return of all displaced, but 300,000 remained." (USCR, 16 June 2005) "Although Lebanon set the end of 2002 as the target for the return of all displaced, estimates of those still displaced at the end of 2003 range from 50,000 to more than 500,000." (USCR, 24 May 2004)	2005	300,000
	2004	50,000 to more than 500,000
US Committee for Refugees "[T]here were still 300,000 in Lebanon as of mid-2002."(USCR, 2003)	2003	300,000
US Committee for Refugees "Although it was not known how many internally displaced persons were actively seeking to return to their homes,	2002	250,000 -350,000

USCR believed that between 250,000 and 300,000 Lebanese remained internally displaced in 2001." (USCR, 2002)		
United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)	2003-2004	UNHCR is not involved in IDP issues in Lebanon. Its 2004 Operations report cites the estimated figure of 600,000 IDPs in Lebanon

Government figures: 16,750 people still in a situation of internal displacement due to civil war and Israeli military operations up to 2000

- 16,750 people continue to be in a situation of displacement according to the government figures of 10 July 2006
- According to the Ministry of the Displaced, there were approximately 300,000 IDPs (end 2001) and 68,000 (2004)

According to the Ministry of Displaced, there continue to be 16,750 people in a situation of internal displacement caused by the civil war and Israeli military operations in Lebanon up to 2000 (Figures as of 10 July 2006, MOD)

According to the Ministry of the Displaced, there continue to be 68,000 people in a situation of internal displacement (Ministry of the Displaced, 4 August 2004)

According to the Ministry for the Displaced, there were approximately 300,000 IDPs as of end 2001.

Government figures on return: at least 470,510 people displaced by the civil war and Israeli military operations until 2000 have been able to return to their areas of origin (2006)

Ministry of Displaced, as of 10 July 2006

An estimated 470,510 people displaced by the civil war and Israeli military operations were able to return to their homes of origin, according to the Ministry of Displacement

Ministry of Displaced, 4 August 2004

"Effective number of people who were able to return to their area of origin: 79,500 persons*[*]*.

Areas of origin:
-Kfar Selouan
-Obaye
-Al Benieh
-Ain Drafil
-Kfar Matta
-Dfoun
-Baawartah

-Breeh
-Parts of Beirut and its suburbs" ()

Note: This figure does not include return movements to South Lebanon and in the West Bekaa regions

Figures on IDP populations and geographic distribution differ significantly (1997)

- Attempts to compare the figures on population movements and distribution reveals large disparities
- Despite the many discrepancies, all surveys give some indication of the scale of a phenomenon that has affected every region of Lebanon

ILO, 1997, Sect. 4.1.2

"Many surveys and studies have been undertaken to determine the magnitude of the problem of permanent displacement. However, any attempt to compare the figures on population movements and distribution reveals large disparities. The most striking difference is the 900,000 put forward by Faour and, at the other end of the spectrum, the 450,000 of the Ministry of the Displaced (hereafter MOD). For the purpose of this report the figures presented in the findings of the Beaudoin and Kasparian's study (1991) will be relied on. In 1987, they estimated the number of the displaced to be 670,000, representing 22 per cent of the Lebanese population. These figures do not include those displaced in the 1989 conflict.

The same variations apply when it comes to the geographic distribution of the displaced population by province, *mouhafazat*, or by district number, caza. For instance, Faour and Beaudoin and Kasparian estimated the displaced population in the south at 12.2 per cent, while the MOD put forward the figure of 23.1 per cent. Despite the many discrepancies, all surveys give some indication of the scale of a phenomenon that has affected every region of Lebanon."

Displacement figures between 1975 and 1995 (1997-2002)

- Several waves of short and long-term displacement took place during the civil war
- An estimated 810,000 people were displaced between 1975 and 1990
- About 450,000 persons remained displaced at the end of the war

Note:The number of internally displaced persons is difficult to estimate. A UNDP study stated in 1997 that about 450,000 persons were displaced as of 1995. Other organizations refer to that study for their estimates.

UNDP 1997

"When the civil war ended in 1991, some 90,000 families, or about 450,000 persons, remained displaced. Some 86 percent originated from the Mount Lebanon governorate (62 percent) and southern Lebanon (24 percent). Many of the displaced, particularly from the south, settled in Beirut.

Internally displaced persons in Lebanon include those from the internal conflict and civil war, which broke Lebanon into sectarian districts, and those displaced by the Israeli invasions of 1978

and 1982. The 1978 invasion displaced about 200,000 mostly Shi'a Muslims and 65,000 Palestinians from the south of the country.

The government offered compensation to internally displaced people to rebuild homes, but the vast majority of the displaced have not reclaimed their properties. The government set the end of 2002 as the target for the return of all displaced, but there were still 300,000 in Lebanon as of mid-2002." (USCR 2003)

"Since the outbreak of the war in 1975, and up to its end in 1990, 810,000 citizens were affected by waves of forced displacement as follows:

1975 - 1976	300,000 persons
1977 - 1981	150,000 persons
1982 - 1985	200,000 persons
1989 - 1990	160,000 persons

[…]
The number of villages and towns affected [by displacement] numbered 949, of which 174 villages were totally or partially destroyed […]. The number of destroyed or damaged housing units was 45,020, which further exacerbated the housing problem in Lebanon.

USCR 2002

"Lebanon's civil war violently fragmented a pluralistic society into fairly distinct sectarian areas. At the height of the conflict, up to a million people were internally displaced, and many people were often displaced briefly during the war.

When the civil war ended in 1991, some 90,000 families, or about 450,000 persons, remained displaced."

Geographical distribution: July-August 2006 conflict

Most people displaced came from south lebanon and the southern districts of Beirut (2006)

- Up to 70 per cent of displaced people living south of the Litani river were forced to leave their homes
- Displaced people moved to Beirut, Saida and Aley, Kesrouane, Baabda and some families in other cazas further north

UNHCR, 9 August 2006

"The majority (70%) of persons in the South have left their homes. Over 80% of those living south of the Litani river […], have moved to the north. Those who have remained are too vulnerable or too poor to leave, or their passage is too dangerous.

The major concentrations of IDPs are in Saida, Chouf, Aley Cazas and Beirut – with UNHCR assessments also showing significant displacement to Mont Liban Mohafaza (El Metn, Kesrouane, Jbail) and the North. […] The majority of people are staying with host families, solidarity is high but the needs of host families are increasing as supplies run low and prices rise.

Support to host families is needed as public buildings have limited capacity to absorb more persons."

OCHA, 27 July 2006

Situation as of 27 July: IDPs by caza

Caza	# Locations	# IDPs
Beirut	158	37,840
Chouf	60	4,974
Kasrouane	63	10,550
Aley	65	11,709
Baadba	35	5,185
Zgharta	7	526
Koura	10	532
Tripoli	8	777
Akkar	2	92
Saida	59	14,526
Sour	13	1,013
Zahlé	9	504
Baalbek	13	371

Click here for full map

See also: IDPs residing in schools by caza, OCHA, 8 August 2006

Geographical distribution: civil war

Population figures disaggregated by caza

- No comprehensive population census has been undertaken since 1932
- Two government surveys undertaken in 1996 and 1997 remain the main source about population movements
- See charts below for details on population density by area

Ministry of Environment, 2001

"Since the last comprehensive population census dates back to 1932, there continues to be no agreement on the actual size of the Lebanese population today. The two latest government surveys have produced significant differences in their estimates, from 3.1 million (1996) to 4 million people (1996-97), as explained next, up from 793,000 in 1932 […].

About one third of the total population resides in Beirut and its suburbs. [1] While Beirut accounted for 22.3 percent of the population in 1970, with the expansion of the Beirut suburbs, this share has decreased to just 10 percent in 1997 […]

Within the Beirut suburbs, the highest proportion of the population resides in the immediate extension of Beirut, namely Chiah, Furn El Chabak, Sin el Fil and Bourj Hammoud (CAS Study, No.9/1998). Table 1.2 presents the population distribution and population density in 1997."

Table 1. 2
Distribution of Population by Mohafaza (1997)

Mohafaza	Population	Percent	Surface Area (km²)	Population Density
Beirut	403,337	10%	20	20,167
Beirut Suburbs	899,792	22%	233	3,862
Rest of Mount Lebanon	607,767	15%	1,735	350
North	807,204	20%	2,025	399
Bekaa	539,448	13%	4,161	130
Nabatieh	275,372	7%	1,098	251
South	472,105	12%	930	508
Total	4,005,025	100.0	10,202	393

Source: CAS Study, No. 9/1998

[Footnote 1 Geographic extension of Beirut suburbs is described in Appendix B. It includes portions of the Cazas of Metn, Baabda, Chouf and Aaley.

Table 1. 4
Official Population Estimates (1996-97) and SOER Estimate (2001)

Mohafaza / Caza	MoSA Survey Estimates a/		CAS Population Estimates (1997) b/	Po E (
	Population Estimate (1996)	Average Household Size (1996)		
Beirut	**407,403**	**4.1**	**403,337**	
Mount Lebanon	**670,610**	**4.4**	**1,507,559**	1
Jbeil	62,407	4.7	-	
Kesrouan	123,600	4.0	-	
Metn	367,150	4.2	-	
Baabda	371,882	4.7	-	
Aaley	99,947	4.4	-	
Chouf	120,473	4.6	-	
North	**670,610**	**5.3**	**807,204**	
Akkar	198,174	6.0	-	
Tripoli	227,857	5.2	-	
Minieh-Dinnieh	96,417	5.7		
Zgharta	48,974	4.6	-	
Bcharre	16,831	4.7	-	
Koura	47,540	4.4	-	
Batroun	34,817	4.6	-	
Bekaa	**399,891**	**5.0**	**539,448**	
Hermel	38,975	5.8	-	
Baalbek	157,049	5.3	-	
Zahle	124,336	4.6	-	
West Bekaa	55,692	5.0	-	
Rachaiya	23,839	5.0	-	
South	**283,057**	**4.9**	**472,105**	
Jezzine	14,626	3.5	-	
Saida	138,348	4.9	-	
Sour	130,083	5.1	-	
Nabatiyeh	**205,412**	**4.6**	**275,372**	
Hasbaya	19,460	4.3	-	
Bint Jbeil	52,710	4.8	-	

Majority of displaced population is from Mount Lebanon and South Lebanon (2003)

- 62 per cent of the displaced are from the Mount Lebanon and 24 per cent from Southern Lebanon

USCR, 2003

"At the height of the conflict, up to 1 million people were internally displaced for long periods of time, and many people were often displaced briefly during the course of the fighting. When the civil war ended in 1991, some 90,000 families, or about 450,000 persons, remained displaced. Some 86 percent originated from the Mount Lebanon governorate (62 percent) and southern Lebanon (24 percent). Many of the displaced, particularly from the south, settled in Beirut."

UNDP, 1997

Displacement by governorate of origin and destination (as of 1995)

The first two columns of the graph below show where the displaced families where displaced from, while the last two columns indicate where the displaced families were located in 1995

Mohafazat	Displaced families		Arriving families	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Beirut	5,460	7.7	14,274	20.2
Mount Lebanon	43,880	62	37,284	52.7
North Lebanon	2,961	4.2	2,657	3.8
South Lebanon	16,780	23.8	11,152	15.8
Bekaa	1,645	2.3	4,116	5.8
Abroad	-	-	1,243	1.7
Total	70,726	100	70,726	100

Source: Ministry of the Displaced, The Return of the Displaced in Lebanon, 1996 (in Arabic).

Internal displacement resulted in overpopulation in urban areas whereas rural areas were left nearly empty (1997)

- Internal displacement resulted in major demographic changes in the country
- The civil war displaced many rural communities into urban localities, mainly due to political strategies and militias

- A demographic balance is hoped to be restored with the resettlement of the displaced from over-populated areas to the nearly empty areas of displacement

Beaudoin and Kasparian, 1991

"More than a million people have been displaced during the war; some were permanently dislocated, the rest returned when hostilities ceased. The social fabric of rural and urban communities was severely affected; life-styles were disrupted. The massive migratory movements across the country have resulted in the disruption of the cultural and social organization of the displaced communities. They have also affected the receiving societies confronted with different cultural practices and values of those coming from rural backgrounds into an urban environment or vice versa.

Internal migration was a major determining factor in the demographic changes that resulted from the war. As a result of this planned human reorganization of the country, the population of Beirut, for instance, underwent major changes: the exodus of a large part of its original inhabitants was balanced by the inflow of refugees from other areas. In the southern suburbs of the capital, 30 per cent of the population is composed of refugees. As noted earlier, this phenomenon has affected every region of the country to varying degrees.

USAID, 1995

The civil war has displaced many rural communities into urban localities. The forced displacement due to political strategies and organized by the militias reinforced the pre-existing rural-urban migratory trend. The major phenomena which characterized the urbanization process in Lebanon could be summed up as follows:
·   the cycles of rural migration prior to and during the war;
·   the displacement of the urban population into safer areas, some of which were not yet urbanised at the time;
·   the expansion of urban agglomerations to reach neighbouring rural areas.

ILO, 1997, Section 4.1.2

These phenomena have resulted in a continuously changing spatial reorganization. The increased urbanization of the population was paralleled with the emptying of the rural areas from a substantial part of the active population. According to ECWA (Abu Nasr et al., 1985), in 1975 a large proportion of the country's population (65 per cent) lived in urban areas. The UN (EIU 1995) estimated that after the war the capital alone had a population of 1.5 million, which represents almost half of the entire population of the country. The imbalance in the population distribution is one of the main compelling factors for the Government to organize the return of the displaced. A demographic balance is hoped to be restored with the resettlement of the displaced from over-populated areas to the nearly empty areas of displacement."

PATTERNS OF DISPLACEMENT

July-August 2006 conflict

Military operations force people to flee their homes in south Lebanon and south Beirut (2006)

- Israeli military operations targeted South Lebanon and the southern districts of Beirut forcing people to flee north
- Most displaced sought refuge with family and friends, while others lived in schools, mosques, churches and other public buildings
- Some displaced Lebanese sought shelter in Palestinian refugee camps
- Many of the areas which were targeted were areas already affected by poverty

COI, 10 November 2006

"It is clear, however, that the greatest impact of the conflict was felt by those living in areas already affected by poverty, including the urban suburbs of south Beirut, villages in the South, and some rural districts. […]According to UN estimates, up to 70% of the total number of IDPs were housed in temporary accommodation in Beirut."

HRC, 5 September 2006

The Israeli aggression on the South and the southern suburbs of Beirut has caused a large number of people to flee their homes in the search of areas that have not as of yet been directly targeted by Israeli bombs. According to government sources, approximately one fourth of the Lebanese population are currently displaced with many seeking refuge in schools in Mount Lebanon and Beirut. The displaced have mainly found shelter in schools and relief agencies, while many have found shelter with families, friends, churches, and mosques. The remaining displaced population has left Lebanon to settle in neighboring countries.

Christian Science Monitor, 8 August 2006

"Nearly six decades ago, the Lebanese gave shelter to tens of thousands of Palestinian refugees who fled their homeland when the state of Israel was created. Now some of those refugees' descendants are returning the favor. Hundreds of Lebanese who have abandoned their homes have sought shelter in the Palestinian camps ringing the southern coastal town of Tyre. [...]

Rashidiyeh's Palestinian population of about 17,000 has been joined by as many as 1,000 Lebanese, who have settled into the empty classrooms at Ain al-Qassem school. The Palestinian popular committee that runs the camp provides food three times a day, mattresses, and medicines."

IRIN, 21 July 2006

"Of the estimated half a million displaced people in Lebanon, some 70 per cent are from southern villlages, officials say. [...]

Police sources in Lebanon say about 350,000 people have left their homes in cities and villages such as Tyre (80 km south of Beirut), Nabatyeh (95 km southeast of Beirut), Zahrani (60 km south of Beirut) and Bint Jbeyl (200 km south of Beirut).[…]

Others have taken shelter in schools in safer eastern parts of the Lebanese capital of Beirut - where the majority of the population is Christian - or in northern and southeastern districts of Lebanon such as Akkar (110 km north of Beirut) and the Chouf Mountains (20 km southeast of Beirut).

Southern families headed to more secure cities like Sidon, the capital of the South (45 km south of Beirut). According to the Mayor of Sidon, Abdel Rahman Bezri, "more than 5,000 people are now taking shelter here, all from border villages. They are living in 13 public schools and centres, and we are working on providing them with what they need."

Other Lebanese are taking shelter in safer eastern parts of the Lebanese capital of Beirut - where the majority of the population is Christian - or in northern and southeastern districts of Lebanon such as Akkar (110 km north of Beirut) and the Chouf Mountains (20 km southeast of Beirut).

Some people who had fled their homes were forced to flee a second time due to IDF bombardments (2006)

- This was particularly the case for displaced people who fled south lebanon and sought shelter in the southern districts of Beirut
- The districts of Gazieh and Chiyah were two areas where displaced people sought safety which were subsequently targeted by Israeli airstrikes in the days prior to the ceasefire
- Civilians had fled the areas of Deir Intar, Majadel and Touleen of Bent J'beil and sought refuge in Chiyah

COI, 10 November 2006

"In addition, some individuals who had fled north of the Litani river seeking safe shelter with family or other members of the community were affected a second time by IDF bombardments. The Commission received reliable information and gathered witness testimonies in relation to two such incidents, in Ghazieh and Chiyah districts respectively.

Until the last days of the conflict, Ghazieh was seen as a safe haven for displaced civilians coming from the south and, according to the mayor, over ten thousand displaced people arrived in the town over the course of the conflict. According to witness testimonies, on Monday 7 August at around 0800 hours the town was attacked by Israeli air strikes. Several buildings were seriously damaged and at least three houses were completely destroyed by direct hits. Roads and bridges were also badly damaged, resulting in the isolation of Ghazieh from the main points of access into and out of town. According to one witness testimony, eight people were killed in one attack on a residential building, while another victim reported that he had lost his wife and four of his children in the bombardment. In another attack, a house was hit directly and its five inhabitants, including a twoyear old, two sisters and their mother, were killed when the structure collapsed. In total, at least twenty-nine civilians died in Ghazieh between 6 and 8 August.

In the Chiyah district of south Beirut, civilians had sought shelter with family members after having fled southern Lebanon earlier in the conflict. According to testimonies collected by the Commission, as well as information provided by local non-governmental organisations, civilians had fled the areas of Deir Intar, Majadel and Touleen of Bent J'beil and sought refuge in Chiyah. Others had fled to there from the Ghobeiri neighborhood of southern Beirut, which had been

heavily hit by air bombardments. The Commission received information in relation to at least one building in Chiyah occupied by people displaced from the South, which was destroyed by air strikes. On 7 August 2006 at around 1945 hours, at least 39 civilians were killed in their homes when the Israeli air force bombarded the building in the residential neighborhood of Chiyah. One witness from Chiyah explained to the Commission that her family had been hosting displaced people who had fled the conflict in southern Lebanon. She stated that although they felt safe, the house was extremely crowded and the children were constantly fighting as a result. She confirmed other reports received by the Commission that no warning had been given prior to the air strike on the evening of 7 August, which destroyed the building next door and caused significant damage to neighbouring buildings. The witness's 16-year old son was killed when the building collapsed. Her 13-year old son was seriously injured and her youngest son, a five-year old, suffers from serious post-traumatic stress disorder as a result of the incident."

Civil War

Other factors than security may account for long-term displacement (1997-2002)

- According to UNDP, long-term displacement is not only due to the inability of families to return to their former homes for security reasons, but also due to social and economic considerations

USCR 2002

"In the past, the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) has questioned the central assumption underlying the Lebanese government's approach to long-term internal displacement: that the solution to the problem lies in reversing the process and returning the displaced to their former homes. UNDP said that the goal of returning the displaced disregards the past 20 years of social and economic changes in Lebanon, and argues that these changes, many the result of rural-to urban migration, would have taken place even in the absence of war."

UNDP 1997

"There is reason to believe that prolonged displacement cannot be explained entirely in terms of the inability of families, for security reasons, to return to the places where they lived before the war. Economic and social considerations have played a role in determining the pace of return.

Displacement produced large-scale demographic shifts resulting in total or partial segregation on religious/sectarian basis. These shifts altered the demographic features of both the areas of origin and areas of destination, affecting in the process the unity of the society and creating real problems at the level of social integration. In addition, the economy suffered from the segregation of the labor market, the increase in the rate of emigration abroad, and the impoverishment of displaced families, reflected in the loss of resources, incomes and jobs; and from the deterioration of conditions affecting housing, education, health care and other services."

Majority of displaced were Muslim early in the war and Christian in later phases (1975-1991)

- In the beginning of the civil war, displacement of Muslims by Christian Militias and of Christians by the Palestine Liberation Organization took place in and around Beirut

- In the later phases of the war, many Christians were displaced from the mountainous region of the Shouf

UNDP 1997

"Before 1975 many parts of Lebanon had predominant confessional groupings, but settlement patterns were complex and intertwined. The civil war led to the wholesale expulsion of Muslims from regions controlled by Christian militias, and substantial displacement of Christians from regions controlled by the PLO [Palestine Liberation Organization] and the LNM [Lebanese National Movement]. Most of these 'population exchanges' took place in and around Beirut, and probably led to the long-term displacement of between 250,000 and 300,000 people, the great majority Muslims.

The later phases of the war saw many Christians displaced from the Shouf, the mountainous region to the southeast of Beirut. The Bekaa region in the east of the country, and to a lesser extent the north of Lebanon, also saw displacement, largely of Christians to areas controlled by the Christian militias, particularly Zahleh and Beirut. An estimated 650,000 Lebanese left the country altogether during this period (a disproportionate number of them Christian). (Dammers 1998, p.185)

"Displacement was associated with large-scale destruction of villages, towns and housing units, rendering immediate return impossible, and prolonging forced displacement for years after the cessation of military operations."

USCR 2002

"Lebanon's civil war caused the violent fragmentation of a pluralistic society into fairly distinct sectarian areas. At the height of the conflict, up to a million people were internally displaced, and many people were often displaced briefly during the course of the fighting."

Internal displacements were not continuous but occurred in waves during the conflict (1997)

- A distinction needs to be made between temporary and permanent displacement
- Temporary internal displacement was caused by internal strife and external aggression, such as the Israeli invasions of 1978 and 1982 and the fight between Syrian forces and Lebanese militias
- Permanent internal displacement was provoked by massacres and expulsions aimed at creating confessionally homogenous zones

ILO, 1997, Sect. 4.1.2

"Displacement is the most serious phenomenon that affected the Lebanese population as a consequence of war. This internal migration followed a concerted plan that was executed in different stages by numerous actors on the war scene. Two-thirds of the population were displaced. A distinction should be made between temporary and permanent displacement. The former was provoked by internal strife and external aggression, such as the Israeli invasions of 1978 and 1982 and the fight between Syrian forces and Lebanese militias. In those cases, the people would abandon their homes and go back as soon as fighting had ceased. The latter was provoked by massacres and expulsions aimed at creating confessionally homogenous zones.

Displacements were not continuous but occurred in separate, successive waves, corresponding to the different rounds of the conflict. During 1975-76, approximately 300,000 people were displaced in the capital city of Beirut alone. From 1978-82, an additional 150,000 people fled due to fighting in their area and the Israeli invasion. From 1982-90 a further 360,000 people were uprooted (Lebanese NGO Forum, 1994)."

PHYSICAL SECURITY & FREEDOM OF MOVEMENT

Physical security

Hundreds of thousands of cluster bombs pose threat to lives of civilians (2006)

- Unexploded ordnance (UXO) are killing or wounding on average three people per day
- Most deaths and injuries occured while people checked their homes or fields upon return
- Most victims have been men who returned home before women and children
- As of November, it is estimated that there are approximately 800 cluster strike locations
- 90 per cent of the cluster bombs were fired during the three days prior to the ceasefire
- Cluster bombs are for the most part contaminating large parts of South Lebanon
- There was already and existing mine problem in South Lebanon, mainly of mine fields placed by the Israelis along the "Blue Line" from Naquoura to Kfar Chouba before Israel withdrew in 2000
- The UN has requested Israel of maps of cluster bomb attacks but had not received detailed information to date (November 2006)
- In interviews with Israeli army officers, one said that the army had fired more than 1.2 million cluster bombs into Lebanon, Haaretz newspaper reported

AFP, 13 September 2006

"Israel's army fired more than 1.2 million cluster bombs into Lebanon during the month-long conflict, the liberal Haaretz newspaper reported Wednesday citing a senior Israeli army officer.

The unnamed officer described his unit's use of the controversial bomblets during Israel's 34-day offensive against Hezbollah guerrillas as "crazy and monstrous."

"We covered entire villages with cluster bombs," the newspaper quoted the commander as saying.

The 1.2 million cluster bombs cited by the commander only included those bomblets fired by a Multiple Launch Rocket System. Additional cluster bombs were fired by 155 mm mortars or dropped from the air, he said.

Other soldiers cited in the article said the army fired phosphorous shells to start fires in Lebanon."

UNSC, 12 September 2006, p.11

"In its resolution 1701 (2006), the Security Council envisaged that all remaining maps of landmines in Lebanon in Israel's possession be provided to the United Nations in order to enable a permanent ceasefire and long-term solution. IDF has been handing over some maps to UNIFIL as it withdraws from particular locations. The Israeli authorities have assured UNIFIL that all relevant maps of landmines and unexploded ordnance in their possession will be handed over on completion of the withdrawal.

While IDF has provided some maps to UNIFIL regarding cluster strikes, they are not specific enough to be of use to operators on the ground. I expect that Israel will provide further detailed information to UNIFIL regarding the exact location, quantity and type of cluster munitions utilized during the conflict."

AI, 31 August 2006

"Amnesty International today called on Israel to immediately provide maps of the areas of Lebanon into which it fired cluster bombs during the recent conflict to enable their clearance and prevent further civilian casualties."

UNOCHA, 19 September 2006

"Unexploded cluster bombs have been killing or wounding on average three people a day since 14 August. At least 15 people have died during this period and 83 others wounded, as of 18 September.[...] Most of these casualties have occurred as people checked their homes or fields.[...] Five civilians have been killed while herding or working their land and a further 16 have been injured. Most of the victims have been men. They were typically the first to return home after the cease fire and generally tend to be more involved than women and children in agriculture production and herding.

	Children (0 - 17)		Adult (18 +)		Total (Injury/ Death)
	M	F	M	F	
Injured	19	4	55	5	83
Killed	1	0	14	0	15
Total	20	4	69	5	98

Source: National Demining Office, 18 September 2006

One child has been killed and 23 others injured[...]. Most unexploded cluster bombs are small and innocuous looking, some in the shape of a soft drink can, often with ribbons attached, thus making them particularly attractive to curious children."

OCHA, 31 August 2006, pp. 4 and 6

"Of real concern is the number of unexploded ordinance (UXO) that is killing on average one person a day and injuring three others. Across much of southern Lebanon, the high level of UXOs that have been discovered have made the concentration of these munitions – and the threat they pose to local communities – greater than that found in Iraq immediately after the United States campaign in 2003 […].

The number of casualties continues to grow due as a result of the high level of contamination of UXOs. Since 26 August, 12 people have died (including two children) and 40 have been injured (including 12 children) as a result of UXO incidence. Unexploded ordnance, particularly cluster munitions, remains the direst threat to the civilian population and humanitarian workers. By 27 August, the Mine Action Coordination Centre (UNMACC) had identified 359 strike locations, a figure which is expected to rise. So far, approximately 100,000 unexploded cluster bomblets lie in identified strike locations. According to UNMACC, 90% of the cluster bombs were fired during the three days before the cessation of hostilities. Approximately 8,500 pieces of Israeli ordnance

remain unexploded. [1] Clearance of UXOs inside houses is a major priority. [2] The Lebanese Army reports clearing 1,000 cluster munitions daily."

Assessed UXOs in South Lebanon (Estimated Numbers)

Air-Delivered Missles 825

Air-Delivered Bombs - 825

Artillery - 13,200

Artillery (Naval) - 4,950

Cluster Bombs - 101,760
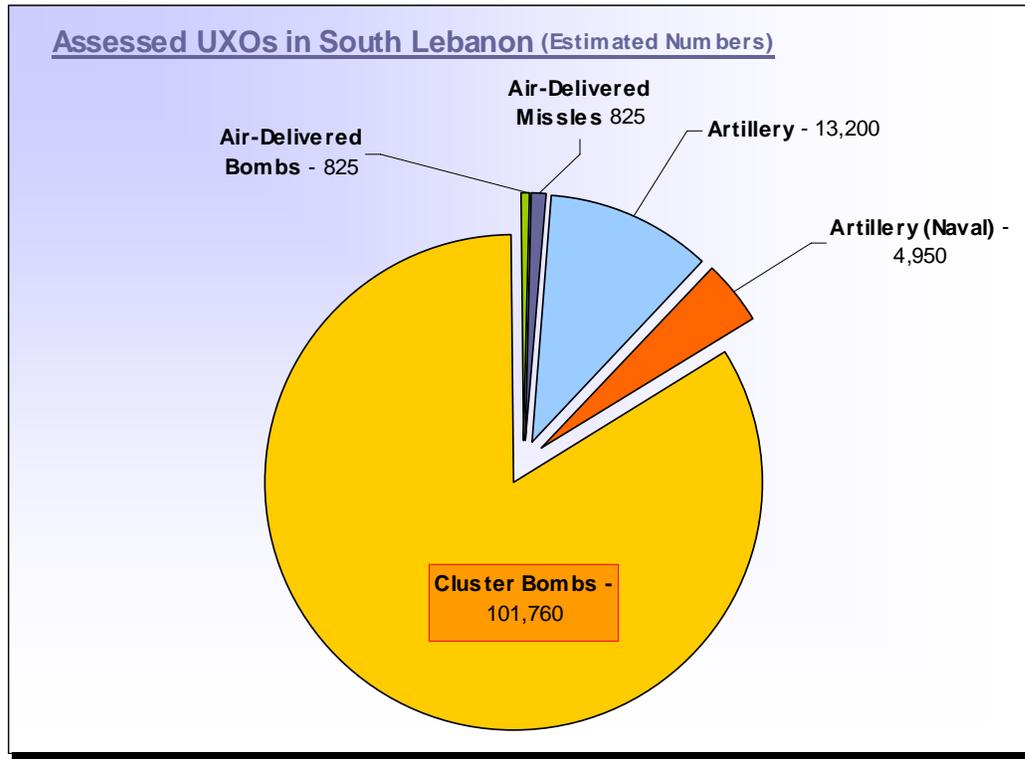
Graph III: Assessed UXOs in South Lebanon

This graph displays the number of UXOs that are currently contaminating large areas of southern Lebanon. It should be noted that Cluster munitions can be delivered as an air-dropped bomb or by artillery round. However, the number of 'Cluster Bomblets' highlighted here should be taken as a separate number from the 'Air-Delivered Bombs' and artillery rounds given that their actual deliver system differ.

Source: United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS)

[Footnote 1] Estimated by UNIFIL and reported in US Government Situation Report, Lebanon Humanitarian Emergency, 16 August.
[Footnote 2] OCHA Humanitarian Update, 17 August.

MACC SL, 2004

"Landmines and unexploded ordnance (UXO) left over from the Israeli occupation of southern Lebanon and previous periods of conflict in the area dating back to the French mandate continue to hamper the effective restoration of peace and security in the area.

While landmine casualty figures have fallen significantly since initial levels recorded immediately following the withdrawal, the remaining landmines and UXO continue to impact on the reconstruction, socio-economic development and the return of normalcy to community life for those in affected areas.

It can often be misleading to focus on the number of mines however it is useful to note that the south of Lebanon is the most highly contaminated region of the country. At the end of 2003 there remains an estimated 410,000 landmines in the area.

The majority of these mines lie in the immediate proximity of the UN delineated 'Blue Line' between Lebanon and Israel. These minefields are known as the 'border minefields' and they stretch from Naqoura on the Mediterranean coast to Kfar Chouba in the east. These border minefields remain a risk to the UNIFIL troops operating in the area and to those villages in the immediate vicinity of the Blue Line. Mines and UXO are also present in and around the immediate vicinity of villages throughout the area away from Blue Line. The immediate areas of risk are those village communities living in close proximity to minefields within the former occupied zone other than along the Blue Line."

High level Commission of Inquiry established to "investigate systematic targeting and killing of civilians by Israel in Lebanon" (2006)

- The Inquiry will also look into types of weapons used by Israel and their conformity with international law and the extent and impact of Israeli attacks on human life, property, infrastructure and environment

OHCHR, 11 August 2006

"The second special session of the Human Rights Council today strongly condemned the grave Israeli violations of human rights and breaches of international humanitarian law in Lebanon and decided to urgently establish and immediately dispatch a high-level inquiry commission to the region."

OCHA, 27 September 2006

"A High Level Commission of Inquiry into the Situation in Lebanon arrived in Beirut on 23 September. The three-member delegation of the UN Human Rights Council includes Joao Clemente Baena Soares of Brazil, Mohamed Chande Othman of Tanzania and Stelios Perrakis of Greece. The independent and impartial body will remain in Lebanon until 07 October to investigate the systematic targeting and killing of civilians by Israel in Lebanon; examine the types of weapons used by Israel and their conformity with international law; and assess the extent and deadly impact of Israeli attacks on human life, property, critical infrastructure and the environment. The delegation will meet with government officials, the diplomatic community and representatives of civil society and will travel to areas affected by the recent conflict to collect evidence and witness accounts of the military operations."

An unedited version of the report (10 November 2006) is available here

High Commissioner for Human Rights condemns killings in Qana (2006)

OHCHR, 31 July 2006

"The United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, Louise Arbour, today said: "I strongly condemn the killing of dozens of civilians, among whom a very high proportion were children, resulting from the shelling by the Israeli Forces of a residential building in which civilians were sheltering in Qana, South Lebanon, on 30 July.

"I call again on all parties to the conflict to respect their obligations under international law, and to take all measures to effectively protect civilians and civilian objects."

The High Commissioner extended her deepest condolences to the families of the victims.

Noting that Israel had warned the population of likely military action, the High Commissioner underlined that while effective advance warning of attacks which may affect the civilian population must be given, this legal obligation does not absolve the parties to the conflict of their other obligations under international law regarding the protection of civilians.

"All parties to the conflict must respect the principles of distinction and proportionality, particularly when civilians remain in the zone of military operations after a warning has been issued", the High Commissioner said.
 […]
The High Commissioner welcomed reports that Israel would conduct an inquiry into the civilian deaths at Qana. In order to establish facts and conduct an impartial legal analysis of the persistent allegations of violations of international humanitarian law and international human rights law during this conflict, the High Commissioner reiterated the need for independent investigations. To this end, she advocated the active involvement of international expertise in any such investigations. Once again the High Commissioner reminded all parties of the need for accountability for violations of international law."

Human rights observers urge investigation into possible war crimes committed in Lebanon (2006)

- A report by Human Rights Watch argues that by systematically failing to distinguish between combatants and civilians, Israel has violated one of the most fundamental tenets of the laws of war: the duty to carry out attacks on only military targets
- The Israeli government claims it took all possible measures to minimize civilian harm, but the cases documented by Human Rights Watch reveal a systematic failure by the IDF to distinguish between combatants and civilians
- The report also notes that in none of the cases of civilian deaths it investigated is there evidence to suggest that Hezbollah forces or weapons were in or near the area that the IDF targeted during or just prior to the attack

HRW, August 2006, pp. 3-8

"This report documents serious violations of international humanitarian law (the laws of war) by Israel Defense Forces (IDF) in Lebanon between July 12 and July 27, 2006, as well as the July 30 attack in Qana. During this period, the IDF killed an estimated 400 people, the vast majority of them civilians, and that number climbed to over 500 by the time this report went to print. The Israeli government claims it is taking all possible measures to minimize civilian harm, but the cases documented here reveal a systematic failure by the IDF to distinguish between combatants and civilians.

Since the start of the conflict, Israeli forces have consistently launched artillery and air attacks with limited or dubious military gain but excessive civilian cost. In dozens of attacks, Israeli forces struck an area with no apparent military target. In some cases, the timing and intensity of the attack, the absence of a military target, as well as return strikes on rescuers, suggest that Israeli forces deliberately targeted civilians.

The Israeli government claims that it targets only Hezbollah, and that fighters from the group are using civilians as human shields, thereby placing them at risk. Human Rights Watch found no cases in which Hezbollah deliberately used civilians as shields to protect them from retaliatory

IDF attack. Hezbollah occasionally did store weapons in or near civilian homes and fighters placed rocket launchers within populated areas or near U.N. observers, which are serious violations of the laws of war because they violate the duty to take all feasible precautions to avoid civilian casualties. However, those cases do not justify the IDF's extensive use of indiscriminate force which has cost so many civilian lives. In none of the cases of civilian deaths documented in this report is there evidence to suggest that Hezbollah forces or weapons were in or near the area that the IDF targeted during or just prior to the attack.

By consistently failing to distinguish between combatants and civilians, Israel has violated one of the most fundamental tenets of the laws of war: the duty to carry out attacks on only military targets. The pattern of attacks during the Israeli offensive in Lebanon suggests that the failures cannot be explained or dismissed as mere accidents; the extent of the pattern and the seriousness of the consequences indicate the commission of war crimes.
[…]
This report analyzes a selection of Israeli air and artillery attacks that together claimed at least 153 civilian lives, or over a third of the reported Lebanese deaths in the conflict's first two weeks. Of the 153 civilian deaths documented in this report by name, sixty three of the victims were children under the age of eighteen, and thirty-seven of them were under ten.[...]

The report breaks civilian deaths into two categories: attacks on civilian homes and attacks on civilian vehicles. In both categories, victims and witnesses interviewed independently and repeatedly said that neither Hezbollah fighters nor Hezbollah weapons were present in the area during or just before the Israeli attack took place. While some individuals, out of fear or sympathy, may have been unwilling to speak about Hezbollah's military activity, others were quite open about it. In totality, the consistency, detail, and credibility of testimony from a broad array of witnesses who did not speak to each other leave no doubt about the validity of the patterns described in this report. In many cases, witness testimony was corroborated by reports from international journalists and aid workers. During site visits conducted in Qana, Srifa, and Tyre, Human Rights Watch saw no evidence that there had been Hezbollah military activity around the areas targeted by the IDF during or just prior to the attack: no spent ammunition, abandoned weapons or military equipment, trenches, or dead or wounded fighters. Moreover, even if Hezbollah had been in a populated area at the time of an attack, Israel would still be legally obliged to take all feasible precautions to avoid or minimize civilian casualties resulting from its targeting of military objects or personnel. In the cases documented in this report, however, the IDF consistently tolerated a high level of civilian casualties for questionable military gain.

In one case, an Israeli air strike on July 13 destroyed the home of a cleric known to have sympathy for Hezbollah but who was not known to have taken any active part in hostilities. Even if the IDF considered him a legitimate target (and Human Rights Watch has no evidence that he was), the strike killed him, his wife, their ten children, and the family's Sri Lankan maid.

On July 16, an Israeli airplane fired on a civilian home in the village of Aitaroun, killing eleven members of the al-Akhrass family, among them seven Canadian-Lebanese dual nationals who were vacationing in the village when the war began. Human Rights Watch independently interviewed three villagers who vigorously denied that the family had any connection to Hezbollah. Among the victims were children aged one, three, five, and seven.

Others civilians came under attack in their cars as they attempted to flee the fighting in the South. This report alone documents twenty-seven civilian deaths that resulted from such attacks. The number is surely higher, but at the time the report went to press, ongoing Israeli attacks on the roads made it impossible to retrieve all the bodies.

Starting around July 15, the IDF issued warnings to residents of southern villages to leave, followed by a general warning for all civilians south of the Litani River, which mostly runs about 25

kilometers north of the Israel-Lebanon border, to evacuate immediately. Tens of thousands of Lebanese fled their homes to the city of Tyre (itself south of the Litani and thus within the zone Israel ordered evacuated) or further north to Beirut, many waving white flags. As they left, Israeli forces fired on dozens of vehicles with warplanes and artillery.

Two Israeli air strikes are known to have hit humanitarian aid vehicles. On July 18 the IDF hit a convoy of the Red Crescent Society of the United Arab Emirates, destroying a vehicle with medicines, vegetable oil, sugar and rice, and killing the driver. On July 23, Israeli forces hit two clearly marked Red Cross ambulances in the village of Qana. As of August 1, tens of thousands of civilians remained in villages south of the Litani River, despite the warnings to leave. Some chose to stay, but the vast majority, Human Rights Watch found, was unable to flee due to destroyed roads, a lack of gasoline, high taxi fares, sick relatives, or ongoing Israeli attacks. Many of the civilians who remained were elderly, sick, or poor.

Israel has justified its attacks on roads by citing the need to clear the transport routes of Hezbollah fighters moving arms. Again, none of the evidence gathered by Human Rights Watch, independent media sources, or Israeli official statements indicate that any of the attacks on vehicles documented in this report resulted in Hezbollah casualties or the destruction of weapons. Rather, the attacks killed and wounded civilians who were fleeing their homes, as the IDF had advised them to do.

In addition to strikes from airplanes, helicopters, and traditional artillery, Israel has used artillery-fired cluster munitions against populated areas, causing civilian casualties. One such attack on the village of Blida on July 19 killed a sixty-year-old woman and wounded at least twelve civilians, including seven children. The wide dispersal pattern of cluster munitions and the high dud rate (ranging from 2 to 14 percent, depending on the type of cluster munition) make the weapons exceedingly dangerous for civilians and, when used in populated areas, a violation of international humanitarian law.

Statements from Israeli government officials and military leaders suggest that, at the very least, the IDF has blurred the distinction between civilian and combatant, and is willing to strike at targets it considers even vaguely connected to the latter. At worst, it considers all people in the area of hostilities open to attack. On July 17, for example, after IDF strikes on Beirut, the commander of the Israeli Air Force, Eliezer Shkedi, said, "in the center of Beirut there is an area which only terrorists enter into."[…] The next day, the IDF deputy chief of staff, Moshe Kaplinski, when talking about the IDF's destruction of Beirut's Dahia neighborhood, said, "the hits were devastating, and this area, which was a Hezbollah symbol, became deserted rubble."[…]

On July 27, Israeli Justice Minister Haim Ramon said that the Israeli air force should flatten villages before ground troops move in to prevent casualties among Israeli soldiers fighting Hezbollah. Israel had given civilians ample time to leave southern Lebanon, he claimed, and therefore anyone remaining should be considered a supporter of Hezbollah. "All those now in south Lebanon are terrorists who are related in some way to Hezbollah," he said.[…]

International humanitarian law requires effective advance warnings to the civilian population prior to an attack, when conditions permit. But those warnings do not way relieve Israel from its obligation at all times to distinguish between combatants and civilians and to take all feasible precautions to protect civilians from harm. In other words, issuing warnings in no way entitles the Israeli military to treat those civilians who remain in southern Lebanon as combatants who are fair game for attack.
[...]
This report does not address Israeli attacks on Lebanon's infrastructure or Beirut's southern suburbs, which is the subject of ongoing Human Rights Watch research. It also does not address Hezbollah's indiscriminate rocket attacks on Israel, which have been reported on and denounced

separately and continues to be the subject of ongoing Human Rights Watch investigations. In addition, Human Rights Watch continues to investigate allegations that Hezbollah is shielding its military personnel and materiel by locating them in civilian homes or areas, and it is deeply concerned by Hezbollah's placement of certain troops and materiel near civilians, which endangers them and violates the duty to take all feasible precautions to avoid civilian casualties. Human Rights Watch uses the occasion of this report to reiterate Hezbollah's legal duty never to deliberately use civilians to shield military objects and never to needlessly endanger civilians by conducting military operations, maintaining troops, or storing weapons in their vicinity.

The armed conflict between Israel and Hezbollah is governed by international treaties, as well as the rules of customary international humanitarian law. Article 3 Common to the Geneva Conventions of 1949 sets forth minimum standards for all parties to a conflict between a state party such as Israel and a non-state party such as Hezbollah. Israel has also asserted that it considers itself to be responding to the actions of the sovereign state of Lebanon, not just to those of Hezbollah. Any hostilities between Israeli forces and the forces of Lebanon would fall within the full Geneva Conventions to which both Lebanon and Israel are parties. In either case, the rules governing bombing, shelling, and rocket attacks are effectively the same."

See the full report and recommendations in sources below

See also, Amnesty International's reports on Lebanon and Israel which underline the need for the UN to establish a full and impartial investigation into violations committed by both sides of the conflict.

Displaced people targeted as they fled (2006)

- Displaced people were targeted as they fled
- In several instances, convoys of displaced people were targeted as they fled

UNSC, 21 July 2006, p.2

"On the morning of 15 July, IDF announced via loudspeakers to tlie residents of Ayta ash Shab and Marwallin that they sliould vacate their villages. UNIFIL observed a large-scale exodus from Ayta ash Shab. However, a large group of villagers from Marwahin approached United Nations observation post Hin and position 1-21 on foot, requesting shelter and humanitarian assistance. UNIFIL explained that it was not in a position to provide humanitarian assistance to the villagers and asked them to return to their homes, where they would be safer. That evening and overnight, two UNIFIL armoured personnel carriers were stationed in Marwahin for the villagers' protection.

In an unrelated incident that day, 18 Lebanese civilians, including women and children, were killed on tlie road between Al Bayyadah and Shama villages as they were fleeing from Marwahin in two vehicles. Contrary to what was reported in the media, these were not the same civilians who had approached UNIFIL for shelter previously. UNIFIL took the initiative to retrieve tlie bodies of the civilians. The Force came under fire during the recovery mission. One .UNIFIL soldier sustained an injury to his eye when a demonstrator threw a piece of glass at him during the recovery mission. In response to a request from the Government of Lebanon, the following day UNIFIL evacuated 283 inhabitants from Marwahin to Tyre. The convoy came under fire during the evacuation, but no injuries were sustained."

Extract from LHRA, 8 August 2006

List of collective massacres perpetrated by Israeli Army in its attack against Lebanon in summer 2006						
No.	Village	Region	Date	Targeted area	Number of killed	Number of wounded	Remarks
13	Rmayleh massacre		17-Jul	Convoy of displaced people trying to flee their villages heavily struck by air raids	12 civilians	unknown	Chemical bombs were thrown on a convoy of displaced people
22	Nabi Sheet massacre	West Bekaa	19-Jul	Hassan Shakar house	8 civilians	3 civilians	Amongst the victims there were displaced from Majas Al-Jabal village, two entire families of 8 were killed
49	Shiyyah massacre	Beirut southern suburb	7-Aug	Hajjaj residential neighborhood	20 civilians	30 civilians	The death toll increased later since many corpses were removed beneath the rubble. Amongst the victims, there were displaced from Beer Al-Abed, Haret Hreyk, Hayy Mawad
53	Marjeyoun convoy massacre	Bekaa	11-Aug	A displaced convoy heading to the Bekaa valley fleeing Marjeyoun area	7 civilians	32 civilians	The convoy was escorted by UN forces and had previous security clearance. It was constituted of more than 1300 civilian cars and 300 military cars
55	Breetal second massacre	Bekaa	13-Aug	One residential building in Breetal	13 civilians	22 civilians	Five families were looking for a safe haven in the building that was struck heavily by Israeli air raids
56	Jamaliyyeh massacre	Bekaa	14-Aug	A van carrying civilians	7 civilians	7 civilians	The van was carrying displaced people

(Click on link in sources below to see the full chart)

Political instability: string of bomb attacks and assassinations (2004 -2006)

- Political tensions have been accompanied by a series of assassinations and attacks targeting Lebanese officials and other prominent persons, such as journalists
- These include the assasination of Prime Minister Rafic Hariri on 14 February 2005, the assassination of Samir KAssir, a prominent journalist and politician George Hawi
- Other attacks have occured in public places, such as in a shopping mall or in the street

UNSC, 18 October 2006, p.1-2

"A tense political climate has continued to prevail in Lebanon. In its midst, in a worrying return to last year's climate of frequent assassinations and terrorist acts, a senior Lebanese security official survived an assassination attempt while driving on a road in south Lebanon on 5 September. Four of his aides and bodyguards were killed in the attack and five were wounded.

In the early morning hours of 15 October, six Lebanese civilians were hurt when three rockets were launched into a building in downtown Beirut, close to both United Nations headquarters and the Grand Serail which houses the Prime Minister's offices. This disconcerting incident followed two other attacks which had not caused any casualties, with similar rocket launchers and with hand grenades against police stations in Lebanon. In the aftermath of the latest attacks, the Government of Lebanon has expanded the presence of the Internal Security Forces in Beirut by 800 men."

UNSC, 21 July 2006, para. 36

"Since the assassination of former Prime Minister Rafic Hariri on 14 February, Lebanon has undergone a period of increased political instability, manifested by the large-scale demonstrations in the capital, the resignation of the Government, several bomb attacks in various areas of Beirut, the assassinations of journalist Samir Kassir and politician George Hawi and, most recently, the attack on the envoy of Defence Minister Elias Murr. The withdrawal of Syrian forces from Lebanon by the end of April, made possible the holding of free and fair parliamentary elections over a fourweek period in May and June. Lebanese armed forces now have to show that they can maintain effective security throughout the country at a time when the size of the Lebanese Army is being reduced significantly."

BBC, 12 December 2005

"A chronology of bomb attacks and explosions in Lebanon since October 2004.

December 12: Prominent anti-Syrian MP and journalist Gibran Tueni and three others are killed in a car bomb attack as they travel through the Mekallis area of eastern Beirut.

September 25: May Chidiac, a well-known television news journalist for the Lebanese Broadcasting Corporation, is seriously wounded by a car bomb in Jounieh, north of Beirut.

September 17: A powerful blast rocks the Ashrafiyeh district of Beirut, killing one person and injuring at least 22 more.

August 22: At least two people are injured when an explosion takes place outside a hotel and shopping centre in the Zalka suburb of Beirut.

July 22: Several people are injured in a car bomb blast in a busy Beirut street.

July 12: Former Defence Minister Elias Murr - a staunch supporter of Syria - is injured and two others are killed in a bomb attack as his motorcade passes through the affluent Beirut suburb of Antelias.

June 21: Ex-Lebanese Communist Party leader George Hawi and critic of Syria is killed when his car blows up as he travels through the Wata Musaitbi district of Beirut.

June 2: Anti-Syrian journalist Samir Qasir is killed in a car bomb outside his home in Ashrafiyeh.

May 7: At least one person is killed and seven are injured in an explosion in Jounieh, east of Beirut.

March 27: A bomb explodes in a mainly Christian area of Beirut, wounding at least six people.

March 23: Three people are killed when a bomb explodes in a shopping centre in Kaslik, near Jounieh.

March 19: A car bomb has wounds at least 11 people in a predominantly Christian suburb of Beirut, New Jdeideh.

February 14 2005: Former Lebanese Prime Minister Rafik Hariri - a critic of Syria - is killed by a massive truck bomb blast in Beirut. 20 others were killed by the explosion - including former minister Bassel Fleihan.

October 1 2004: Marwan Hamadeh, a former Lebanese minister is injured and his driver killed in a blast near his home on Beirut's seafront."

Clashes between supporters and opponents of Syria's influence in Lebanon (2006)

- Clashes have broken out between supporters of the pro-Syrian former minister (Wiam Wahhab) and the anti-Syrian politician (Walid Jumblatt)
- Fighting broke out following a dispute over the display of posters in a town in south Beirut
- One person was killed and several wounded

BBC, 4 July 2006

"Security officials in Lebanon say that one person has been killed and five wounded in fighting between supporters of rival Druze politicians.

The clashes were between supporters of the pro-Syrian former minister, Wiam Wahhab, and the anti-Syrian politician, Walid Jumblatt.

They broke out during a dispute over the display of political posters in the town of Jahliye, south of Beirut.

The security forces moved in to stop the fighting.

It was not clear which side began the shooting, but acting Interior Minister Ahmed Fatfat said all the casualties appeared to be supporters of Mr Jumblatt.

Tensions

This is not the first clash between the two groups. In April, Mr Wahhab's bodyguards shot and wounded two civilians who objected to his presence at a funeral in a Druze mountain village.

Tensions between supporters and opponents of Syria's influence in Lebanon have increased since the assassination of the former Lebanese PM Rafiq Hariri, in February 2005.

Many Lebanese blame Syria for Mr Hariri's death and an on-going United Nations investigation has said the killing could not have taken place without the knowledge of high-ranking Syrian officials.
Syria has denied any involvement.

The assassination of Hariri precipitated the withdrawal of Syrian forces from Lebanon in April 2005, after a 29-year presence, under heavy domestic and international pressure."

Clashes between army and militants (2006)

- Clashes broke out in east Lebanon between a Palestinian militant group and the Lebanese army

BBC, 18 May 2006

"One Lebanese soldier and a Palestinian militant were wounded in clashes on Wednesday between the Lebanese army and Palestinian militants in east Lebanon.

The clashes broke out after an army patrol was attacked by the militants, the army said.

The AFP news agency reported on Thursday that both sides sent reinforcements to the area overnight.

The militants were from Fatah-Intifada, a secular, Syrian-backed group that has opposed peace agreements with Israel.

The group has a camp on Lebanese soil, about two kilometres from the border with Syria.

Reinforcements

Lebanese police told AFP that the Palestinian group smuggled 15 military vehicles carrying fighters, arms and ammunition into Lebanon from Syria overnight on Wednesday.

AFP also reported that the militants took up positions in the mountains overlooking the camps in which clashes took place yesterday.

Fatah-Intifada, led by radical Palestinian militant Abu Moussa, was established in 1983. Its headquarters are based in Damascus.

During Wednesday's clashes, a Lebanese soldier was kidnapped by the militants. He was later released, after the army threatened to break up one of the Palestinian group's camps.

UN resolution

On Wednesday, the UN Security Council adopted a resolution calling on Syria to forge formal ties with Lebanon and demarcate the border between the two countries.

The 15-member council adopted the resolution by 13-0 with Russia and China abstaining.

Resolution 1680 seeks full implementation of a 2004 resolution urging a complete end to external influence in Lebanon. It was co-sponsored by the United States, France and Britain.

In 2005, Syria withdrew its troops from Lebanon following 29 years of military and political rule over its smaller neighbour, in line with Resolution 1559 of 2004.

The move came after Damascus faced massive international pressure following the assassination of ex-Lebanese PM Rafik Hariri, in a bombing with which it denied any connection.

Border issue

However, Damascus has so far refused to formalise diplomatic contacts with Lebanon or open a Syrian embassy in Beirut.

Nor has it responded to Lebanese requests that the border between the two countries be officially demarcated.

Several Palestinian groups have camps in Lebanon, where about 400,000 Palestinian refugees live.

Lebanese factions who have been gathering for a national dialogue conference have agreed to disarm Palestinian groups active in Lebanon outside of the Palestinian refugee camps."

Vulnerable groups

Some cases of women subjected to specific human rights violations such as arbitrary detention or cruel and inhuman treatment (2006)

- There are reports that some women were held and threatened by IDF; two were shot, one killed and one injured
- They said they had stayed in their village, along with the elderly, in order to take care of the tobacco plantations and olive groves.

COI, 10 November 2006

"The Commissioners learned first hand of the sufferings of women and children and of the elderly in this, as in other conflicts. As the Representative of the Secretary General on the Internally Displaced has pointed out, women and children represent the overwhelming majority of internally displaced persons. In addition to the general suffering of civilians, women have been the victims of more specific human rights violations such as arbitrary detention or cruel and inhuman treatment [243] In addition, due to the armed conflict there will be an increase in women-headed households with all the human rights problems that implies, such as limited access to social benefits and housing rights."

[Footnote 243] The Commissioners heard from the women of Chihine, for example, how they remained in their village when the men had left whilst it was the target of bomb attacks; a number of them were held and threatened by IDF; two were shot, one killed and one injured. They said they had stayed in their village, along with the elderly, in order to take care of the tobacco plantations and olive groves.

UN Committee on the rights of the child reiterates concern of impact of past conflict on children (2006)

"The Committee reiterates its concern at the persisting negative impact of the past armed conflict on children, including the vulnerability to socio-economic deprivation and slow return of displaced families, and that the problem of landmines still exists.
[…]
In light of articles 38 and 39 of the Convention, the Committee recommends that the State party take all appropriate measures to ensure that children affected by armed conflict have

access to adequate health and social services, including psychosocial recovery and social reintegration. It also recommends that the State party continue its demining activities and seek the necessary technical and financial support within a framework of international cooperation, including from United Nations agencies."

SUBSISTENCE NEEDS

General

Shortages in water and shelter identified by the UN as the most pressing needs (2006)

UN News, 21 August 2006

"With most Lebanese who fled the devastating month-long conflict in their homeland now having gone back to their homes, United Nations agencies on the ground have identified shortages of clean water and shelter as two of the most pressing needs faced by the hundreds of thousands of returnees."

Report of the Special Rapporteur on the right to food (2006)

- The Rapporteur's report notes that the war took place at the peak of the fishing and fruit harvest season, affecting the people who earn their livelihood from these sectors both directly in terms of damage, and more indirectly in terms of lost markets and revenues
- Much farmland has been affected by bombing and will continue to be affected by unexploded bombs that continue to make access to many fields impossible
- The destruction by the Israeli forces of infrastructure essential to the survival of the Population, particularly agricultural, irrigation and water infrastructure will also have long-term impacts on livelihoods and access to food and water
- Fishing was heavily affected by the massive oil spill following Israeli bombing of the four Jiyyeh fuel tanks on 14 July 2006
- The Special Rapporteur found that loss of livelihoods and sources of income is the main threat to the future well-being of many thousands of families, particularly in rural areas.

UNGA, 5 October 2006

"The Special Rapporteur on the right to food, Jean Ziegler, has the honour to submit to the Human Rights Council the present report on his mission to Lebanon which took place from 11 to 16 September 2006. The mission was undertaken at the invitation of the Government of Lebanon. The Special Rapporteur also requested authorization to visit Israel to investigate the situation of the right to food of the affected Israeli population, but as of the time of writing, he had received no response from the Government of Israel. This report therefore covers only the situation in Lebanon, but the Special Rapporteur remains willing to visit Israel as soon as he receives permission from the Government.

The mission followed the war that took place from 12 July to 14 August 2006 between Hezbollah and Israel, following Hezbollah's capture of soldiers in a raid across the border between Israel and Lebanon. During the 34 days of the war the Israeli forces launched more than 7,000 air attacks and 2,500 attacks by sea as well as heavy artillery shelling. The war has had farreaching effects on the Lebanese population. According to the Government of Lebanon, the war resulted in 1,189 killed (mostly civilians), 4,399 injured, 974,189 displaced and between 15,000 and 30,000 homes destroyed.

During the war, a combination of destruction of road and transport infrastructure and repeated denial of safe transit by the Israeli armed forces made it very difficult for humanitarian agencies to transport food and other relief, especially to the approximately 22,000 people left trapped in the area south of the Litani River, where there are 38 localities under the control of the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon. The forced displacement of a vast number of people from their homes and agricultural lands disrupted normal access to food and left tens of thousands dependent on food aid.

The war took place at the peak of the fishing and fruit harvest season, affecting the people who earn their livelihood from these sectors both directly in terms of damage, but even more importantly, indirectly in terms of lost markets and revenues. Much farmland has been affected by bombing and will continue to be affected by unexploded bombs that continue to make access to many fields impossible. According to the United Nations Mine-Action Centre, hundreds of thousands of pieces of unexploded ordnances (UXO), mostly cluster bombs (antipersonnel weapons that spray bomblets indiscriminately over a wide area), will need to be cleared before agriculture can be re-established. It was reported that more than 1.2 million cluster bombs were dropped by the Israeli forces. About 90 per cent were dropped in the last 72 hours of the war when the Israeli forces were already aware that a ceasefire was imminent. The destruction by the Israeli forces of infrastructure essential to the survival of the Population, particularly agricultural, irrigation and water infrastructure will also have long-term impacts on livelihoods and access to food and water. Fishing was heavily affected by the massive oil spill following Israeli bombing of the four Jiyyeh fuel tanks on 14 July 2006.

The long-term impacts of the war on livelihoods are the key concern today. The right to food is not primarily about food aid; it is the right to be able to feed oneself through an adequate livelihood. The Special Rapporteur found that the livelihoods of a large part of the population have been disrupted by the war, and the process of reconstructing livelihoods has been slow. Loss of livelihoods and sources of income is the main threat to the future well-being of many thousands of families, particularly in rural areas.

In the light of his findings and the international obligations of the parties involved in the war, the Special Rapporteur concludes with a series of recommendations aimed at improving the realization of the right to food of the whole Lebanese population. In particular, the Special Rapporteur recommends that:

(a) Violations of the right to food under international human rights and humanitarian law should be further investigated, including to determine whether they constitute grave breaches of the Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949 and Additional Protocol I thereto and possible war crimes under the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court;

(b) The International Humanitarian Fact-Finding Commission, established in accordance with Additional Protocol I, should be accepted by the Government of Israel and the Government of Lebanon to investigate violations of the right to food under international humanitarian law;

(c) According to international jurisprudence the Government of Israel should be held responsible under international law for any violation of the right to food of the Lebanese civilian population. The Government of Israel should be held responsible under international law for the violations of the right to food of the Lebanese civilian population. Under international law, the Government of Israel has the obligation to ensure that all victims receive adequate reparation and compensation for the losses suffered during the war as well as for ongoing losses due to the disruption of livelihoods;

(d) The Government of Lebanon, with bilateral and multilateral donors, should accelerate the clearing cluster bombs from agricultural fields. The Government of Israel should provide the full

details of its use of cluster munitions in order to facilitate the destruction of the UXO and the clearing of affected areas."

Farmers in the south can no longer access fields due to cluster bombs (2006)

- Agriculture is the main source of income in Lebanon, constituting 70 per cent of household income of the working population in the south
- Farmers have been unable to access their fields because of the substantial amounts of cluster bombs
- Cultivated areas have been hardest hit (particularly olives and other fruit trees)
- Cluster bombs have also affected more than 7 per cent of grasslands used for the grazing of animals
- The contamination of water sources also puts farmers at risk
- Some 173 streams and rivers in south Lebanon are contaminated with unexploded cluster bombs

OCHA, 10 November 2006, p.3

"The impact of cluster bombs on agricultural livelihoods

South Lebanon is highly dependent on agriculture. It is the main source of income in south Lebanon – half the working population in the south earns their living entirely from agriculture and it constitutes 70 per cent of total household income.[...]

Yet it is agriculture land that is heavily contaminated with cluster bombs and with most ordnance disposal activity still focused on key roads, residential areas and schools, South Lebanon's farmers cannot yet enter their fields to nurture and harvest their crop or to plant next year's crop.

Farmers, in areas feared to contain cluster bombs, have not been able to irrigate or harvest their current crops and are unable to plant the winter crop, be it wheat, lentils, chickpeas or other vegetables. Next year's agriculture cycle will also be affected if, as is likely to be the case, substantial numbers of cluster bombs are not cleared until the end of 2007.

In many instances, farmers have been burning off their fields after demarking the bomblets, in an attempt to destroy them but in doing so put their lives and the lives of others at risk.

Total Household Monthly Income (US$) by region, 1997

	South Lebanon	Lebanon average
Public sector	1,125	1,486
Agriculture	841	486
Industry, Construction, Handicraft	1,707	2,258
Trade	1,452	2,174
Services	1,370	2,921
From abroad	636	586
Other labor income	4	16
Non-labor income	432	912
Total income	7,568	10,839

Source: United Nations Integrated Rural Development Programme

Cultivated areas, particularly those producing high-value crops, such as citrus fruits, bananas and vegetables, have been hardest hit by the cluster bombs. It is estimated that at least 6.4 per cent (94km2) of land used to cultivate citrus fruits and bananas and 10 per cent (74km2) of land used for planting field crops have been contaminated (*Map 2*).

Agricultural Areas of Production in South Lebanon

Olive	40%	23,431 Hectares
Fruit Trees	22%	17,469 Hectares
Agro industry	56%	6,239 Hectares
Vegetables	5%	2,161 Hectares
Wheat, Corn and Barley	18 %	10,624 Hectares

Source: Ministry of Agriculture, 2004

This figure, however, is believed to be a significant underestimate as dozens of new cluster strikes are being identified each week. The olive industry will feel the economic impact for at least two years as the unexploded ordnance keeps farmers out of their fields and unable to prune their trees. Cluster bombs have also affected more than 7 per cent (35km2) grasslands, used for the grazing of animals, according to UNMACC.

Water resources have also been contaminated. The banks and streambeds of 173 streams and rivers in South Lebanon are littered with unexploded cluster bombs putting shepherds and farmers irrigating their fields at risk (*Map 3*)."

Agricultural and non-agricultural income (US$/year) in selected agricultural areas, 1998

	Agricultural income, $/hh	Non-agricultural income, $/hh	% of agricultural to total hh income
Hermel (North Lebanon)	2,537	4,430	36%
Baalbeck and Beqaa'	30,790	19,672	61%
South Lebanon	22,320	9,600	70%

See also maps included in "A Lasting Legacy: The Deadly Impact of Cluster Bombs in Southern Lebanon" linked in Sources Below

Displaced people were forced to live in crowded and insecure conditions during the conflict (2006)

- During the conflict around 142,397 internally displaced persons were accommodated in schools

COI, 10 November 2006

"During the conflict around 142,397 internally displaced persons were accommodated in schools, [...] while over 600,000 sought shelter with families, friends or in other temporary accommodation and, in some cases, in open spaces such as parks. As a result of the massive destruction of houses and other civilian infrastructure, displaced individuals and families were forced to live in crowded and often insecure conditions with limited access to safe drinking water, food, sanitation, electricity and health services. Other reports suggested an increased incidence of respiratory diseases and diarrhoea in schools and public areas during the period of displacement [...] It should be noted that the displacement crisis triggered by the conflict, as well as the serious displacement-related protection concerns, may have led additionally to a humanitarian crisis were it not for the families, communities and organizations in Lebanon which hosted and/or supported many of the displaced during and after the conflict."

Poverty in many areas of Beirut and its suburbs (2006)

- Prior to the summer 2006 conflict, many suburbs of Beirut lacked basic infrastructure
- Hay al-Selom and the suburb of Nabaa, north of Beirut's city centre, constitute the capital's two main poverty belts, according to a December 2005 study funded by the World Bank

IRIN, 21 Mar 2006

"Beirut's impressive downtown district reflects much of the wealth and development that Lebanon has enjoyed since the end of the civil war in 1990. But a few minutes' drive to the capital's southern and northern fringes reveals a vastly different reality, featuring extreme poverty and underdevelopment.

Residents and NGOs working to alleviate poverty put much of the blame for the shabby condition of the suburbs on government inaction. "We're second class citizens," said Youssef Hassan, a 48 year-old resident of the southern suburb of Hay al-Selom. "Officials forget we exist below the poverty line."

Those earning less than Lebanon's monthly minimum wage – 300,000 Lebanese pounds (roughly US $200) – are generally considered to be living under the poverty line, according to Sawsan Masri, project manager at the Ministry of Social Affairs.

"We have no electricity or paved roads, no health insurance and none of the essential services that a government should provide its people," said Hassan who works as a taxi driver to provide for seven dependants. He and his family have been living in a two-room apartment in Hay al-

Selom since they were forced out of the southern village of Arabsalim by the Israeli occupation 15 years ago.

"I get about 300,000 Lebanese pounds a month from driving people around," he said. "It barely covers the rent of the car I'm using and basic needs, like food. We have to buy clothes second-hand – if not third-hand."

Hay al-Selom and the suburb of Nabaa, about a 15-minute drive north of Beirut's city centre, constitute the capital's two main poverty belts, according to a December 2005 study funded by the World Bank. The study was conducted by the Lebanese Council for Development and Reconstruction (CDR), set up by the government in 1977.

The survey, the aim of which was to identify deprived areas for future development, classifies these two suburbs as "the most deprived around Beirut." It goes on to note that poverty on the outskirts of the capital was "one of the key issues that consecutive governments have failed to resolve."

While relatively affluent neighbourhoods nearby have seen a modicum of reconstruction and development in the last decade, including road construction, wastewater treatment and electricity projects, such development has eluded the impoverished areas on the capital's periphery."

Southern region struggles to develop economy after years of war and occupation (2005)

- Little investment has been made in southern Lebanon
- According to an article by IRIN, 37 percent of households in the south live without basic needs, including sanitation systems and access to potable water
- The area also suffers from low levels of education
- Unemployment is widespread
- The rate of people out of work is estimated at 11.5 percent countrywide, according to UNDP/government figures, this rate is thought to be much higher in the south
- The Israeli occupation until 2000 and landmines left in the area have had a severe impact on the economy of the region

IRIN, 25 October 2005

"Ever since the Israeli withdrawal, there has been little investment in southern Lebanon.

Mukalled attributed this to a number of reasons, including the lack of government planning and political conditions often imposed by would-be donors.

Observers note that the dearth of investment also has to do with the presence in the area of the Hezbollah militia, which controls the south. The group, locally credited with the expulsion of Israeli forces, is also a political party, which enjoys 17 seats in parliament.

Experts argue that the group's conflict with Israel and calls by Washington for its disarmament deters would-be donors from investing in the south.

Joint UN projects in the south over the past five years have totalled some $4 million.

As a result of this shortfall, 37 percent of households in the south live without basic needs, including viable sanitation systems and access to potable water. The area also suffers from low levels of education. While there are several schools in all villages, many lack even the most basic equipment, such as desks.

Unemployment in the area, too, is rampant. While the rate of people out of work stands at 11.5 percent countrywide, according to UNDP/government figures, this rate is thought to be much higher in the country's south.

Historically, residents of the area have been farmers, with traditional crops consisting of olives, grapes, figs, pomegranates, wheat and tobacco. With the coming of the Israeli occupation, however, much of the area's arable land was planted with mines, curtailing the viability of the industry.

This, in turn, has led to a considerable outflow of the local work force.

"More than half of the young population have left to seek jobs in Beirut or abroad," said Mukalled. "For those who are in the villages, there are few opportunities."

No recent census has been conducted, largely for political reasons, and accurate statistics are hard to come by. But according to local aid workers, some 44,000 people from the village of Bint Jbeil, a few kilometres from the current Israeli border, left the area over the course of the occupation. A population of a mere 7,000 was left behind. "

Displaced population in outskirts of Baalbek live in poverty (2004)

- Some 320 displaced families live in the Baalbek area, in what are known as the "Gouraud barracks"
- The families are all former residents of Beirut who were displaced from their homes in 1976 during the civil war
- Despite numerous surveys of their living conditions, these IDPs have not yet received compensation and are living below the poverty line with minimum access to health and social services
- The barracks consist of makeshift rooms separated by cardboard, shared toilets and limited access to water and electricity
- Some of the displaced claim to have received neither national nor international assistance

Daily Star, 22 January 2004

"On the outskirts of historic Baalbek, just meters from the ancient ruins, lie the old Gouraud military barracks, named after a French general, inherited from the Mandate forces, and now providing accommodation for some 320 families living in desperate conditions.

The families are all former residents of Beirut and its suburbs who abandoned their homes in 1976 when the civil war reached one of its climaxes, causing the displacement of hundreds of thousands of who, sought refuge in remote areas. They are living below the poverty line and lack minimum social, health and environmental services.

The number of residents has been counted several times, surveys on their living conditions have been made, and over the years, there have been repeated calls for their problems to be solved by the payment of compensation, as happened with other groups of internally displaced.

But 28 years after they first arrived at the barracks, the families are still there, and have only grown larger in size, since many of the children have married and have families of their own.

The barracks contain a number of lodgings, with each one divided into makeshift rooms separated by cardboard. Toilets, in most cases, are shared and water and electricity are not always available.

In winter, residents are faced with the problems of how to cope with the cold and damp. At times, the temperature drops to minus 7C at night.

Abdo Noon, who keeps a record of residents, said:

'We have been promised money to evacuate the barracks and find new lodgings. It is said that the location will be refurbished and turned into public offices needed in Baalbek.'

'But the promises have yet to be fulfilled and although we learned from the region's parliamentary representatives that the necessary funds have been allocated for this purpose, nothing has been done to solve the problem,' he added.

Nasibeh Rabah, who looks after her two disabled children, following the death of her husband 17 years ago, complains that no international or local organizations have provided the residents with aid, on the grounds that the civil war has ended.

'In fact our situation has got worse,' she said."

Most IDPs live in Beirut and its suburbs in minimal conditions (2004)

- Most IDPs live in Beirut and its suburbs, frequently with relatives or friends
- About 70 per cent of the displaced population live in minimal conditions
- During the civil war, the government could not provide the displaced with adequate shelter, security, food and medical care
- The displaced now often live in overcrowded houses while the poorest are in makeshift shelters by rivers
- Ministry of Displaced exempted the displaced from water and electricity fees to improve the condition of the displaced
- Favorable health indicators at the national level conceal regional and social differences

Caritas, August 2004

"Most IDPs are centered in Beirut and its suburbs. 70% of them are living on a minimal level while 30% of them have settled well with good businesses. The 70% are located in the crowded areas of Beirut living either free of charge at someones' home (a relative who is out of the country or someone from the village who is well off), while the rest are paying very high rent which they cannot afford and which barely leaves them with anything to spend on food and other necessities. A very low percentage of the IDPs are still living in confiscated homes since the government two years ago forced everyone to leave the homes of others. There are no host centers in Lebanon; every displaced person takes care of himself and his family and they have no special or protected status."

UNDP, 2002

"Favorable health indicators at the national level conceal regional and social differences, with infant mortality rates reaching 48 per thousand in North Lebanon, for example. Similarly, education indicators are less favorable in areas outside the capital Beirut. Furthermore, the inability to satisfy basic needs is substantially higher in rural areas. Deprivation, specifically in terms of education and health insurance, is twice as important in the regions other than Beirut and Mount Lebanon."

Assaf & El-Fil 7 April 2000

"During the years of conflict nothing could be done to put a halt to numerous instances of illegal occupation of property. The fragmentation and disintegration of the government and the power of the militias made it impossible to provide IDPs with shelter, security, food and medical care.

The disastrous effects of displacement have had ongoing social and psychological consequences. The fact that large numbers of families have had to live in one house has created tension and conflict. Overcrowding has increased the spread of disease. Drug abuse and delinquency have become prevalent among young people. As moral values have generally deteriorated squatting in somebody else's property has come to be regarded as normal. Indeed, some of the displaced even claim the right to squat as one of their legitimate rights. Illegal occupation of property has implicitly been condoned by political factions."

UNDP 1997

"With the cessation of military operations, some 450,000 persons were still displaced comprising 90,000 families, of which 70,000 could be considered genuinely concerned. Among these, 45,000 families were occupying other people's homes and another 12,000 were living in very poor conditions and accommodations."

USCR 2001

"Many of the displaced are among the poorest in Lebanese society. The poorest of the homeless, called Muhajjaran, mass along the banks of the Awwali and Zahrani rivers in makeshift shelters in unsanitary conditions. In most cases, however, internally displaced Lebanese have found shelter with friends and families, but often live in overcrowded conditions."

Ministry of Displaced 1998, "water & electricity fees"

"To relieve the displaced of some of their burdens, […] the Ministry [of Displaced] has given the displaced statements confirming their 'displaced status'. Such statements are to be submitted to the Ministry of Water & Electricity so that it will exempt them from the fees accruing since the date of their displacement."

See also: "Post-war Lebanon: Women and other war-affected groups", International Labour Organisation (Naila Nauphal), 1997

ACCESS TO EDUCATION

General

Schools targeted and school year disrupted due to the conflict, particularly in areas worse hit (2006)

- 16 schools were directly hit and 157 seriously damaged according to the Ministry of Education
- More than 128,760 people sheltered in schools during the conflict
- In some cases, schools where displaced people were sheltering were targeted
- The start of the school year was delayed by some three weeks, until 16- 18 October 2006
- It was reported that 85% of children in primary education were able to return to school by 18 October
- Specific problems were encountered in areas worst hit, particularly along the Blue Line, where children were attending school in neighbouring villages, using double shifts when necessary, as their own schools had been completely destroyed
- The ongoing displacement of some teachers and children made it difficult for them to reach their schools and some schools were reported to be emptier than usual

COI, 10 November 2006

"The conflict took place at a time when children were on summer holidays. According to statistics issued by the Ministry of Education[...], some 16 schools were directly hit, causing major destruction of the building. Another 157 were seriously damaged, either following direct hits or in collateral damage from attacks on adjacent buildings. Some 3 others were in need of repair having been using as shelter for as many as 128,760 internally displaced. In Bent J'beil six schools were completely destroyed and another two partially. Two private schools and two public schools had been totally destroyed in the town of Khiyam, with another two, including a vocational (agricultural) school, badly damaged.

In Bent J'beil the Commission saw one school that had been destroyed completely but for the ground floor. It was later learned that pupils would return on 16 October, using only this ground floor as the rest of the building was being restored. In one school in the town, the Commission was informed, 37 civilians had taken shelter and the building came down around them; injuries were suffered and one old man and one old woman were found under the rubble at the end of the war. In Yatar, the Mayor recounted how the school had been attacked and the Lebanese Army found one unexploded missile there shortly before the school year began again. In Al Duweir, the members of the Commission were told how the religious school in Saida, at which Sheikh Adil Akash[...] taught, had been targeted. In Taibe, they were told how Israeli soldiers had occupied the private school and despoiled the teachers' kitchen and left urine in bottles around the classrooms. In Khiyam, the Commission visited one of the schools that had been very badly damaged, a school that UNESCO had helped build. One school in the town had already been renovated with help from Qatar; that and the agricultural school would be used to accommodate pupils from all four destroyed schools when the school year began again.
[...]

In the circumstances, the start of the school year was delayed by some three weeks, until 16- 18 October 2006, to allow time for repair, restoration, disinfection, clearance of debris and refurbishment of school buildings. The costs of this were estimated at US$44,000,000. Major support came quickly for early recovery efforts, in particular from the United Arab Emirates,[...] focusing on rehabilitation of schools and provision of basic equipment. This was accompanied by a Back to School campaign led by UNICEF and the Ministry of Education.

Thus it was reported that 85% of children in primary education were able to return to school by 18 October [...]. Of the other 15%, it is still not clear how they will continue with their education. Specific problems were encountered in those areas worst hit, particularly along the Blue Line, where children were attending school in neighbouring villages, using double shifts when necessary, as their own schools had been completely destroyed. The issue of displacement continued to contribute to the problem, as there were still an unknown number of children, and teachers, living far from their family homes; thus, some schools were more empty than usual, while others were overcrowded and still others were missing teaching staff. The full picture would only be known as the year progressed.

The more serious impact would be in relation to the effects of this sudden and major conflict on children and young people, and how they would cope with the trauma and feelings of insecurity. Thus attention was being given to the quality of education in the aftermath of the conflict, the management of classrooms in these circumstances and the psychosocial needs of children and young people[...]."

ISSUES OF SELF-RELIANCE AND PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

General

Polling stations set up for displaced (June 2005)

Daily Star, 8 June 2005

"Aley MP Fouad Saad said polling stations for displaced Lebanese villagers will be placed within village boundaries, but will be located on or near borders, so as to minimize friction between voters and current village residents. Speaking on Voice of Lebanon Radio, Saad said the decision was a compromise between MPs, obligated to follow the law requiring polling places to be within villages, and current residents, foreseeing election day conflicts. Some of the displaced, all Christians, from five villages - Brih in the Chouf, Kfar Matta, Baawerta, Abey and Daqoun in Aley - will be able to vote Sunday."

Despite decade of reconstruction, basic needs of a third of Lebanese are still not fulfilled (2002)

- There are an estimated one million poor in Lebanon, of whom 75% are urbanized
- Economic growth and reconstruction have favored some regions, like Beirut, to the detriment of other parts of the country
- Growth of service sectors over agriculture and industry
- Without adequate social integration, the problem of poverty, particularly in cities, may prove destabilising
- Low participation of women in public and political life, and in labor force in general

UNDP, 2002

"The economic crisis has nevertheless led to continuation of high levels of emigration, particularly of youth, over the last 10 years, and increased pressure on the living conditions of vulnerable and poor households. Of particular concern regarding the repercussions of the economic crisis are the poverty conditions in the already-depressed regions of the country such as the northern Bekaa and the North. With unemployment estimates hovering as high as 12-14%, this remains a very considerable challenge for the government."

EU 2002, p. 2, 9

"Lebanon's remarkable decade of reconstruction following a devastating 15 year civil war saw strong economic growth gradually slide to a halt by 1999. The cost of rebuilding highways, schools, airports, seaports, housing, power stations, and government buildings pushed public debt to 160% of GDP and led to chronic budgetary problems: spending outstripped revenues by over 50%. GDP per person, estimated at €5,200, is below prewar levels. The process of reforming economic policy, modernising manufacturing capacity, improving the investment climate and opening the internal market has begun, and form the basis for economic recovery in the decade to come.

The challenge for Lebanon is to carry through the reforms while reconstructing the economy. The tax system will need to replace revenues lost as customs tariffs fall (they traditionally contributed half of all budget revenues) with VAT, and with more coherent income and company taxes. Privatisation of state agencies, some loss-making, are essential for restructuring. Ways are needed to improve productivity levels suitable in industry, the services sector and in agriculture for an open trading economy, without which future growth will be jeopardised. The second challenge is to tackle poverty and income disparities. The UN estimates that one third of Lebanese lack basic needs. Weak agricultural productivity and a widening gap between rural and urban incomes have led to accelerated urbanisation, environmental degradation, and social imbalance. Policy needs to balance growth with social development, so that transition to a fully liberal economic regime is matched by good governance, the strengthening of democracy, respect for the rule of law and the guarantee of human and individual rights.[...]

There now prevails significant poverty and income disparities as society is increasingly dichotomised between the very rich and the poor. According to the World Bank's crude Living Condition Index which measures the degree of satisfaction of basic needs, 32% of Lebanese households are at the low end of the index, 42% at the intermediate level while 26% reach the high end of the index. A UN study calculates that 35% of the population lack basic needs, ie. live below a poverty line of minimum living standards. There are up to an estimated one million poor in Lebanon today, of whom 75% are urbanised. Economic growth and reconstruction have favoured some regions, notably parts of the Beirut region, to the detriment of large parts of the country. It has also favoured services sectors over typically labour-intensive employing activities in agriculture and industry. Illiteracy reaches 15% to 20% in the disadvantaged areas of the Beka'a valley, South Lebanon and the North, and is acute amongst women. Unemployment, officially given as 8%, is at least double this figure according to studies, and is highest amongst the young. Tight monetary policy, a narrow tax base, and economic recession has led to declining real incomes of many salary earners. The risk of unbalanced growth is social tension and the exploitation of poverty by political organisations which have proved particularly effective in supplying much-needed services on the margins of society. Without adequate social integration, the problem of poverty, particularly in cities, may prove destabilising. Public welfare programmes and social safety nets are largely non-existent in Lebanon, are narrowly based, and often subject to mismanagement. Remittances from expatriates go some way to alleviating the situation amongst underprivileged communities. There is no national health care policy. The system favours equipment, curative and tertiary services driven by the supply of an abundant private sector, rather than primary health care and prevention. There is a need to develop national poverty reduction programmes, to establish a comprehensive social development policy, and to tackle health care.

Particular attention will be paid to the role of women in Lebanon. Rights of women are affected by forms of sectarianism (there is no civil marriage law), incidence of 'honour' killings, low participation rate in public and political life (only 2% of the 128 parliamentary deputies are women; only three of the 300 municipal councils are headed by women), when measured against university graduation rates (50% women), and contribution to employed labour force (27%)."

Political, social, economic and legal consequences of displacement (1997)

- Displacement caused the country to split along religious lines, exacerbated economic imbalances and contributed to the disintegration of social ties
- Illegal occupation of houses and loss of property caused countless legal problems for the displaced

UNDP 1997

"It is difficult to identify all the negative consequences of displacement at the political, social and economic levels in the immediate and long term. A brief summary of the main consequences of displacement is given below.

At the *political level*, displacement caused the country to split along religious lines, resulting in the loss of identity between geography and the national entity. It also led to greater homogeneity between the sectarian and regional notions, and strengthened the feeling of belonging to the sect/region, which impaired national and social integration.

At the *economic level*, displacement was accompanied by the destruction of productive assets and widespread neglect of agricultural land as farmers - who constituted 55 percent of the heads of displaced families - were denied access to their holdings. The industrial sector sustained direct losses as forced displacement affected the labor force and prevented workers from reaching the work place, especially in large plants which were not relocated, contributing to exacerbate regional and economic imbalances.

At the *social level*, problems emerged in integrating the displaced - who felt alienated as a result of their moving from generally rural socio-cultural surroundings to a different and mostly urban setting in poor housing accommodations - in the societies of receiving areas. The move put severe strain on displaced families especially when displacement was associated with the death of a family member. It also contributed to the disintegration of social ties, lowering of social and moral standards, and in multiplying problems confronting youth.

Studies carried out on the displaced indicate a general deterioration in their living conditions. Their participation in economic activity fell below the national average and unemployment in their ranks increased. They were also exposed to extensive impoverishment, with an estimated 50 percent among them not able to meet their very basic needs; and 12.5 percent living in absolute poverty and unfit accommodations. The standard of education of the displaced population also fell below the national average, with 50 percent and 24 percent of them reported as not having gone beyond elementary and intermediate levels, respectively.

In addition, many *legal problems* arose as a result of the displaced being deprived by force of their property or its exploitation, the unlawful occupation of houses, confiscation of property, disadvantageous contracts, and many other legal disputes at a time when resorting to courts was not possible."

ISSUES OF FAMILY UNITY, IDENTITY AND CULTURE

General

Families still searching missing relatives from civil war period (2006)

- An estimated 17,000 people went missing during the civil war period (1975-1990)
- Three committees have been set up to investigate disappearances with little success

IRIN, 31 May 2006

"The parents of Lebanese nationals still detained in Syrian jails and of those who went missing during the civil war protested in front of the parliament building on Tuesday, demanding an international commission to investigate the fate of their loved ones.

According to the NGO Support of Lebanese in Detention and Exile (SOLIDE), hundreds of Lebanese citizens are still languishing in Syrian prisons, with some detainees reportedly having been held since 1991. A total of about 17,000 Lebanese are believed to have gone missing during the civil war, which lasted from 1975 to 1990, many of whom may have been killed and buried in mass graves or handed over to belligerents in the war, such as Israel and Syria."

IRIN, 14 May 2006

"According to SOLIDA (le Soutien aux Libanais Detenus Arbitrairement), about 17,000 Lebanese nationals went missing during the country's civil war from 1975 to 1990. Over the years, three committees have been set up to investigate the fate of the missing Lebanese, with little success."

PROPERTY ISSUES

July-August 2006

Government sets up mechanism for the compensation of property losses with the exception of southern Beirut (2006)

- The mechanism will provide compensation for damage to housing and other lost property
- People who undertook rehabilitation or reconstruction at their own expense may also file for indemnity

"The first mechanism addresses damages to housing and other units resulting from the Israeli aggression between July 12th & August 14th 2006, on the whole of the Lebanese territory with the exception of Beirut Southern Suburbs. It covers the following aspects (detailed in Appendix 3): i. The mechanism for assessing damages and indemnities: It includes detailed information on how to submit requests to the Council for the South, Ministry of the Displaced or the Central Fund for the Displaced; the required documentation; the surveys carried out by the technical committees; cost estimates according to set prices; indemnities assessment (noting that the overall indemnity - 1st and 2nd payments - for total destruction has been set at LBP60 million); financial and technical survey audit and procedure to follow to disburse the two payments (by way of cheques issued by the HRC in the names of beneficiaries and distributed by the Council for the South or the Ministry of the Displaced after submitting all required documents). ii. The furniture indemnity set at 20% of the value of the rehabilitation or reconstruction compensation iii. The indemnity mechanism for those who undertook rehabilitation or reconstruction at their own expenses iv. Detailed technical and financial principles used v. The ability to obtain a housing loan from the General Housing Institute."

"**Decree No 146/2006**

The President of the Council of Ministers,

According to decree no 14952 of 19-7-2005 (nomination of Mr. Fuad Siniora President of the Council of Ministers),

According to the decision of the Council of Ministers no 1 of 16-7-2006 (entitling the President of the Council of Ministers to take all necessary measures and steps to overcome the Israeli aggressions),

Since it is necessary to enable citizens whose houses, stores and establishments have been demolished to rebuild them,

And since it is necessary to pay the concerned party a supplementary amount as an encouragement to rebuild in the same estate,

And since it is necessary to give to the concerned party the freedom to choose between rebuilding his property or buying another one,

And since it is necessary to adopt simple measures that will facilitate agreement between

the demolished estate owners to rebuilt it and will not allow any of the owners to abuse the other owners,

And since it is important to enable owners of damaged or partly destroyed houses, stores or establishments to restore them and use them again,

And according to public interests necessities,

Decides the following:

Article 1: Assessment and compensation payment for the damaged housing and other units from the Israeli aggression between July 12, 2006 and August 14, 2006 in Beirut Southern Suburb are carried out according to the attached mechanism.

Article 2: This decision is applied upon publication.

Beirut,

Fuad Siniora
President of the Council of Ministers"

For more information on the mechanism, see Appendix 3, "Indemnities assessment and payment mechanism in compensation for the damaged housing and other units from the Israeli aggression between July 12, 2006 and August 14, 2006 on the Lebanese territories with the exception of the Beirut Southern Suburb"

See also "The Summer War on Habitat in Lebanon: Addressing Housing Violations as War Crimes", Habitat International Coalition, November 2006

Government creates second mechanism to compensate property losses in Beirut's southern suburbs (2006)

- A special mechanism has been set up for compensation due to damage in the southern suburbs of Beirut

"Concerning Beirut Southern Suburbs, the adopted indemnities scheme is very similar to the first scheme; differences are due to the complexity of co-ownership in that area. These differences include the following (detailed in Appendix 4): i. Indemnities for total destruction has been set at LBP 80 million, including furniture indemnity, to be paid according to a two-phase payment scheme ii. A general ledger will be prepared for each building, or for buildings sharing the same plot number, and will be sent to the technical auditor iii. A special incentive, consisting of an additional LBP 50 million paid upon rebuilding a major part of the building, is given to the building owners committee to motivate people to rebuild on the same plot iv. A special mechanism for indemnity in the case of tenants v. This mechanism has been designed to facilitate agreement among plot owners avoiding unnecessary rebuilding complications, and especially to avoid unfair practices by any owner or landlord hindering reconstruction efforts as the main objective of this mechanism is to help and motivate people to rebuild houses on same plot."

For more information, see "Indemnities assessment and payment mechanism in compensation for the damaged housing and other units from the Israeli aggression between July 12, 2006 and August 14, 2006 in Beirut Southern Suburb"

See also "The Summer War on Habitat in Lebanon: Addressing Housing Violations as War Crimes", Habitat International Coalition, November 2006

Civil war period

Many people say they have not received compensation and are unable to rebuild their homes (2006)

- Returnees interviewed by IRIN in Mount Lebanon noted that there they did not receive compensation to rebuild their homes
- The NGO Caritas also notes that in many areas there is a lack of essential infrastructure

IRIN, 5 January 2006

"After years of displacement, Hasib Saad and his wife Margaret have returned to Remhala in Mount Lebanon, which they fled during the civil war, some 20 km from the capital, Beirut.

Sometimes, though, they wish they hadn't.

"Life is tough here. Very few people have returned and there is no investment," Hasib said. "This place was thriving before we left, and now it's a useless pit."

There are approximately 100 villages in Mount Lebanon. While the area is now a peaceful place, brimming with quaint fir trees, there is little activity.

According to Dorine Abou Rachi, who heads the Lebanese Displaced Programme run by the Caritas Catholic international NGO, the villages of Mount Lebanon are ghost towns.

"Not more than 17 percent of the people have returned to their villages," she said. "There are no medical or education facilities and the government hasn't put any effort into rebuilding schools and hospitals."

"There isn't any development or investment," she added.

More interested in booming cities like Beirut, investors have shied away from Mount Lebanon, where only relatively small businesses are in evidence.

Abou Rachi estimated that 75 to 80 percent of the people now living in the area are unemployed.

"Finding jobs is the villagers' first priority," she noted. "Those who came back are mainly low-income families who can't afford to live in the cities."

If they hadn't been forced to return by their economic situations, they would never have come back," she added.

The 1975-1990 Civil War, along with the Israeli "interventions" of 1978 and 1982, resulted in the displacement of an estimated million people in this small Mediterranean country of roughly 4.5 million.

"We had to leave our home because we could see rockets falling and knew there were snipers outside," Saad recalled.

On 1 November, Minister for the Displaced Nehme Tohme announced that his ministry had been granted the funds required to resolve the issue of displaced persons.

"According to statistics conducted by the ministry, the amount of money required to settle the issue is LL550 billion (approximately US $366 million)," he said.

"Teams from the ministry and the fund will be visiting the villages of the displaced in order to check on the situation of the houses and buildings," Tomeh explained.

According to Abou Rashi, however, little implementation has been seen so far.

"Many families haven't received any payment yet, or only part of it," she said. "It's not enough to have the money – there needs to be a real action plan as well."

While no reliable statistics are available, the Ministry for the Displaced says that almost 80,000 people have been able to return to Mount Lebanon since the end of the war."

Caritas, 1 August 2004

"The amount allocated for the displaced families for rehabilitation and reconstruction were in general divided into three payments. Unfortunately, many families received only one payment, while others two and some three payments depending on the funds available."

Many displaced people have not reclaimed or rebuilt former property (2004)

- Large-scale destruction of towns and villages during the civil war prolonged forced displacement
- As of end 2004 the vast majority of displaced persons have not attempted to reclaim and rebuild their property
- Government paid squatter families to rebuild their homes but the vast majority of displaced have not reclaimed their property
- Minister of the displaced stated that issue of compensation needs to be moved away from sectarian wrangling and attention focused on reintegrating the displaced
- Government authorities took measures to make it easier for owners to rebuild their house in the south, following the withdrawal of Israeli troops

US DOS, 25 February 2004, Sect.2d

"There were no legal restrictions on the right of citizens to return to the country. However, many emigres were reluctant to return for a variety of political, economic, and social reasons. The Government encouraged the return to their homes of over 600,000 internally persons displaced during the civil war. Although some persons began to reclaim homes abandoned or damaged during the war, the vast majority had not attempted to reclaim and rebuild their property."

USCR, 24 May 2004

"The Lebanese government offered compensation to internally displaced people to rebuild homes, but the vast majority of the displaced have not yet reclaimed their properties."

UNDP 1997

"Displacement was associated with large-scale destruction of villages, towns and housing units, rendering immediate return impossible, and prolonging forced displacement for years after the cessation of military operations. The number of villages and towns affected numbered 949, of which 174 villages were totally or partially destroyed. The number of destroyed or damaged housing units was 45,020, which further exacerbated the housing problem in Lebanon."

US DOS 4 March 2002, Sect.2.d

"The Government encouraged the return to their homes of over 600,000 persons displaced internally during the civil war. During the year [2001], the Central Fund for the Displaced continued to disburse funds to assist internally displaced persons return to their homes. The Fund provided approximately $20 million (30 billion Lebanese pounds) for the repair of infrastructure in villages most affected by displacement. Between July 1999 and October 2001, the Fund disbursed approximately $208 million (300 billion Lebanese pounds) for the repair and reconstruction of homes. The Central Fund discontinued payments in November due to a lack of funds. Although some persons have begun to reclaim homes abandoned or damaged during the war, the vast majority of displaced persons have not attempted to reclaim and rebuild their property."

Ministry of the Displaced 2001, I, vi

"Housing: This is a big issue in the lives of the displaced. First of all, so many families have lost their homes and are occupying someone else's houses or buildings that are neither inhabitable nor made as residences. The level of housing deteriorated, building codes were violated. In some cases more than one family live together. In essence, buildings are everywhere on others' or public properties, the disorder in communities got out of hand."

Daily Star 24 February 2001

"'The war will not end except after the return of the last displaced person to his land and property, ' said Helou [Minister of State] […]. Former Aley MP Marwan Abu Fadel also called for a set plan for the return, coupled with a 'comprehensive development plan that would attach the returning residents to their land.' In his remarks, Minister for the Displaced Marwan Hamade said 'we intend to move the issue of compensation away from sectarian wrangling and ensure integration among residents and those returning to their homes.'" ()

Daily Star 24 February 2001

According to a resident of the South of the Lebanon, "although there was no central planning before the construction [of the rebuilt village] began, records of the original property deeds were checked and the owners were permitted to build on their respective plots. He added that the authorities had agreed to waive the $5,000 fee for a construction license for five years to encourage the rebuilding of the village."

Central Fund for the Displaced announced immediate eviction of illegally occupied property (June 2002)

- The Central Fund for Displaced announced eviction of all people illegally occupying properties in June 200

Daily Star 6 June 2002

"The Central Fund for the Displaced announced Friday that eviction of illegally occupied properties would be implemented immediately, with the use of force if necessary.

According to fund president Fadi Aramouni, the Displaced Affairs Squad in Beirut will evict people who have received compensation but failed to leave the properties in question. Evictions will also encompass those illegal occupants who were not eligible for compensation.

A meeting was held at the fund's office in the presence of Minister for the Displaced Marwan Hamade and officials from the ministry and the fund. Aramouni said the fund had decided to issue warnings to all beneficiaries of compensation who did not use the money for reconstruction and renovation purposes and urge them to start works."

See also, the report of the ministry (1992-1997) on evictions of illegal occupants [archived]

IDPs persons residing in Beirut had to vacate former homes in return for compensation (1999)

- Displaced families protested that compensation payments were lower than promised originally

Ibrahim in Daily Star 19 August 1999

"Hundred of residents of Beirut neighborhoods gathered Wednesday at the gates of Speaker Nabih Berri's residence in Ain al-Tineh, demanding a solution to their impending eviction by the Ministry for the displaced.

The displaced families, most of which are originally from the south and occupying residences in Clemenceau, Qantari and Hamra, have been given until the end of the month to sign commitments to vacate their premises in return for compensation. […]

Under the ministry's 1999-2001 plan to return the displaced, $5000 is being awarded per housing unit, and $8,000 in the case of residents of the Israeli-occupied zone, due to their inability to return home.

The eviction orders are long-standing, but have usually been delayed due to the Central Fund for the Displaced's inability to make payments. The protesters were especially incensed that payment levels have been altered, since past payments were calculated per family, and not housing unit. […]

Austerity measures have required paying on the basis of a housing unit, even if multiple families reside there. […] One solution suggested was constructing inexpensive housing for the displaced."

See also, the Ministry of Displaced report, including a section on evictions of illegal occupants. The report was issued in 1997 [archived]

Highest destruction of houses and villages occurred in the Mount Lebanon region (1996)

Table 1. Destroyed houses by county

County	Partially destroyed	Totally destroyed	Damaged	Total	Percentage
Mount Lebanon	6410	14778	4630	25818	57,35%
South	4424	4845	3231	12500	27,77%
Beirut	573	2576	344	3493	7,76%
North	673	1053	499	2225	4,94%
Bekaa	235	409	340	984	2,19%
Total	12315	23661	9044	45020	100,000
%	27,35	52,56	20,09	100,00	

Table 2. Destroyed villages in Aley, Chouf & Baabda area

Caza	# of villages	Damaged	Completely destroyed	Partially destroyed
Aley	68	48	13	35
Chouf	95	67	24	43
Baabda	56	10	7	3
Total	219	125	44	81

Ministry of Displaced, 1996 (Return of the Displaced in Lebanon: Towards a Better Life in the 21st Century)

PATTERNS OF RETURN AND RESETTLEMENT

General

Ceasefire promps "immediate and massive" return movements (2006)

UNSC, 18 August 2006, para. 43

"The announcement of the cessation of hostilities, however, has prompted an immediate and massive movement of displaced populations returning to their home communities. It is estimated that despite numerous cautionary messages from the Government of Lebanon and international aid organizations, 400,000 people, including 107,000 who have returned from the Syrian Arab Republic, have returned to the southern suburbs of Beirut and other areas further south. The almost 800 public institutions, schools and buildings temporarily occupied by up to 150,000 displaced persons are now virtually empty, thereby significantly easing the stress on host communities."

Return movements to Chouf, Baabda and Aley (2005)

- According to the Ministry of Displaced, 40 per cent of Baabda's displaced population returned; 30 per cent have returned to Aley and 42 per cent to the Chouf area

Daily Star, 1 October 2005

"Nehme Tohme, minister for the displaced, threatened he would resign if the government does not grant his ministry the $400 million needed for the return of the remaining internally displaced persons. In an interview with Magazine, Tohme said that between 70 and 90 percent of damaged or destroyed houses in areas the displaced should return to have been repaired, according to UN statistics. According to Tohme, 40 percent of Baabda's displaced population has returned, while 30 percent of Aley's displaced are back in their hometowns and 42 percent of the displaced from Chouf villages and towns have returned. Tohme reiterated that reconciliation between Druze and Christians is still being awaited in seven villages"

Some return movements to south Lebanon are temporary (2004)

- A post clearance review undertaken in several areas since 2003 found that construction of homes is active in and around villages in south lebanon, yet many of these homes are owned by Lebanese expatriates
- Some people are returning to build their homes, yet many still work outside of their villages of origin, returning only on weekends
- Most permanent residents are elderly
- Returnees to the villages of Rshaf and Hanin who received assistance to rebuild their homes noted that they do not live in them permanently due to lacking socio-economic conditions

The Operations Emirates Solidarity (OES) is a project for mine clearance in South Lebanon funded by the United Arab Emirates since 2001. The Mine Action Coordination Centre for South Lebanon together with the United Nations Development Programme has undertaken post clearance reviews in demined areas since September 2003 to measure the impact of mine clearance. Overview of findings for Villages and Towns cleared in South Lebanon, including At Tiri, Bayt Lif, Bayt Yahun, Bint Jbeil, Dibil, Haddathath, Hanin, Rshaf, Al Ghanduriah, Al Qantarah, Al Qusayr, Deir Mimass, Deir Siriane, Ett Taibe and Sarda

MACC SL, 2004, pp.4-5

"In general the villages reviewed […] have increased populations since the end of the occupation. Almost none have reached their pre-conflict population numbers however. Many experienced relatively large emigrations of residents during the post conflict period.
[…]
Construction of homes is active both in and around the majority of villages. As found in Post Clearance Review of OES1 some of these homes are owned by Lebanese expatriates.
[…]
While many of the villages exhibit visible change principally through the presence of new homes and tended land areas surrounding them, some people stated there is not many opportunities within the villages for employment. In some locations people may have returned to build homes but still work outside the villages, returning only in the weekends. The permanent residents today in many of the villages are the elders who, while happy to see some former residents return and activity back in the area, express concern that the former lifestyle of the villages has not returned. In many ways this is to be expected especially amongst the younger generation who left the area and have subsequently developed different lifestyles and needs.
[…]
In the OES 2 sector we have two villages who have received considerable assistance from the Kuwaiti Fund. The Fund provided financial payments to former residents of the villages of Rshaf and Hanin whose homes were destroyed as a result of the war. While the returned residents of both villages are appreciative of the assistance they received it was interesting to note them comment that the development that followed the reconstruction of the homes has been very limited. The majority of the people whose homes have been rebuilt do not in fact reside in the villages as there are no work opportunities for them there. Many of these people return to use their homes in the weekends. Those that are actually living there on a permanent basis tend to be elders of the village who work their small land lots sustaining themselves on small scale agriculture."

See also:
 MACC SL, "Post Mine Clearance Review of Operations Emirates Solidarity, Area 1", 2004
The website of the Mine Action Coordination Centre for South Lebanon (MACC SL)

South Lebanon: 25 years of instability and occupation destroyed socio-economic fabric needed for return (2002)

- The local economy, basic infrastructure, housing and social systems were largely dismantled following more than 25 years of occupation
- The area once occupied by Israel included an approximate resident population of 104,000 inhabitants (73 villages)
- A number of factors including severe social and economic restraints led to an exodus in particular of youth towards safer areas

UNDP, 2002

"The region of Southern Lebanon has been a region of instability and military conflict for the past twenty five years. The continued Israeli attacks on the region, most recently those in June 1993 and April 1996, have resulted in considerable damage to the basic infrastructure and services, productive sectors, and private housing, as well as the rupture of the economic and social fabrics and systems. The local economy has been badly effected and the prevailing situation has led to a wave of steady migration. After more than 25 years of occupation, the Israeli forces evacuated southern Lebanon in May 2000.

The region of Southern Lebanon referred to within the context of this Programme is bounded from the north and the west by the Litani river, and from the South by the 1949 internationally recognized border between Lebanon and Israel. Thus, it refers to the four districts of Tyre, Bint-Jbeil, Marjeyo, and Hasbaya. The Israeli Controlled Area used to include 73 villages with an approximate resident population of 104,000 inhabitants. In general, residents of the ICA suffered from severe economic and social constraints due to the difficult constraints imposed on them. In addition to the lack of contact with the rest of the country, residents faced the dangers of military actions every day. All of these factors have had serious repercussions on the socio-economic development of the area and the long-term economic prospects of the residents, causing the exodus of a considerable percentage of the residents, especially youth, towards safer areas.

The majority of the families in the southern Lebanon rely on agriculture as their primary source of livelihood. However, such income sources are seasonal and irregular and do not cover the basic needs of families. Agriculture is mostly developed in areas where irrigation water is available. Irrigated areas are planted with fruit trees, whereas cultivation in arid areas is limited to olives and tobacco. Where they exist, irrigation networks are old and need rehabilitation. The marketing of agricultural output is dependent on the local market. In many villages, war related activities used to constitute the majority of the income to households in the region. Basic socio-economic infrastructure is in a very bad condition. Education and health service infrastructure is weak. The road system in the region is in a very poor condition and in urgent need of rehabilitation. The majority of the villages do not have access to water systems, and where they exists water networks are damaged because of the military operations. Some of these villages resort to the use of precipitation water stored in artificial reservoirs without taking any sanitary precautions. Sewer networks is almost in-existent in most villages, and houses depend on sanitary pits with disastrous effects on the underground water and the environment."

See also: "The Development of South Lebanon: Assessing needs and defining priorities" United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA), 4 March 2001

Seminar on "ESCWA Assistance for South Lebanon: Achievements and Proposed Projects", United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA), 9 June 2003

Evacuation of Israeli troops from South Lebanon prompted former residents to return to the area (2001)

- Lebanese government has difficulty to cope with the number of applications for a return to south Lebanon following the evacuation of Israeli troops

HRW December 2000

"Israel's unilateral military withdrawal from south Lebanon in May, followed by the rapid collapse of the Israeli-backed militia – the South Lebanon Army (SLA) – marked the abrupt end of over two decades of occupation for the civilian population. Families who had fled violence, intimidation and

impoverishment in the occupied zone began to return as well as those whom the SLA had summarily expelled from their homes."

Ibrahim in Daily Star 7 February 2001

"[T]he liberation of the South and the possibility of people returning to their homes has eased a lot of the pressure that was a problem last year. The only problem we have to deal with is the scope of the issue', including the processing of applications [Shadi Masaad, Director of the Central Fund for the Displaced said], […] 'because we are not equipped to deal with the 2,500 applications we receive everyday."

The 1989 Taif Agreement declared the return of the displaced necessary for reconciliation and sustainable peace (2000)

- Taif Agreement acknowledged the right of every Lebanese citizen displaced since 1975 to go back to the place from which she/he was displaced
- It also pledged financial support to enable the displaced to reconstruct their homes and villages

Assaf & El-Fil 7 April 2000

"The Document of National Understanding (known as the Taif Agreement after the Saudi city in which Lebanese parliamentarians met to agree it) was signed in 1989. It put an end to the fighting and declared the return of displaced persons a necessary condition for permanent reconciliation and sustainable peace: 'The Lebanese territory is one and undivided land for all the Lebanese people. Every Lebanese citizen has the right to live anywhere on this territory under the sovereignty of law; there is no division, no separation and no settlement of people on the basis of their belonging.

The document sought a just and enduring solution to the dilemma of the displaced. It required the government to 'solve completely the problem of IDPs, and acknowledge the right of every Lebanese citizen displaced since 1975 to come back to the place from which he/she was displaced; to establish the legislation that safeguards this right and ensure the means of reconstruction.'

The Taif Agreement thus stressed not only the right of IDPs to return to their place of original residence but also pledged financial support to enable them to reconstruct their homes and villages. This has always been a major issue in all attempts to put an end to conflict in Lebanon. It was one of the main concerns at the Lausanne Conference in 1984. It was also an important feature of the abortive Tripartite Agreement between militias under the aegis of Syria, which provided for the return of IDPs within a period of 'three months after the formation of a new Cabinet'.

The right of IDPs to return to their homes was formalized in 1990 through an amendment to the 1926 Constitution. The right of Lebanese citizens to unrestricted freedom of movement and residence in all parts of the country was enshrined in the constitution. An implicit corollary was rejection of any kind of partition of the territory of Lebanon."

View the Lebanese Charter of National Reconciliation (Ta'if Agreement) (1989)

Obstacles to return and resettlement

Overview of challenges for returning communities and people who remain in a situation of displacement (2006)

- Human rights concerns for the medium and longer term recovery for displaced and returning populations include the urgent need for clearance of all unexploded ordnance and the rebuilding of civilian homes and other infrastructure
- In addition there is a need for resolution of property-related legal issues in South Beirut and southern Lebanon, the restoration of economic activities and infrastructures; and health systems in Lebanon, which have been affected by the displacement of medical staff and damage to health facilities
- In the longer term it will be necesary to develop and implement a strategy, through proper consultation with those affected by the displacement, for redressing the social and economic inequalities with regard to the South

COI, 10 November 2006

"While the longer term consequences of displacement are difficult to measure, it is clear that the displacement of nearly one-quarter of the country's population will have lasting social and economic repercussions, both for host communities and for communities of origin. Routine health services, including child immunization, were severely disrupted during the displacement period and, as many IDPs continue to live with relatives and friends, efforts to re-launch these services are complicated. Economic activity was severely disrupted during the conflict and even after due to the continuation of the blockade; at the same time, displaced persons were forced to rely on family and extended social networks for their survival and deplete their savings, placing a strain on both displaced and host families. The presence of unexploded ordnance continues to act as a major impediment to the return of IDPs and refugees, as well as threatening the lives and livelihoods of those who have chosen to return, and will further exacerbate the social and economic impact of displacement.[…]

Other challenges may include problems associated with the breakdown of communities, such as increased violence – in particular gender-based violence; difficulties linked to family reunification and tracing of family members; legal and financial issues related to property, as well as access to compensation and restitution for victims. These problems may be particularly acute for female heads of household and other women, who may be marginalized or isolated from social support networks .[…]

Serious human rights concerns for the medium and longer term recovery for displaced and returning populations include the urgent need for clearance of all unexploded ordnance; rebuilding of civilian homes and other infrastructure, as well as resolution of property-related legal issues in South Beirut and southern Lebanon; […]restoration of economic activities and infrastructures; and restoring and strengthening health systems in Lebanon, which have been affected by the displacement of medical staff and damage to health facilities.[…] Longer-term rehabilitation and recovery also will require the development and implementation of a strategy, through proper consultation with those affected by the displacement, for redressing the social and economic inequalities with regard to the South."

Cluster bombs and other unexploded ordnance pose obstacle to return to the south (2006)

- A paramount concern for the protection of the displaced returning to their homes, as well as to the lives of humanitarian and reconstruction workers and others, is thethreat posed by unexploded ordnance, in particular cluster munitions
- Some 800 cluster strike locations have been identified by the UN Mine Action Coordination Centre south of the Litani river (as of 4 November 2006)
- That figure is expected to continue to increase
- 90 per cent of cluster bombs are believed to have been discharged in the three days prior to the cessation of hostilities
- Most casualties have been young men and boys
- The majority of fatalities have occured during "reconaissance of homes"
- In addition to cluster munitions, the south and areas in the north and east of Lebanon are also littered with rockets, mortars and other ordnance
- Prior to the 12 July crisis, there was already a significant threat of mines laid by Israel before it withdrew from south Lebanon in 2000

COI, 10 November 2006

"Following the cessation of hostilities on 14 August, massive numbers of internally displaced persons and refugees returned to their areas of origin, particularly in southern Lebanon and the southern suburbs of Beirut. According to UNHCR, approximately 90 per cent of those displaced in Lebanon during the hostilities returned to their homes, or were staying nearby, within days of the ceasefire. Some, however, were displaced for a second time, having returned home to find their homes uninhabitable and their livelihoods destroyed. […] A paramount concern for the protection of the displaced returning to their homes, as well as to the lives of humanitarian and reconstruction workers, peacekeeping personnel, and others, is the constant and pernicious threat posed by unexploded ordnance, in particular cluster munitions."

NDO, 6 November 2006

According to the Lebanese National Demining Office, the majority of fatalities have occured during "reconaissance of homes"

UN MACC SL, 4 November 2006

800 cluster strike locations identified; 22 fatalities and 134 injuries (as of 4 November 2006)

"It is estimated that up to one million un-exploded cluster munitions may be expected on the ground"

In addition to cluster bombs, there are an estimated 15,300 items of unexploded ordnance, including air dropped bombs (from 500 - 2,000 lbs), artillery and rockets

UNSC, 12 September 2006, p.10

"As of 8 September 2006, the United Nations Mine Action Coordination Centre, in conjunction with the Lebanese national demining office, have identified 451 individual cluster strike locations, each containing up to hundreds of individual bomblets or sub-munitions. That number is an increase of 25 per cent over the past two weeks and is expected to grow further. According to the

Centre, an estimated 90 per cent of all cluster bombs were discharged between the time of the adoption of Security Council resolution 1701 (2006) on 11 August and the actual cessation of hostilities on 14 August. […]

In addition to cluster munitions, unexploded bombs, rockets, mortars and other ordnance also litter the south and areas in the north and east of Lebanon. […]

The contamination poses a serious threat to the deployment of the Lebanese Armed Forces and the enhanced UNIFIL Force whose mission is to assist them. Unexploded ordnance has been found inside UNIFIL bases, along patrol routes and in proposed locations for the expanded deployment. The humanitarian impact of these explosive remnants of war on civilians has resulted in at least 14 deaths and 57 injuries. The vast majority of these casualties have been young men and boys. In addition to the threat to human lives, unexploded ordnance poses an obstacle to the return of displaced families, access to housing and agriculture activities affecting the livelihoods of the population of southern Lebanon."

UNSC, 18 August 2006, para. 53

"The conflict resulted in considerable unexploded ordnance contamination south of the Litani River and in areas in the north and east of the country. The widespread contamination of unexploded ordnance and mines has already led to maiming injuries and deaths among returnees to the South. Initial assessments of the Mines Advisory Group, a United Kingdom non-governmental organization, indicated that unexploded ordnance contamination in Lebanon was on a far higher scale than that identified in Iraq after the end of the war in 2003. Bombs, missiles, rockets, mortars, cluster bomblets and other sub-munitions litter routes, housing and the debris that must be cleared for reconstruction to commence. In the days since the cessation of hostilities went into affect, reports of civilian casualties, most notably from cluster bomblets and sub-munitions, have already been reported. The contamination presents a significant obstacle to humanitarian efforts and a threat to men, women, boys and girls returning to their homes and daily activities."

MACCSL, 12 April 2006

"The Blue Line minefields continue to cause death and injury to the local population as well as denying prime agricultural and grazing land. There has been a steady rise in the number of casualties and this trend will continue until these Blue Line minefields are cleared from the threat of mines."

MACCSL, 14 February 2006

"When Israel withdrew from South Lebanon in year 2000 it left behind a deadly legacy of some half million landmines. Even though five years have now passed since the end of the occupation the bulk of these landmines are still in place and causing death and injury to the local population.
[…]
The number of mine incidents and civilian casualties are tragically increasing as the local demand for land continues to grow. In response, the MACC SL sought permission from the Government of Lebanon to commence clearance operations in the most affected locations along the Blue Line. Permission was granted in October 2005 and one mine clearance team, was assigned permanently to work in those minefields; permission to work in additional areas is being sought. This is an encouraging development, as these minefields continue to prevent the use of large areas of prime agricultural or grazing land having a direct impact on the life of the communities living adjacent to them.
[…]

In spite of some 1,103,383 sq m being cleared and released back to the community and 385 landmines located and destroyed in 2005, civilian casualties have begun a worrying trend upwards. In 2005, 11 people were injured and 4 people killed as a direct result of the remaining landmine threat in South Lebanon. This tragic increase is largely due to an increased demand to use the limited available land for local agriculture and herd grazing: Five years after the withdrawal, South Lebanon is still struggling to return to normalcy following 22 years of occupation and the lethal legacy of the 370,000 remaining landmines consistently hinders this human struggle and routinely causes death, injury and disability."

Lebanese National Demining Office, 2004

"While the number of landmine victims has been significantly reduced, remaining landmines and UXO have continued to affect the confidence of people living in the area and of those who might otherwise return, and, therefore, to seriously and adversely impact reconstruction, socio-economic development and general community life in the affected communities. This leads to the conclusion that a continued concerted mine action effort is not only justified, it is a necessary factor in the process to improve the social and economic well being of Lebanon."

UN HCHR, 31 March 2004

"Even though some of the maps of the minefields have been turned over to the United Nations, many minefields are unmarked and unknown minefields are still suspected to exist. Moreover, the process of verifying the accuracy of the maps is a lengthy one. According to UNIFIL officials, at the current rate of clearance, it will take at least four more years to clear known mines. The terrain of Lebanon also presents a more difficult task challenge. The rocky mountainous terrain hampers clearance efforts, driving the costs of de-mining up.

This problem is complicating the return of displaced people and hindering long-term reconstruction and socio-economic development of the south. The full cooperation of all parties to the conflict responsible for the planting of mines is an imperative for humanitarian reasons."(UN HCHR, 31 March 2004)

For regular updates, see the website of the Lebanese National Demining Office (NDO) and the website of the Mine Action Coordination Centre South Lebanon (MACC SL) which has also created a special section with regularly updated information on the 2006 war

For information regarding the impact of mines in Lebanon prior to 2006 see:
"The Landmine Resource Center for Lebanon" by Habbouba Aoun, Journal of Mine Action , December 2001
"The Impact of Landmines on Socio-Economic Development in Southern Lebanon", by Mohamed Abdulkadir Ahmed, Journal of Mine Action, December 2001

Lack of reconciliation in certain areas prevents return of displaced communities (2005)

- In several villages, return has been complicated due to lack of reconciliation between communities, in particular in the Chouf-Aley villages between the Druze and Christian communities
- Some displaced people believe that it is more a matter of funds

Daily Star, 1 October 2005

"Nehme Tohme, minister for the displaced, threatened he would resign if the government does not grant his ministry the $400 million needed for the return of the remaining internally displaced persons. In an interview with Magazine, Tohme said that between 70 and 90 percent of damaged or destroyed houses in areas the displaced should return to have been repaired, according to UN statistics. According to Tohme, 40 percent of Baabda's displaced population has returned, while 30 percent of Aley's displaced are back in their hometowns and 42 percent of the displaced from Chouf villages and towns have returned. Tohme reiterated that reconciliation between Druze and Christians is still being awaited in seven villages"

Daily Star, 29 April 2004

"Some argue that reconciliation in Chouf-Aley villages will not materialize without the election of a municipal council. But others disagree, and maintain that cancelling the elections is the only way to keep the pressure on for the return of the Christian displaced communities to their villages which they share with Druze residents.

'How could we elect a council if we cannot live in our village and preserve our properties,' said Mikhael Khouri, a displaced citizen of Abey and a member of the joint committee for reconciliation. 'The government has to fulfill its obligation before demanding that we reconcile; we cannot elect it by remote control.'

In 1979, the Interior Ministry decided to suspend all elections in the displaced areas that had not reconciled yet.

'The government's decision is not wise;' said Naif Gharzeddine, a displaced medical doctor from Baawirta. 'The council could assist in the dialogue between concerned parties and help bring them closer,' he said.

In Daqoun, whose Christian inhabitants are displaced, a group of young individuals, mainly from the Shaaya and Shalhoub families, formed an uncontested council and won by default.

Khouri does not approve of such an approach, 'because this may delay the return of the displaced, and weakens our collective efforts for compensation and reconciliation,' he said.

In Abey-Ain Drafil, the present council is 41 years old; out of 10 members only three run the municipal affairs. 'This should not continue any further,' said Khouri. 'We must return as soon as possible before new facts on the ground become irreversable.'

Khouri was referring to new roads and houses built on churches and private properties.

Ain Ksour, another mixed community in Shehhar al-Gharbi, managed to reconcile before 1998 and the displaced returned to elect a municipal council. The inhabitants will participate in the elections next Sunday.

'In Ain Ksour, the problem and disputes between the two communities were not as severe as in Kfar Matta,' Mayor Khaddag said. 'Whereas, in our village the wound is deeper and the division is hard to bridge between the two communities,' he added.

The problem lies in the hands of the government according to Khouri.

'We have no dispute with our Druze fellow citizens. In fact, they demand that we return to live with them as we did for hundreds of years,' Khouri said.

'However, the Ministry of the Displaced claims not to have the funds needed to compensate for damages and losses. Money is the key to solving all issues,' he added.

Fouad Hamzeh, the vice president of Abey municipality, agreed with Khouri and said that, 'Shouf MP Walid Jumblatt told the reconciliation committee that the funds will come from outside the official budget and will help solve the problem very soon.'

Kfar Matta is one of the unbending parties that put stiff conditions on any reconciliation efforts. 'Therfore,' said Hamzeh, 'the file of Abey-Ain Drafil is now separate from Kfar Matta. When the funds become available and there is a return of displaced citizens, the elections will take place three months later.'

Kfar Matta Mayor Fouad Khaddag encourages reconciliation. However, he said that 'all contacts are made discreetly out of respect to the victims' feelings. The Christian militias shot 108 young men and women at close range during the Israeli presence in the village in 1982,' he said.

The militias left the victims unburied until their relatives returned five months later. 'This wound cannot heal easily,' Khaddag said.

The mayor admits that money, and large amounts of it, is one factor that could compensate for moral and material damages.

But, he acknowledges, 'Sooner or later, we will come together; we have no other choice,' he said."

Minister of Displaced: Lack of resources is the main reason for the delay in returns (2004)

- The Minister of Displaced refutes accusations of corruption in the ministry; including that it has used its funds for electoral or other personal purposes
- He noted in the interview that almost all villages that witnessed displacement during the war have seen their inhabitants return
- According to the Minister, there are three remaining towns where reconciliation has not been achieved: Brih in the Chouf, Kfarselwan in the Metn and Kfar Matta in Aley
- These villages, according to him, are exceptionally difficult cases
- Reconciliation and the return of the displaced are stipulated by the 1989 Taif Accord yet remain unresolved 14 years after the civil war ended
- According to the Minister, the reason for this delay is financial
- In the mid 1990s, the Lebanese Parliament endorsed a law granting the ministry LL680 billion, to be paid by 2000, yet the ministry claims not to have received this sum

Daily Star, 17 June 2004

"Minister for the Displaced Abdullah Farhat revealed on Monday that financial obstacles have until now been the reason hindering the return of the displaced to their hometowns. Farhat, who was speaking in the Baabda town of Ras al-Metn during the inauguration of the Exchange Meeting for the Youth in the Southern Metn, hoped that allocations would be released as soon as possible for the displaced file to be closed permanently.

The minister also spoke about the importance of undertaking the reconciliation projects in the mountain through accurate follow-up policies that respect the uniqueness of every file.

Farhat praised Ras al-Metn on succeeding in setting a role model to future towns of reconciliations. Farhat's speech was preceded earlier in the day with a visit to the Saydet al-Beshara Church and to the annual book fair that was inaugurated by Metn MP Ghassan Moukheiber."(Daily Star, 10 August 2004)

"During his chat with reporters, Farhat raised political and economic subjects. He also tackled the portfolio of the displaced, and the question of why 14 years after the end of the 1975-90 civil war, this file still has not been completed.

An economist, Farhat spoke at length about the current state of the economy and the tense political climate.

'The problem is that the economy is being held hostage by the political bickering,' he said, in reference to the constant squabbles between President Emile Lahoud and Premier Rafik Hariri.

'"I believe that the first move that ought to be made is to release the economic portfolio from political bickering,' he said.

But beyond this dispute, lies a major socioeconomic problem, which Farhat said would need a miracle to be resolved.
[…]
Farhat proved to be a great defender of the Ministry for the Displaced, which has been mostly handled by members of Druze Leader Walid Jumblatt's Democratic Gathering - of which Farhat himself is a member.

'I don't think that any other ministry has dealt with the effects of the war like the ministry of the displaced did. ... We have worked with the wounded and the families of the victims. We have made people who had been separated by bloodshed sit together and reconcile. No other ministry has had to handle such a hard task,' he said.

Farhat refutes accusations of corruption in the ministry; that it had used its funds for electoral or other personal purposes. 'Before people point such accusations at us, let them tell us who else has done anything to mend the wounds of the war. We have achieved 80 percent of our goal. This is not negligible,' he said.

Farhat spoke about the achievements of the ministry and the fund for the displaced with great pride. 'There were some mistakes, of course, but they are very, very minor. On the other hand, it has been able to reconcile with the parents of victims of great massacres - something many people might have thought impossible,' he said.

Almost all the villages which had witnessed displacement during the war have seen their inhabitants return. There are, however, three remaining towns where reconciliation has not been achieved: Brih in the Chouf, Kfarselwan in the Metn and Kfar Matta in Aley.

These villages, according to Farhat, are yet to be dealt with because they are exceptionally difficult cases. 'They need human and psychological heeling, as well as a lot of resources,' he said. He said Kfar Matta, is an exceptionally tricky case because of the atrocious massacres there - including the slaying of 180 members of one family, 'and this is why it is still hanging.'

Matters of 'reconciliation' and the 'return of the displaced' are binding; they are stipulated by the 1989 Taif Accord. But while they were expected to be completed sooner, they remain unresolved 14 years after the civil war ended.

According to Farhat, the reason for this delay is financial. In the mid 1990s, Parliament endorsed a law granting the ministry LL680 billion, outside the budget allocated to it in the state's yearly budget, to be paid by 2000. But the ministry still has not seen any of the money.

'If they pay the money, then the problem would be solved without delay. But we are short of resources,' he said, adding, 'we realize that paying such an amount would be a great burden on the treasury, but we cannot proceed without resources. ... People tend to forget the importance of the file of the displaced. It is crucial! And once it is solved, we'll have closed the door on the war forever. Until then, that door is still open.'"".

For information on support to Lebanon, see "Lebanon: Paris II Meeting", Government of Lebanon, 14 November 2002

Caritas Survey: Many displaced unable to return due to lack of socio-economic conditions and financial support (2004)

- A survey begun by Caritas in 2001 in 110 villages, found that of 28,400 displaced families, only 5,396 people had returned
- The survey was undertaken in Aley, Chouf and Baada in 31 villages completely destroyed and 79 partially destroyed
- Many IDP families have lost hope of returning due to lack of socio-economic conditions (employment, health and educational facilities, etc.) in the Mount Lebanon region
- A number of displaced people have also received only partial funding from the government due to shortage in government funding

Caritas, 1 August 2004

"One of the objectives [...] was to gather data on the displaced families since officially no information exist on the subject. Social mapping started in 2001 in the different displaced villages. The objective of the social mapping was the following:

1. Acquire the real number of families who originate from each village.
2. Acquire the real number of families displaced from that region.
3. Acquire the real number of returnees to that area.
4. Find out the reason of non-return
[...]
The social mapping was conducted in three stages dividing the study on the three counties: Aley, Chouf and Baabda areas. 110 villages in total were visited, 31 of which were completely destroyed while 79 were considered partially destroyed [...].

The statistics according to what we saw of the actual situation today are the following:

· Total number of original families: 28,400
· Total number of Displaced Families: 22,273 (78.40%)
· Total number of returnees: 5,396 (24.20%)
· Total number still displaced: 16,877 (75.80%)
[...]
The Displaced families have lost complete hope of proper return. The region is completely ignored in terms of educational, economic and health development and the fact that the government does not have any more funds to compensate the families whose homes were completely destroyed or even partially destroyed is making things worse. There are some

families who have received one payment and are still waiting for the second or third. That is why, when passing thru the villages, most homes are skeletal and cannot be lived in.

All this, has contributed to the demoralization of the displaced families since their situation was not properly looked into since 1991 and this issue has been dragging for the past 14 years. A lot of funding was allocated to this issue but unfortunately, the villages are so underdeveloped and empty [...]. [A]ll aspects are affecting return: social, economical, reconstruction, health, education etc."

Slow return and resettlement due to corruption, political rivalries, lack of finances and security concerns (2002-2004)

- Several hundred thousand landmines located in the South have caused death and injury and cross-border fighting between Israeli forces and Hizbollah guerrillas continued (2003-2004)
- More funds are needed to speed return of displaced
- Over 50 per cent of return process completed according to CFD
- Experts on the issue of the displacement say that anywhere between 20-30 percent of the displaced will never return, mainly due to the loss of social ties with their areas of origin
- Young displaced people in particular often commute, between place of origin and areas where they have relocated close to jobs, businesses, or schools, giving rise to a type of 'partial return'

US DOS, 25 February 2004, Sect.2d

"The resettlement process was slowed by tight budgetary constraints, destroyed infrastructure, political feuds, a lack of schools and economic opportunities, and the fear that physical security still was inadequate in some parts of the country."

USCR, 24 May 2004

"Return has been slow due to corruption and political rivalries between government officials, lack of money, and security concerns. Several hundred thousand landmines located in the south have caused death and injury. In addition, cross-border fighting between the Israeli forces and *Hizballah* guerrillas continued."

USCR, 2003

"Return has been slow due to corruption and political rivalries between government officials, lack of money, and security concerns. However, the UN agencies and international donors continued to support the government's efforts to reintegrate the internally displaced.

Many villages were partially or totally destroyed, employment options were limited, and security was still inadequate. The destruction of infrastructure, shortage of schools, and lack of economic opportunities prevented returns to many villages of origin. Several hundred thousand landmines located in the south have caused death and injury. In addition, cross-border fighting between the Israeli forces and *Hizballah* guerrillas continued."

LebanonWire, 8 July 2002

"Despite efforts to settle the issue, 12 years after the civil war deadlines are still hard to meet. Since the end of the civil war, the return of an estimated 450,000 displaced Lebanese to their

villages and towns has been one of the state's top priorities. Struggling under the heavy burden of public debt and general budget constraints, officials have sought to fund this return through the Central Fund for the Displaced. But deadlines to complete the return have come and gone, mainly due to government austerity policies - leaving no set time-frame for returning people to their original homes. 'Since 1993, both the Ministry for the Displaced and the CFD have been working for the return of displaced citizens within a comprehensive plan,' said Fadi Aramouni, the chairman of the CFD, who was appointed to his post at the end of last year. In an interview with The Daily Star, Aramouni said that despite officials' attempts to announce deadlines for the conclusion of the return process, no dates can be given for the time being. 'All we can say is that the CFD and the government are both working hard to complete this process,' Aramouni said.

According to Aramouni, over 50 percent of the process has been completed - though he conceded that 'it looks like only 10-15 percent.' He added that completing the returns was contingent upon additional funds, which are provided either by laws passed by Parliament or irregular contributions from annual budgets. Experts who deal with the issue of the displaced say that anywhere between 20-30 percent of the displaced will never return, because their social ties to their places of origin are irrevocably cut - a phenomenon particularly true for young people who never knew their home village. This group of displaced sometimes opt for maintaining their new residences while visiting their home villages when it is convenient, giving rise to a type of 'partial return.' Aramouni justified what he called the 'weekend or summer vacation return,' by saying most displaced had resettled in places close to their jobs, businesses or children's schools, and that they chose to go to their home towns and villages only for vacations. Although Aramouni said he understood the reasons for such a trend, he said the fund sought to make the return of these residents to their homes 'permanent and sustainable.'

Aramouni also admitted that in light of increased migration to the cities, his institution was going against the current by trying to motivate people to return to their villages. But he also argued that bringing the displaced back home should be easier now, given the expansion of Beirut's surrounding areas. According to the CFD chairman, during the past two years a considerable sum of money has contributed to a boost in the fund's activity. 'Over this period, the CFD has spent 50-60 percent of the total sum of the money it spent since its establishment' in 1993. 'Even when we are running low on funds, the CFD has its own administrative work to do,' he said. 'The government has been the only source of cash for our office and consequently the pace of our activity has depended on how much money the Finance Ministry pumps into the CFD.'

Decision-making on CFD expenditures is done in coordination with the Finance Ministry and, as with any other public institution, a sum of money is allocated for the fund in the annual budget. Aramouni said that in 1999 Parliament approved a special grant to the CFD of $300 million, but 'the Finance Ministry is still holding on to the money.' Finance Minister Fouad Siniora told the CFD it will receive funds in the near future. 'A week ago, (Siniora) promised us that our funding problem would be solved,' said Aramouni, who estimated the total sum spent on CFD activity since 1993 at around $1 billion. He also said the fund needed an additional $800 million to complete the return process. 'For 2002, LL60 billion ($40 million) was allocated to the CFD (from the budget). We hope that funding continues after we receive this sum,' he said.

CFD expenditures cover compensation to displaced citizens whose houses have been either completely or partially destroyed. In the first case, the CFD pays citizens up to $20,000 for reconstruction. This amount, given in three payments, varies according to the property's building space. In cases of partial destruction, the CFD pays up to $12,000 for renovation, according to space and damage. In this case, the displaced receive compensation in two payments.

Aramouni warned citizens who have received their first payment but have not started reconstruction or renovation to do so soon, saying they would be held accountable for the money they received. He also urged those who have received their first payment and completed 50

percent or more of the work to contact the CFD to receive their next payment. CFD expenditures also cover minor and 'complementary' infrastructure projects, such as the rehabilitation of water networks and the paving of roads, which should provide the minimum conditions required for the return of the displaced. Aramouni went on to say that one of the major issues tackled by the CFD and the Ministry for the Displaced is that of the second-generation of displaced residents. Under the new policy, children of displaced people are entitled to apply for reconstruction and renovation compensation. 'This step is crucial and is in line with our vision for the future of these villages,' he said.

He also said the eviction of illegal occupants of deserted property - a crucial step in the return process - was nearly complete, with only some 'minor exceptions in Beirut, Mount Lebanon, and the North. 'We blame ourselves for not finishing the issue. It is unacceptable that 12 years after the conclusion of the war, we still have cases of occupied property.

'This has prompted us to revive our eviction plans,' he said, adding that such cases were concentrated in villages of the displaced where no post-war reconciliation has taken place. The government uses the term 'villages of reconciliation' for around 20 areas where war-time sectarian massacres took place involving people from the village. Funding the return in these areas cannot begin unless an official reconciliation and signing ceremony takes place. Aramouni said all the CFD needed to finalize reconciliation was funding, and that only five villages - Kfar Matta, Brih, Kfar Salwan, Dqoun and Awarta - have yet to be compensated.

The CFD pays $20,000 for the family of each victim of the sectarian massacres committed during the civil war. 'The administrative procedure for these villages has been established, but we just need the funds to pay these families,' he said."

See also "Post-war corruption inevitable without stronger institutions", Daily Star, 18 February 2004

 "The dilemma of the country's displaced", Bejjani, Elias, 28 January 1999 [Internet]

Displaced for over 25 years, many do not want to return to their former homes (2002)

- The Lebanese government offered compensation to IDPs to rebuild their homes, but the majority of displaced have not yet reclaimed their properties (2003-2004)
- Director of the Central Fund for the Displaced acknowledged that after 25 years, many displaced persons have become part of a new social context
- Budgetary constraints, destroyed infrastructure, lack of schools and economic opportunities, as well as security concerns also account for slow resettlement process
- According to the Lebanese NGO Forum, common distrust between Christian and Druze populations and leadership, corruption, no clear government policy to guarantee return and the absence of infrastructure are factors explaining slow rate of return

USAID 17 November 2000

"The end of the war provided an opportunity for many Lebanese to return to their homes and villages and to start rebuilding their lives. However, this return has been difficult and the majority of displaced have not been able to resettle."

Ibrahim in Daily Star 7 February 2001

"Masaad [Shadi Masaad, Director of the Central Fund for the Displaced] said that when appointed fund director in 1999, he was provided with two sets of statistics; one prepared by local religious authorities who said that the rate of return was about 12 percent, and another provided by the Ministry of the Displaced which set the rate at about 35 percent. According to him, both figures 'are equally right and wrong' depending on whether return is defined as the ability to return or the actual process of return.

'The problem is not with the houses and their reconstruction, its much more complicated than that' [Masaad said]. He said it would be naïve to expect people to move back overnight after being away from their villages for over 25 years and after having become part of a new 'social context.' 'We can't expect people to give up their work, their children's schools, and go back to what would be a new environment, especially since we haven't provided any employment alternatives for them,' Masaad said.

U.S. DOS February 2001

"The resettlement process is slowed by tight budgetary constraints, destroyed infrastructure, political feud, the lack of schools and economic opportunities, and the fear that physical security still is incomplete in some parts of the country."

USAID 1997

"[R]eturn has been complicated by the reality that thousands of homes, villages and businesses were destroyed or severely damaged during the war. Electricity, water and telecommunications networks were destroyed, directly affecting 1.5 million people and cutting off potable and irrigation water. The abandonment of communities and farms not only affected economic growth, but resulted in severe environment degradation, urban overcrowding and unemployment."

Helou, 10 April 2001

According to Lebanese NGO Forum, "Many reasons explain this poor percentage of returnees:
1.the common distrust between Christian and Druze populations (Christians were forced to leave their region
2.the lack of will and "entente" between the Christian and Druze leadership
3.the widespread corruption that surrounded the return issue: the money allocated to the fund for the displaced was used by some officials in charge of the Fund for personal political reasons, which resulted in spoiled money benefiting to one part of the population at the expense of the other
4.the absence of a clear and firm political decision at government lebel to end this matter and guarantee the return of all the displaced
5.the absence of government policy to ensure proper infrastructure necessary to encourage the return of the displaced: reconstruction and restoration are not enough if initiatives at government level are not taken to follow up with developmental projects that will ensure socio-economic activities."

See also a survey on return to the South cited in "The Development of South Lebanon: Assessing needs and defining priorities", United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA), 4 March 2001

HUMANITARIAN ACCESS

General

Israeli military operations block delivery of humanitarian assistance and the free movement of displaced civilians (2006)

- Humanitarian workers reported that on many occassions their movement was limited because Isareli authorities did not give permission and because roads and bridges were severely damaged
- The UN Humanitarian Coordinator called for an end to attacks in Lebanon on civilian infrastructure and to measures which slowed down or hindered the distribution of humanitarian supplies to thousands of IDPs

COI, 10 November 2006

"The destruction of the land transportation network had a huge impact on humanitarian assistance and on the free movement of displaced civilians, notably those who had been ordered by the IDF to leave their villages. The Commission was told by humanitarian workers that on many occasions their movement was limited not only because the Israeli authorities did not consent to it but also because the roads and bridges were severely damaged. On many occasions this destruction occurred after humanitarian organizations had obtained a clearance from Israel to use these roads. In the same vein, the Commission was told that the evacuation of civilians was particularly hampered by the destruction of roads and bridges. This was for example the case for the convoy of Marjayoun as part of the road had been heavily bombed and therefore the progress of the convoy was dramatically delayed (the convoy left at about 1600 hours and reached Western Bekaa at 2130 hours)."

[...]

For example, the World Food Programme was confronted early in the conflict by serious movement and deployment limitations, including cases of close firings against its humanitarian convoys. […] Although no WFP convoy was directly hit, two security incidents occurred next to the same convoy on 6 August 2006. According to a WFP report "[O]n the way to Tyre, some 15 km north of the city, a van travelling in the opposite direction was hit by a missile, apparently fired from the air. Both occupants of the vehicle were killed. There was no damage or injuries to the UN convoy. As the empty trucks were returning to Beirut, another vehicle, some 30 meters ahead of the convoy, was hit by a missile. The driver, who was apparently alone in the vehicle, was killed." […] In view of the difficulties to provide humanitarian assistance to civilians in need, the UN Humanitarian Coordinator called for an end to attacks in Lebanon on civilian infrastructure and to measures which slowed down or hindered the distribution of humanitarian supplies to thousands of displaced persons. […].

Further evidence of the difficulties faced by humanitarian agencies can be seen in the humanitarian cargo movement notification procedure. […]According to this procedure, no humanitarian convoy could move without the Israeli authorities' express authorization (so-called "concurrence" mechanism). In fact, many convoys were not given authorization by the IDF. In many cases, while authorization was granted, IDF bombed roads which, due to the advance notification process, it knew were to be used by the convoys. Consequently, numerous humanitarian assistance movements had to be cancelled. In a press communiqué released on 10 August, WFP stated that "a combination of 70 bridges destroyed and the denial of "concurrence

on safety" by the Israeli Defense Forces for aid convoys is crippling WFP's efforts, on behalf of the entire humanitarian community, to organize overland transport of relief items, including food for one quarter of the Lebanese population displaced from their homes." […].

Efforts undertaken by humanitarian agencies to ease access for humanitarian relief but were often unsuccessful. On 28 July, the UN Emergency Relief Coordinator, Jan Egeland, called for a 72- hour pause in the fighting to facilitate aid efforts, but Israel rejected the call the following day. […] On 30 July, the Security Council also urged all parties to grant immediate and unlimited access to humanitarian assistance. […] Despite the announcement made by a US State Department spokesperson of 30 July 2006 that Israel had agreed to a 48 hour suspension of aerial bombardments, […] Israel continued with its military operations in the South, thus impeding humanitarian agencies' access to locations south of the Litani River.[…]"

UN News, 10 August 2006

"Stressing that Israeli civilians and ordinary Lebanese were the "biggest losers" in the conflict in Lebanon, the top United Nations emergency official said today it was a "disgrace" that Hizbollah and Israel were preventing humanitarian supplies getting through to more than 100,000 people in the devastated south of the country.

Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs Jan Egeland said there were over 200,000 people throughout Lebanon who humanitarian workers have been unable to reach because of the escalating violence, adding that the war-ravaged country was one of the worst places in the world in terms of getting aid to those most in need.

"We have not had any access for several days to the besieged population of southern Lebanon. It is a disgrace really, because the parties to the conflict, the Hizbollah and the Israelis, could give us access in a heartbeat and then we could help 120,000 people in southern Lebanon," he told a press conference in Geneva.
"The civilian population in Lebanon and in northern Israel have been the biggest losers in this senseless cycle of violence that is now exactly one month old… Civilians were supposed to be spared and in this conflict they are not."

Despite the enormous difficulties, UN humanitarian agencies continue to do what they can and a spokesman in New York said 15 trucks carrying relief items travelled from Beirut to the town of Baalbek this morning, but he confirmed that another convoy was unable to go to Nabitiyeh in the south after failing to get clearance from the Israeli Defence Forces (IDF).

The World Food Programme[…] also appealed today for a cessation of hostilities by both sides to allow the passage of desperately needed relief assistance, as food, fresh water and fuel stocks in particular are running dangerously low in Lebanon.
[…]
A combination of 70 bridges destroyed and the denial of "concurrence on safety" by the IDF for aid convoys is crippling WFP's efforts, on behalf of the entire humanitarian community, to organise overland transport of relief items, including food for one quarter of the Lebanese population displaced from their homes, the agency said in a press release."

Israeli Defense Forces targeted UNIFIL (2006)

- UNIFIL was targeted by IDF fire on several occasions during the July-August 2006 conflict
- There were also an incident in which a Hezbollah rocket hit near a UNIFIL position

UNSC, 18 August 2006, para. 9-10

"In the midst of the escalation of fighting in the final hours leading up to the cessation of hostilities, UNIFIL personnel endured 85 IDF-fired artillery shells impacting directly inside several positions, 35 in the area of Tibnin alone, in addition to 10 air-to-ground rockets and 108 artillery rounds landing in the immediate vicinity of these and other United Nations positions, including the UNIFIL headquarters in Naqoura. UNIFIL very fortunately did not suffer casualties but a number of positions sustained significant material damage. The mission strongly protested to IDF command throughout the period in question.

UNIFIL also strongly protested to the Lebanese authorities one incident of a Hizbollah-fired rocket impacting directly inside a UNIFIL position in the area of Ghanduriyah. The impact caused material damage but no casualties."

UN News, 13 August 2006

"There were five incidents of firing from the Israeli side directly inside UNIFIL positions in the areas of At Tiri, Bayt Yahun and Tibnin (3) yesterday and this morning, and one incident of firing from the Hizbollah side directly inside a UNIFIL position in the area of Ghanduriyah yesterday.

The impacts caused extensive material damage in all the positions, but no casualties, the mission said in a news release. There were nine other incidents of firing from the Israeli side close to UN positions in the areas of At Tiri (4), Ghanduriyah (2), Brashit, Tibnin and Ibil as Saqi.

"UNIFIL strongly protested all the incidents to the Israeli and Lebanese authorities respectively."

The Force's freedom of movement and the ability to re-supply positions and provide humanitarian assistance were denied because of the lack of security clearance from the IDF and due to the intensive hostilities on the ground. For a week now, a humanitarian convoy to distribute food to the villages in the western sector, and other humanitarian activities planned by UNIFIL, could not proceed because the IDF has denied consent."

UNSC, 21 July 2006, p.2

"Three UNIFIL positions (1-21 near Marwahin, 6-44 near At Tiri and 8-33 near Hula) have been hit by IDF fire. On 17 July, one artillery smoke bomb penetrated the roof of a prefabricated living shelter at position 1-21. The bomb did not detonate but did cause damage to the roof of the shelter. No personnel were injured. On 16 July, two IDF artillery shells exploded inside position 6-44, near At Tiri, causing major damage to prefabricated living quarters and two containers. UNIFIL troops were in shelters at the time and there were no casualties. The same day position 8-33, near Hula, was hit by two IDF tank rounds. One soldier was seriously injured by shrapnel and was evacuated to the Indian battalion headquarters for immediate medical treatment. He is reported to be in stable condition. In addition, UNIFIL has reported more than 48 instances of firing close to its positions."

NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL RESPONSES

Overview

Overview: National and international response (December 2006)

National Response

The Lebanese government was not prepared for the sudden onset and magnitude of displacement caused by the recent war and the bulk of the response came from local NGOs, political organisations, local authorities and volunteers who supported the displaced, ranging from basic provision of relief to running IDP sites. In the aftermath of the war, the government has put together a recovery plan, with the support of the international community, and has begun implementation of a broad range of assistance, recovery and reconstruction activities. The slow pace of the government efforts has attracted criticism in comparison with the more efficient reconstruction and assistance efforts of Hizbollah although the whole process of assisting the displaced risks failure because of duplication and growing political tensions in the country (Schenker, 14 September 2006; UNHCR, 6 December 2006). The Higher Relief Commission (HRC) is the government office responsible for humanitarian coordination, including assistance to the newly internally displaced. The HRC coordinates with key ministries, including the Central Fund for the Displaced, the Ministry for Social Affairs and the Council of the South. Political organisations, notably Hizbollah, remain key actors in the distribution of assistance, social services and reconstruction. The government has deployed 15,000 troops to south Lebanon in accordance with UN Security Council Resolution 1701.

There is no revised national IDP strategy and it is not yet apparent how the government will coordinate its response to the differing situations of the recently displaced and those displaced over a decade ago. In the 1990s the government had designed a comprehensive return programme, including compensation to IDPs to rebuild their homes, support for the reconciliation process between residents and returnees, and socio-economic rehabilitation to address the civil war situation of displacement (MoD, 10 July 2006). The 1989 Taif Agreement codified the return of IDPs as an essential condition for reconciliation and peace and binds the authorities to establish legislation that safeguards the right to return and ensures the means for return and reconstruction (GoL, 30 June 2004; Assaf and El-Fil, April 2000; Taif Agreement 1989). A Ministry for the Displaced was established to rehabilitate infrastructure and housing, improve the economic sector, and to achieve national reconciliation, and a Central Fund for the Displaced was created to finance the return of the displaced. Both institutions are also involved in the response to the displacement caused by the recent conflict.

According to government representatives, the absence of funds has prevented the development of a national strategy for the return of people displaced by the civil war and as a result of the Israeli occupation (GoL, 30 June 2004; MoD, 10 July 2006). In October 2005, the Minister of the Displaced threatened to resign if his ministry was not granted the necessary funds for the return of the remaining internally displaced (Daily Star, 10 October 2005). However, the ministry has also come under criticism for mismanagement of funds and political corruption (ILO 1997; Caritas, August 2004; Assaf and El-Fil, 7 April 2000; Daily Star, 18 February 2004 and 29 September 2006). Prior to the recent breakout of hostilities, the ministry continued to focus its efforts on reconciliation agreements between communities including resolution of disputes

between individual families in order to facilitate returns, including in several towns around Aley, east of Beirut (Daily Star, 17 June 2005 and 28 July 2005; MoD, 10 July 2006).

International response

Prior to 2006, international agencies focused their efforts on broader development work and security in Lebanon and for the most part have not been involved in responding to the needs of displaced and returnee populations from the civil war period. Since 1978, the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) has been present in south Lebanon to maintain peace and security in the area (UN Security Council Resolutions 425 and 426 (1978)). No international organisation has been monitoring or advocating for the rights of displaced people. The United Nations Development Programme was the only UN agency implementing a return programme for displaced people in the Mount Lebanon region. The programme was launched over ten years ago and is expected to continue in 2007, although no up-to-date information is available on the impact of this programme.

In contrast, the recent conflict initiated widespread mobilisation and financial support among UN and international humanitarian agencies and donors; however, on the ground many international organisations faced difficulty in assisting IDPs due to factors including the highly politicised environment, the lack of a presence in the country, security restrictions and widespread destruction of infrastructure which severely limited free movement. In addition, the Israeli military forces refused to ensure safety for aid convoys and on several occasions targeted humanitarian convoys, thereby obstructing agencies from providing assistance to displaced and host communities (ICRC, 10 August 2006; WFP, 10 August 2006; COI, 10 November 2006, p.41).

The "cluster approach" was applied in Lebanon; this is a humanitarian coordination mechanism whereby certain UN agencies are assigned lead roles by sector in order to improve the efficiency of humanitarian response by ensuring greater cooperation, accountability and partnership between the UN, the Red Cross and Crescent Movement and national and international non-governmental organisations. The cluster leadership role in protection and emergency shelter for IDPs was assumed by UNHCR. Although on the whole successful, an evaluation of the application of the mechanism in Lebanon also points to a number of areas for improvement (UNHCR, October 2006). In addition, while there were supportive local NGOs and government representatives who participated actively in the clusters, a concern that emerged was that many of the key local NGOs and government ministries did not participate because of lack of information of the benefits of the mechanism.

At the political level, the international response to the conflict between Hizbollah and Israel was widely criticised as a belated one given the consequences for civilians. Nor did it resolve the underlying causes of the conflict. However consensus on a ceasefire was reached with UN Security Council resolution 1701 which also provides for an expanded UN peacekeeping force in southern Lebanon, tasked among other things with supporting the safe return of displaced persons.

In response to extensive criticism that Israeli military operations in Lebanon were in contravention of international law, a High Level Commission of Inquiry was established by the UN in August 2006 in the context of the Human Rights Council. The Commission is mandated to investigate the systematic targeting and killing of civilians by Israel in Lebanon, examine the types of weapons used by Israel and their conformity with international law; and assess the extent and impact of Israeli attacks on human life, property and the environment. In the first draft of its report, the Commission found that the internal displacement which occurred in Lebanon constituted in itself a violation of international law and human rights, given that displacement was the result of indiscriminate attacks on civilians and civilian property that were, in many cases, disproportionate

in nature and could not be justified on the basis of military necessity (COI, 10 November 2006, p.48).

National and international response: civil war period

International Response (prior to June 2006)

The UN country cooperation framework agreement (2002-2006) in Lebanon includes the objectives to support post-conflict reconstruction and development in two regions of the country: Mount Lebanon and South Lebanon, both areas affected by the civil war and regions of displacement (UNDP, 2002).

Since 1992, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) has been the key UN agency assisting IDPs and returnees in Lebanon. Between 1994 and 1997, UNDP provided technical support to the Lebanese Ministry of Displaced as well assistance in management and coordination. UNDP also facilitated coordination between international and local organisations and provided support to resource mobilisation. An evaluation mission carried out in 1996 concluded that the project successfully established statistical databases to monitor the return of IDPs and compile information on a wide variety of geographic, demographic, social and economic indicators. Following the first phase of the programme, UNDP focused more on socio-economic issues affecting IDPs in the Mount Lebanon region (UNDP, 2002).

In 2006, UNDP continues to be the only UN agency working directly with IDPs. UNDP provides support to the return and reconciliation process in Alley, El-Chouf and Baabda of the Mount Lebanon region through its "Reintegration and Socio-Economic Rehabilitation of the Displaced" programme that was expected to be completed in 2005 but has been extended until 2007 (UNDP 2002, 2004; UNDP June 2006). The UNDP Programme is focused on helping IDPs, returnees and residents in Damour, Joun, Harf, and Bhamdoun. The programme includes a focus on employment and income generation through small-scale socio-economic interventions, social rehabilitation and small-scale community infrastructure (UNDP, 2002).

Most of the other UN agencies in Lebanon have focused their efforts on south Lebanon. These initiatives include mine clearance, employment promotion and socio-economic rehabilitation and development. For instance in one of his reports, the Secretary General notes that "I wish to stress the need for an intensified focus by all concerned on the rehabilitation and economic development of the south. The achievements made in demining over the past year, accomplished through exemplary cooperation among the United Arab Emirates, the United Nations and the Lebanese authorities, were part of an encouraging trend supporting stability and social and economic development. In this respect, I urge the Government of Lebanon and the international donors to bolster their efforts. The United Nations remains strongly committed to assisting Lebanon in its economic rehabilitation of the south." (UN SG, 21 July 2004, p.6)

The United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon has maintained a presence in South Lebanon since March 1978. UNIFIL was established by Security Council Resolutions 425 and 426 to restore international peace and security, assist the government in re-establishing authority over the area, and confirm the withdrawal of Israeli troops. UNIFIL has cooperated closely with government authorities and the UN in the implementation of development projects in South Lebanon; undertaken mine clearance; and remained focused on maintaining ceasefire patrols in its area of operation.

On a yearly basis, the mandate of UNIFIL has been renewed due to tensions between Israel and Lebanon along the border. In January 2006, UNIFIL's mandate was renewed following tension and violence along the Blue Line, including an exchange of fire by Hizbullah and Israel in November and December 2005 as well as the continuing Israeli violations of Lebanese air space (UNSC, 31 January 2006)

In 2001, the UN Economic and Social Commission for West Asia (ESCWA) launched an initiative to promote socio-economic development in South Lebanon. The eight tracks for support to South Lebanon include urban development, social issues, vocational training, environment and small businesses. The tracks were identified following discussions with representatives of Lebanese officials and the local communities in South Lebanon.

The European Union provided humanitarian and post conflict assistance including support to IDPs between 1978 and 2000. The E.U. has also supported NGO partners in the implementation of projects including support to the return of the internally displaced in the Chouf region, economic reintegration in South Lebanon, and support to the socio-economic rehabilitation of return areas. However, programmes supporting IDPs and returnees were largely completed at the end of 2003 (EC, August 2004). The EU continues to support a number of programmes in Lebanon, including democracy and human rights and assistance to socio-economic development.

Useful Links:

UN:
See the evaluation of the "Reintegration and Socio-Economic Rehabilitation of the Displaced Programme" and other related reports on UNDP's website.
For more information, see the website of the UN System in Lebanon
For information on the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon see UNIFIL's website
See also the website of ESCWA South Lebanon

EU:
See the website of the Delegation to the European Union to Lebanon

National Response (prior to June 2006)

Government Response

Resolving the issue of internal displacement has repeatedly been emphasised as a national priority by governmental representatives, codified in the 1989 Taif Agreement, which declared the return of IDPs an essential condition for permanent reconciliation and peace (Daily Star, 15 November 2005; 21 January 2004; Monday Morning, 30 April 2003; Lebanese government, 30 June 2004). The agreement binds national authorities to "solve completely the problem of IDPs, and acknowledge the right of every Lebanese citizen displaced since 1975 to come back to the place from which he/she was displaced; to establish the legislation that safeguards this right and ensure the means of reconstruction" (Assaf and El-Fil, April 2000; Taif Agreement 1989). The agreement also pledges financial support to IDPs to reconstruct their homes and villages (Assaf and El-Fil, April 2000; Lebanese government 1989).

Following the conflict, two central government structures were created to implement the return process. A Ministry for the Displaced was established to rehabilitate infrastructure and housing, improve the economic sector, and to achieve national reconciliation, and a Central Fund for the Displaced (CFD) was created to finance the return of the displaced. The government designed a

comprehensive return programme, including compensation to IDPs to rebuild their homes, support to the reconciliation process between residents and returnees and socio-economic rehabilitation (Ministry of the Displaced 1997, 2001; UNDP 2002).

The government has undertaken some innovative initiatives, such as providing support to "second-generation" displaced in order to encourage their return, acknowledging that second-generation displaced people may be less likely to return due to a lack of socio economic opportunities (Ibrahim Alia, 2 March 2001). The government along with NGOs also supported reconciliation between communities, including between Christian and Druze residents in villages in the Chouf and Aley regions (U.S. DOS February 2001). In early 2004, the Ministry of the Displaced announced a new type of micro-credit loan for IDPs, intended to encourage displaced people to return to their homes by providing them with economic opportunities (Daily Star, 21 January 2004). The government reconfirmed its committment to secure the return or resettlement of all people displaced by war in 2004 (Republic of Lebanon, 30 June 2004).

According to government representatives, the absence of funds has stood and still stands in the way of the national strategy for the return of people displaced during the conflict (Lebanon Wire, 8 July 2002; UNDP, 2002; Monday Morning, 30 April 2003; Daily Star, 21 January 2004 and 10 August 2004; Lebanese government, 30 June 2004). The Minister of the Displaced announced at the end of June 2004 that 185 billion Lebanese pounds (approximately $122 million) are needed to secure the reintegration of all people displaced by the war (Lebanese government, 30 June 2004).

However, the government has come under criticism for failing to secure the return of IDPs due to mismanagement of funds and political corruption. Reports indicate that large percentages of the Ministry's expenditure went to people who were occupying houses but were not always displaced. Case-studies in villages of return indicate inconsistencies between government discourse and practice. For instance, many returnees have not been paid the full compensation promised and the physical infrastructure of many villages is only partially repaired (ILO 1997; UNDP 1996; Caritas, August 2004; Assaf, 7 April 2000; Daily Star, 18 February 2004). In the early to mid 1990s, implementation of programmes was also characterised by an absence in planning and coordination. For example, some areas were provided with electricity but not potable water or cash payments were made to rebuild houses in areas where infrastructruture and public services were non existent (Assaf & El-Fil, 7 April 2000). The opposition has criticised the government's "continuous postponement of resolving the issue of the displaced" (Lebanon Wire, 2 March 2002).

During 2005, the Ministry of Displaced announced that a new plan was in place to address the issue of internal displacement. Minister of Displaced, Nehme Tohme said that the Ministry had put together a detailed and effective plan which is estimated to cost around $400 million (Daily Star, 13 September 2005 and 1 October 2005). In November 2005, the Minister announced that the money required to implement solutions for people still displaced from the 1975-1990 conflict had been allocated to the ministry (Daily Star, 2 November 2005). He also noted that teams from the ministry and the fund would be visiting the villages of the displaced in order to assess the needs (Daily Star, 2 November 2005). Former Minister of the Displaced, Adel Hamieh, noted that the Ministry had succeeded in signing reconciliation and return agreements for the towns of Baatoura and Dqoun (Daily Star, 28 July 2005). Current minister of displaced, Tohme, also noted in a press conference that in total, the ministry had conducted reconciliations in 22 villages in Mount Lebanon (Daily Star, 20 August 2005).

Further Information:

Ministry of Displaced Persons
"[T]he direct reasons of the program [of return of the Ministry] are:

Objective 1: To rehabilitate the reconstruction sights in the areas of return
Objective 2: To rehabilitate the infrastructure
Objective 3: Housing
  a-Repairing the destroyed houses
  b-Rehabilitate the partially destroyed houses
  c-To reconstruct the totally destroyed houses
  d-To evacuate the illegally occupied houses
Objective 4: Resetting the general services, social and educational services and develop them. Provide educational, health and social services. Support the work of local associations.
Objective 5: To rehabilitate the productive economical sectors
Objective 6: Achieving reconciliation." (Ministry of the Displaced 2001, II, B.)

See the website of the Ministry of the Displaced (archived)
See the report of the Ministry on achievements 1992-1997 (archived)

Central Fund for the Displaced
"The Central Fund of the Displaced was formed in order to finance the return of the displaced. In addition it is supposed to finance the return, and its security, of the displaced to all the Lebanese areas. It also gives grants and loans for similar reasons. The Fund coordinates with the Ministry in a complementary manner. It handles the following:
-Investigate the cases of illegally occupied houses and making payments for the occupiers.
-Assess technical reports to make compensations for rebuilding
Observe the progress of work and assess the second payment in coordination with the Ministry" (Ministry of the Displaced 2001, II, D.)

A'idoun
"It is a nationally implemented program called, UN Reintegration and SocioEconomic Rehabilitation of the Displaced, in cooperation with UNV's, Ministry of the Displaced, UNDP and UNESCO. […]

"A'idoun" program is predetermined to remedy any socio economic need for the return of citizens. In the first stage, building of houses was the goal. The biggest challenge of return is to make it a permanent return, as the residents have spent enough time in the city. The fact remains, would they want to return to the rural life where so many of the living conditions are lacking or have been destroyed. It is obvious that making this return permanent should come from […] a development program which would support the socio economic duties […]. [A'idoun] worked in cooperation with UNCHS Habitat […]." (Ministry of the Displaced 2001, II, D.)

"Other State ministries responsible for addressing the protection and assistance needs of internally displaced persons in virtue of the duties entrusted by the Lebanese Constitution and Laws:

Lebanese Council of the South (South Lebanon)
The Lebanese Council for the Reconstruction and Development (CDR)" (Ministry of Displaced, 4 August 2004)

"The Council for Development and Reconstruction (CDR) is the primary government institution that is responsible for the planning and the development of programmes for the country as a whole." (UNDP, 2002)
See the website of the Lebanese Council for Development and Reconstruction

Civil Soceity

A number of national and international NGOs continue to provide a range of assistance to displaced and returnee populations, ranging from housing restoration programmes to micro-credit and financial assistance. However, many no longer receive funds, and rely on their own resources to implement projects for IDPs (Caritas, August 2004).

Among these NGOs, Caritas Lebanon has assisted displaced and returning populations since the begining of the war in the 1980s. In early ritas Lebanon shifted its focus from short-term charitable giving and assistance to longer-term rehabilitation and development projects. (CARITAS, 2004). In addition to providing support to a number of disadvantaged groups, CARITAS programmes provide assistance to internally displaced people in war damaged regions, including South Lebanon.

Begining in 1984, Caritas provided broad assistance to displaced and returnee populations. In 1991, Caritas worked to support return, including by providing grants for reconstruction and loans for economic development, assisting 12,500 IDP families. In 1998, Caritas began to focus its attention on the Mount Lebnaon region. Since 1998, Caritas has implemented projects in about 22 villages including rehabilitation of homes, micro-credits, reconstruction of a school and youth developments. These programmes have benefited approximately 750 IDP families.

Caritas implements programmes to encourage return of IDPs including, housing restoration in areas of return (specifically the Chouf villages and East Saida including the villages of Mtolleh, Aalman, Jmeilieh, Majdalouna, Mazmoura, Mohtokra and Mazraet el-Dahr; provision of plant crops and agricultural knowledge to farmers in the Chouf region, and support to women and young girls from displaced families that have returned tot he Hammana (high Metn) area, including the villages of Bmaryam, Falougha, El-Kourayye, Khalwat, Tikhnay, Chbenieh, Khraiby, Kobay El-Kala'a. Since 1992, Caritas has granted credits and finantial assistance to facilitate the return of IDPs, mainly in Mount Lebanon and East Sidon, but also throughout the country. Caritas also provides professional training and a micro-credit programme. (Caritas, 2004). Caritas assists populations in war damaged regions including rehabilitation projects in South Lebanon (Jezzine, Marjeyoun and Hasbaya). For more information, see CARITAS Lebanon's website

The Saradar Foundation started an initiative, the Saradare IT Programme to provide information technology to disadvantaged communities. In its first phase, the project focused on providing information technology to IDPs in Baabda, Aley and Chouf (Mount Lebanon) focusing specifically on women and children. The project is intended to complement programmes of the Ministry of Displaced and UNDP in regions of displacement to encourage sustainable return and development in war torn areas. In 2003, the IT programme was provided to IDPs in Araya, Bhamdoun and Kfarhim. In 2004, the programme will be provided to IDPs in Jezzine. For further information, see SARADAR's website

Another key NGO who worked with IDPs is The Lebanese NGO Forum (LNF). The LNF provided support ranging from infrastructure rehabilitation to legal awareness and education campaigns. (LNF, 2002). However, as of 2004, the LNF has ceased to work with IDPs and focused its efforts on migrants and refugees in Lebanon. For more information, see the website of the Lebanese NGO Forum (LNF)

Maronite Outreach in Lebanon is a church based organisation that also seeks to support the return of IDPs (Maronite Outreach, 2003). For more information see the website of Maronite Outreach

For further information on organisations working in Lebanon, the UN website lists a number of organisations involved in the reconstruction and rehabilitation process in lebanon, see UNDP Civil Society Organisations

National law and policy

Lebanon: ratifications to international treaties

CAT-Convention Against Torture and Other Cruel Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment	Accession		04/11/2000	05/10/2000
CAT-OP-Optional Protocol to the Convention Against Torture and Cruel Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment	No Action			
CCPR-International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights	Accession		23/03/76	03/11/72
CCPR-OP1-Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights	No Action			
CCPR-OP2-DP-Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights	No Action			
CEDAW-Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women	Accession		16/05/97	21/04/97
CEDAW-OP-Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women	No Action			
CERD-International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination	Accession		12/12/71	12/11/71
CESCR-International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights	Accession		03/01/76	03/11/72
CMW-International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families	No Action			
CRC-Convention on the Rights of the Child	Ratification	26/01/90	13/06/91	14/05/91
CRC-OP-AC-Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflict	Signature only	11/02/2002		
CRC-OP-SC-Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the sale of children child prostitution and child pornography	Ratification	10/10/2001	08/12/2004	08/11/2004

For further information, see the Lebanon page of the OHCHR

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Known references to the Guiding Principles (as of December 2006)

Reference to the Guiding Principles in the national legislation

None

Other References to the Guiding Principles (in chronological order)

None

Availability of the Guiding Principles in local languages

The Guiding Principles have been translated into Arabic.
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