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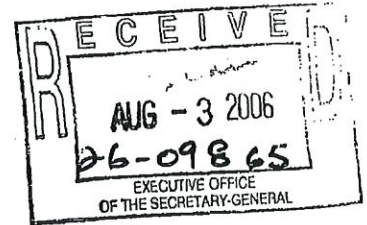
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Note to Ms. Bárcena

LEBANON CONFERENCE SUMMARY NOTE

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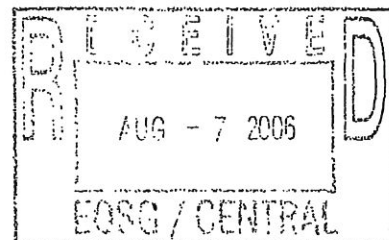


Please find attached a summary note on the Lebanon conference in Rome last week, together with the co-chairmen statement. While events have quickly moved on in the past few days, the positioning of the states participating in the conference is of interest. It is particularly noteworthy that despite the fact that an overwhelming majority of ministers expressed support for the Secretary-General's call for an immediate cessation of hostilities, this point was not reflected in the final statement.

Angela Kane

Angela Kane
1 August 2006

cc: Mr. Guéhenno
Mr. Nambiar
Mr. de Soto
Mr. Pedersen
Mr. Larsen



PLENARY MEETING OF THE INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE
FOR LEBANON

Rome, 26 July 2006

Introductory Statement by Prime Minister of Italy - Romano Prodi:

- Conference unity is of fundamental importance
- Humanitarian corridors are necessary
- The Italian Government is ready to contribute to the conference and to initiatives that will follow.

Statement by Foreign Minister of Italy - Massimo D'Alema:

- The focus should be on four items:
 1. ways and means to undertake humanitarian action;
 2. how to create conditions for a stable, lasting cease-fire, building on the G-8 statement;
 3. deployment of an international force under a UN mandate to assist the Government in implementing Security Council resolution 1559;
 4. and a financial package for reconstruction.
- General principles shared by all are as follows:
 - the right of Israel to protect its security and defend its territory against external attacks, while exercising restraint to avoid punishing Lebanese civilians;
 - the right of Lebanon to preserve and consolidate its sovereignty and territorial integrity;
 - the need to eradicate terrorism for there to be lasting peace in the region;
 - the moral duty to help with Lebanese reconstruction.
- A date should be set for a donor conference
- There is a need to reconcile the need to create political conditions for a cease-fire with the moral duty to save life.
- The terms for an international force should be set by the Security Council. Italy is ready to contribute to the force.

Statement by the Secretary-General:

See press release SG/SM/10578 on 26 July 2006

Statement by Prime Minister of Lebanon – Fouad Siniora:

- Lebanon is being torn to shreds by destruction, displacement, despair and death.
- Lebanon's future could be one of fear, financial ruin and fanaticism.
- The war is barbaric and senseless, and beyond any notions of legitimate self-defence.
- Lebanon will commence proceedings and "spare no avenue" in making Israel pay compensation for its defiance of international law.
- A new "Marshall Plan" should be set in motion.

- A return to the status quo ante would be futile.
- There should be an immediate cease-fire, as well as a “declaration of agreement” on the following 7 point plan:
 1. the release of Lebanese and Israeli prisoners and detainees through the ICRC;
 2. the return of Israel “back behind the Blue Line”, so that displaced people can return to their homes;
 3. the Security Council should place Shebaa farms under UN jurisdiction until the border delineation is carried out;
 4. the Lebanese Government should extend its authority over all its territory through legitimate armed forces, with no weapons or authority other than the Lebanese State;
 5. the “UN international force” in southern Lebanon should be supplemented, reshaped and enhanced in numbers, mandate and scope as needed to do humanitarian work and to guarantee stability for the return of displaced people;
 6. the UN and the parties should put into effect the 1949 armistice between Lebanon and Israel, and explore possible amendments;
 7. the international community should support Lebanon in recovering from this human, social and economic tragedy, especially in terms of reconstruction.

Statement by U.S. Secretary of State - Condoleezza Rice:

- The U.S. is committed to a quick improvement of the situation
- The U.S. is pleased that Israel has offered to open humanitarian corridors to and in Lebanon, and that the airport is now open to humanitarian flights. The U.S. has urged Israel to let relief operations proceed without delay or difficulty.
- On Monday, the U.S. announced a \$30 million donation in response to the UN appeal.
- A donor conference should be held soon
- There was a need to address root causes; otherwise, there would continue to be a pattern of “failed cease-fire after failed cease-fire after failed cease-fire...”
- The “answer to how” depends on extending the authority of the Lebanese Government, the full return of Lebanese sovereignty and, per the Taef agreement and resolution 1559, there being one authority over all means of force.
- The immediate cause of the current crisis was Hezbollah’s illegal attack.
- One could not allow something like this to happen again
- The G-8 statement, the 1949 armistice, resolutions 1559 and 1680, and the Taef agreement offer a framework and principles, and a political agreement is needed in order to fully implement them.
- Syria and Iran must respect this outcome.
- To support a political outcome, there need to be circumstances in which people can return to their homes, and this can be done only by the Lebanese Army, which will need help from the international community and the international stabilization force under a UN mandate.
- In the short term, the international force should also provide humanitarian support.
- But the long term answer is a Lebanon that can govern on its own.
- It is time to put the situation on a sustainable basis.
- Lebanon’s neighbours should not use Lebanon as a battleground.

Statement by Foreign Minister of Finland (for the EU Presidency) - Erkki Tuomioja:

- The most important item on our agenda is a cease-fire; “uneasy” with the position that political conditions must be achieved before establishing a cease-fire; this could imply that there is justification for continuation of the conflict.
- Express support of the Secretary-General’s appeal for urgent action on a cessation of hostilities.
- Need effective UN force, a clear mandate, establish a close cooperation with GoL to implement Res. 1559.
- Explore position of other parties through engagement, specifically Syria.
- Above all, comprehensive MEPP is essential, including an end to the Israeli occupation.

Statement by EU High Representative - Javier Solana:

- This is not the time for big speeches.
- Less than 18 months ago the entire international community decided to take action to support Lebanon and implement 1559; today shows that we lost the opportunity – we need to think about how that happened.
- The EU will contribute to an international force in a very significant manner.

Statement by EC Commissioner - Benita Ferrero-Waldner:

- Most immediate concern is the humanitarian crisis in Lebanon and Gaza.
- Support to the political solution as set forth by the Secretary-General.
- Support for the Secretary-General’s call for immediate cessation of hostilities.
- EU team leaving for the region will report back to the EU Council of Ministers meeting on 1 August.

Statement by Foreign Minister of UK – Margaret Beckett:

- The FM of the United Kingdom noted there was a consensus that hostilities must stop. While there was an urgent need to address the humanitarian situation, the International Community needed to create the conditions for a sustainable solution to the crisis.
- The political framework should be based on the implementation of resolution 1559. In that regard, the Government of Syria had a strategic choice to make, either in favor or against the interests of the Lebanese.
- Finally, she emphasized the UK’s belief that a new Force was needed on the ground.

Statement by Foreign Minister of Egypt – Ahmed Aboul Gheit:

- Unacceptable situation which is a serious threat to regional stability.
- Agree on need to reach ceasefire. Believe there should be an immediate cessation of hostilities and support the Secretary-General’s suggestion to take this proposal to the SC.
- Believe that Shebaa Farms issue must be addressed early.
- International force need to define mandate and should not exclude the possible use of force. Its aim would be the guarantee the unity of Lebanon and implement the Taif accords.
- The freezing of the MEPP is critical in promoting tension in the region, essential that a viable peace process be restarted.

Statement by Foreign Minister of Spain – Miguel Angel Moratinos:

- The FM noted that the Rome conference generated a lot of expectations and needed to send a strong message against terror and for the achievement of peace. Leadership was needed.
- Agreed with the US position that the roots of the crisis had to be addressed. Hezbollah and Hamas were responsible for the current events in the Middle East. Return to status quo ante was untenable.
- Any solution should be reached through diplomatic negotiation. As regards the role of Syria and Iran, there was a need to engage them, particularly Syria.

Statement by Foreign Minister of Russia – Sergey Lavrov:

- Joins those who call for immediate for cessation of hostilities, this is needed to save lives and to save the GoL.
- Nuances in position: cannot allow military operations to continue as create new victims and new popularity for Hezbollah; national dialogue is the preferred route.
- Support Secretary-General's political framework and agree that there is a need for the Security Council to pronounce on the issue (Nambiar mission report good basis for Security-Council deliberations).
- Our contacts with Assad shows that Syria wants to play a constructive role; believes Israel, Syria and Iran should have been invited to the conference.
- As the G8 said, key component is the absence of a comprehensive settlement in the region, it is important not to forget Gaza, Israel/Palestine, Israel/Syria.
- On the international force agree with the Secretary-General that it must have an international mandate and its aim must be to assist the Lebanese armed forces.

Statement by Foreign Minister of France - Philippe Douste-Blazy:

- The FM noted the danger of tensions among the different communities inside Lebanon due to the crisis. The violence must stop. A durable and fair political agreement was required.
- The first priority was the immediate cessation of hostilities, if only for humanitarian reasons. There was no military solution to the conflict.
- Objectives should be 1/ restoring the sovereignty of the Government of Lebanon throughout its territory, 2/ no solution could be imposed from outside. An agreement between Israel and Lebanon was needed, 3/ Any resolution to the crisis should take place through the UN. The framework was 425, 1559 and 1680.
- For France, the Secretary-General should be the key actor in this endeavour.
- As regards the deployment of a new force, it could only follow a political agreement which would include: 1/ cessations of hostilities, 2/ full implementation of 1559 and 1680, including the border dispute (Shebaa farms), 3/ Security guarantees, 4/ prisoner swaps, 5/ a force which would assist the Lebanese Army. France intended to table a resolution containing the abovementioned points.

Statement by Foreign Minister of Saudi Arabia – Prince Saud al-Faisal:

- Prime Minister Siniora's speech should be the action plan.
- Support imposition of immediate cease fire.
- Priority for the region and Lebanon is to resolve the Arab/Israeli conflict.
- Lebanon faces various foreign interest, the key is to protect the sovereignty of Lebanon.

- Immediate Security Council action for: immediate ceasefire, humanitarian assistance, deployment of international force.
- Solution should include the 1949 Armistice Agreement and a solution to Shebaa Farms.

Statement by Foreign Minister of Germany – Frank-Walter Steinmeier:

- Proposal to create a contact group including participants from the region to develop a mandate for the international force.
- The FM called for an immediate cessation of hostilities. It was time for diplomacy. The priority was to protect the civilians.
- Germany supported the ideas of the Secretary-General as presented to the Security Council earlier. It was a good basis for a political solution. Return to status quo ante was not an option.

Statement by Foreign Minister of Turkey – Abdullah Gül:

- The current crisis illustrated the danger of lack of diplomacy in the region to address the Palestine question and the Middle East peace process; this should be addressed by a policy of inclusiveness and engagement
- Turkey supports the 7 point plan of PM Siniora
- A strong message needed to be sent to the region that international community will act to stop the violence in Gaza and Lebanon
- Noteworthy and instructional that the locations where non-state violence has erupted (Lebanon and Gaza) are both locations where essentially unilateral withdrawals were carried out by Israel, demonstrating the need for negotiated solutions, with all relevant parties.

Conclusion

The Italian FM presented the outlines of a final co-chairmen statement (drafted mainly by the US, with co-chair Italy), to which a number of participants reacted strongly and negatively. A lengthy and acrimonious discussion followed. France and Russia pointed out that the statement did not represent the views of the majority of participants, as it did not call for a cessation of hostilities, let alone a ceasefire. Saudi Arabia and Egypt expressed dismay with the statement. The Secretary-General commented that he was "baffled" by the discussion, and noted that the ministers were being more cautious than the Security Council, which routinely called for cessations of hostilities when dealing with conflict. Prime Minister Siniora stressed the need for consensus, but in the press conference later publicly expressed disappointment with the outcome.

The Foreign Minister of Italy proposed that the relevant part of the final statement should be amended to read as follows: "... expressed their determination to work immediately to reach with the utmost urgency a cease-fire that puts an end to the current violence and hostilities..." (statement attached).

The suggestion was agreed by consensus, and the meeting was adjourned.

Note prepared by Fabrice Aidan, Richard Amdur, and Lee O'Brien

International Conference for Lebanon

Rome, July 26

Co-Chairmen Statement

Representatives of Italy and the United States, the United Nations, Canada, Cyprus, Egypt, France, Germany, Greece, Jordan, Russia, Saudi Arabia, Spain, Turkey, the United Kingdom, the European Union (High Representative, Finnish Presidency, Commission), and the World Bank met today in Rome along with representatives of Lebanon. Building on the September 19, 2005 ministerial-level Lebanon Core Group meeting in New York, the Lebanon Core Group and other countries concerned for the fate of Lebanon met today to express the international community's deep concern about the situation in Lebanon and the violence in the Middle East, to enjoin urgent and substantial humanitarian assistance, and to discuss concrete steps that would allow a free, independent, and democratic Lebanon to exercise effective control over all of its territory. The Lebanon Core Group and the other participants to the Rome Conference are committed to helping the Lebanese government to address the political, economic, and security challenges that it faces.

The participants pledged their united determination to work in partnership with the international community to provide immediate humanitarian relief to the people of Lebanon, expressing deep concern for civilian casualties and suffering, the destruction of civil infrastructures and the rising number of internally displaced people. Calling Israel to exercise its utmost restraint, they welcomed Israel's announcement of humanitarian corridors to Lebanon, including for humanitarian flights into Beirut International Airport, and within Lebanon that can allow for the rapid delivery of relief aid, and called for their immediate operation.

The Rome Conference participants expressed their determination to work immediately to reach with the utmost urgency a cease-fire that put an end to the current violence and hostilities. That cease-fire must be lasting, permanent and sustainable.

The Rome Conference affirmed that the fundamental condition for lasting security in Lebanon is the Government's full ability to exercise its authority over all its territory. The participants noted that a framework of international decisions, including the G-8 statement of July 16, United Nations Security Council Resolutions 425, 1559 and 1680, the Lebanese national framework embodied in the Taif Accords, and 1949 Armistice Agreement represent the principles that govern the international community's efforts and responsibilities to help support the Government and people of Lebanon.

The participants called for the full implementation of these relevant UN Security Council Resolutions and the Taif Accords, which provide for the deployment of Lebanese Armed Forces to all parts of the country and the disarming of all militias.

An International Force in Lebanon should urgently be authorized under a UN mandate to support the Lebanese Armed Forces in providing a secure environment. The Rome Conference pledged its support for Lebanon's revival and reconstruction. The participants today agreed to the convening of an international donor conference to assist with the revival of Lebanon's economy and called for the provision of reconstruction assistance to the Lebanese Government, with special emphasis on the southern part of the country. In addition, the need for a meeting of partner countries to discuss a joint approach to security assistance for the Lebanese Armed Forces and security services was widely supported.

Participants agreed that any lasting solution to Middle East tensions must be regional. They expressed their full commitment to the people of Lebanon, Israel and throughout the region to act immediately with the international community toward the goal of a comprehensive and sustainable peace.
