

*Permanent Mission of Lebanon
to the United Nations*

Ref: 154/18

The Permanent Mission of Lebanon to the United Nations presents its compliments to the Office of the Secretary-General of the United Nations and wishes to respond to and protest against the letter transmitted by the Permanent Mission of Israel to the United Nations to your esteemed office on 21 December 2017 (Ref No. MI-SG- 12212017)¹.

In this letter, the Government of Israel objects to the decision of the Lebanese Government to grant an offshore license to a consortium of three companies (Total SA, ENI SpA and Novatek PJSC) in Lebanon's Block 9 and contends that this block is located "in maritime areas that are under Israeli sovereignty and jurisdiction".

The Government of Lebanon objects to the contentions of the Government of Israel and reaffirms that Block 9 is located in its entirety within maritime areas that belong to Lebanon. In this regard, the Government of Lebanon recalls the Lists of Geographical Coordinates for the Delimitation of the Exclusive Economic Zone between Lebanon and Palestine that were transmitted by the Lebanese Republic to the Office of the Secretary-General on 14 July 2010 and 19 October 2011, and which clearly place the above-mentioned block in areas that belong to Lebanon.

By protesting, once again, against Lebanon's tender process, the Government of Israel has ignored our response letter submitted to the United Nations on 20 March 2017 (Ref: 574/2017)⁴. In this communication, the Government of Lebanon stated in unequivocal terms that Block 9 is located within Lebanese waters. It also clearly asserted the sovereign right of the Lebanese Republic to conduct or authorize exploratory, drilling and exploitation activities in this area without any Israeli prior consent or authorization.

The Government of Lebanon wishes to express its grave concern regarding the barely concealed threat by Israel that it is "committed to pursuing available and relevant options to protect its [so-called] sovereign rights". In this respect, it reminds the Government of Israel of its fundamental legal obligation under the UN Charter to refrain from the threat or use of force against other states. The Republic of Lebanon will not hesitate to avail itself of its inherent right to self-defence if an armed attack occurs against the economic activities carried-out in its maritime areas. It will not hesitate neither to take all appropriate measures against Israel or its private *cessionaires*, including Energean Oil & Gas, should they decide to take advantage

of their activities in the so-called Israeli blocks 13 and Alon D, where the Karish field is located, to exploit the natural resources of the Lebanese seabed by way of directional drilling.

The Government of Lebanon wishes to seize this opportunity to reiterate, once again, its commitment to international law and in particular to the relevant provisions of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea.

The Permanent Mission of Lebanon would be grateful if this *Note Verbale* could be published in the relevant sections of the Ocean and Law of the Sea UN Website as well as the next Law of the Sea bulletin.

The Permanent Mission of Lebanon to the United Nations avails itself of this opportunity to renew to the office of the Secretary-General of the United Nations the assurances of its highest consideration.

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