

Explanation of position on A/C.5/74/L.47 entitled “Financing of the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon”

Lebanon recognizes the exceptional and extraordinary circumstances caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, which have affected the course of deliberations and decision-making process. We deeply regret that, under the current circumstances, no alternative mechanism for voting on a draft resolution could be put in place to allow the General Assembly to fully and efficiently function, in accordance with the General Assembly Rules of Procedure and the United Nations Charter.

Lebanon appreciates the essential role that United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) plays in the stability of the country, as well as the region, and recognizes that its financing is thus critical for its functioning and the implementation of its mandate.

It is in this spirit that Lebanon accepts the proposal, by the Secretariat, of commitment authority, with assessment, to ensure the immediate financing of UNIFIL for the period 1 July 2020 to 31 May 2021.

Lebanon also appreciates and accepts the assurances of the President of the General Assembly expressed in his letter of 23 June 2020 that such commitment authority by the General Assembly will not affect past UNIFIL resolutions, in accordance with General Assembly resolutions and practice.

By doing so, it is our understanding that this commitment authority is an interim measure, that should be followed by the adoption of a regular ‘financing of the UNIFIL’ resolution, as early as practicable, when the conditions are met again to physically convene a session and vote on a resolution in the General Assembly or in any other format or venue.

In other words, and to ensure an actual budget appropriation for UNIFIL, Lebanon will submit a Financing of the UNIFIL resolution, as presented by Group of 77 and China in the fifth committee during the second resumed part of the seventy-fourth session of the seventy-fifth session of the General Assembly, with all the relevant paragraphs, as soon as the conditions permit.

Lebanon takes this opportunity to reaffirm that resolution 73/322 on the financing of the UNIFIL – and all related previous resolutions - in particular the paragraphs stressing that Israel shall pay an amount of 1,117,005 dollars resulting from the incident of Qana on 18 April 1996, continues to be valid. This reaffirmation is in accordance with General Assembly resolution 38/227 paragraph 8, whereby it is stated ‘that the adoption of new resolutions by the General Assembly will not imply the elimination of existing activities or programmes carried out as a result of legislative mandates, nor the elimination or reduction of resources appropriated to them by the Assembly, unless the Assembly expressly decided otherwise’.

Lebanon kindly requests this explanation of position to be made part of the record of the proceedings.