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Second Interim Report of the United Nations Observation Group
in Lebanon

Submitted through the Secretary-General in pursuance of the
resolution of the Security Council of 11 June 1958 (S/4023)

17 July 1958

Mr. President,

I have the honour to transmit to the Security Council the second interim report of the United Nations Observation Group in Lebanon, which has been received today, by cable. I may refer in this connexion to my statement just before the close of the 830th meeting of the Security Council yesterday afternoon, 16 July 1958.

I fully endorse the plan here outlined by the Observation Group as representing adequate interpretation of the Security Council resolution of 11 June 1958, in the light of the needs and possibilities flowing from the progressive development of the operations of the Group. In this regard, I refer to the interpretation of that resolution made by me in the 827th meeting of the Security Council on Tuesday morning, 15 July 1958.

Please accept, Sir, the assurances of my highest consideration.

Dag Hammarskjöld
Secretary-General

The President
Security Council

Second Interim Report of the United Nations Observation Group in Lebanon
to the Security Council

1. The access to all sections of the frontier secured on 15 July 1958 and reported to the Security Council in the interim report submitted by the Observation Group on that date has enabled the Group to review the position with regard to outstations and the need for Observers and other trained personnel. This review has now been completed and the results are contained in this report.
2. As of 15 July the Group had established the following network of outstations, sub-stations and permanently manned Observation Posts, the number of Observers stationed in each of these Posts being indicated:

Headquarters Beirut 14

Tripoli Area

Tripoli 7
Sir Danie 3
Ehden 4
Cedars 4
Halba 4

Bekaa Area

Chitaura 17
Btedai 6
A.U. Farm 6
Zalle 6
Rachaya 6
Saghbine 6

Southeast Lebanon

Marjayoun 10

Saida Area

Saida 13
Jezzine 3
Tyre 4

Total Observers 113

3. As a result of this improved access to the frontier, the Group proposes to establish stations or permanent Observation Posts on or close to the frontier at the following points (manned by the number of Observers indicated against each), which include all important road and rail frontier crossings:

Tripoli and Akkar Valley

Arida 8
Nziziye 8
Braghite 8

North Bekaa

Baalbek Hq. 8
Koussair 12
El Kah Border Customs Post 8
Arsal 8
Yafoufa 8

Central Bekaa

Masnaa 8
Deir-el-Aachayer 8

Southeast Lebanon

Chebaa 6
Kharouia 6
Total Observers 96.

4. While in some cases the Observers for these posts may be obtained from currently existing sub-stations, a substantial number of the Observers required to man them must be sought from outside the present strength of the Observer force and the Group has already requested the Secretary-General on 12 July to make arrangements for placing at its disposal an additional 25 Observers. A further 65 Observers will now be required, raising the total Observer force to a figure of some 200.

5. It should be borne in mind that while night watches had been kept at all existing posts, the new posts on the frontier will be required to function on a 24-hour basis. Furthermore, the Group should also be in a position to establish such additional posts as the situation may require.

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6. The advance of the Observation Group's activities up to or close to the frontier will change to a considerable extent the character of the field operations. It has hitherto been possible to place observation stations in the great majority of cases in hotels or other public facilities and the auxiliary needs of the staff of Observers has been met by local arrangement. Most of the new posts to be established will be placed near or on the frontier, where suitable accommodation is generally not available. It will, therefore, be necessary to establish tented camps for which some material has already been requested on 12 July.

7. This raises the question of the need for providing additional support for the ground Observers, both in respect of the performance of their observation duties, as well as by way of relief from duties not strictly connected with the responsibility of observation. It would greatly help in the extension of the activities of the Observers were they to be assisted by a certain number of unarmed troops to be used for regular ground reconnaissance on foot, based on outposts. Patrols could consist of officers, accompanied by a small number of other ranks, patrolling on foot or by mule, along the frontier areas, thus permitting wider and more profitable use of the force of Observers at the Group's disposal. In addition, Observers stationed at observation posts along the border would have men under their command to undertake the variety of duties required for the operation and maintenance of such posts, which in many cases would be located in isolated positions. Furthermore, the other ranks could be very usefully employed as guards; they could undertake the maintenance of transport, communications, supply and equipment and, in general relieve military Observers of other time-consuming and non-essential duties. The Group will, therefore, suggest to the Secretary-General that a force of unarmed non-commissioned personnel and other ranks should be assigned to it.

8. Experience with air reconnaissance since the Group's first report was submitted on 2 July 1958 has shown that this is a most valuable adjunct to the Group's ground observation. The aircraft and personnel at the disposal of the Group have been used to the maximum of their capabilities. Up to 15 July, 82 missions had been flown, totalling 150 flying hours.

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9. The mission considers that on the basis of past experience it is desirable that the Group should be equipped with an adequate number of planes and trained personnel capable of providing continuous air patrols on all sections of the frontier. It also believes that a proportion of these planes should have night photography capabilities. One such plane was requested on 11 July. The Group estimates that 18 reconnaissance planes and 4 helicopters with aircrews supported by sufficient ground personnel and equipment would be required. Additional helicopters would be required to maintain contact and to insure rapid communications within the expanded network of outstations and observation posts referred to above.
10. It should be emphasized as will have been seen from the foregoing description of the outstations, observation posts and patrolling activities, that the Observation Group's whole operations and activities are directed mainly along the border areas. Permanent stations have been moving progressively closer to the frontiers on all sides. The development of the plans outlined in the Report is fully in accordance with the mandate of the Security Council, which charged the Observation Group in its resolution of 11 June 1958 "to ensure that there is no illegal infiltration of personnel or supply of arms or other materiel across the Lebanese borders". It is evident that for the performance of the task assigned to it, the Observation Group's activities must be directed to the border regions and to areas immediately adjacent to them. For that reason, the barest minimum of staff is maintained in Beirut, and UNOGIL Headquarters have only some 14 officers, whereas the rest of the entire force of officers, including aircrews, is constantly out in the field. It is proposed, in the immediate future, to locate helicopters and reconnaissance planes at the airport at Rayak in the centre of the Bekaa Valley, so that a constant aerial watch on a 24-hour basis can be maintained of the entire eastern and southern frontier. Planes based on Beirut will similarly patrol the seaboard and the northern frontier, till such time as arrangements can be made to locate some of them at the airfield north of Tripoli and close to the northern frontier.
11. Since the Observation Group's activities have been established on a fully operational basis, the 3 members have been considerably relieved of the pressure of organizational work necessitating their presence at Headquarters and they

have been able to undertake frequent visits to the outstations and border areas. They hope to make these visits, which have helped them greatly to acquire a fuller understanding of the situation, even more frequently, and in course of time they intend to keep in constant personal touch with all the outstations and observation posts, particularly in the more sensitive areas.

12. The actual strategy of observation activities has been undergoing a fundamental change with the development of the organization and increasing access to the border areas. Instead of probing operations to points on the frontier from the widely scattered outstations and posts, permanent posts can now be established at or near the main road intersections with the frontier. In addition to increased air patrols, more extensive patrolling between these posts, on foot or by mule in areas where jeeps cannot operate, is the next logical step. With the increase in the Observer force and the addition of enlisted personnel, together with supporting equipment, envisaged earlier in the report, direct and constant patrolling of the actual frontier will be possible.

