



Statement

by

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Permanent Representative of **Lebanon**

to the United Nations

at the

UN Peacekeeping Ministerial

**“Uniformed Capabilities, Performance and Protection”**

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*Check Against Delivery*

*Permanent Mission of Lebanon to the United Nations  
866 United Nations Plaza, Suite 531, New York, NY 10017*

Mr. Chairman,

Thank you for holding this important high-level meeting on Peacekeeping. I wish to thank the Secretary-General Mr. António Guterres for his leadership on the peacekeeping agenda and for reminding us that the blue helmets are the true symbol of the United Nations, its purpose and its mission.

Mr. Chairman,

Our gathering here today is a vow of confidence and commitment:

Confidence in the role of peacekeeping operations as a key pillar of the UN peace and security architecture;

And a commitment to preserve, strengthen and enhance this role, boosting our collective strife to maintain global peace and security.

Peacekeeping operations continue to shoulder a fundamental task of reducing tension, and maintaining calm in post-conflict situations, across the world.

Humanity will be forever grateful for the efforts and sacrifices of peacekeepers, especially those who have paid the ultimate price for the cause of peace. This meeting, and your commitment, are also a tribute to their noble sacrifices.

Mr. Chairman,

Excellencies,

I speak today because I believe the voice of troop-hosting countries should also be heard.

My country, Lebanon, feels entitled and encouraged to testify to the decisive role of peacekeeping operations in preserving peace and stability, in a world burdened by wars and political unrest.

Lebanon has been hosting an exemplary peacekeeping operation for over four decades. UNIFIL continues to be a major contributor to peace and security in Southern Lebanon.

With the participation of 41 countries, UNIFIL has become one of the biggest peacekeeping operations in the world. Comprised of 10,500 troops and 815 civilians, UNIFIL continues to implement its mandate set in Security Council resolutions 1701, 2373 and 2433. It conducts an average of 450 operational activities daily, by land, air and sea. It is worth noting that UNIFIL maritime force it's the first of its kind in peacekeeping in the world.

UNIFIL peacekeepers, not only maintain peace, they unpluck the remnants of war and erase it from the daily life of our people. Since 2006, UNIFIL deminers have cleared more than 4 million square meter of our land from cluster munitions, and more than 105 thousand square meter from landmines.

Women have been at the center of this tremendous undertaking. I am glad to note that UNIFIL ranks second in terms of female participation among the seven major UN peacekeeping operations.

Today, the number of women in UNIFIL troops has risen to 541 as of 28 February 2019, accounting for around 5%.

Mr. Chairman,

UNIFIL's achievements rest on a strong, longstanding partnership with our Lebanese Armed Forces (LAF). It is a strategic partnership that has been cemented over years, especially after 2006, when LAF's fifth regiment was deployed to South Lebanon, extending the government's authority, and maintaining security and stability in the South. The Lebanese Government is working on the establishment of a Model Regiment to be deployed in the South as well, which would further enhance LAF's active presence in the area, and ease the burden shouldered by the peacekeepers.

Yet, one additional element of inspiration in UNIFIL's story is its positive interaction and impact on the local community in its area of operations. Lebanon is extremely grateful to UNIFIL's leadership, headed by General Stephano Del Col, and to its entire staff, for their relentless dedication. I wish to take this opportunity to pay tribute to the memory of the 312 UNIFIL soldiers who lost their lives in the line of duty since 1978. We will be eternally indebted to their sacrifice.

Let me also express my country's genuine gratitude to each and every troop-contributing country, for their enduring support and unwavering commitment to UNIFIL's mission.

Lebanon reiterates its unwavering commitment to the implementation of resolution 1701 in its entirety, and to continue supporting UNIFIL in fulfilling its mandate.

Finally, it is important to move from peacekeeping to peacebuilding and permanent peace. This happens when we achieve permanent solutions to conflict.

Thank you.