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Stabilizing Lebanon: Peacekeeping or Nation-Building

WILLIAM K. MOONEY, JR.

The summer 2006 Israel-Hezbollah war demonstrated that Israel views the problem of Hezbollah geostrategically, as a proxy military challenge supported by its long-term enemies Syria and Iran. This view led the government of Israel to attempt the eradication of Hezbollah through the application of overwhelming military force, an effort that was flawed in design and failed in execution. Similarly, the United Nations has viewed the problem as a conflict between two warring military entities, a problem it has unsuccessfully sought to mitigate since 1978 with the deployment of the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL). Colored through the lens of the global war on terrorism, the United States also views the threat created by Hezbollah geostrategically, the influence of a top-tier terrorist organization financed by Iran and supported by Syria.

Together, these views led to the delayed implementation of a cease-fire in 2006 and the misguided belief that Israel would be successful in its efforts against Hezbollah. After 34 days of air and ground engagements the Hezbollah continued to fight, delivering what some have termed a strategic victory. Meanwhile, the state of Lebanon was once again decimated, with more than 1,200 civilians killed, 130,000 homes destroyed, and damage to the economy and infrastructure totaling over \$7 billion.¹ The post-war response of the United Nations and the United States continues to focus on the symptom (Hezbollah), rather than the root cause that allows such an organization to exist; the weakness of the Lebanese government.

This conflict should be seen in the context of a series of conflicts that have afflicted Lebanon during its history. In striking similarity to the current

crisis in Iraq, Lebanon has struggled with internal sectarian conflict, the rise of transnational armed groups, foreign occupation, insurgency, and the use of its territory as both a battleground and a launching pad for regional conflicts fought by proxy. While outside actors have played a major role, the weakness of the Lebanese government lies at the foundation of these problems. The Lebanese government finds itself unable to exercise the most fundamental elements of state sovereignty: the control of borders and a monopoly on the use of force. Thus, any international effort to stabilize and reconstruct Lebanon in the wake of this most recent conflict needs to focus on the political objective of strengthening the Lebanese government.

The Expanded UNIFIL

The United Nations and American-led international response to the summer 2006 Israel-Hezbollah war was the passage of United Nations Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1701.² The central initiative of UNSCR 1701 was the dramatic expansion of UNIFIL and the simultaneous deployment of the Lebanese Armed Forces (LAF) to South Lebanon. At the tactical level, the expansion of UNIFIL and the deployment of the LAF enabled Israel to withdraw its forces from South Lebanon without ceding the terrain to its antagonist, Hezbollah. Strategically, the LAF deployment serves the critical mission of strengthening the sovereignty of Lebanon's government, demonstrated by placing Lebanese soldiers on the border with Israel for the first time in decades. Simultaneously, the expanded UNIFIL deployment is intended to support the LAF's southern deployment and provide political space for the Lebanese government as it tries to strengthen its institutions.

The UNIFIL mandate and peacekeeping presence have been in existence in various forms since their inception in 1978. Prior to the 2006 war, UNIFIL consisted of 2,000 lightly armed peacekeepers.³ This force was of insufficient size and capability to provide any form of credible deterrent to hostile forces on either side of the Israeli-Lebanese border, commonly referred to as the Blue Line. With the unilateral withdrawal of Israeli forces in 2000, Hezbollah had extensive freedom of maneuver allowing them to arm and train local militias and to conduct detailed surveillance of opposing Israeli

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forces. They were also able to prepare an extensive series of fighting positions, weapons caches, and concealed rocket launch sites that proved exceptionally effective during the summer 2006 war.⁴

UNSCR 1701 expanded the size of the UN force dramatically and upgraded the force's capabilities, due to the fact that the primary contributors are "top-tier" military forces, mostly from Europe, but also including China and India. UNIFIL is now structured with military capabilities that are robust by any peacekeeping standard, including armored and mechanized units, artillery, and even air defense.⁵ Despite the UNSCR 1701 mandate for up to 15,000 UN troops in UNIFIL, the organization has deployed just over 12,000 troops, as of late January 2007.⁶

Perhaps more significant than the increased size of UNIFIL was its new mandate. UNSCR 1701 specifically charges UNIFIL to:

- Monitor the cessation of hostilities.
- Accompany and support the Lebanese Armed Forces as they deploy throughout the south, including along the Blue Line, as Israel withdraws its armed forces from Lebanon.
- Coordinate its activities toward a permanent ceasefire and a long-term solution with the government of Lebanon and the government of Israel.
- Extend its assistance to help ensure humanitarian access to civilian populations and the voluntary and safe return of displaced persons.
- Assist the Lebanese Armed Forces in taking steps toward the establishment of a demilitarized area between the Blue Line and the Litani River.
- Assist the government of Lebanon, at its request, to secure its borders and other entry points to prevent the entry in Lebanon without its consent of arms or related materiel.⁷

Both the mission mandate and force authorization in UNSCR 1701 are aggressive by comparison to previous UN peacekeeping operations in Lebanon, with the implication that this force would be powerful enough to confront Hezbollah militarily, if required. However, a year into the expanded mission, it is apparent that neither UNIFIL nor the Lebanese government possesses the will to directly confront or forcibly disarm Hezbollah. The collective sensitivity against the implied task of countering Hezbollah is inhibiting forces from completing some explicit tasks found in the mandate. Specifically, UNIFIL has not executed the "accompany and support" mission. From the perspective of military tactics, the directive to "accompany and support" requires UNIFIL and the LAF to conduct operations together, in a physically combined patrol or at the very least within direct observation and communication of the other force. According to UNIFIL and LAF officers, this is not happening, with both UNIFIL and the LAF conducting independent patrols and checkpoints

throughout the zone.⁸ The February exchange of small-arms fire between Israeli and Lebanese forces along the Blue Line is a poignant example of the need for UNIFIL forces to fully execute this mandate.⁹ UNIFIL needs to be more vigilant in its close accompaniment of the LAF and its surveillance of activities on the Blue Line if future conflict is to be avoided.

The Lebanese army's deployment to the Blue Line is a vital step toward the government of Lebanon's ability to establish control over its territorial borders, a fundamental element of state sovereignty. UNIFIL has enabled that deployment, providing fuel, transportation, and significant logistical support to the desperately ill-equipped Lebanese Armed Forces.¹⁰ These military activities in support of the Lebanese army and government are tremendously important toward achieving the "long-term solution" noted in the mandate. It is more valuable for UNIFIL forces to empower and supervise as the Lebanese army supports the government in asserting its sovereignty, rather than rely on external powers. Beyond the provision for logistical support, UNIFIL does not have an explicit mandate to provide military training or assistance, something that could enhance the capabilities of the Lebanese force.

The structure of UNIFIL also presents several challenges for the legitimacy of both the UN mission and the Lebanese government. First, the heavy organization and weaponry of the intervention force resembles that of a peace enforcement operation, where the intervention units use force or threat of force to coerce compliance of warring parties.¹¹ This lends credence to Hezbollah suspicions that UNIFIL plans to attack Hezbollah and disarm it. Second, this heavily armed presence is likely to generate hostility among the Lebanese population in southern Lebanon. UNIFIL patrols of heavy tracked vehicles have caused further damage to the already devastated road network in the south. The image of heavily armored UN peacekeepers is similar to that of forces in Iraq, widely viewed by the population as an "occupation" force. Also, UNIFIL deployed without any organic civil affairs or information operations units, leaving it without a structured means to interface with local leaders, to craft and disseminate messages, or to leverage information and influence the population. Information operations are vital, as locals who perceive that the deployed force is providing them a tangible benefit are much more likely to inform of possible dangers and plots.¹² To their credit, UNIFIL has been able to provide limited medical and veterinary care to the population of the south, with one Level II hospital being established by Belgium in Tibneen.¹³ This effort is extremely popular, as access to western-quality medicine is extremely rare in South Lebanon. UNIFIL needs to do more along these lines in an effort to avoid the perception of "occupier," whose real mission is the destruction of Hezbollah. For the Lebanese people in general, and the Shia community in particular, image of occupation is decidedly negative (built upon Israel's previous occupation of South Lebanon

and current presence in Palestinian territory) and generates widespread sympathy for armed resistance.¹⁴ No group has more effectively built upon this sympathy than Hezbollah. Thus, to the extent that UNIFIL looks and behaves like an occupying force, it emboldens the call for resistance and legitimizes Hezbollah's justification for retaining its armed capability.

Defining and Dealing with Hezbollah

Inspired by the Iranian Revolution of 1979, Hezbollah emerged in 1982 in response to Israel's occupation of southern Lebanon.¹⁵ Professor Augustus Richard Norton recently stated that "if Iran was the mother of Hezbollah, Israel was its stepfather because Israel's two-decade-long occupation fostered and honed Hezbollah."¹⁶ Trained and funded by the Iranian Revolutionary Guards, Hezbollah began as an exceptionally violent and ideological organization that eschewed politics and extensively employed terror (most notably kidnappings, assassinations, and suicide bombings) to weaken its opponents. As President George W. Bush pointed out in his 2007 *State of the Union Address*, Hezbollah is only second to al Qaeda in the number of Americans killed by terrorism.¹⁷ Yet since its murderous beginnings in the 1980s, Hezbollah has grown in both size and complexity. This growth has changed its tactics and goals. Beginning in 1992, Hezbollah made a strategic decision to participate in parliamentary elections. Thus, the organization was (partially) resorting to a peaceful political process to obtain its goals, which were becoming increasingly national and less ideological in nature.¹⁸

Despite its foray into politics, Hezbollah maintained its emphasis on armed resistance. Benefiting from support of Iran and Syria, as well as years of combat operations against Israeli forces in southern Lebanon, Hezbollah's military wing became increasingly professional and capable. Simultaneously, Hezbollah developed a popular base by providing social services to the neglected and impoverished Shia community, as well as creating a world-class television and Internet operation, Al-Manar.¹⁹ Hezbollah now is a classic nationalist insurgency, not unlike the Irish Republican Army with its political wing Sinn Fein. Even after Israel unilaterally withdrew from Lebanon in 2000, Israel's retention of the disputed Shaba'a Farms area and the Lebanese government's inability to control South Lebanon enabled Hezbollah to resist Israel by exercising a strategy based on border skirmishes, rocket attacks, and the preparation of defensive positions. Hezbollah's defense-in-depth proved formidable during the July 2006 war and contributed to Israel's inability to destroy its forces.²⁰ Israel's strategy appeared to be aimed at inflicting pain on the Lebanese people as a whole, with the expectation they would turn on Hezbollah. Yet, Israel's overreaction and seemingly wanton destruction only consolidated popular sup-

port for the resistance in both the Shia community and among Lebanese who had traditionally opposed Hezbollah. The war was viewed as an Israeli defeat by many Israelis and Lebanese.²¹ Thus, the war gave Hezbollah greater legitimacy and political clout; a non-state actor repelled the invader and had defeated Israel on the field of battle by merely surviving.

With the cessation of hostilities and the UN's expansion of UNIFIL, Hezbollah has shifted its efforts to gaining additional political power. Allied with the Christian party of Michel Aoun, its boycott of the government of Prime Minister Fouad Siniora and subsequent demonstrations are challenging the Lebanese government's ability to retain power. The Hezbollah-Aoun alliance vehemently opposes the Siniora government's pro-western agenda, most notably the establishment of an international tribunal to prosecute the killers of former Prime Minister Rafik Hariri. Emanating from the UN's investigation conducted by Serge Brammertz, a criminal tribunal has the potential to implicate Syria, Hezbollah's local sponsor.²² Since the walkout of five Shia ministers and a Christian cabinet minister in November 2006, the alliance has used public demonstrations and an extensive media campaign to pressure the government into meeting their demands. Specifically, the alliance is seeking early parliamentary elections and the formation of a national unity government, in which their political bloc would have at least one-third plus one seat, guaranteeing them the ability to block objectionable legislation (such as acceptance of the Hariri tribunal).²³

While these machinations should be seen as yet another phase of an ongoing insurgency and effort to gain political power, it is extremely important to note that Hezbollah has not used their military capabilities to realize their goals. Having demonstrated its lethality against a well-trained and equipped Israeli force, Hezbollah's military capabilities are superior to those of the Lebanese army. But rather than pursuing a violent overthrow in an effort to establish an Islamic state, Hezbollah's leadership is attempting to work within the current government framework. It is also instructive to note that they are willing to ally themselves politically with a Christian party in their effort to attain power. This is not the same group that called for the establishment of a Shia Islamic theocracy in the 1980s. While they have retained their armed wing as a hedge, their political faction seeks increased representation commensurate with the growing Shia population in Lebanon.

Once Hezbollah is recognized as both a military and political insurgency, then any strategy designed to contain or end the insurgency needs to be based on accepted counterinsurgency principles. One of the most widely recognized of these principles is the fact that counterinsurgency operations should focus on developing effective governance and enhancing the government's legitimacy in the eyes of the population.²⁴

Strengthening the Lebanese Government

If good governance and enhancing governmental legitimacy are key to defeating an insurgency, then the long-term solution to the cycle of violence in Lebanon requires more than military action; such as economic development, social reconciliation, and the enhancement of government capacity. A senior diplomat in Beirut explained, “The government of Lebanon governs Beirut, but doesn’t govern in the south, the north, or in the Beka’a Valley.”²⁵ The government’s inability to fully exercise its writ and provide services outside the capital creates essentially ungoverned spaces that permit organizations such as Hezbollah to exist. While Hezbollah is the strongest non-state actor, it is not alone in challenging the state’s monopoly of force; sectarian militias, armed Palestinian groups, and new Sunni extremist groups inspired by al Qaeda all have established a presence in the rural regions of Lebanon.²⁶ Many of these rural areas receive little or no essential services from the government. Particularly in southern Lebanon, where whole villages were obliterated by the July war, there is a great need for the government to step in and make a difference.²⁷ Despite the widely publicized Hezbollah payments (funded by Iran) to those who lost their homes, that money has not put all the villagers back to work or restored their livelihood.²⁸

Unfortunately, the Lebanese government and its international partners have been slow to mobilize reconstruction efforts, allowing Hezbollah to lead in the race for hearts and minds. The government’s failure to quickly respond is perceived as apathy and disregard for the Shias’ welfare, and it continues to ignite the long-held grievances of a marginalized population.²⁹ Indeed, much of the initial United Nations Development Program’s reconstruction effort and funding have gone to rebuilding infrastructure in greater Beirut, with comparatively little going to the devastated south.³⁰ The January 2007 Economic Reform Program submitted to international donors by the Siniora government states an intention to offset expenditures by “closing the Fund for the Displaced and the Council of the South,” created as the government’s vehicle to reconstruct South Lebanon.³¹ If the Siniora government and the international community want to separate the insurgency from the population, they need to be able to compete with Hezbollah in terms of resources and services.

The slow and disjointed nature of the ongoing stabilization and reconstruction effort is symptomatic of a fundamental lack of unity. On the political front with regard to the United Nations’ effort, there are a number of high-level UN envoys to Lebanon, none of which has clear authority to oversee or coordinate the actions of the many UN organizations working in the

country. Geir Pedersen, formerly the Envoy for South Lebanon, was named Special Coordinator for Lebanon in February 2007. While his new title is encouraging, what is really required is a mandate that delineates lines of authority and provides adequate staffing if he is to successfully fill the political void. Terje Roed-Larsen remains the Special Envoy for the Implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 1559, a resolution with the sole requirement to disarm militias.³² In perhaps the most politically visible UN initiative, Serge Brammertz serves as Commissioner of the UN International Independent Investigation Commission into the assassination of former Lebanese Prime Minister Rafik Hariri. While there are many areas of overlap in the political portfolios of these UN leaders, none has clear authority to orchestrate the actions of UNIFIL or the myriad of other UN agencies.³³ Each of these entities reports to its home office at United Nations headquarters in New York, including the UNIFIL Military Commander, who reports to a Strategic Military Cell in the Department of Peacekeeping Operations.³⁴ The existing structure squanders resources that could be directed at reconstruction, but are instead spent on multiple layers of bureaucracy. In other post-conflict interventions, the United Nations has named a Special Representative to the Secretary General with the mandate to coordinate all UN activities (including military operations) in an integrated mission. Unfortunately, the UN has not provided this type of leadership or a headquarters structure for the Lebanon effort.³⁵ The compartmentalized nature of the UN structure reflects a view that the UNIFIL mission is separate from and unrelated to the missions of providing humanitarian aid or investigating the Hariri murder. In fact, these missions are all facets of a single nation-building mission in the midst of an insurgency.

The US effort to bolster the Lebanese government suffers from a similar problem of focus, exacerbated by an inability to deliver timely aid. Seeing the Lebanon-Hezbollah-Israel problem through the prism of the global war on terrorism, the US response has been to channel aid to military security and humanitarian relief programs, while providing limited resources to strengthen the Lebanese government's non-security institutions. In August 2006, President Bush pledged \$230 million in assistance to Lebanon, and the United States did an admirable job of providing immediate humanitarian relief. However, as of January 2007, only \$120 million of the initial \$230 million pledged had been delivered. The remaining funds are awaiting the completion of the fiscal year 2007 budget and fulfillment of long-lead-time equipment orders. At the height of the Siniora government's political crisis in January 2007, Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice announced an additional \$770 million in assistance at the Paris III conference.³⁶ While Congress appropriated the funds in the fiscal year 2007 emergency supplemental bill, it

will take more time to program and apportion these funds.³⁷ In the most optimistic scenario, these funds will not be released until later this year.³⁸

Even for the funds already allocated to Lebanon, the United States has been challenged to quickly turn those funds into “deliverables,” actual items or programs on the ground. The US Foreign Military Financing program was not designed as a rapid-response system, and the arcane process from apportionment of funding to the actual delivery of an item can take 18 to 24 months, dependent on technology transfer approval, availability, production schedules, and transportation.³⁹ Making matters more difficult is the ongoing effort to equip the Lebanese Armed Forces. This program has suffered from competition for resources with US forces that are equipping and reorganizing for combat in Iraq and Afghanistan. Some of the most immediate needs of the LAF have been trucks and ammunition, both items that are in tight supply.⁴⁰ For example, in January 2007, the US was only able to make a symbolic delivery of 20 of the 285 trucks promised to the LAF. The remainder must await production and shipping.⁴¹

The majority of pledged US funds for Lebanese post-conflict stabilization and reconstruction are targeted against military or security requirements. A close examination of the fiscal year 2008 international affairs budget request shows that 60 percent of the \$770 million in new US assistance will go to fund the military and police initiatives, while only 40 percent is allocated to humanitarian, economic, and social programs. If the Lebanese government’s inability to provide essential services is the driving force of popular support for its political opposition, then a primary focus of the strategy to empower the government needs to be the expansion of its capacity to govern and serve. The proponents for heavy military assistance point to the need to stabilize the security situation first, but the requirement for jobs and services has proven to be an equally essential part of the security equation in post-conflict interventions.⁴²

The impact of targeted security assistance on internal Lebanese politics needs to be factored into the equation. During the opposition-led Beirut demonstrations in January 2007, most local observers regarded the Internal Security Forces (ISF) as dominated by Sunni groups and partial to the 14 March ruling coalition.⁴³ The recent US delivery of riot-control gear and vehicles to the ISF may be viewed as empowering the Sunnis to take on the Shia, thereby exacerbating the sectarian aspect of the conflict.⁴⁴ The Lebanese army, on the other hand, is widely viewed as an impartial, cross-confessional, national institution (despite a high number of Christians in the senior officer ranks). The LAF commander, Lieutenant General Michel Suleiman, is a protégé of pro-Syrian Lebanese President Emile Lahoud, yet has urged the army to exercise restraint and neutrality in the face of protests.⁴⁵ This restraint

and neutrality is critical to the Lebanese government's efforts to gain legitimacy against sectarian challengers.

As previously mentioned, the deployment of the LAF to the Blue Line is a critical step to enhancing the legitimacy of the government. However, the LAF needs to not only be able to take control of the nation's borders, but its training and equipment must also improve qualitatively if it is to be seen as a capable replacement for Hezbollah as the "defenders of Lebanon." For example, a ubiquitous reminder of Lebanese vulnerability to its Israeli neighbor is the overflight of southern Lebanon and Beirut by Israeli warplanes. These overflights reduce the legitimacy of both the Lebanese government and the LAF, and make UNIFIL appear ineffective in its enforcement of UNSCR 1701. The ability of the Israeli air force to overfly Lebanon with impunity is a direct result of the fact that the LAF has virtually no organized air defense capability.⁴⁶ While the United States has agreed to provide the LAF with a wide range of military systems for defensive purposes, America has not yet approved the transfer of such technology as air defense weapons or anti-tank missiles, weaponry that could potentially alter the tactical balance of power in the region. Meanwhile, Hezbollah demonstrated impressive anti-tank missile capability during the July war and is now reported to be acquiring advanced man-portable surface-to-air missiles from Iran.^{47/48} If the strategy to minimize or eliminate Hezbollah influence is to empower the LAF and the central government, then it needs to demonstrate a military capability that might be considered threatening to Israel.

A major consideration for the United States in providing economic aid and humanitarian assistance should be how such assistance promotes and strengthens the Lebanese government. To its credit, the United States did a great deal in the aftermath of the July war in providing immediate humanitarian relief. Additional support has come in the areas of food aid, de-mining funds, and funding for water, sanitation, and health projects. However, 90 percent of \$108 million that the United States obligated in fiscal year 2006-2007 for humanitarian assistance was disbursed to nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) such as Mercy Corps, World Vision, and Catholic Relief Services, as well as to various UN relief agencies. Only 10 percent went directly to aid to the government of Lebanon or for administrative costs.⁴⁹ While NGOs may be the most expeditious and cost-effective way to dispense relief in the immediate aftermath of the conflict, the almost exclusive reliance on western aid organizations does little to enhance the Lebanese government's capacity or its legitimacy in the eyes of its citizens. In the context of the larger strategic problem of empowering the Lebanese government, future assistance should serve the dual purposes of providing services while increasing the role of the government of Lebanon in distributing those services.

Recommendations

United Nations

Unity of effort is essential to the successful stabilization and reconstruction of Lebanon. The best means to create this unity is for the United Nations to appoint a Special Representative of the Secretary General with a mandate to establish an integrated mission that would directly coordinate all UN activities in Lebanon, to include UNIFIL. If the UN goal is the “territorial integrity, sovereignty and political independence of Lebanon,” then a more holistic and integrated approach that addresses all aspects of stabilization and reconstruction is required.⁵⁰

Second, UNIFIL needs to coordinate more closely with the Lebanese army, specifically by ensuring that all operations are combined (UNIFIL and LAF) operations. This change will meet the requirements of UNSCR 1701 to “accompany and support,” and minimize the likelihood of accidental engagements between the Lebanese army and the Israeli Defense Forces along the Blue Line. UNIFIL should also bolster its ability to advise, train, and assist the Lebanese army within its sector. In addition to traditional military training, any assistance should empower and encourage the Lebanese army in its effort to assist the population in South Lebanon. The LAF and UNIFIL need to work side-by-side in operating field hospitals, providing medical and dental services, conducting civil engineering projects, and rendering other assistance that will benefit both the LAF and the local population. Over time, a coordinated effort to train and equip the Lebanese army will serve two strategic goals. It will empower the army to capably replace both UNIFIL and Hezbollah. It is imperative that this increased capability allows the LAF to demonstrate that it is fully capable of defending the territorial integrity of Lebanon. Simultaneously, these actions will demonstrate the Lebanese government’s commitment to the welfare of the impoverished south, enhancing the legitimacy of the Lebanese government, and diminishing the population’s reliance on Hezbollah.

United States

The most important step the United States can take to support the Lebanese government is to expedite the delivery of promised funds and assistance. Rather than relying on wartime supplemental funding legislation to fund aid projects, the President and the Congress should reconsider the size of the foreign operations budget and the annual timeliness of its passage. While the Department of Defense (DOD) has been given limited authority to reprogram funds to meet emerging regional requirements, the Department of State (DOS) has no such authority.⁵¹ In the case of both DOD and DOS, the severe lag in delivery of funds and equipment has placed the Lebanese government at risk.

While the effort to train and equip the Lebanese Armed Forces is strategically important, the United States should weight future assistance in favor of economic and social aid versus military assistance. The ratio of security assistance to economic support funds should be 1:2 (a reversal of the current ratio). This ratio is required if the current government is to address the dire conditions impacting the Lebanese economy. An increase in economic funding will provide tangible benefits to the population and ameliorate many of the conditions that permit the insurgency to thrive. More importantly, the bulk of the economic aid provided by the United States should be administered by the government of Lebanon rather than western NGOs. Regimens and conditionality can be emplaced to inhibit corruption, but it is imperative that the United States use its assistance to empower Lebanon in its efforts to build governmental capacity and serve its people.

While US funds and equipment are vitally important to improving the capabilities of the Lebanese army, the United States is caught in the unfortunate dilemma that any effort to provide training within Lebanon by American personnel would raise their public profile. A more viable approach would be to financially support a UNIFIL-led training assistance mission. As the effort to train and equip the LAF matures, the United States might consider modifying arms transfer policies to permit the LAF to field a defensive capability (e.g., air defense and anti-tank missiles) providing a credible deterrent to aggression. A credible deterrent is key to the LAF's ability to replace Hezbollah as defender of the Lebanese people.

Finally, there is no doubt that Lebanon's neighbors must play a strategic role in the international community's effort to stabilize and reconstruct Lebanon, particularly Syria and Iran. Both the United Nations and the United States need to make a concerted effort to engage Syria and Iran on the subject of Lebanon within the context of Middle East peace. Recent American initiatives to talk directly with North Korea and to participate in direct talks with Syria and Iran on the subject of Iraq provide promising precedents. While the problems of Lebanon will not be resolved outside of Lebanon, recent history has shown that outside influence can either exacerbate or mitigate many of these challenges.

Conclusion

The provision for more and better-armed peacekeepers and a significant increase in the security forces of the Lebanese government are not the answers to a lasting peace in Lebanon. To be successful, the United Nations intervention must change from a force separation mission to a holistic nation-building effort. The strategy underpinning this effort needs to recognize the insurgency within Lebanon and develop a campaign to address the conditions which give rise to that insurgency. First and foremost, this integrated cam-

paign should increase the capacity of the Lebanese government in its efforts to provide good governance and services. Adapting the current US aid program to support a UN-led integrated effort would be the most effective use of funding. Additionally, it will provide a positive example of the “carrots” that the United States offers to accompany the many “sticks” it wields in its war on terrorism. Without this holistic approach, Lebanon will certainly return to the cycle of violence that it has suffered for the past 30 years.

NOTES

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50. UNSCR 1701, para. 5.
51. Specifically, sections 1206 and 1207 of the 2006 National Defense Authorization Act allow the Department of Defense to transfer limited funds and training to foreign countries to build partner capacity for the global war on terrorism. In US government circles, these funds have become known as "1206 funds" and "1207 funds."