

Republic of Lebanon

Committee: UN Security Council

Topic: The situation in the Middle-East

The Republic of Lebanon detains a unique position on the World Map, being at the cross roads between Occident and Orient, maintaining strong relationships with the international community and the UN. The situation in the Middle East today has Lebanon's utmost attention, as it is situated in the middle of the conflict.

Lebanon's history is scarred. Indeed, for as long as the people of Lebanon have walked the Earth, their territory has been occupied by different regional powers, often creating conflict. Civil war broke out in 1975, involving Lebanese, Palestinians, Syrians and Israelis. Moving from civil war to reconstruction, however, has not solved Lebanon's problems with its neighbours, especially Israel. Indeed, in 2006, Lebanon suffered atrociously at the hands of the Israeli military in the systematic war it conducted against Lebanon, as thousands died and a quarter of Lebanon's population was displaced internally.

Since 2008, Lebanon has enjoyed diplomatic relations with its neighbour, Syria. Lebanon maintains good relations with the USA and several of its Arab partners. It is in a strategic position to accomplish peace in the Middle East.

UNIFIL, the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon, has allowed for much progress over the years in establishing boundaries between Lebanon and Israel, although relations remain tense with this neighbour.

Lebanon urges the international community to exert more pressure on Israel to accept a fair peace, like the one established in the Arab peace initiative of 2002. Atrocious violations of international law continue to be committed by Israel with their settlement policies and the blockade of Gaza. More than ever, Israel is taking unilateral illegal actions, which are rendering the "two state solution" impossible. Peace efforts led by the American administration are being undermined by Israel's continued expansion of settlements.

Any future negotiations need to focus on final status issues (especially borders, including Jerusalem), and should be based on progress already made with Security Council resolutions 242 and 338. The Republic of Lebanon is eager to see concrete action taken by the Quartet in the following months.

The ultimate goal of the Security Council concerning the Middle East should be the establishment of an independent Palestinian state by March 2012. This is the only way the hundreds of thousands of Palestinian refugees, including those currently in Lebanon, will be able to regain their homeland.