

## **"Resolution 1559"**

### **The Re'ut Institute – Concepts and Terms**

#### **Definition**

This term refers to UN Security Council Resolution 1559 (9/04), which calls for strengthening the sovereignty of the Lebanese government, the withdrawal of foreign forces from Lebanon and the disarmament of militias.

#### **Background**

The resolution intended to bolster the governing abilities of the Lebanese regime over its entire territory, in light of the presence of the Syrian army in Lebanon, as well as due to the existence of armed militias that do not adhere to Lebanese sovereignty (predominantly Hizbullah). While Syria indeed withdrew from Lebanon,<sup>1</sup> the disbanding and disarmament of the militias and the deployment of the Lebanese army were not fully implemented.

#### **Content of the Resolution<sup>2</sup>**

The essence of the Resolution can be summarized as follows:

- **Strengthening the Lebanese government and imposing its authority over all of Lebanon's territory** – The resolution calls for strengthening the Lebanese government and safeguarding Lebanon's territorial integrity, sovereignty, political independence and international borders. The resolution supports extending the government's control over all of Lebanon's territory.
- **Withdrawing of all foreign forces from Lebanon** – Israel's withdrawal (5/00) increased the international and Lebanese pressure on Syria to end its presence in Lebanon. The resolution's call for the withdrawal of all foreign forces was directed towards the Syrian presence in the country.

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<sup>1</sup> The Resolution did not succeed in bringing about an immediate Syrian withdrawal. The withdrawal was achieved in April 2005, following the murder of Prime Minister Hariri (2/05) that led to riots in Lebanon which were called "the Cedar's Revolution".

<sup>2</sup> Resolution 1559 was not the first UN resolution dealing with Lebanon. Several other resolutions that were passed between 1978-2004 should be noted: Resolutions 425 & 426 (3/78) called for an Israeli withdrawal from Lebanon following the Litani Operation and the establishment of UNIFIL; Resolution 520 (9/82) called for the withdrawal of foreign forces from Lebanon, following the Israeli invasion during the Israeli Lebanese War.

- **Dismantling of all armed militias** – The armed organizations, such as the Palestinian militias in the refugee camps in Lebanon and the Hizbullah, expropriate the monopoly over the use of force from the Lebanese central government.<sup>3</sup> The dismantling was never properly implemented. On the contrary, Hizbullah did not only firmly oppose it,<sup>4</sup> but rather continued to rearm heavily.<sup>5</sup>
- **Carrying out free and just political elections in Lebanon** – The resolution points out the importance of carrying out elections that are legal and free from all foreign interference. The elections took place in Lebanon following the resolution (5/05) symbolized the end of the Syrian influence over Lebanon, as well as the implementation of the required democratic political reforms.

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<sup>3</sup> See Shif Ze'ev, "Lebanese government admits for the first time: we have permitted the transfer of an arms convoy from Syria to Hizbullah", **Haaretz**, 2/26/06 (in Hebrew), Shif Ze'ev, "Iran has gave Hizbullah rockets that can reach Beer-Sheva", **Haaretz**, 5/29/06 (IN Hebrew), Zvi Barel, **Haaretz**, 1/4/06 (in Hebrew).

<sup>4</sup> Hizbullah claims that it continues to be armed for self-defense purposes against Israel. and that as long as Israel retains the Sheeba Farms, there is justification for the continuance of its activities. Following internal criticism towards the organization, Hizbullah agreed to discuss the issue with the Lebanese government. However, the matter was not solved and it is considered to be an extremely sensitive political one. See MEMRI webpage on the dismantling issue. [www.memri.org](http://www.memri.org).

<sup>5</sup> The dismantling of the armed militias in Lebanon is included in the framework of the Taif Agreement (10/89), which brought about the end of Lebanon's civil war. This agreement also called for the implementation of political reforms in Lebanon, and it was the first to call for the dismantling of armed militias in the country. However, due to the Syrian presence in the country, only those militias that were against Syria were dismantled in the end. The Palestinian militias and Hizbullah continued to be armed.