

Point of View No. 47

Draft UN Resolution on Lebanon - Where is the Catch?

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Political sources in Israel were satisfied with the US-French draft resolution on a ceasefire in Lebanon. (News Agencies, 8/6/06). **The Reut Institute contends** that the resolution's ambiguity regarding the time table for its implementation may undermine the prospects for a long-lasting effective settlement.

What is the Issue?

- The main points of the draft resolution are: full cessation of all hostilities; unconditional release of the abducted Israeli soldiers; establishment of a demilitarized zone south of the Litani river and an international embargo on the sale or supply of arms and related material to Lebanon; and a call for Israel and Lebanon to reach a long-term solution based on principles provided in the draft.
- The draft resolution does not include a time table for the deployment of the new international force. It stipulates that UNIFIL will be replaced only in the second phase of the ceasefire after Israel and Lebanon agree on the principles for a long-term settlement.
- Hence, following the declaration of a ceasefire Israel and Lebanon will face a significant time period during which they will be required to reach an agreement (hereinafter: "Interim Period").
- It seems that during the interim period, and up until the deployment of an international force, IDF forces will remain in a "security zone" in south Lebanon.

Why is this Important? Why Now?

- The Reut Institute has thus far presented several points of complexity in the establishment and deployment of an international force in Lebanon. This complexity stems from disputes regarding the scope of mandate of the force, the arrangement between Israel and Lebanon and the issue of the disarmament of Hizbullah (see [Int. Involvement Predicament \(4\) – The Interim Period](#)).
- Therefore, the IDF may find itself in south Lebanon, exposed to Hizbullah's guerilla attacks and with no certainty regarding the deployment of an effective international force.
- During the Interim period, Hizbullah may be able to restore its military capabilities, regain internal political legitimacy and even obstruct the deployment of the international force.

Policy Options

Lebanon's official rejection of the draft resolution (**Ynet**, 8/6/06) opens its content for negotiations. Israel should use this opportunity to establish an "exit strategy" from Lebanon:

- Israel should demand that any declaration of ceasefire include a clear schedule for the deployment of an international force, thus shortening the interim period.
- Conditioning Israel's withdrawal upon a comprehensive settlement with the Lebanese government may damage Israel's interests. It may be preferable for Israel to demand a temporary mechanism that would guarantee the IDF's withdrawal during the interim period.
- An Israeli willingness to compromise on the powers and authorities of the international force will increase international "will" and ability to deploy the force sooner rather than later.

For additional sources see the Reut Institute website: www.reut-institute.org

End.