

UNIFIL only protects Israel

By [Global Research](#)

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The expanded UN force in Lebanon is deployed in the south to protect Israel, Lebanon's top Shia cleric said on Monday, according to Reuters.

Grand Ayatollah Mohammed Hussein Fadlallah urged the Lebanese people to treat the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) with caution, saying that the international forces were doing little to stop Israel's violations of UN Resolution 1701, which imposed a ceasefire on August 14 to end the month-long conflict between Israel and Hezbollah.

"The widening of the scope of Israeli violations in the south and other areas in Lebanon and their repetition within the sight and hearing range of UNIFIL forces that don't interfere to stop these violations... affirm that these forces have come here to protect Israel not Lebanon," a statement from Fadlallah said.

"Therefore, it is the Lebanese people's right to put a question mark over its (UN force) role and to be cautious toward it in order to deal with it in a way that would protect Lebanon's security and peace," it added.

Fadlallah's statement came one day after the Italian navy handed over the UN naval force tasked with patrolling Lebanon's coastline to German command.

Germany has agreed to send up to 2,400 military personnel to Lebanon in the country's first mission in the Middle East since World War II.

UN Resolution 1701 called for the disarmament of Hezbollah, the withdrawal of all Israeli troops from southern Lebanon, and the deployment of 15,000 Lebanese soldiers to be backed by an equal number of UN peacekeepers in mainly Shia south Lebanon.

Israeli troops pulled out from virtually all of south Lebanon on October 1, but some soldiers remain in the Ghajar village, which is located at the border between Lebanon and the Golan Heights that Israel seized from Syria in the 1967 Middle East War.

Lebanon has threatened to complain to the UN Security Council unless Israel leaves the Lebanese part of the Ghajar village, which is split into two parts, two-thirds of it lie inside Lebanon and the rest in Syrian territory.

Israeli jets also continue to fly over the war-hit country. Lebanese and UNIFIL officials say the Israeli overflights violate Lebanese sovereignty and breach the UN resolution.

But Israel insists that the overflights would continue, claiming that they're aimed at ensuring that arms supplies do not reach Hezbollah.

The 34-day Israeli offensive in Lebanon claimed the lives of more than 1,200 Lebanese civilians, 30% of them children under 12, and wounded at least 4,000 others.

The deadly Israeli assault also left much of southern Lebanon in ruins and displaced nearly a million civilians, sparking what aid agencies describe as a humanitarian crisis.

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