

Conclusion of Israeli-Lebanese troop withdrawal agreement

Summary and key dates

Israeli-Lebanese-US negotiations (February to May)

Visit of Mr George Shultz to Middle East (April to May)

Approval of draft agreement by Israeli and Lebanese Parliaments (May)

Signing of agreement (May)

Reactions of Syrian and other Arab states (May)

Formation of Lebanese opposition front (May)

After nearly five months of negotiations initiated in December 1982, representatives of the Israeli, Lebanese and United States Governments on May 17, 1983, signed an agreement providing for the withdrawal of Israeli forces from Lebanon, (ii) the ending of the state of war between Israel and Lebanon, and (iii) the establishment of a 'security region' in southern Lebanon, to prevent the reinfiltration of Palestinian fighters into the area. (For the Israeli invasion and occupation of southern Lebanon in 1982,)

During the negotiations, one major area of difference between Israel and Lebanon concerned the methods by which the 'security region' would be enforced.

A statement was issued by President Reagan of the United States on Feb. 22 to the effect that the US Government would 'take all necessary measures' to guarantee the security of Israel's northern border, after the latter's forces had withdrawn from Lebanon. US officials subsequently stated that such measures could include the presence of a strengthened multinational force along the Lebanese side of the border, together with intelligence and monitoring stations staffed by US personnel. Mr Itzhak Shamir, then Israeli Foreign Minister, commented shortly afterwards that Israel was 'not asking for American guarantees', adding that 'no international force will be able to prevent the return of the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) to the border'.

Israeli spokesmen denied Lebanese newspaper reports at this time that Israel had agreed to a US compromise proposal envisaging two contiguous security zones, one (extending from the Israeli border to a line 11 miles to the north) to be controlled jointly by the Lebanese Army and the Israeli-backed forces under the command of Maj. Saad Haddad, and the other (extending to a line 27 miles further north) to be controlled jointly by the Lebanese Army and the multinational force.

The Israeli spokesmen maintained that Israel was continuing to insist on observation posts in southern Lebanon staffed by Israeli personnel (Mr Ariel Sharon, the then Defence Minister, having in late 1982 demanded five permanent observation posts, to be staffed by Israeli soldiers who would have the right to search and detain suspected guerrillas.)

Some progress in the negotiations occurred at the end of February, after lengthy discussions between Dr Elie Salem, the Lebanese Foreign Minister, and Mr Philip Habib, then the US special presidential representative with overall responsibility for Middle East peace negotiations (for whose subsequent resignation and replacement on July 22 see 32314 A). Following further talks with Mr Habib in Jerusalem, Israeli officials said that it was too early to speak of an accord but that 'Mr Habib has drafted an agreement on some less contentious issues'. The state of future relations between Israel and Lebanon remained a major obstacle to progress, however, with the Lebanese Government strongly resisting Israeli demands for a gradual normalization of diplomatic and trade relations.

Dr Salem on March 4 noted that 95 per cent of Lebanon's exports were to Arab countries, and he stated that there could be no question of Lebanon opening the border to free trade with Israel. In response Mr David Kimche, Director-General of the Israeli Foreign Ministry and head of Israel's negotiating team, commented that there would be no reason to proceed with the negotiations if Dr Salem's statement represented the official Lebanese position. Dr Salem, however, said on March 10 (during a visit to New Delhi, for the summit conference of heads of state or government of the non-aligned movement) that the Lebanese Government would reject any political or economic relations with Israel, and that it would not tolerate 'any kind of residual military presence on Lebanese soil'.

In a further effort to accelerate the progress of negotiations, Mr George Shultz, the US Secretary of State, together with Mr Habib and Mr Morris Draper (chief US negotiator in Lebanon), held talks on March 12 and 13 in Washington with Dr Salem and Mr Shamir respectively, concentrating on the question of security arrangements in southern Lebanon after an Israeli withdrawal.

According to the Lebanese press, the US officials had suggested a number of ways forward on this issue, including the establishment of a joint US-Israeli-

Lebanese military commission to monitor the security zone, (ii) an expansion of the multinational force to enable it to play a more active role, and (iii) the integration of Maj. Haddad's forces into the Lebanese Army. (The Lebanese Government was reportedly prepared to agree on the last point provided that Maj. Haddad himself retired, but this proviso was rejected by Mr Shamir as 'absolutely unacceptable', although in an interview on Israeliradio Maj. Haddad had volunteered to stand down if this would assist the passage of the agreement.)

In a television interview during the course of his US visit, Mr Shamir said that Israel was not contemplating a permanent military presence in southern Lebanon, but intended to maintain forces there which would operate in the context of a joint arrangement with the Lebanese. While Dr Salem insisted that the Lebanese Army was capable of maintaining peace and security in the area, a confidential US congressional report which was 'leaked' to the American press on March 22 claimed that the Lebanese Army 'exists only on paper', and that it would not become effective for at least two years.

In early April the two sides reportedly reached a compromise on the security issue by which 'joint supervisory teams' would be entrusted with patrolling the security region. A major factor in the achievement of this breakthrough was understood to be the acceptance by Israel that the troops forming the Israeli component of the teams would be based on Israeli territory, and would only enter Lebanon in the course of team duties-this formula overcoming Lebanese objections to the stationing of Israeli troops on Lebanese territory.

On April 25, Mr Shultz began a Middle East tour which included a number of meetings with President Amin Gemayel of Lebanon and with Mr Menahem Begin, then Israeli Prime Minister, as well as meetings with Dr Salem and Mr Shamir and talks with President Hafez al-Assad of Syria, President Hosni Mubarak of Egypt and King Fahd of Saudi Arabia.

By the beginning of May, the negotiations had progressed to the stage of an article-by-article study of a draft agreement. Continuing Israeli insistence that Maj. Haddad be given command of the Lebanese Army in the south was eventually modified with acceptance of a Lebanese offer that he become deputy commander of a 'territorial brigade' composed largely of forces currently under his command.[see summary of agreement below].

The Israelis on May 10 also accepted, at Lebanese insistence, that the agreement should be signed only by the respective heads of the negotiating teams, rather than by the respective Foreign Ministers.

Mr Ahmad Iskander Ahmad, the Syrian Information Minister, stated in early March that his Government had no objection to a simultaneous withdrawal of Syrian and Israeli forces, but an article published on March 23 in *Tichrin*, the Syrian Government daily, warned that Syria would not accept any agreement which allowed either US or Israeli forces to remain in Lebanon. An editorial in the April 18 edition of *Tichrin* stated that Syrian forces would remain in Lebanon, which was described as Syria's 'strategic flank', if the forthcoming agreement gave Israel any 'geographical, political, strategic or security advantages'. On May 2, President Assad met with Dr Salem in Damascus (the Syrian capital) and stressed that Syria would reject the agreement if it allowed Israel a continuing role in Lebanon. Dr Salem subsequently affirmed that Lebanon 'will never do anything to compromise the authority of Syria'. (For Syrian intervention during the Lebanese civil war in 1976, and subsequent legitimization of this intervention by the Arab League as part of the Arab Defence Force[see page 27771; 28117 A;], President Gemayel formally dissolved the Arab Defence Force in March 1983.)

The draft agreement was approved by the Israeli Cabinet (by a vote of 17 to two) on May 6 and by the Lebanese Cabinet (unanimously) on May 14.

Those opposing the agreement in the Israeli Cabinet were Mr Ariel Sharon, the Minister without Portfolio, and Prof. Yuval Ne'eman, the Minister of Science and Technology and leader of the right-wing *Tehiya* party. Addressing the *Knesset* (Israeli Parliament) on May 10, Mr Shamir reiterated earlier warnings by Israeli officials that the Government would consider the agreement suspended if certain conditions, including the return of Israeli prisoners of war and the simultaneous withdrawal of Syrian and PLO forces, were not met.

On May 16 the *Knesset* after a long debate accepted the agreement by 57 votes to six with the 45 opposition Alignment deputies abstaining. On the same day the Lebanese Parliament unanimously endorsed the agreement without debate at a session attended by 81 out of the 92 deputies.

The agreement was formally concluded on May 17 in ceremonies at Khalde (Lebanon) and Kiryat Shemona (Israel), the two principal venues of the negotiations. It was signed for Lebanon by Mr Antoine Fattal (a senior Foreign Ministry official and head of the Lebanese negotiating team), for Israel by Mr Kimche and for the USA by Mr Draper.

During the signing ceremony, Mr Fattal made a statement in which he stressed that Lebanon intended 'to remain faithful to its Arab vocation, while ending the state of war with Israel'; he asserted that there was 'no contradiction there', and added that the agreement was 'a step towards a just and lasting peace in the region' (a phrase

which had notably also been used in the Israeli-Syrian disengagement agreement of May 1974-see page 26566.

The preamble to the agreement noted that the two countries had ‘agreed to declare the termination of the state of war between them’. Article 1 stated that they agreed to ‘respect the sovereignty, political independence and territorial integrity of each other’, and that therefore ‘Israel undertakes to withdraw all its armed forces from Lebanon’. In Article 2 the parties undertook to settle their disputes by peaceful means in line with the principles of the United Nations Charter. Article 3 provided for the establishment of ‘security arrangements, including the creation of a security region’, the details of which were included in a separate annex[see below].

Article 4 stated that ‘the territory of each party will not be used as a base for hostile or terrorist activity against the other party, its territory or its people’. It further specified that each party would take action against any individual or group which violated this provision, and would ‘refrain from intervening in the internal or external affairs of the other party’. Article 5 stated that the ‘parties will abstain from any form of hostile propaganda against the other’. Article 6 stated that ‘each party will prevent entry into, deployment in, or passage through its territory... by military forces, armament or military equipment of any state hostile to the other party’. (In the event of a dispute as to whether a particular state was hostile, it was agreed that the provisions of Article 6 would be applied in respect of any state which did not maintain diplomatic relations with both parties.)

Article 7 permitted the Lebanese Government to continue to request international forces to help maintain its authority, with the proviso that ‘new contributors to such forces shall be selected from among states having diplomatic relations with both parties’.

Article 8 provided for the establishment of a joint liaison committee, to meet alternately in Israel and Lebanon and to include US participants, which would be entrusted with supervising the implementation of the agreement. The committee would also ‘address itself on a continuing basis to the development of mutual relations between Lebanon and Israel, inter alia the regulation of the movement of goods, products and persons, communications, etcetera’. Each party was permitted to ‘maintain a liaison office’ on the territory of the other party to ‘assist in the implementation’ of the agreement. A ‘security arrangements committee’ would be established within the framework of the joint liaison committee [for details, see annex below]. Paragraph 2 of Article 8 specified that ‘during the six-month period after the withdrawal of all Israeli armed forces from Lebanon. and in the light of the termination of the state of war, the parties shall initiate, within the joint liaison committee, bona fide negotiations in order to conclude agreements on the movement

of goods, products and persons and their implementation on a non-discriminatory basis'. Article 9 allowed the parties one year to abrogate any treaties, laws or regulations conflicting with the agreement. Article 10 provided for ratification of the agreement and for its subsequent modification if such was desired by both parties.

Article 11 provided that any disputes as to the agreement's implementation would be settled in the joint liaison committee, and would thence be submitted to conciliation if they remained unresolved. Article 12 provided for registration of the agreement with the UN.

Paragraph 1 delineated the security region. Paragraph 2 stated that the Lebanese authorities would enforce special security measures aimed at detecting and preventing hostile activity, as well as the introduction into or movement through the security region of unauthorized armed men or military equipment. Official Lebanese Government forces and those of the joint supervisory teams [see below] would be the only armed forces permitted in the region.

Two Lebanese Army brigades would be stationed inside the security region, of which one, the territorial brigade, would be based in the area extending from the Israeli-Lebanese frontier to 'Line B' 15 kilometres inside Lebanon, while the other, a regular Army brigade, would be stationed within the security region to the north of 'Line B'. The territorial brigade would encompass 'the existing local units' (i. e., Maj. Haddad's forces), together with 'Lebanese Army personnel from among the inhabitants of the security region'. It was further stated that 'the existing local civil guard' (i. e. the local militias) would be incorporated into the Lebanese auxiliary forces (Ansar), 'to enable it to continue guarding the villages in the security region', and that 'all the Lebanese armed forces and elements in this area... will be subordinated to the (territorial) brigade commander'.

The structure and strength of the two brigades, as well as the weapons, vehicles and other equipment which they and the other Lebanese forces would be permitted to deploy in the security region, were listed in a detailed appendix to the agreement. Paragraph 2 further stated that deployment of ground radars within 10 kilometres of the boundary was subject to approval by the security arrangements committee, and that 'ground radar throughout the security zone will be deployed so that its sector of search does not cross the Lebanese-Israeli boundary'. Lebanese naval coastal installations were to be permitted in the security zone, with certain limitations imposed on the number of sea surveillance radars, coastal defence guns, and coastal air defence guns. No shore-to-sea missiles would be permitted in the security region. It was agreed that 'in order to prevent incidents' there would be 'continuous communication between the Southern Command of the Lebanese Navy and the Israeli Navy in order to exchange information concerning suspected vessels'.

The Lebanese authorities would also be required to give advance notification of any flights over the security region.

Paragraph 3 covered the establishment of the security arrangements committee, to be composed of an equal number of Lebanese and Israeli representatives, headed by senior officers, with a US representative to participate in meetings of the committee at the request of either party. The committee would supervise the implementation of the agreement's security arrangements and establish and operate joint supervisory teams [see below]. The committee would meet once a fortnight in Israel and Lebanon alternately to 'discuss any violation reported by the joint supervisory teams or any complaint concerning a violation submitted by one of the parties'.

The provisions for the supervisory teams stated that they 'would be composed of an equal number of representatives from each party', but would be commanded by a Lebanese officer, and that in carrying out their functions they would recognize 'that the responsibility for military, police and other control operations rests with the Lebanese armed forces, police and other authorized Lebanese organizations and not with the teams'. The teams would 'conduct regular verification of the implementation of the security arrangements', which would be carried out by sea, land, and in the air. 'If they uncover evidence of a violation or potential violation, they will contact the proper Lebanese authorities through the security arrangements supervision centres [see below] in order to assure that the Lebanese authorities take appropriate neutralizing and preventive action in a timely way...; they will report the results to the security arrangements committee.' The teams themselves were not to use force except in self-defence.

Paragraph 3 provided for the termination of the role of the teams 'upon 90 days' notice by either party given at any time after two years from the date of entry into force of the agreement'.

Two security arrangements supervision centres were to be established, in unpopulated areas near Hasbaya and Mayfadun, to direct, supervise and support the activities of the supervisory teams, which would commence and complete their patrols at the centres. The centres would be commanded by Lebanese Army officers, and would serve as the Lebanese meeting places for the security arrangements committee; in this connexion the agreement stated that 'Israeli personnel will be stationed in Israel when not engaged in activities at the centres'.

A further function of the security arrangements committee would be to 'ensure that practical and rapid contacts between the two parties are established along the boundary to prevent incidents and facilitate co-ordination between the forces on the

terrain'. It was agreed that this would 'include radio and telephone communications between the respective military commanders and their staffs in the immediate border region as well as direct face-to-face consultations'.

Paragraph 4 stated that the Lebanese Government could request 'appropriate action in the UN security Council for one unit of the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) to be stationed in the Sidon area' to assist the Government in asserting 'authority and protection in the Palestinian refugee camp areas'.

Paragraph 5 stated that the security arrangements committee would conduct, three months after the Israeli withdrawal, a review of the adequacy of the security arrangements with a view to their improvement.

Paragraph 6 provided for the withdrawal of the Israeli forces 'within eight to 12 weeks of the entry into force of the agreement'. During the withdrawal, the Israeli and Lebanese armies 'will co-operate in order to facilitate the reassertion of the authority of the Government of Lebanon'.

The text of the accord was in four languages-Arabic, Hebrew, English and French. In the case of any divergence of interpretation, it was agreed that the English and French texts would be equally authoritative.

A confidential US-Israeli agreement was also signed in Washington. Although its details were not publicized, US State Department officials stated that it included a recognition by the US Government that Israel's forces would remain in Lebanon until such time as all Israeli prisoners of war had been repatriated, and Syrian and PLO forces had withdrawn from the country. (Syrian forces, together with several hundred PLO fighters, continued to occupy large areas of northern and eastern Lebanon also below.)

The Syrian Government took a hostile attitude as soon as details of the agreement became known, with a spokesman stating on May 9 that it was 'not an acceptable basis on which to start negotiations for the withdrawal of Syrian and PLO forces'. Syrian Government officials stated that Syrian troops would remain in Lebanon 'for the foreseeable future' and that Syria 'would do all in its power to prevent the agreement's implementation'. On May 12 President Assad said at a meeting with Dr Salem in Damascus that the accord constituted a 'grave danger to Syrian security', and Mr Abdel Halim Khaddam, the Syrian Foreign Minister, stated that Syria had 'rejected the agreement in form and in substance'. He further claimed in an interview published on May 18 in the left-wing Beirut newspaper *As-Safir* that the agreement and the March 1979 peace treaty between Israel and Egypt were 'two

sides of the same coin'. Mr Khaddam had also affirmed that Syria would 'support actively all the Lebanese forces who are struggling against the agreement'[see below].

In a move to coincide with the signing of the agreement, Syrian units on May 17 closed the Beirut- Damascus and Beirut- Tripoli roads, and cut telephone and telex links between Beirut and Syrian-controlled areas of Lebanon. On May 18, *Al-Baath* (the newspaper of the ruling Syrian *Baath* party) claimed that 'the Lebanese Government has lost its legitimacy as well as its capability and competence to direct the Lebanese people, and (it) has become a full partner of the USA and Israel in their schemes against the Arab world'. In an effort to win support for the Syrian position, on May 20 Mr Ahmad and Mr Faruk al-Sharar, a senior Foreign Ministry official, embarked on a tour of Arab states, including Algeria, Tunisia and Saudi Arabia.

Jordan and Egypt both openly supported the agreement, while South Yemen, the PLO and Libya publicly denounced it; the Lebanese ambassador was expelled from Libya and the Libyan ambassador recalled from Beirut. The Damascus press also claimed that the Iranian Government had declared its opposition. Other Arab governments refrained from making decisive public statements on the accord, but it appeared that most were broadly sympathetic to it.

Gen. Kamel Hassan Ali, the Egyptian Foreign Minister, on May 17 called for all 'foreign parties' to respect the agreement, urging them to 'observe the will of the Lebanese people and not create obstacles which could perpetuate the presence of foreign troops on Lebanese soil'.

An Iraqi spokesman stated on May 20 that the agreement must be 'confronted', since there was a danger of Arab states 'lowering their guard' in dealings with Israel. The spokesman also expressed sympathy with the Lebanese people, however, and suggested that they had been forced into the agreement.

Mr Ali ibn Hasan al-Shaer, the Saudi Information Minister, said that his Government supported the Lebanese people, but it was noted that he refrained from commenting on the agreement as such. A similar line was adopted in a statement issued by the Gulf Co-operation Council (comprising Bahrain, Kuwait, Qatar, Oman, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates), which declared that the Council 'respected the will of the Lebanese people'.

After its emissaries had met with leaders of a number of Arab states, the Lebanese Government claimed that the leaders of Algeria, Tunisia, Morocco, Kuwait, the United Arab

Emirates, Qatar, Bahrain and Saudi Arabia had all privately given their support to the accord.

Within Israel, government officials stated that they regarded the agreement as tantamount to a peace treaty, since the two countries had formally agreed to end the state of war between them. The agreement was criticized by the *Tehiya party* and by the Labour Party, whose leader, Mr Shimon Peres, claimed that the security arrangements provided for in the accord left Israel in a worse position than before the invasion of Lebanon.

There was considerable opposition to the agreement within Lebanon, particularly among leftist Moslem factions, and on May 14 a national opposition front was formed after a meeting in the northern town of Zghorta involving Mr Soleiman Franjie, President of Lebanon from 1970 to 1976[see 24187 B;page 27773];; Mr Rashid Karami, a Sunni Moslem from Tripoli and former Prime Minister (most recently from July 1975 to late 1976-see page 27289 and 28124), Mr Walid Jumblatt, leader of the (Druse) Progressive Socialist Party, and Mr George Hawi, leader of the Lebanese Communist Party. After the meeting, Mr Jumblatt and Mr Hawi went to Damascus for consultations with Syrian leaders.

During a visit to Paris on May 23, Dr Salem warned that if the agreement was not applied 'in a reasonable time' it would meet 'a natural death', and he further stated that it would not in any case apply unless Syria withdrew its forces from Lebanon. (International Herald Tribune— Times —New York Times— Le Monde— Guardian— Financial Times Daily Telegraph)

(Prev. rep. Arab- Israel conflict 32228 B; Map Of Labenan 31920 A)

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