

## Special Envoy for the Implementation of Resolution 1559

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Following the December 2004 UN Security Council Resolution 1559 – which aims to strengthen the sovereignty, territorial integrity, unity and political independence of Lebanon under the exclusive authority of the government of Lebanon throughout the country – the Secretary-General appointed Terje Roed-Larsen as Special Envoy for the Implementation of the Resolution. Mr. Roed-Larsen began his appointment on 3 January 2005 and is mandated to consult with the government of Lebanon, other interested states and UN agencies in preparing the Secretary-General's semi-annual report on the implementation of Resolution 1559. The Resolution is somewhat controversial as it is seen by some as antagonistic in tone and was adopted by the Security Council with six abstentions.<sup>1</sup>

Since the adoption of the Resolution, several of its provisions have been implemented. Following the 18-month political crisis in Lebanon and the intense violence of May 2008, the political scene in Lebanon has become much more stable. Elections in June 2009 finally resulted in a Unity Government created on 9 November 2009, with a calm security situation throughout the process. Political rapprochement between Syria and Lebanon and a high-level visit from Lebanon's prime minister to Damascus in December 2009 marked an important step toward the normalization of relations for the two countries. In August 2010, in a move that may positively affect its national security and stability, the Lebanese government granted employment rights to Palestinians living in Lebanon. Notwithstanding these positive developments, violations of the Resolution or a lack of implementation persist. Issues like border delineation with Syria, Israel's occupation of the northern part of Ghajar, porous borders and the presence and interference of Hezbollah, Palestinian and Lebanese militias continue to obstruct Lebanon's advances toward full reaffirmation of its sovereignty and territorial control.

1 The six countries that abstained from voting on Resolution 1559 were Algeria, Brazil, the People's Republic of China, Pakistan, the Philippines and Russia. The remaining nine Council members – Angola, Benin, Chile, France, Germany, Romania, Spain, the United Kingdom, and the United States – voted in favor. See Elizabeth Sellwood, "The Role of the United Nations in Middle East Conflict Prevention," Center on International Cooperation, New York University, 2009.