

UN International Independent Investigation Commission

In April 2005, the UN International Independent Investigation Commission (UNIIC) was established by Security Council Resolution 1595 to probe the 14 February 2005 assassination of Lebanese Prime Minister Rafik Hariri, who was killed along with 22 others in a car bombing in Beirut. UNIIC's mandate was later expanded to include assistance to the government with investigating further terrorist attacks in Lebanon. Initially conceived for a three months period, the UNIIC continued its work until 28 February 2009.

While on the technical side the UNIIC assisted the Lebanese authorities with legal, forensic and analytical expertise in the Hariri and the other cases, the Commission's investigative activities over the years have led to arrests of key suspects. In late 2008 and early 2009, the Commission was preparing for a gradual transfer of its operations, staff and assets to the Special Tribunal for Lebanon with the view to complete the transition by the time the Tribunal would take up its work on 1 March 2009.

The Tribunal was established in 2007 by Security Council Resolution 1757 and is based in The Hague. It is mandated to continue to investigate and then prosecute perpetrators of the Hariri assassination as well as other cases that the UNIIC assists in investigating if they are found to be linked to the Hariri case and are of similar nature and gravity. In its last report to the Council, the UNIIC warned that – against high expectations in some quarters – the launch of the Tribunal did not mean that the investigations were completed. In the same report the UNIIC urged the Office of the Prosecutor to continue gathering evidence to support any indictments before the Tribunal.