

U.S. Statement  
December 8, 2006  
Ambassador Warren Tichenor

Thank you, Mr. President.

The human suffering on both sides of the Lebanon-Israel border earlier this year was a tragedy and remains a serious concern of my government.

Faced with the tragic results of the conflict in Lebanon precipitated by the egregious cross-border attacks by Hizballah, the Council reacted in August with a one-sided and unfair resolution aimed only at Israel. The Council compounded its actions by creating a Commission of Inquiry to investigate only Israel's use of force. As we heard at this session, the Commission report was one-sided and flawed. When evaluating issues such as targeting, use of weapons, and proportionality – which are in any event matters outside the mandate of the

Council – one needs to look fully at all sides to the armed conflict. Nevertheless, in its long list of recommendations, the Commission managed to make a few that would apply to Hizballah.

Now the Council goes a further step of continuing work within that flawed mandate. By condemning only Israel and discouraging an examination of the actions of Hizballah, the Council is rewarding an armed non-state actor, one that is currently trying to bring down the democratically elected Lebanese government, for engaging in repeated armed attacks against a member state of the United Nations. Hizballah has attacked civilians and has conducted its operations in Lebanon in a manner that puts civilians in harm's way. Hizballah deliberately adopted these tactics to camouflage its operations and try to insulate its forces from attack, in such a way that even

if Israel attacks legitimate targets, Hizballah will score public relations points from the spectacle of Lebanese civilian casualties and death.

The United States remains a strong supporter of Lebanon's democratically elected government, and the Lebanese people, who deserve a prosperous and secure country in which they are free to make decisions without fear of violence or intimidation. We urge the Council to live up to its responsibility to consider all sides of a situation -- to act constructively, in accordance with its mandate, to promote and protect human rights so as to end the suffering on both sides and to advance the cause of peace.

Thank you, Mr. President.