UNIFIL Peacekeeping in Southern Lebanon

Christina Greene

United Nations Mine Action Coordination Centre

Follow this and additional works at: http://commons.lib.jmu.edu/cisr-journal

Part of the Other Public Affairs, Public Policy and Public Administration Commons, and the Peace and Conflict Studies Commons

Recommended Citation
Available at: http://commons.lib.jmu.edu/cisr-journal/vol15/iss1/1

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Center for International Stabilization and Recovery at JMU Scholarly Commons. It has been accepted for inclusion in Journal of Conventional Weapons Destruction by an authorized editor of JMU Scholarly Commons. For more information, please contact dc_admin@jmu.edu.
EDITORIAL

I was looking over Issue 14.3 of the journal, and I was quite concerned about the chance of North Korea’s nuclear tests. When I saw that they were not satisfied with their safety measures, I was quite worried about the possibility of a war. But I think that we should do our best to avoid it. The situation in North Korea is very tense, and I hope that they will come to their senses.

Dear Editor,

I was pleased to see the demining project at the Mine Action Centre in Syria. The project has been successful in reducing the number of casualties. I would like to express my support for the work being done.

Maureen Morton, Project Assistance, Inc.

Letters to the Editor

Dear Editor,

The article by Christina Greene on UNIFIL Peacekeeping in Southern Lebanon is very informative. It provides a good overview of the challenges and successes of mine action within the context of peacekeeping operations.

Christina Greene | United Nations Mine Action Coordination Centre

UNIFIL Peacekeeping in Southern Lebanon

Since 1978, the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon has been working to help bring peace and security to the region. UNIFIL began humanitarian mine-action activities and cluster-munitions clearance in Lebanon in 2006. It also began to demine parts of the Blue Line, which is the demarcation line between Israel and Lebanon. This overview discusses a few UNIFIL projects.

M

ine-action operations by countries contributing to U.N. peacekeeping in the Lebanon. The United Nations Mine Action Centre (UNMACC) now coordinates between UNIFIL and LMAC, as well as supporting UNIFIL troop-contributing countries in complying with International Mine Action Standards.

Given the security context in Southern Lebanon, the UNIFIL peacekeepers conducting mine action in Southern Lebanon are fulfilling a unique role. More than 1,000 marked minefields run alongside the Blue Line. While the clearance of these minefields is not yet politically feasible, the need to physically mark the Blue Line requires the clearance of access lanes for the construction of blue-marker barrels. As there is a high level of distrust between Lebanon and Israeli military and UNIFIL peacekeepers provide a neutral force that is able to operate there. The security sensitivity of this area was highlighted in August 2010 when the Lebanese Armed Forces and the Israeli Defense Forces clashed after the IDF attempted to cut down a tree near the Blue Line.

Since 2007, UNIFIL also has engaged in a new project, demining access corridors for marking the Blue Line, and from early 2010, UNIFIL troop-contributing countries phased out RAC tasks and focused exclusively on supporting UNIFIL’s goal to physically mark the Blue Line. Working in conjunction with the UNIFIL troop-contributing countries through the J3 Combat Engineer Section, the UNIFIL Mine Action Coordination Centre has similarly undergone a change in role and focus. In 2009 the responsibility for coordination of humanitarian demining in Lebanon transitioned from the UNMACCC to the UNMACC. In 2009, the UNMACCC now coordinates between UNIFIL and LMAC, as well as supporting UNIFIL troop-contributing countries in complying with International Mine Action Standards.

Given the security context in Southern Lebanon, the UNIFIL peacekeepers conducting mine action in Southern Lebanon are fulfilling a unique role. More than 1,000 marked minefields run alongside the Blue Line. While the clearance of these minefields is not yet politically feasible, the need to physically mark the Blue Line requires the clearance of access lanes for the construction of blue-marker barrels. As there is a high level of distrust between Lebanon and Israeli military and UNIFIL peacekeepers provide a neutral force that is able to operate there. The security sensitivity of this area was highlighted in August 2010 when the Lebanese Armed Forces and the Israeli Defense Forces clashed after the IDF attempted to cut down a tree near the Blue Line.

Since 2007, UNIFIL also has engaged in a new project, demining access corridors for marking the Blue Line, and from early 2010, UNIFIL troop-contributing countries phased out RAC tasks and focused exclusively on supporting UNIFIL’s goal to physically mark the Blue Line. Working in conjunction with the UNIFIL troop-contributing countries through the J3 Combat Engineer Section, the UNIFIL Mine Action Coordination Centre has similarly undergone a change in role and focus. In 2009 the responsibility for coordination of humanitarian demining in Lebanon transitioned from the UNMACC to the UNMACC.

Since 1978, the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon has been working to help bring peace and security to the region. UNIFIL began humanitarian mine-action activities and cluster-munitions clearance in Lebanon in 2006. It also began to demine parts of the Blue Line, which is the demarcation line between Israel and Lebanon. This overview discusses a few UNIFIL projects.

Since 1978, the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon has been working to help bring peace and security to the region. UNIFIL began humanitarian mine-action activities and cluster-munitions clearance in Lebanon in 2006. It also began to demine parts of the Blue Line, which is the demarcation line between Israel and Lebanon. This overview discusses a few UNIFIL projects.

Since 1978, the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon has been working to help bring peace and security to the region. UNIFIL began humanitarian mine-action activities and cluster-munitions clearance in Lebanon in 2006. It also began to demine parts of the Blue Line, which is the demarcation line between Israel and Lebanon. This overview discusses a few UNIFIL projects.

Since 1978, the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon has been working to help bring peace and security to the region. UNIFIL began humanitarian mine-action activities and cluster-munitions clearance in Lebanon in 2006. It also began to demine parts of the Blue Line, which is the demarcation line between Israel and Lebanon. This overview discusses a few UNIFIL projects.

Since 1978, the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon has been working to help bring peace and security to the region. UNIFIL began humanitarian mine-action activities and cluster-munitions clearance in Lebanon in 2006. It also began to demine parts of the Blue Line, which is the demarcation line between Israel and Lebanon. This overview discusses a few UNIFIL projects.

Since 1978, the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon has been working to help bring peace and security to the region. UNIFIL began humanitarian mine-action activities and cluster-munitions clearance in Lebanon in 2006. It also began to demine parts of the Blue Line, which is the demarcation line between Israel and Lebanon. This overview discusses a few UNIFIL projects.
The UNMACC does provide a center of institutional knowledge within UNIFIL; however, a longer rotation by peacekeeping teams would increase their efficiency and familiarity with the mine and explosive remnants-of-war situation in South Lebanon. UNMACC has provided a much-needed support role for the troop-contributing countries’ demining teams in coordination with the UNIFIL Combat Engineering Section; however, disagreements arise between the civilian UNMACC and the military staff from UNIFIL whenever UNIFIL perceives infringement upon its own military chain of command. Coordination of the demining peacekeepers’ troop-contributing countries requires sensitivity to the fact that militaries operate to a strict chain of command and are not as flexible as other mine-action organizations. On the other hand, UNIFIL must also be open to receiving instruction and support from coordinating bodies such as UNMACC and LMAC that have a wealth of expertise and experience to offer for such operations. UNIFIL’s mine-action operations have demonstrated that demining troop-contributing countries are able to provide a significant and unique role within peacekeeping operations and within mine action. While many of their tasks are not necessarily humanitarian in nature, they contribute to stabilization of insecure regions. To ensure the successful implementation of troop-contributing countries’ demining operations, the existence of a coordinating body such as UNMACC is critical to ensure coordination with national authorities and adherence to IMAS/LMAS, as well as the continuation of institutional knowledge for operations, quality assurance, training and accreditation.

see endnotes page 81