

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

July 12, 2007

The Honorable Condoleezza Rice
Secretary
United States Department of State
2201 C Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C.

Dear Madam Secretary:

We write today to express our concerns about the failure to implement the terms of United Nations Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1701 and its impact on stability in the Middle East. We urge you to collaborate closely with UN Secretary General Ban Ki Moon, the Lebanese government, and other officials to encourage the full implementation of UNSCR 1701, including the return of captive soldiers and the end of arms movements into Lebanon for Hezbollah forces.

As you know, Hezbollah demonstrated new and dangerous military capabilities during the August 2006 conflict in Lebanon. For the first time, we saw the use of the Iranian C-802 anti-ship guided missile and the capability to rapidly deliver large clusters of Katyusha rockets and Fajr-3 missiles. UNSCR 1701, which ended the war between Israel and Hezbollah's militia, called on Lebanon to secure its borders and prevent the entry of unauthorized arms, with assistance from the enlarged United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL). Unfortunately, the resolution is not being implemented and Hezbollah is re-arming at an alarming rate with the help of Iran and Syria.

On April 17, 2007, the President of the UN Security Council declared "its serious concern about illegal movements of arms across the Lebanese-Syrian border in violation of resolution 1701." On June 26, 2007, a UN assessment team issued a report, in which it determined that there is "a steady flow of weapons and armed elements across the border from Syria." It also reported that the Lebanese Army is incapable of controlling the border because of lack of experience and equipment and recommended equipping the Lebanese Army with targeted intelligence reports and rapid interception capacity.

A fully re-armed Hezbollah poses a clear and present danger to U.S. forces in the Mediterranean, the safety of our allies, and the future of Lebanon's democratic government. The deteriorating situation in Gaza is sure to embolden Hezbollah. We must take action, lest we face a reprise of last summer's violence.

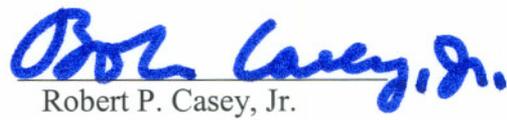
We urge you to focus on this issue and pressure the UN Security Council, the government of Lebanon, and all appropriate international players to enforce UNSCR 1701. It is critical that Lebanon's government gives UNIFIL the mandate it needs to stop the illegal movements of arms across the Syrian border. We must also find ways to assist the Lebanese Army so it can control the border more effectively. Finally, we must do more to bring home the captive Israeli soldiers, whose families are left standing afraid and uncertain on the fate of their loved ones.

Thank you for your consideration of our concerns. We hope you will continue to make this issue a top priority.

Sincerely,



George V. Voinovich
United States Senator



Robert P. Casey, Jr.
United States Senator





