An architecture for peace: deciphering the UN's multidimensional approach to the Israel - Arab Conflict (1967 - 1982)

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Chapter 5

Stress testing the peacekeeping architecture in the Middle East

The Breakdown of the Architecture

Thus far, this dissertation highlighted the building and consolidation of the UN Architecture in the Middle East. Chapters 3 and 4 showed the two pillars which comprise it: security and diplomacy. This chapter explores how the Peacekeeping Architecture, conceptualized as a complex adaptive system, responded to the loss of integral components and the diminution of agency among its remaining parts due to external political pressures. The chapter provides a real-life illustration of how a complex system like the UN's peacekeeping operations in the Middle East navigated the challenges of adaptation and continuity in the face of significant disruptions.

The analysis will focus on understanding the mechanisms through which the system attempted to adapt and overcome the challenges posed by losing parts of its structure—namely, the withdrawal of UNEF II and the abandonment of the Chief Coordinator post together with the side-lining of UNIFIL—and how the remaining components' ability to influence the conflict's course was impacted by superpower politics and shifting regional dynamics. This exploration will shed light on the resilience and limitations of the UN Peacekeeping Architecture when confronted with the dual challenge of operational discontinuity and diminished political leverage. By employing Complexity Theory as the theoretical backdrop for this investigation, the chapter aims to contribute to a deeper understanding of the dynamics at play within the UN Peacekeeping Architecture during one of the most tumultuous periods in the history of the Israel-Arab conflict. This approach will enable a nuanced analysis of the system's capacity for adaptation and the factors that influence its resilience in the face of external shocks and internal transformations.

The Security Council spent most of the 1970s building a peacekeeping architecture in the Middle East to deal with the Israel-Arab conflict holistically. The decade started with one operation, UNTSO, which stretched almost to the point of breaking; a few hundred of its observers worked around every single one of Israel’s borders. Observers faced different terrain and different challenges. In the Sinai Peninsula, Israel and Egypt continuously fought

a war of attrition (Bar-Siman-Tov, 1984). Up north, in the Golan Heights and the shores of the Litani River, UNTSO constantly faced and witnessed skirmishes and tensions grew by the day; the wounds of 1967 were still open. UNTSO "was unable to do more than observe and report and/or limit the intensity of the ongoing hostilities" (Wiseman, 1983, p. 46). While UNTSO's presence and service provided significant value to the Security Council and, to a lesser extent, the parties, it did not have the tools, resources or mandate to prevent another war. By 1970, UNTSO was alone and under stress.

However, the Yom Kippur War changed the UN peacekeeping architecture, as it changed everything else. The Security Council reacted quite differently to the Six-Day War and the Yom Kippur War. On the former, they agreed to engage politically through the Jarring Mission and maintained the status quo vis-à-vis peacekeeping. However, because the Yom Kippur War left too many issues to deal with *after* the fighting stopped the Council decided to deploy a robust military response and, at the same time, begin an incremental political process that started at the tent and concluded in Geneva. The Council worked with such an uncharacteristic unanimity[63] that it amounted to a *consensus.* The Security Council agreed that UN Peacekeeping Operations would constitute the default *modus operandi* to deal with the conflict; at the same time, the Secretary-General had to fight to have a seat at the political table, the Council agreed that the Secretariat was the best –and perhaps only– entity to run the operations.

In the field, the Council empowered Siilasvuo to act not only as a Force Commander but also as the *de facto* Representative of the Secretary-General[64]. He had a broad political and military mandate as Chief Coordinator of Peacekeeping in the Middle East. For the first time in history, the head of a peacekeeping operation was involved in diplomatic work at the regional level. While the Military Working Group discussed military affairs primarily, chapter 4 demonstrates that the separation between short-term military disengagement and

[63] Unanimity only in so far as peacekeeping. The P5 maintained significant political differences concerning the overarching conflict however; they agreed that peacekeeping was the only concrete way they had to keep the tensions low on the ground.

[64] Siilasvuo did not have the title of *Special Representative of the Secretary-General (SRSG)*, which did not exist back then. However, if we compare his mandate with current SRSGs working in peace operations, who have a diplomatic and political role to play we can see he indeed was a proto-SRSG. For a complete analysis of Siilasvuo's mandate, see Chapter 1.

long-term political agreements was, at best, dubious. The former profoundly impacted the latter, and discussing military issues was never outside of the political. The Security Council empowered Siilasvuo to play an active role in the process. The Secretary-General recognised the importance of the role by elevating it to the rank of Under-Secretary-General. From 1974 until 1978, the Secretariat built an impressive peacekeeping architecture with four concurrent operations plus Siilasvuo's office. While the Council, as this chapter shows, had tremendous differences in their interests and views vis-à-vis the conflict, they wholeheartedly endorsed the architecture.

Moreover, because the region was so important geopolitically, the Council spent a significant portion of its time trying to manage the conflict (Saikal, 1998). Of course, this was only partially an exercise in preserving the peace, security and principles of the UN Charter. The Council members had individual and conflicting interests. The superpowers actively worked towards ensuring that peace came under *their* auspices; they wanted to become the indispensable country to deal with the conflict. Moscow and Washington had a direct economic and political interest in the region, which meant they were deeply involved (Yaqub, 2013). This meant their relationship with the Secretariat and reliance on the UN as an organisation was fluid. Whenever they felt they needed a neutral actor to deal with an element of the conflict, they allowed the Secretary-General and his team to get involved. Two clear examples were the negotiations at the tent at km 101 and the chairing of the Geneva Peace Conference. However, whenever Moscow and Washington felt the Secretariat worked across their national interests, they tended to sideline the Secretary-General and the UN as an organisation (Citino, 2019). This chapter deals with two instances where the superpowers imposed their view on the conflict and undermined the peacekeeping architecture.

National interests and *realpolitik* notwithstanding, the Council was relatively efficient whenever they focused on "acute crisis management issues that are but facets or sub-dimensions of the overall Arab-Israel conflict as well as the definition and implementation of temporary stop-gap measures" (Bouillon, 2015, p. 527). The Security Council wholeheartedly (and relatively harmoniously) believed that UN peacekeeping was its only collective tool to deal with this never-ending conflict. However, this chapter discusses two

instances, which shifted the paradigm. Indeed, the parties and the superpowers decided to pursue their vision for peace, which effectively broke down the consensus that tackling the conflict required a baseline agreement at the Council that the UN was the best vessel through which they could keep tensions lower and enforce the cease-fires and peace agreements. In the Sinai Peninsula, the Soviet Union sacrificed UNEF II to make a political point. In Lebanon, the United States agreed to deploy its version of 'peacekeeping'[65], which they could directly controlled and was outside the oversight of the Security Council. Moreover, a non-UN operation does not have to comply with or adhere to the principles of UN peacekeeping.

The Secretariat spent an enormous amount of time and effort managing this conflict. Through the Office of Special Political Affairs, the Secretary-General focused on two main issues: politics and the management of peacekeeping operations. From a purely political standpoint, the Secretary-General had two overarching objectives. First, to the best of his abilities and capabilities, he sought to bring the parties to settle their differences peacefully and end the conflict. However, the first and more pressing challenge for the Secretary-General was (and continues to be) ensuring the parties and the Council include his office in any political process and use the UN's tools, such as peacekeeping. Because the Security Council had a vested interest in the conflict and the superpowers saw the Middle East as a critical battlefield of the Cold War, it was not a given that they would require or even want the Secretary-General to play a role (Gilmour, 2017). The Americans proved this when Kissinger effectively took over from Jarring and paved the way for disengagement. Chapter 4 highlights how in one of Waldheim's letters to Kissinger, he pleaded to the Americans to keep the Secretariat involved. He wielded the political argument that bringing the UN to the Geneva Peace Conference was a much-needed vote of confidence since they, up to that point, executed the Council's decisions and peacekeeping operations. However, he was also mindful that his office was not in a position to *demand* a seat; therefore, he stated that he "did not wish to interfere" (UNA, 1973). After the Yom Kippur War, Kissinger did bring Waldheim into the fold and allowed the Secretariat to play an active role in paving the road towards Israel's disengagements with Syria and Egypt. The Secretariat had the agency to

[65] While theoretically, the US-led Multinational Force in Lebanon was a peacekeeping operation, it quickly became closer to a contemporary operation with a mandate grounded in Chapter VII of the UN Charter. Its mandate and the way the local population perceived it was drastically different from UNIFIL.

think[66] alongside the parties and co-created UNEF and UNDOF's terms of reference. In 1978 however, things started to change. The United States aggressively forced the Secretariat to deploy UNIFIL and did not leave any room for the Secretariat to have any input into the reasoning behind this decision (Nachmias, 1999). This began a pattern where the superpowers pushed the UN aside; and while their approaches and objectives greatly differed, the goal of ensuring their own political supremacy in the region and bypassing the Secretariat was, broadly speaking, the same.

The Secretary-General was mindful of the region's political developments and the Security Council's politics. Through this decade, the Secretariat still had few staff members working in the Office of Special Political Affairs[67] (Ramcharan, 1990). Urquhart, Guyer and their team constantly travelled to the region to meet with Siilasvuo, the Force Commanders, and government officials of every country. In addition, as chapters 3 and 4 demonstrate, the small supporting bureaucracy in New York meant that the abovementioned players had to be heavily involved in almost every operational decision taken in the field. Managing three peacekeeping operations (as of 1973) and chairing the Military Working Group in Geneva was challenging and time-consuming. In 1978, deploying UNIFIL was downright difficult and risky. The Council authorised the deployment of an operation with no overarching legitimacy on the ground and failed to provide it with a robust mandate. The Secretariat needed to invest even more time than it did in UNDOF and UNEF; the Security Council deployed peacekeeping operations to an area without an iota of peace to keep. In other words, UNIFIL was *another* enormous challenge before the Special but tiny Office for Special Political Affairs.

[66] The post-Yom Kippur War political and military process placed the UN at the epicentre. Siilasvuo chaired all meetings at the tent and in Geneva. As chapter 4 illustrates, the UN's presence and chair was not window-dressing rather, played a constructive albeit understated role.

[67] The Secretary-General created the Senior Planning and Monitoring Group for Peacekeeping Operations only in 1990. This coordination mechanism included two Under-Secretaries-General, two Assistant-Secretaries-General alongside the Military Advisor. In addition, the group had sub-groups on logistics and planning. Among the key terms of reference, this group prepared contingency plans, monitored existing operations advised the Secretary-General on budgetary matters. For more see the Memorandum to the Staff: ST/SGB/233 (1990). These terms of reference are interesting because they show everything the Secretariat did not have during the 1970s. They also highlight why Siilasvuo had so much room to manoeuvre; he was doing the work, which was, after 1990, done in New York. More on this in chapter 1.

Chapters 3 and 4 highlight that the setup of this multi-operation architecture resulted from an arduous process through which the Secretariat dealt with the conflict *and* learned how to deal with a regional conflict as complex as the one in the region. There was no blueprint; they needed to create a *modus operandi*. Yet, the Secretariat reacted quite well to the Yom Kippur War. UNTSO proved it was (and continues to be) an vital asset when it comes to crisis management and becomes an important partner for UNEF; within 72 hours of the Security Council's resolution, UNTSO was already reporting from the Sinai Peninsula while Siilasvuo began preparing for the first meetings at the tent. A few weeks after, as the Military Working Group began its substantive work in Geneva, UNTSO and UNEF started to prepare for UNDOF's forthcoming arrival. Fast-forward to 1978, UNTSO once again provided invaluable, time-sensitive assistance to UNIFIL (Erskine, 1989). The Secretariat –through the work of Urquhart in New York and Siilasvuo in Jerusalem– positioned UN peacekeeping operations as the most practical tool in the Security Council's conflict management activities in the region.

Between 1973 and 1977, the conflict dynamics followed a relatively linear evolution. Kissinger implemented his 'step-by-step' strategy to solve the conflict gradually (Stein, 1985). The American high-level political engagement and peacekeeping operations monitoring and preventing further escalations significantly reduced tensions in the Sinai Peninsula and the Golan Heights. While Kissinger's approach did facilitate the disengagement plans, the Geneva Peace Conference failed to facilitate a comprehensive solution. Indeed, as Chapter 4 discusses, the absence of the PLO set the precedent that the Americans were more interested in solving the conflict's inter-state aspects and did not see the Palestinian issue as equally important (Stocker, 2017) . Moreover, the disengagements did not fully address the issue of sovereignty of the Sinai Peninsula –an existential issue for Sadat. Furthermore, Southern Lebanon's situation was a continuously exploding powder keg. So many different actors were acting within Lebanon that its political system was near pure anarchy. By the time Kissinger left office in January 1977, the dynamics were tense, and the agenda was full of unresolved issues.

By the end of the 1970s, the peacekeeping architecture was delivering mixed results. On the one hand, UNDOF and UNEF II performed well. The former received very few complaints,

and no situation ever rose to the level of a crisis. Israel and Syria left each other significant breathing room, meaning UNDOF moved within its AO freely with little to no risk (James, 1987). Similarly, UNEF II faced a few challenges; the km 101 negotiations proved remarkably successful at reducing the chance of another round. The operation itself was large enough to deter the parties from attempting to carve through it. Given the superpower's unequivocal endorsement and support, the parties knew that breaking the peace would have severe political consequences (Diehl, 2015b).

Overall, the success of UNEF II and UNDOF was an early indication of two critical ways the overall conflict was evolving. First, the prospect of another large-scale regional war faded into the background. At the political level, while the Arab League (and the Soviet Union to a lesser extent) continued to denounce Israel's occupation of the Sinai Peninsula, the Golan Heights, and the West Bank; there was no serious intention of attacking Israel again. At the same time, the result of the Yom Kippur War had a profound effect on Israel, which embarked on "the biggest and most expensive military build-up in Israeli history" (Bar-Joseph, 2008, p. 76). The defence establishment sought to crystallise the IDF's military superiority and create enough deterrence. Furthermore, Egypt's position on Israel became more fluid for two main reasons. First, Cairo realised that it could not solve its differences (i.e. the return of the Sinai Peninsula) with Israel militarily. Therefore, it started softening its position regarding engaging Israel. Second, Egypt's top foreign policy priority was establishing a long-term partnership with the United States to access American-made weapons. Kissinger used this to pressure Egypt to sit down and talk to Israel. Egypt started to follow a different route than the rest of the Arab League, which deprived them of a key player; an Arab coalition without Egypt could have never won a war against Israel. Of course, Israel and her neighbours were still at odds, and the animosity never entirely left. However, the dynamics were changing, and Israel never saw another simultaneous attack against her borders, similar to 1973 and 1982. The period of state-to-state conflict was over.

Second, whereas the chance of conventional warfare started to dwindle, the conflict's epicentre began to move to Southern Lebanon, an almost lawless area that neither the government nor the military entirely controlled. The different Lebanese factions continuously fought against each other and the government. At the same time, the PLO's

increasing political and military power in Southern Lebanon made the situation even more complicated (Gil Guerrero, 2016). In 1978, the Security Council hastily and without much consideration for the long-term strategy deployed UNIFIL to do the impossible.

With such a significant architecture in place with decades of institutional memory and a vast network on both sides, it would appear as self-evident that the Security Council would use it whenever a new development occurred. However, the evolution of the conflict leads to the parties breaking away politically and militarily. On the former, the Soviet rejection of the Camp David Accords prevented the Chief Coordinator's Office from assisting in the treaty's implementation. The Secretariat's agency vis-à-vis the conflict dwindled and eventually fell dormant for the next decade. On the military side, two non-UN operations arrived in the region. In 1981, the Multinational Force and Observers (MFO) took over from UNEF II and monitored the implementation of the Camp David Accords –a task it continues to perform today. From August 1982 to March 1984, the Multinational Force in Lebanon (MNF) deployed to Southern Lebanon to supervise a cease-fire between the PLO and Israel and supervise the former's departure from Lebanon to Tunisia. UNIFIL stayed on the ground; however, it was unable to perform its duties because the Council never provided the necessary political support.

These two developments shocked the post-1973 peacekeeping architecture in the region. The first continued a never-ending political push and pull, and the second truly shocked the peacekeeping paradigm in the Middle East. On the political front, the fact that Cold War politics within the Security Council reduced the Secretariat's ability to work in the region was unfortunate; however, not surprising. After all, the Council's willingness to tolerate the Secretariat's activism vis-à-vis the conflict was very fluid. After the Six-Day War, the Jarring mission had a wholehearted endorsement to find lasting peace; however, after the Yom Kippur War, the Council benched Jarring, and Kissinger took the reins. However, what was significantly different after the Camp David Accords was that the Council reduced the Secretariat's room for manoeuvring, *and* nobody took it over for the next decade.

On the military side, however, the developments broke from the existing consensus at the Council. For the first time since 1948, the Council decided to bench the peacekeepers despite

having such a robust presence on the ground. Moreover, in the case of the Camp David Accords, the UN entirely withdrew; however, in Southern Lebanon, UNIFIL remained, albeit it as a lame duck. This chapter discusses how the conflict reached this point and its impact on the UN's involvement in the Israel-Arab conflict and for UN peacekeeping. This chapter will critically answer the following question:

To what extent did the Camp David Accords and the 1982 Israeli invasion of Lebanon affect the ability of the UN Peacekeeping Architecture to perform its duties?

War & Peace: A Tale of Two Shocks

Before going forward, it is critical to discuss why this study treats the peace treaty as a *shock* rather than an accomplishment. As the chapter will note, the peace treaty did not call for UNEF's withdrawal—quite the opposite. The parties involved in Camp David agreed they needed a verification mechanism; Israel and Egypt did not trust each other enough to go on their honour. Yet, UNEF withdrew. The treaty's implementation required a workaround outside the UN's peacekeeping framework. Instead of using all the tools at their disposal, the parties had to go outside the system. The Soviet Union believed the Camp David Accords were nothing more than the consolidation of American hegemony in the region, and they bitterly rejected the manner in which the agreement came about. Therefore, they decided to try to spoil its implementation and they used UNEF to do so. This chapter discusses this shock and sheds light on UNEF's final act in the Sinai Peninsula.

The second shock is, in a manner of speaking, more 'conventional' since it was the escalation of an existing conflict. In June of 1982, after years of skirmishes, failed cease-fire agreements and rising tensions, Israel launched Operation Peace for the Galilee, through which the IDF invaded Southern Lebanon. Between Operation Litani in 1978 and 1982, the situation on the Israel-Lebanon border was very tense.

These two instances are fundamental pieces of this study's research question because the management of both these situations *required* the work, which, in previous years, fell to UNEF II and UNIFIL. In 1973, the Security Council swiftly authorised UNEF II's deployment, coordinated with the Secretariat to plan and recruit TCCs, and instructed UNTSO to lay the foundations for the new operation. In addition, the Council anticipated that Syria and Israel

would eventually reach some disengagement plan, which would naturally require a peacekeeping operation. In short, UN peacekeeping operations were the only game in town. However, these two shocks changed the status quo.

Due to reasons entirely exogenous to the operations, the parties bypassed the existing architecture already in place –which had decades of first-hand experience in crisis management and observation– and the United Nations altogether. This chapter analyses the rationale behind these decisions, the Secretariat's response, and the results.

While these two events profoundly affected UN Peacekeeping in the Middle East, it is essential to state that they were not equally profound. The Camp David Accords produced two pieces of collateral damage. Due to the ardent opposition of the Soviet Union and the Arab World –including the PLO– the Secretariat could not assist in implementing the Egypt-Israel peace treaty. UNEF II's mandate was not renewed, and the operation withdrew despite the peace treaty specifically requesting UN participation in the post-peace security arrangements.

Second, the treaty also envisioned a role for Siilasvuo, who needed the authorisation to perform these tasks. Because everybody else in the region opposed the treaty, the Arab League's collective policy was to refrain from engaging Israel in peace negotiations until they recognised the claims of Palestinian statehood. In other words, there was not an iota of political will to move beyond the status quo. Therefore, the Secretary-General saw no need for a Chief Coordinator, and he let the post elapse in 1979 when Siilasvuo retired. For 20 years, the Secretary-General did not have a representative[68] who engaged with the parties and coordinated the work of the remaining peacekeeping operations (Hylton, 2013).

The 1982 Israeli invasion of Lebanon was tragic and produced an enormous loss of life and devastation. In terms of UN Peacekeeping, it crystallised two critical issues. First, the Security Council did not think this through; it sent UNIFIL to the field with a weak mandate, which it did not have a real chance to achieve. Second, the operation never had the trust of the parties

[68] Between 1979 and 1992, the most senior UN Staff Members were UNTSO Chief of Staff, UNDOF, and UNIFIL Force Commanders. During this period, there was no coordination mechanism in the field, which aligned the work of the operations and the different agencies, funds and programmes of the UN System.

on the ground. Every party to the conflict, at one point or another attacked the operation politically and even militarily (Urquhart, 1983; Wisenman, 1983; Orion, 2016). The operation was rendered so irrelevant that when the United States spearheaded a deployment of a non-UN peacekeeping operation, they did not even bother to withdraw UNIFIL; they left it to witness the atrocities going around as they fought for their survival.

This chapter discusses the political evolution of the Israel-Arab conflict and the impact this had on the peacekeeping architecture. In addition, the Chapter analyses how the Secretariat, the Chief Coordinator and the operations reacted to the evolution. The first section discusses the road to Camp David, and the second addresses the road to the 1982 Israeli invasion of Lebanon.

The United Nations and the Soviet Union: From Conveners to Bystanders

By 1976, the Security Council re-elected[69] Waldheim for a second term. One of his main priorities was to tackle the conflict and reconvene a Geneva Peace Conference to bring all relevant parties to the table. Waldheim engaged in an aggressive media campaign where he gave extensive interviews discussing how he perceived his role within the conflict; he publicly expressed that the Superpowers empowered him to "run with the Middle East settlement ball" (Urquhart, 1987, p. 268). While both Washington and Moscow rejected the implication that they had 'delegated' the issue to Waldheim, it was clear that his agenda for the second term had the Israel-Arab conflict at the forefront. Waldheim wanted to secure his legacy as a successful peacemaker; he genuinely wanted to tackle the Israel-Arab conflict and get the credit for doing so (Urquhart, n.d). Soon after he started his second term, the UN's host country had a profound political shift that saw Jimmy Carter become the newest tenant of the Oval Office.

Waldheim saw Carter's election as an opportunity. After years of acting as Kissinger's understudy, Waldheim believed Carter would be much more willing to see him (and the entire UN System) as a partner rather than the executor of Washington's grand strategy. Waldheim's read was correct. The incoming administration planned to be "far more open

[69] As a symbolic gesture, the People's Republic of China abstained in the first round of voting signalling their view that the next Secretary-General ought to come from the Global South. Afterwards, they abstained.

and democratised, and less imperial, than the Nixon Administration" (Jones, 1996, p. 11). Concerning the Israel-Arab conflict, the administration stated that the best way to deal with "regional conflicts is by addressing their fundamental causes, rather than seeing them in east-west terms and treating the symptoms by relying on containment and force" (Rosati, 1993, p. 464). Carter believed in the importance of multilateralism and structured his foreign policy around it.

Carter and Waldheim saw the conflict and, more importantly, the path to its solution very similarly. Both men believed in bringing all parties to the table and engaging in a regional dialogue to prevent another Yom Kippur War. Moreover, they agreed that the lack of progress was due to the systematic undermining of the Palestinian question at the first Geneva Peace Conference and after that. While both supported Israel's right to exist, they thought it should withdraw to pre-1967 borders; in other words, in their view, the best formula to go forward was 'land for peace'. Furthermore, the Secretariat and the White House agreed that the time to kick-start the process was imminent. Initially, Carter and Waldheim were in lockstep. Unfortunately, this political alignment did not stand the test of time and new developments, and Carter had no choice but to revert to old practices and take what he could get in brokering peace.

By December 1976, when the Carter administration began the transition, Waldheim started his initiative to bring peace to the Middle East. The first step of this new diplomatic push required the Secretariat to get the political endorsement. However, going to the Security Council was a gamble; the Ford Administration was still in charge, albeit as a 'lame duck'; therefore, that would risk a veto. In a move that would have made Hammarskjöld proud, Waldheim took his request somewhere much more willing to listen: the General Assembly.

In December 1976, the General Assembly adopted two resolutions addressing the Israel-Arab conflict and demanding a concrete way forward. Resolution 31/61[70] started by denouncing the lack of progress. Moreover, the Assembly condemned Israel's occupation of post-1967 territories and reaffirmed its collective position that Palestinian people had

[70] The resolution passed with 91 votes in favour, 11 against and 29 abstentions. The United States voted against, France abstained.

"inalienable rights". The resolution stated that reconvening the Geneva Peace Conference was "essential for realising a just and lasting settlement in the region" (1976). A supplementary resolution, 31/62 (1976) (adopted on the same day), addressed the Secretary-General. The Assembly requested that Waldheim resume direct negotiations with both the United States and the Soviet Union to reconvene the conference, and they gave him a deadline. The Assembly wanted the meeting to occur "no later than March 1977".

Furthermore, the Assembly requested Waldheim to submit a report within two months, giving an update on the situation. These two resolutions warrant analysis because they sent a few critical messages. First, the Assembly wanted to show the Security Council that most UN Member States wanted the peace process to move forward and denounced the Council's usual paralysis. Second, the resolutions gave Waldheim the legitimacy to embark on a comprehensive diplomatic initiative. The answers gave Waldheim more power than he had the first time. Unlike then, where he had to plead with Kissinger to 'allow' him to join the meeting, this time, he had the backing of the Assembly to be proactive. In addition, the resolution *requested* Waldheim to engage with the co-chairs to convene the conference "in accordance with his initiative" (Para 1(a)). Waldheim succeeded in reclaiming the political role he had lost to Kissinger. Of course, General Assembly resolutions are not in and of themselves sufficiently powerful to accomplish this; however, the timing of the resolutions, coupled with the political shift in Washington, opened the door for a multilateral approach. Third, the Assembly reaffirmed[71] the importance of inviting the PLO as a standalone delegation at the Conference. The resolution went as far as possible to ensure the conference setup would not torpedo the conference in the same way it did in 1973. While the Assembly never questioned the importance of protecting Israel's integrity as a legitimate Member State, the resolution once again rejected the notion that its post-1967 borders were a legitimate basis for the start of the negotiations.

Waldheim quickly embraced this political capital and embarked on a ten-day mission to the region. He visited Israel, all immediate neighbours and Saudi Arabia. He also met Arafat in Damascus. In addition, he held high-level talks with both Moscow and Washington. After he

[71] The General Assembly adopted Resolution 3375 (1975) which called for the PLO to "participate in all efforts, deliberations and conferences on Middle East […] on equal footing with other parties.

left the region, it became apparent that the critical structural issues that torpedoed the first meeting in 1973 were still there. First, the PLO understandably demanded a standalone invitation and, more problematically, they rejected Israel's request that Resolution 338[72] serve as the basis for the meeting. Second, Israel refused to negotiate with the PLO even if it embraced Resolution 338 and amended its charter. Israel's policy rejected "the political autonomy or sovereignty of the Palestinians in the West Bank or elsewhere in western Palestine" (Perlmutter, 1978, p. 365). This obstacle made it impossible for Waldheim to make any substantive progress. Therefore, the Secretary-General went back to New York empty-handed.

On 28 February, Waldheim submitted his report (1977). The document outlines the main challenges to the prospect of reconvening the conference; the issue of Palestinian representation was the most difficult of all. Waldheim floated a few procedural ideas to surpass the challenge; however, neither side was ready to move an inch. Waldheim's report touches on a critical element of the process, namely the positions of the superpowers. The Soviet Union expressed to Waldheim their unequivocal belief that the conflict required a holistic solution constructed in a multilateral forum. While Moscow was willing to translate the idea of one conference into a more prolonged framework with multiple meetings at various levels, Soviet officials stressed their commitment to moving things forward as long as the framework was multilateral. The Soviet Union was unwilling to relinquish its role as conference co-chair (Gupta, 2023). This was an early warning against adopting bilateral agreements and creating a process that excluded their direct participation. Because the Camp David Accords did precisely that, Moscow denounced them and punished UNEF II.

The incoming Carter Administration kept close contact with Waldheim and endorsed his efforts to reconvene the conference. Cyrus Vance, the new US Secretary of State, travelled to the region almost immediately after Waldheim to build momentum around the idea of having a conference (Male, 1979). The American government showed its deep commitment to the region and supporting Waldheim; however, "Amidst Israeli, Syrian, and Palestinian intransigence, Washington could not get the parties to agree to a set of principles for

[72] The resolution treated Palestinian as 'refugees' and did not grant them legal agency to negotiate on their own behalf.

reconvening the Geneva Conference" (Nemchenok, 2009, p. 606). Vance, same as Waldheim, came home empty-handed.

Carter was undeterred by early setbacks. The Administration worked on a few potential ideas to bypass the issue. The most plausible –albeit highly unlikely– was to fold the PLO *within* the Jordanian delegation. Predictably, however, Arafat rejected the idea from the onset because it had a prohibitive political cost for the PLO, which needed to guard its position as the legitimate representative of the Palestinian people.

The Soviet Union was adamantly opposed to the Camp David Accords for three fundamental reasons. First, Moscow understood that the trilateral peace conference would further erode its influence. Egypt's rebuke of Soviet participation was a significant setback for them since it had been a key ally during the Nasser years. Having two of the most powerful countries in the region squarely inside Washington's sphere of influence was a heavy blow to Soviet foreign policy. Second, the Soviet Union wanted a multilateral process not just for its own sake but also to protect the interests of its remaining allies. The Soviets knew that the peace process would ignore their interests unless they had a seat at the table. The trilateral agreement did not even include the Golan Heights. Third, they believed that Sadat was so desperate to reclaim the Sinai Peninsula that he was willing to sacrifice the Palestinian issues; they were correct.

After Sadat and Begin exchanged visits and Carter reluctantly accepted to act as the direct mediator, the Soviet Union became mainly irrelevant to the process. In retaliation to the developments, Moscow took an aggressive stance against the process and aligned with Arab hardliners (Rubinstein, 1985). The Soviet Union's policy of choice to show its displeasure with the peace process was to prevent the UN from actively implementing all future agreements. Therefore, it adopted a policy of vetoing any resolutions at the Security Council, which would task the Secretariat to assist the parties. UNEF II's days were counted.

As soon as the Camp David Summit concluded, Moscow denounced the process as an imperialist move and accused Sadat of betraying the Arab League and the Palestinian people (Gupta, 2023). In addition, they bitterly denounced the Carter Administration for betraying the commitment it made when they issued the joint communique.

The Camp David Accords

The Camp David Accords were a historic achievement on the road towards peace in the Middle East. It goes beyond this study to discuss the process and outcomes of this historic summit. For clarity, however, it is essential to outline the main outcomes. The trilateral negotiations produced two agreements: the Framework for Peace in the Middle East and the Egypt-Israel Peace Treaty.

The former established a mechanism for negotiations between Israel and its Arab neighbours. It addressed issues such as the status of the West Bank and Gaza, Palestinian autonomy, and the rights of Palestinian refugees. The parties agreed to a five-year transitional period during which Palestinians would have limited autonomy, followed by negotiations to determine the final status of these territories. However, the framework was a significant victory for Israel for two main reasons. First, the framework did not deal with the Palestinian question. "Israel had not committed to eventual withdrawal from the West Bank and Gaza; nothing was said about Jerusalem; and settlements in the Palestinian Occupied Territories were nowhere mentioned" (Quandt, 1986, p. 255). Furthermore, the framework did not request Israel to withdraw from anywhere except the Sinai Peninsula, which, while very valuable economically and militarily, was not part of what Begin saw as rightful Israeli clay (Kuruvilla, 2022). Israeli returned something it never rightfully owned in exchange for preserving what it perceived as its own by right.

On the bilateral front, the Accords laid the groundwork for signing the Egypt-Israel Peace Treaty, which the parties signed in March 1979. This treaty led to the establishment of diplomatic relations[73] between the two countries. Egypt became the first Arab state to recognise Israel. Critically important, Israel agreed to withdraw from the Sinai Peninsula in exchange for Egypt's pledge to demilitarise the area.

An extensive body of literature covers every aspect of the process and negotiation (Quandt, 1986; Rubinstein, 1985; Gupta, 2023; Naidu, 1992; Akehurst, 1981). The next section

[73] Egypt and Israel agreed to exchange Ambassadors one month after Israeli withdrawal to the interim line, provided by the Camp David Accords.

discusses the Accords' impact on peacekeeping architecture in the Middle East, especially UNEF II and UNTSO.

UNEF II, Siilasvuo and the Camp David Accords: Collateral Damage

Israel agreed to withdraw the IDF from the Peninsula if there were sufficient security guarantees. While Israel has significant misgivings about peacekeeping, it supported including it in the peace treaty (Comay, 1983).

Therefore, the Peace Treaty envisioned including UN Peacekeeping as a critical element. Article IV (2) states:

> The Parties agree to the stationing of United Nations personnel in areas described in Annex I. The Parties agree not to request the withdrawal of the United Nations personnel and that this person will not be removed unless such removal is approved by the Security Council of the United Nations, with the affirmative vote of the five Permanent Members, unless the Parties otherwise agree (1979)

A few necessary details vis-à-vis UN Peacekeeping warrant analysis. First, the clause demonstrates that neither party was interested in withdrawing UNEF II from the area. However, when Waldheim discovered their intentions, he explained that any change to UNEF II's mandate required Security Council approval (Nelson, 1984). Therefore, the parties decided to keep the article as vague as possible. The Treaty does not mention UNEF II or UNTSO by name; it refers to them as '*The United Nations Force and Observers*'[74]. Furthermore, the title of Article VI of Annex I, which outlines the mandate, is '*United Nations Operations*'. In addition to the Secretariat's requirement for a Security Council resolution to amend UNEF II's mandate, the treaty kept things vague for four additional reasons. First, the treaty mentions both 'Forces' and 'Observers'. The parties wanted the verification mechanism to have armed military soldiers (presumably those already deployed to the Sinai) and UNTSO officers to staff the observation posts and prepare reports to the Council and the parties.

[74] The term appears 8 times in Annex I.

Second, the provisions of the Peace Treaty are more specific than the mandates of UNEF II and UNTSO. Article VI of Annex I states, "The parties will request the United Nations to provide forces". This acknowledgement involving UN Peacekeeping required a *new* Security Council resolution (Akehurst, 1981). The Article requested UN Peacekeeping to staff checkpoints and observation posts along the different lines, provide verification reports and ensure freedom of navigation through the Strait of Tiran. While UNEF II and UNTSO already performed some of these tasks, complying with all the requirements the treaty envisioned required either enhancing UNEF II's mandate significantly or, possibly, requesting the TCC to deploy additional battalions and/or redeploy more observers from UNTSO (Mackinlay, 1989).

Third, the spirit of this clause wanted to prevent UNEF II from suffering the same fate as UNEF I–which Nasser expelled in 1967 without consultation with the Council– the parties committed to keeping their consent consistent until the P5 unanimously said otherwise. The parties wanted a stable verification mechanism that did not depend on the political mood of the day in either Jerusalem, Cairo or New York. Withdrawing the operation would require a significant policy shift across the board, an improbable scenario (Elaraby, 1983).

Fourth, Article VI of the Annex established a Joint Commission to troubleshoot any problems during the treaty's implementation and serve as a support system to UNEF II. The parties wanted the Commission to serve as a framework through which Israel presented her withdrawal plans. The parties requested that the Chief Coordinator of UN Peacekeeping in the Middle East review these plans work with the Joint Commission (Bar-Yaacov, 1980). Including Siilasvuo made sense. He was the most experienced peacekeeper in the region (and perhaps the world). He had broad respect from both sides and his military and diplomatic roles up until that point prepared him well for the task.

The treaty earnestly sought to involve the UN, which was a testament to the UN's credibility on the ground. For five years, things remained quiet in the Peninsula, and while the operation could not get all the credit for this, its presence helped keep tensions from boiling over (Diehl, 2015b). Moreover, both sides trusted that Siilasvuo was an honest broker who could discuss problems with both sides.

While the Treaty did codify precisely what they expected the UN to do, the parties knew that their decision to ignore the Soviet Union was going to have consequences. Therefore, they jointly decided to prepare for an eventual Security Council veto. The Soviet Union started to signal informally to the Council that it was unwilling to renew UNEF II's mandate. In October 1978, the Council discussed the operation's renewal, and the Soviet Union started making roadblocks. Moscow was under considerable pressure from its Arab allies to block the renewal; however, at this point, Moscow remained on the fence (Elaraby, 1983). The Council passed resolution 438, which prolonged UNEF II's stay on the ground for nine months[75]; the Soviet Union and Czechoslovakia abstained. This was a troublesome development because Israel made their presence a core requirement to withdraw its forces from the Peninsula. Israel[76] requested that the United States ensure it was ready to fill the vacuum (Tabory, 1986). On the other hand, Egypt was keen to keep the operation on the ground because it performed well and wanted to have as much international legitimacy as possible.

The Carter Administration quickly complied. On 26 March 1979, it sent identical letters to Cairo and Jerusalem, assuring them of the commitment to continue to keep UNEF II on the ground and designing an alternative if the need arose.

> The United States believes the Treaty provides for the permanent stationing of United Nations personnel in the designated limited force zone can and should be implemented by the United Nations Security Council. The United States will exert its utmost efforts to obtain the requisite action from the Security Council. If the Security Council fails to establish and maintain the arrangements called for in the Treaty, the President will be prepared to take those steps necessary to ensure the establishment and maintenance of an acceptable alternative multinational force (1979)

By the summer of 1979, the Soviet Union decided it would veto any draft resolution that sought to renew UNEF II. Therefore, to avoid a political showdown, the Council agreed to refrain from putting the issue up for a vote; they agreed to let the mandate elapse. On 24 July

[75] The Council renewed UNEF II's mandate for one year. However, on this occasion nine months was the longest they could without risking a Soviet veto.

[76] Israel always saw peacekeeping with a degree of apprehension. Begin saw UNEF II's troubles as an opportunity to have a non-UN peacekeeping operation, led by the Americans who they believed were more reliable and trustworthy.

(1979), the Secretary-General sent a letter to the Council stating his intention to begin the operation's departure. However, while the Soviet Union wanted to remove UNEF II, they did not discuss UNTSO's future. Moscow agreed to allow UNTSO observers to take on the essential duties of UNEF II left vacant (Nelson, 1984). UNTSO was critical in keeping things quiet in the Sinai in the period between UNEF II's withdrawal and the deployment of the non-UN-MFO. Once again, the operation proved its value in times of vacuum and at the start-up phase of an incoming operation. UNTSO stayed in the Peninsula, and its liaison offices in Cairo and Ismailia continued their work.

The Secretary-General stressed that UNEF II's withdrawal "is without prejudice to the presence of UNTSO observers in the area. Therefore, it is my intention to make the necessary arrangements to ensure the further functioning of UNTSO" (1979). Once again, UNTSO proved impervious to the political strifes at the Security Council. Because UNTSO is based in Jerusalem and has a regional mandate, it did not make sense for the Soviet Union[77] to sabotage it. By 1979, UNTSO observers worked closely with UNDOF and UNIFIL by way of dispatching Observer Groups to support them. Furthermore, the operation has liaison offices in every capital and is an interlocutor whenever the parties need to talk. UNEF II became the latest collateral damage of Cold War politics. The operation performed its duties well and left its AO stable (Diehl, 1988; 2015b; Elaraby, 1980; Urquhart, 1980; Sommereyns, 1980).

The second collateral damage was the Office of Chief Coordinator. By the autumn of 1978, Siilasvuo announced his intentions to retire from active duty and agreed with the Secretariat that he would relinquish his UN post in December 1979. The Secretary-General decided against appointing a replacement, and thus, the office disappeared. The Secretariat went about this significant policy change quietly. In fact, the public reasoning behind this was that "the post lapsed with the withdrawal of UNEF in July 1979" (UN Chronicle, 1980, p. 31). Siilasvuo became the first and last Chief Coordinator of UN Peacekeeping in the Middle East.

[77] On 24 July 1979, the Permanent Representative of Kuwait to the United Nations, who was a non-permanent member of the Security Council at the time, sent a letter to the Secretary-General denouncing UNTSO's presence in the Israel-Egypt Area of Operations. The letter states that UNTSO's presence was the UN's de facto recognition of the validity of the Peace Treaty. On 31 July, Kuwait sent a subsequent letter expressing that the views expressed on the former represented that of the entre Arab Group. The Arab world's objection to UNTSO was, at most, a symbolic gesture. The Council never called into question UNTSO's legitimacy and relevance and the General Assembly continuously voted to keep the operation funded.

While the Secretariat never gave a comprehensive explanation, there are a few reasons why they took this decision. First, the Soviet's bitter objection against UN involvement in the Egypt-Israel treaty made the role untenable. With the loss of the largest of the operations and the absence from the only political process, which was moving forward, the Chief Coordinator had not much left to do. Second, the Chief Coordinator was, by design, a military officer tasked with liaising with diplomats and military officers. By 1980, with UNDOF already in place, there was no chance Israel and Syria would engage in meaningful discussion. In Lebanon, UNIFIL worked in a quasi-anarchic area which neither Israel nor Lebanon controlled. The operation's greatest care became not the achievement of its mandate but the survival of its troops. While Siilasvuo was instrumental at UNIFIL's –within the realm of the possible– there was no further need to have a figure above the Force Commander.

Third, UNTSO had continued to provide invaluable support to the parties when it came to liaising, lowering tensions and reviewing complaints, its Chief of Staff had sufficient gravitas to perform these duties on his own. In addition, even without the office of Chief Coordinator, UNTSO continued to collaborate with UNDOF and UNIFIL through the UN Observer Groups it sent to both.

The office's closure also signalled that, for the Secretariat, the Israel-Arab and Israeli-Palestinian conflicts were frozen; there was no chance for progress, and therefore the Secretariat decided to reduce its involvement. During the 1980s, no relevant peace initiatives occurred; the Secretariat confined itself to ensuring UNDOF, UNIFIL, and UNTSO performed their duties to the best of their abilities. Throughout the entire tenure of Secretary-General Javier Perez de Cuellar, the Secretariat did not engage with the conflict in any meaningful way.

Siilasvuo's role and tasks stayed vacant until the early 1990s. In January 1993, the Secretary-General appointed Chinmaya Gharekhan as Special Envoy to the Middle East process and granted him the rank of Under-Secretary-General. In 1994, because of the Oslo Accords, the Secretariat established the Office of the United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process (UNSCO), which serves as the UN's focal point vis-à-vis the conflict and

peace process. In 1999, because of the Madrid Conference, Secretary-General Kofi Annan enhanced UNSCO's mandate to establish "a unified structure with a clear and recognisable focal point for the organisation" (1999). Furthermore, UNSCO's head became the Secretary-General's Personal Representative to the PLO and the Palestinian Authority.

The difference between these roles and Siilasvuo's are significant. While the former was a General on active duty, UNSCO's head is a civilian –usually a former diplomat– who coordinates the work of the entire UN System on the ground[78]. While UNSCO coordinates the work of the UN System, it does not have direct oversight authority over the operations. The Secretary-General intended to create a regional unified coordination mechanism; Member States, particularly the Arab League, and TCCs rejected this idea and requested to keep the traditional model whereby the operations have a unified command (Hylton, 2013). In other words, the Secretary-General was unable to recreate Siilasvuo's role.

While Chapter 6 provides an in-depth analysis of Siilasvuo's record as Chief Coordinator, it must stress a few preliminary conclusions. From a practical and budget perspective, closing the office of the Chief Coordinator made sense. This tactical retreat acknowledged that Siilasvuo's replacement would have had a much narrower mandate and scope. It is senseless to having an Under-Secretary-General of the United Nations who could not visit one of the most critical areas within his mandate. Moreover, the Secretary-General lowered the pressure on his office because if he had kept the role, the Council would have scrutinised its achievements –or lack thereof.

The Camp David Accords finally ended the Israel-Egypt war. For three long decades, the two countries fought a war, which did not seem to end. Without a doubt, this was a triumph for peace and security. Unfortunately, the Middle East was one of the most prominent battlefields of the Cold War. The Accords were also a significant triumph for the United States, establishing itself as Egypt and Israel's most important ally and protector. Therefore, the Soviet Union reacted in a short-sighted and vindictive manner by 'punishing' the parties and forcing them to design a new peacekeeping operation without UN support.

[78] The Deputy Special Coordinator is also *ex officio* the UN Resident Coordinator and Humanitarian Coordinator for the Palestinian Territories.

In the end, the MFO proved to be a successful operation, Israel withdrew from the Sinai, and the border remained quiet (Mackinlay, 1989; Nelson, 1984). The MFO's success, however, rests on UNEF II's shoulders. For six years, UNEF II was an integral part of the Israel-Egypt disengagement negotiations; it provided assurances to both sides and kept the Security Council informed. UNEF II kept the peace.

While things in the Sinai Peninsula gradually stabilised and Israel performed an orderly withdrawal of civilians and military personnel, in Southern Lebanon, things moved from bad to worse. While UNEF II departed the region, UNIFIL was fighting for its life within a lawless area where nobody wanted them there.

Lebanon: A Multi-Dimensional Conflict

While all four operations worked within *one* overarching conflict and Siilasvuo coordinated their activities, UNIFIL's situation was exponentially more precarious. The operation was facing an inferno, which was unprecedented in the history of UN peacekeeping. UNIFIL worked in "a sea of instability with more than 50 military factions fighting over the territory in and around Beirut, with 30,000 Syrian troops in partial occupation of Lebanon and the constant danger of Israeli threats to attack […] Syrian positions and PLO forces" (Wiseman, 1983, pp. 52-53). The Security Council did not equip UNIFIL to handle such a challenging environment (Mackinlay, 1989).

One of UNIFIL's few positive things was that it could always rely on the architecture operations for operational and political support. UNTSO and UNEF II provided experienced troops and observers to UNIFIL, UNEF II and UNTSO redeployed part of its logistic battalions, to set up the different bases and headquarters. Furthermore, UNTSO Observer Group Lebanon became the last resort for the Secretary-General to employ after the 1982 invasion. On the political front, Siilasvuo was firmly in place as Chief Coordinator and provided significant assistance to Erskine when dealing with the Israeli and Lebanese governments and the PLO. This section discusses why the United States and the Lebanese government decided to deploy a non-UN operation *alongside* UNIFIL. Why did they choose to deliver such an explicit vote of no confidence to UNIFIL? This is ironic since the United States forcefully pushed the Security Council to deploy it in the first place.

While UNEF II and UNIFIL were neutralised, the processes leading to this point and the aftermath differed. UNEF II's destiny was entirely outside of its hands. The Secretariat was not involved in the Camp David Summit. The parties did not consult Siilasvuo or the Force Commander, even though they expected both to play a significant role in the implementation process. After signing the Peace Treaty, the Secretary-General announced to the Council its intention to withdraw UNEF II without putting the issue up for a vote.

However, in the case of UNIFIL, the political evolution was a result of developments in the field. Moreover, the United States and Lebanon decided to push for the MNF because of the challenges facing UNIFIL. In light of the Israeli invasion of 1982, Washington knew that it could not rely on a UN peacekeeping operation. UNIFIL's ill-conceived mandate and inability to secure its own AO became the definitive factor that led to the MNF. Unlike UNEF II which was not part of the Camp David equation, UNIFIL was the decisive variable. Therefore, while the road of Camp David does not include an in-depth analysis of UNEF II and its record, the study of the 1982 Israel invasion is UNIFIL-centric because the operation was a witness (and sometimes even a casualty) of the conflict around it. Shedding light into UNIFIL's initial three years provides the necessary context for the 1982 Israeli invasion and the subsequent deployment of the MNF.

Every peacekeeping operation has to deal with politics. As we saw throughout chapters three and four, it is impossible to have a strict separation of military and political affairs. The Secretary-General created the role of Chief Coordinator to support the Force Commanders in their political dealings with officials from their host countries. Until UNIFIL started its mission, Siilasvuo and his Force Commanders from the other operations interacted with military and civilian government officials. The operations facilitated the implementation of the Israel-Egypt and Israel-Syria disengagements and the latter the Israel-Egypt Peace Treaty. These instruments and the operations dealt with the conventional war between Israel and her neighbouring states.

UNIFIL deviated from the mould; the operation had to build political relationships with state and non-state actors to perform its mandated duties and, at times, even guarantee the safety of its troops. Siilasvuo and the Force Commander needed an experienced civilian political

officer ready to who could support them in building relationships, report to New York and act as the operation's political voice. Luckily, Urquhart found the ideal candidate to fill that role in Tokyo.

Ambassador James Holger[79] of Chile was a diplomat with ample experience in his country's most important embassies. He served *inter alia* as Ambassador to the Soviet Union and Deputy Permanent Representative to the United Nations. After leaving the Foreign Service in 1973, Holger became a UN Staff Member. Between 1977 and 1978, he worked as Executive Assistant to the Rector of the United Nations University (Valverde, Castillo, & Rivas, 2021). Urquhart recruited him to serve as UNIFIL's Senior Political Affairs Officer. His terms of reference included: reporting to Urquhart on Lebanon's political developments, attending sensitive political meetings, and assisting the Force Commander in his political dealings with all relevant actors. Throughout his time at UNIFIL, he communicated with Urquhart directly. Between 15 January 1979 and 14 January 1981, Holger sent 11 confidential monthly political reports. These documents are extraordinary because of their detail, clear understanding of the conflict's dynamics, and honesty. In addition, Holger and Urquhart sent each other multiple letters to discuss UNIFIL's position and the broader conflict. These documents serve as the basis for this analysis of UNIFIL's performance and constraints between its arrival and the 1982 Israeli invasion.

On 15 January, a month after his arrival, Holger sent his first political report summarising the core challenges.

> Israel's unwillingness and Lebanon's inability to implement Security Council resolutions are further compounded by the *de facto* forced restrictions on UNIFIL's freedom of movement […] a reactivation of PLO militancy is also to be expected […] this will place UNIFIL more and more on the defensive, with the possibility of its credibility may deteriorate […] The Security Council may have to display greater resolve and imagination in coping with the situation (UNA, 1979, p. 4)

[79] After his time at UNIFIL, Holger worked as Head of the Middle East desk at the Office for Special Political Affairs in New York (1981-1982). He served in Cyprus as Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General (1982-1984) and later as Special Representative (1984-1988). Afterwards, Holger worked as Director of the United Nations Information Centre in Washington DC (1988-1990).

Holger highlighted that every side was blocking UNIFIL's progress; however, he identified Israel's support of the SLA as the most difficult challenge. The report concludes with a warning: either the United States pressures Israel to support UNIFIL, or the operation will fail. Holger was right. By the time he drafted Report #1, the Lebanese military was on the verge of deploying to Southern Lebanon to attempt to regain control of the area. The Security Council supported this decision. On 19 January, it adopted resolution 444 (1979). The Council renewed UNIFIL's mandate for another six months and appreciated the Lebanese efforts to deploy their forces to the south. However, the resolution bitterly criticises Israel's actions vis-à-vis UNIFIL, mainly because it supports "irregular armed groups" (the SLA). However, while the decision had significant support in New York, the reality was different on the ground. Report #2 (UNA, 1979) stresses that Beirut's decision may become counterproductive due to the risk of retaliation from the SLA. Moreover, the report correctly concluded that unless the situation in the whole country improves, peace in the South would be impossible. UNIFIL's situation deteriorated by the day. Report #3 explains that Israel was not complying with resolution 444 hence "UNIFIL's inability to effect any further development in the south" (UNA, 1979, p. 1). Israel's relationship with UNIFIL was full of tension and, ultimately, mistrust. While the IDF did withdraw from the South in 1978, it never vacated its 'security zone', which was very close to UNIFIL's AO. In addition, Israel's unwavering support for Haddad placed it squarely against the spirit of the operation's mandate: restore state control over Southern Lebanon.

By the summer of 1979, Holger raised the possibility of another war. Report #5 explains that the PLO's rejection of the Camp David Accords was fierce and led to increased attacks against Israeli civilians. Furthermore, Syria's decision to place surface-to-air missiles close to the Israeli border was an apparent provocation. Holger also discusses the other dynamics shaping the region. First, Syria had an enormous military presence in Lebanon, which sometimes conflicted with the PLO. Arafat saw the Syrians as threatening his *de facto* control over Southern Lebanon. The IDF attacked Syrian-controlled areas, which heightened the tensions further. Holger warned that both Israel and Syria made on the record statements warning each other that they were ready to retaliate if attacked. The report concludes that

the chances of an Israel-Syria war in Lebanon were high; however, UNIFIL was not in a position to keep the peace (UNA, 1979)

Holger's Report #8 from 3 June 1980 summarised the root problem succinctly

> The present international, regional, and Lebanese environments do not appear conducive to a lasting solution to the Lebanese problem. This is a multidimensional problem, one that has intra-Lebanese, Lebanese-Palestinian, inter-Arab, Israel-Arab, intra-Palestinian, and US-Soviet connections. It is a problem where religion, politics and energy are intertwined in a divisive as well as an integrative manner (UNA, 1979, p. 16)

UNIFIL was a one-dimensional operation trying to solve a multi-dimensional problem. Holger's reports stress that while UNIFIL performed admirably, it was not a match for this conflict. The operation's mandate was unrealistic and inadequate (Urquhart, 1983; James, 1983). Between 1978 and 1982, UNIFIL struggled to secure its own AO and keep parties from having daily skirmishes. In addition, while external factors complicated the situation, as Chapter 3 highlights, the operation and New York also made critical mistakes during the start-up phase regarding preparation, initial deployment of battalions and logistics (Mackinlay, 1989).

Erskine dispatched Holger to meet with the PLO numerous times to obtain assurances that their forces would not attack UNIFIL's battalions. However, the efforts were mostly futile. On March 1979, Holger sent a letter to Urquhart reporting on a meeting at PLO headquarters in Beirut. Erskine dispatched Holger to Beirut to ensure the safety of a Dutch Battalion due to deploy imminently. UNIFIL had to negotiate access to its own AO and request the parties to refrain from attacking its peacekeepers. The PLO's assurances were, at best, unreliable and, at worst, lies (UNA, 1979). Holger reported to Urquhart that both sides were re-arming[80] and warned that a new round of confrontation was looming.

By 1981, the situation got worse with the "rocket crisis". This was a significant escalation in the low-level war the IDF and the PLO started waging after Israel's Operation Litani. In May,

[80] Holger noted that Israel was increasing its military support to the SLA.

the PLO began to fire rockets in northern Israel while the IDF bombed PLO positions in Lebanon. The situation escalated even further in July. The IDF launched a significant operation against the PLO, which included destroying the PLO's headquarters in Beirut. The PLO sent a large number of rockets to Israel. The parties were on the brink of an all-out war (Kaufman, 2010). The United States decided to intervene in the conflict by sending Philip Habib, a Special Envoy, to broker a cease-fire. Habib's good offices were up to the challenge, and he managed to halt the conflict (Esber, 2016).

In early 1982, the Security Council adopted Resolution 501, which increased UNIFIL's troops from 6,000 to 7,000[81]. In April, the Secretary-General reported to the Council that tensions remained high while the cease-fire was holding. Moreover, the report stressed that UNIFIL remained unable to perform its duties, so the quest to achieve peace in Southern Lebanon remained elusive. The Secretary-General remarked that it instructed the UNTSO Chief of Staff to discuss with Israel and Lebanon the possibility of reactivating the Israel-Lebanon Mixed Armistice Commission (United Nations Security Council, 1982)

This action is gripping because it reflects two critical issues. First, after Siilasvuo's departure, UNTSO became the primary interlocutor between the Secretariat and the AO countries. Second, the Secretary-General and the Security Council wanted to try everything possible to avert another war; however, they knew the prospect of reactivating the commission was almost none. Moreover, even if UNTSO managed to start the process, the Lebanese government did not have control over Southern Lebanon. Therefore, the commission's decisions would be, at most, a symbolic gesture.

Unfortunately, the cease-fire was not comprehensive enough to halt the skirmishes, and the Security Council's resolutions did not strengthen UNIFIL's hand. Unlike Egypt in 1967, when Egypt expelled UNEF I before invading its AO, Israel did not even bother to request UNIFIL to withdraw; Jerusalem treated the operation as a non-issue and invaded Lebanon regardless

[81] The report indicates, "Ghana, Ireland, Nepal and Norway have agreed to increase their contingents by 221, 70, 30 and 20 men, respectively" (p.2). In addition, the French government pledged a 600-strong battalion. The troops arrived in the spring, 1982.

of its presence. The IDF called for a meeting with the UNIFIL Force Commander[82] on the morning of the invasion and informed him after the troop movement began (Erskine, 1989).

UNIFIL was not in a position where it could do something about it. By the time the rocket crisis started, UNIFIL had been on the ground for three years and had a mixed record. The operation's most pressing activity during this period was defending itself from heavy attacks from both sides (Parker, 1986). UNIFIL did not count with the protection, let alone the trust of anybody on the ground. While the Security Council continued to renew UNIFIL's mandate and even sent 1,000 more troops, the operation faced an impossible mission (Houghton & Trinka, 1984). Understanding UNIFIL's weak performance requires revisiting the way and reasons the Security Council deployed it in the first place. Establishing a large operation in Southern Lebanon was not a well-thought idea with the support of the entire Security Council or the Secretariat. The United States forced the Security Council to adopt a resolution after a single day of discussions and completely ignored the Secretariat's profound opposition to the prospects of sending peacekeepers to such a hostile AO (Nachmias, 1996).

By 1982, the status quo was horrendous. Holger communicated to Urquhart that an Israeli offensive was imminent. On 5 June 1982, Israel launched *Operation Peace for Galilee.* The Operation had multiple objectives. First, expelling the PLO from Southern Lebanon; second, neutralising the Syrian[83] threat from Lebanon. Israel sought to eliminate all threats coming from Lebanon with one operation. The reasons the Israeli government engaged in such a large-scale action are threefold. First, the PLO's military capability was significant and therefore, preventing them from attacking Israel's northern border required the IDF to keep the PLO at least 50 km away. The PLO was transforming into a conventional military with enhanced training and capabilities. Second, securing the border required clashing with Syria,

[82] On February 1981, Lt Gen William O'Callaghan of Ireland succeeded Erskine as Force Commander. He remained on his post until 1986, making him the longest-serving Force Commander in UNIFIL's history. Erskine returned to the post of UNTSO Chief of Staff, which he held until 1986. This continued the trend of moving leadership between the operations. Reappointing Erskine was a sensible and practical choice; after Siilasvuo's retirement, he became the most experienced peacekeeper in the Middle East.
For more details about the Chiefs of Staff and Force Commanders in the region, see Chapter 2.

[83] While Syria and Israel attacked each other from the Israel-Lebanon border, the Golan Heights remained quiet. Due to the Heights' proximity to Damascus, if Syria would have attacked Israel from that sector, the IDF had the advantage if could use artillery against the Syrian capital. It was less risky for Syria to engage Israel from outside its borders.

which directed the IDF to prepare to fight two enemies at the same time. Syria and the PLO, while different entities, coordinated their military actions (Yaniv & Lieber, 1983). The Israeli Cabinet committed around 90,000 troops, 800 tanks and hundreds of aircraft. After the Camp David Accords, the Israel-Lebanon border became the epicentre of the conflict (Freilich, 2012).

UNIFIL tried to stop the IDF advance; however, they only managed to slow them down briefly (Erskine, 1989; Göoksel, 2007). The invasion had profound consequences for UNIFIL. The operation's *de facto* AO became much smaller. UNIFIL lost its freedom of movement and dealt with militias who constantly harassed and attacked the soldiers. Furthermore, "the civilian population in the UNIFIL area, which had increased by over 200,000 in the period before the second invasion, was now bolstered by a further 150,000" (Parker, 1986, p. 70). Such a drastic increase in the refugee population put a strain on UNIFIL and the entire UN System; the invasion created a large-scale humanitarian crisis.

For the duration of the invasion, UNIFIL played a minimal role. The operation focused on providing humanitarian assistance and protecting of civilians, and ensuring the protection of its own troops. In addition, UNIFIL –with the assistance of UNTSO Observers– continued to report violations within its AO. In other words, UNIFIL became a glorified bystander with no power to do anything other than watch (Murphy, 2012).

Newly elected Secretary-General[84], Javier Perez de Cuellar, decided to be as active as he could in the quest for peace. During the entire invasion, the UN Chief criticised the Security Council for their unwillingness to prevent the violence (De Soto, 2018). Moreover, while he understood the Secretariat was not in a position to stop the invasion, he believed the organization had to exhaust every possible option. Therefore, Perez de Cuellar, as all his predecessors before him, reached out to one of the UN's most reliable actors: UNTSO

UNTSO in Lebanon: the UN's last resort

The invasion paralysed UNIFIL. A peacekeeping operation whose AO is invaded by a foreign military cannot be effective. The IDF took control over Southern Lebanon with

[84] On 1 January 1982, Javier Perez de Cuellar of Peru replaced Waldheim as Secretary-General.

overwhelming power. After quickly overpowering the South, the IDF moved to take the capital. A decisive moment in the invasion was the siege of Beirut. The IDF encircled the Lebanese capital from June to August. Heavy fighting, significant civilian casualties, and widespread destruction of infrastructure characterised the siege. The Siege of Beirut prompted international outcry and increased diplomatic efforts to end the war.

While UNIFIL remained sidelined, the Secretariat had another card it could play: UNTSO. Indeed, its observers had ample experience supporting UNIFIL by staffing OPs across the border (Myers & Dorn, 2022). Therefore, the Secretary-General began negotiations for the observers to be more active. Initially, Israel was adamantly against authorising UN Observers to enter Beirut; the IDF did not want them to report on their activities (Comay, 1983). The Lebanese government, however, formally requested the Council to authorise their deployment.

After weeks of intense negotiations, the Security Council unanimously adopted resolution 516 (1982). The resolution authorised the Secretary-General to deploy UNTSO to "monitor the situation in and around Beirut". UNTSO, true to form, could react within a matter of hours. Erskine redeployed 28 observers to Beirut. However, the IDF informed UNTSO "that until so ordered by [the] government, 'no cooperation will be extended to UNTSO personnel'" (Nelson, 1984, p. 72). Israel took the opportunity to continue its policy of undermining the operations. Jerusalem saw an opportunity to dwindle the UN's relevance in the region by opposing its presence. While they kept their consent to UNTSO and UNIFIL's mandates and presence, they did not want them in Beirut.

The Secretary-General submitted a Special Report to the Security Council (1982) informing them that the UNTSO Chief of Staff had high-level discussions with Israel and Lebanon to discuss the cease-fire. Erskine visited the Israeli Foreign Ministry in Jerusalem, where he learned that the issue of UN Observers was on the cabinet's agenda and that they would communicate Israel's decision shortly. Later, he met with the Commander of the Lebanese Armed Forces, who stressed his country's willingness to engage with UNTSO. Erskine tried to meet Arafat. However, he was unable to secure a meeting. The PLO informed the Secretary-General directly of their willingness to cooperate with UNTSO.

As the summer passed, the IDF kept control of Beirut, and in September, one of the darkest moments of the entire campaign took place: the Sabra and Shatila massacre. Between 16 and 18 September, Israeli-allied Lebanese Christian Falange militia members entered the Palestinian refugee camps of Sabra and Shatila in Beirut. They killed hundreds, if not thousands, of civilians, including women and children. The massacre occurred in the aftermath of the assassination of Lebanese President-elect Bashir Gemayel, a leader of the Falange party. The Falangists blamed the Palestinian factions for his death and sought revenge. The IDF, which had encircled Beirut during the invasion, allowed the Falangists to enter the camps. While the IDF did not directly participate in the killings, the Israeli government –namely the Minister of Defence, the Chief of the Defence Staff and the Prime Minister– had the responsibility of failing to prevent or stop the massacres (Temkin, 1987)

The Security Council, once again, adopted a resolution to address the developments. Resolution 520 took note of Gemayel's assassination, requested the IDF to retreat to the position it held until 15 September –a day before the massacre– and requested the Secretary-General to deliver a briefing on the situation within 24 hours.

On 18 September, he submitted a Report to the Council (1982). The document shares the initial reports submitted by the observers. The Secretary-General took the opportunity to remind the Council that he had requested to increase UN Observers' presence since June. Furthermore, the also reminded the Council that while it endorsed his recommendation to enhance the number of observers and widen their duties–through resolution 516– nothing changed on the ground. The report also stresses that the ten observers in Beirut were doing their best to keep the Council appraised of the situation. The report contained strong language from an assertive Secretary-General. The United States decided to answer his call for peace, albeit in a very American way.

The United States, led by special envoy Philip Habib, was crucial in mediating between the various parties and negotiating a ceasefire (Eisenberg, 2009). After weeks of negotiations, the PLO and Israel reached an agreement. The PLO agreed to leave Southern Lebanon, and the IDF agreed to allow them to do so safely. The United States decided against enhancing UNIFIL's mandate and opted to deploy a non-UN operation. Together with the United

Kingdom, France, and Italy, they deployed the MNF and mandated it to ensure the safe evacuation of the PLO fighters and to help restore stability in Beirut (Nelson, 1984). The MNF's presence aimed to prevent further violence and protect the civilian population. The ceasefire agreement also provided a framework for the IDF's staggered withdrawal from Beirut and Lebanon.

It is essential to clarify that the MNF did not replace UNIFIL. The operations had different mandates. The former sought to support the Lebanese government in establishing Beirut, facilitate the PLO's evacuation from Beirut, and protect the civilian population. UNIFIL, at least on paper, continued to work towards ensuring the IDF's withdrawal from *Southern* Lebanon and aid the Lebanese government in gaining control of the area (Weinberger, 1983).

The United States pushed the Security Council and the Secretariat to deploy UNIFIL to save the Camp David Accords. UNIFIL did not achieve its goals because the Council needed to give it the necessary support to do so. A few years later, the United States pushed for a non-UN operation because it did not trust UNIFIL (Mackinlay, 1989). While the MNF did not have the same mandate as UNIFIL, the Council could have enhanced UNIFIL's mandate[85] instead of dispatching an entirely new operation. The United States decided to refrain from forcing the Council to re-invigorate UNIFIL's mandate because it did not see the UN's involvement as essential.

While the MNF showed early success, it ran into significant challenges. After facilitating the PLO's departure and stabilising Beirut, the situation in Lebanon worsened (Robinson, 2022). The MNF increasingly became a target of attacks by various factions, including radical Shiite groups such as Hezbollah. These attacks led to significant casualties among the MNF troops, including the devastating Beirut barracks bombings in October 1983, which killed 241 U.S. service members and 58 French paratroopers.

The MNF was unable to maintain its neutrality. Lebanon's political system remained unstable while the United States wanted Beirut to have peace; it also had a specific

[85] In response to the 2006 Israel-Hezbollah War, the Security Council significantly enhanced UNIFIL's mandate and size. For more see Novosseloff (2015a).

preference for whom it wanted to see in power. Therefore, the MNF was as a partisan foreign operation with a pro-western agenda. By 1984, the United States and allies ran out from political will to keep the MNF and withdrew.

Lebanon's political, security and economic challenges only increased after the MNF's withdrawal. The Security Council, despite all these difficulties did not adopt UNFIL's mandate. The operation remained frozen in time. UNIFIL faced numerous obstacles in, such as limited resources, hostility from all the parties involved, and the complex nature of the conflict. Nevertheless, to this day, UNIFIL continues to work in a hostile environment trying to keep stability in one of the world's most sensitive political landscapes.

Conclusion

Incorporating Complexity Theory into our understanding of the UN Peacekeeping Architecture's response to the shocks of the Camp David Accords and the 1982 Israeli invasion of Lebanon provides a nuanced perspective on the system's resilience and adaptability. This approach allows us to dissect the architecture's internal coherence and robustness, alongside its vulnerabilities in the face of superpower dynamics during the Cold War era.

The significant shocks to the peacekeeping architecture underscored a critical limitation in the UN system's ability to influence the conflict independently of the geopolitical currents shaped by the Cold War. Despite the internal coherence and the operational coordination mechanisms that defined the interdependent actors within the UN's peacekeeping efforts, the architecture found itself particularly vulnerable to the overarching influence of superpower politics. The withdrawal of UNEF II following the Camp David Accords and the side-lining of UNIFIL during the Israeli invasion of Lebanon highlight how the sustainability and success of a system orchestrated by the United Nations hinge on robust support from the Security Council, especially from its permanent members. This evidences that while a complex system like the Architecture possesses inherent strengths in terms of adaptability and coordination, its resilience is significantly compromised in the absence of unified backing from the global powers that dictate the Security Council's dynamics.

Despite these shocks, the remaining components of the peacekeeping architecture did not succumb to a complete breakdown. Instead, they maintained and adapted the coordination mechanisms established by Siilasvuo, demonstrating the system's inherent capacity for adaptation. Operations such as UNTSO, UNDOF, and UNIFIL continued to support each other, with UNTSO, for instance, persisting in its role of providing observers to the other operations. This enduring coordination underscores that even when a complex system experiences significant external shocks, it does not necessarily entail the disintegration of connections between its parts. Instead, the system adapts, striving to preserve its operational coherence and maintain open lines of communication and support among its components. This adaptability is indicative of the resilience embedded within complex systems, which, even in the face of severe challenges, seek to sustain their core functions and collaborative dynamics.

By applying Complexity Theory to analyze the UN Peacekeeping Architecture's response to these critical events, we gain insights into the dual nature of complex systems: their vulnerability to external pressures and their inherent capacity for resilience and adaptation. This analysis not only enriches our understanding of the UN's role in international peacekeeping but also highlights the importance of strategic backing from the Security Council and the international community to bolster the efficacy and sustainability of peacekeeping

The Camp David Accords: The End of Conventional War

The Camp David Accords are a historic step in the path towards peace. However, the parties did not reach this milestone because of multilateralism and the United Nations; they did so in spite of them. While the accords were successful in establishing peace between Israel and Egypt, they also led to a more fragmented approach to the peace process. Without Egypt, the rest of the region was unable to continue to speak with one voice opposing Israel’s occupation and demanding the return to the 1967 borders. The region bitterly rejected Egypt’s decision, which led to Egypt's temporary expulsion from the Arab League and Sadat’s assassination.

The Soviet Union, a close ally of the Arab States and the PLO in the Israel-Arab conflict, expressed its anger at the Accords by withholding its support to UNEF II. While their opposition had legitimate reasons such as the undermining of the Palestinian question, their anger stemmed from the fact the United States went back on its word and undermined their shared objective of reconvening Geneva. This would subsequently influence their decision increase its support of Syria, and the PLO, thereby complicating the dynamics of the conflict further.

For the Secretariat, the Camp David Accords had a significant negative effect as they lost two critical pieces of the architecture. While the literature covered UNEF II's withdrawal in depth, the loss of the Office of Chief Coordinator remains understudied. While the post existed only for a few years, it was a critical part of the UN's strategy to manage the conflict.

The Israel Invasion of Lebanon: A Shift in the Narrative

The Israeli invasion of Lebanon in 1982 had a profound impact in the dynamics of the Israel-Arab conflict as it pushed the issue of Palestinian Statehood to the epicentre. Between the mid-1970s until the invasion, the PLO had a state within a state in Southern Lebanon. They controlled most of the area and acted with complete impunity. The PLO used the region's proximity to Israel to, continuously, attack both civilian and military targets. Furthermore, the invasion and subsequent occupation led to a high number of casualties and displacement of people, creating a humanitarian crisis.

While Israel achieved its initial objective of expelling the PLO from its northern border, the IDF did not destroy the PLO. In fact, it gave it significant political capital across the region and worldwide. Arafat used this as an opportunity to cement the support of over half the UN Member States to the cause of Palestinian statehood. In addition, the invasion fostered the creation of radical Islamist movements such as Hamas and Hezbollah. In addition, the Sabra and Shatila massacre, an act for which the IDF was indirectly responsible, increased the international support for the Palestinian strife and placed their quest at the centre of the conflict. By the time Israel laid siege to Beirut, the conflict's most pressing issue was not an inter-state competition but an asymmetrical war between a State and a non-state actor. Of

course, the invasion did not create the Israel-Palestinian conflict however, it displayed that unless this issue is resolved, and the chances of peace in the region are futile.

For the UN Peacekeeping architecture in the Middle East, the invasion displayed that the UN was not equipped to deal with the Israel-Palestine conflict. UNEF II and UNDOF partially succeeded in achieving their mandates only because the chances of another Yom Kippur-style war rapidly dwindled after 1974. Their mandates were clear; the parties consented to have the operations and, to a certain extent, cooperated with them. UNIFIL did not have the consent or legitimacy from the key stakeholders in Southern Lebanon.