

Israel's new ground offensive and the UN peacekeeping plan, Jurist August 9, 2006
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Anthony D'Amato [Northwestern University School of Law]: "Israel's decision to launch a massive ground attack on Lebanon appears to entail an unnoticed and unintended effect.

In the past weeks the Security Council had been scrambling to come up with enough national pledges for troops to constitute a U.N. peacekeeping force for southern Lebanon. At first, Turkey seemed to be the most willing to supply troops. Next came France.

Then on Monday, August 7th, the Lebanese government said it would send its own troops, numbering perhaps 15,000, to police the border areas in southern Lebanon. This proposal would obviate the need for an international peacekeeping force. The major parties, including Israel and the United States, were delighted with the proposal, as it seemed to bypass the extremely difficult task of amassing an international force.

But there was a catch to it. Lebanon said it would not deploy its troops unless Israel withdrew all its ground troops from Lebanon.

However, upon reflection, it is not a "catch" but a necessity.

If any peacekeeping forces, whether from Lebanon, Turkey, France, Canada, etc., were to be deployed in southern Lebanon, that deployment would simply replace an equal number of Israeli forces now stationed there. The Israeli troops would then be free to join the Israeli army moving up toward Beirut and the Bekaa valley.

Thus the injection of Lebanese or international peacekeepers into southern Lebanon would constitute direct military assistance to Israel. So long as Israel maintains ground troops in Lebanon (and the prognosis is that they will be there for at least 30 days), the idea of a peacekeeping force is lopsided and could not be acceptable to the Arab states.

I argued in a recent [JURIST editorial](#) that the draft UN resolution was unlikely to bring about peace in Lebanon. Subsequent events appear to have made it even more unlikely."