



Office of the Special Coordinator
for Lebanon

Bureau du Coordinateur Spécial
pour le Liban

**United Nations Special Coordinator for Lebanon Michael Williams
Statement Following Meeting with Defense Minister Elias Murr
Beirut, Lebanon**

Wednesday, 03 February 2010

Good Morning.

I just met with Minister of Defense, H.E. Elias Murr. It was a very good meeting.

Our discussions today touched on the implementation of Resolution 1701. I informed the Minister that the twelfth report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of that resolution is due to the Security Council at the end of this month, and we discussed various aspects relating to the implementation of the resolution.

Last week, I visited Israel also in line with the regular consultations on 1701 and I was pleased to hear from the Israeli officials their continued commitment to the prevailing cessation of hostilities with Lebanon. Of course, more needs to be done and we are hoping that progress can be made in order to move from the cessation of hostilities to a more enduring ceasefire between the two countries.

The Minister and I agreed that one of the successes achieved by Resolution 1701 has been the excellent cooperation between UNIFIL and the Lebanese Army. UNIFIL's new Force Commander, Maj.-Gen. Alberto Asarta Cuevas, officially took over his functions last Thursday. At the official hand over ceremony in Naqoura last week, Minister Murr stated, and reiterated to me today, Lebanon's commitment to the full implementation of Resolution 1701, which we warmly welcome.

We were also glad that UNIFIL could be of assistance to the Lebanese Army during the search and rescue operations that followed the tragic accident of the crash of the Ethiopian airplane off the coast of Beirut last Monday.

Thank you.
