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Bureau du Coordinateur Spécial
pour le Liban

**United Nations Special Coordinator for Lebanon, Michael C. Williams
Statement following Meeting with Speaker of Parliament Nabih Berri**

Beirut, Lebanon

Friday, 06 May 2011

Good afternoon.

I want to thank the Speaker of Parliament, H.E. Nabih Berri, for receiving me today and for discussing many issues with me, including the situation obviously in Lebanon and in the wider Middle East.

I agreed with the Speaker that Lebanon needs an active and functioning government and the sooner the better. There are many concerns of importance to ordinary Lebanese people that need to be addressed, irrespective of their confession or their politics. These include social issues, economic issues but also security concerns.

The Speaker and I also discussed the developments in the Arab world, the changes that have been taking place and the emphasis that the Secretary-General has put on the need for dialogue and reforms, whether in Syria or Libya or Bahrain and to refrain from violent responses to legitimate expressions of popular aspirations. All governments need to respect basic human rights and to engage in dialogue.

We also discussed again with the Speaker today the question of maritime issues, maritime resources and reiterated the UN's position that Lebanon was fully entitled to take the necessary measures to explore and exploit such resources within its territorial waters. This is one more reason, a very important reason, why a new government should be formed as soon as possible.

Thank you very much.
