



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 Caretaker Foreign Minister Ali Shami
Beirut, Lebanon**

Tuesday, 08 March 2011

I just had an excellent meeting with the Foreign Minister, Mr. Ali Shami and our discussions were about two main issues.

One, the Minister wanted to discuss with me the question of Lebanon's maritime borders of the Exclusive Economic Zone and the question of the exploration and exploitation of the natural resources that may be in the Seas of Lebanon. We want to work closely with the Minister and with the Lebanese Government on this issue, which we believe is vital for Lebanon's economic future and wellbeing and we will do all we can to support this. And of course the Lebanese Government also must take some steps itself, demarcating borders with all its neighbours.

Then the second very important issue we discussed, and this is a critical issue for Lebanon, was the question of cluster bombs. Lebanon has suffered so much damage and has suffered so many casualties as a result of the cluster bombs dropped during the war of 2006. We believe that it is very fitting, very appropriate, that Lebanon in six months time, in September, will host the second meeting of the State parties to the Convention on Cluster Munitions, which will take place here in Beirut between September 12 and 16. The first meeting was in Laos, like Lebanon, a small country in south-east Asia that suffered in the past so much from bombing and many victims of cluster bombs. The next meeting will be here in Beirut and we in the UN want to work as closely as possible with the Minister and with the Government in making this event a great success.

Thank you very much. Merci bien.

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