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

Beirut, Lebanon

Monday, 11 April 2011

Good afternoon.

I just had a very good meeting with H.E. the Speaker of Parliament, Mr. Nabih Berri.

We discussed many issues. I briefed the Speaker on my recent visit to New York and the discussion of Security Council Resolution 1701.

We also discussed the situation in Lebanon, including the process of government formation. I expressed my hope that a government would be formed soon to address the needs of the Lebanese people, especially with a view to their social and economic concerns but also the security situation.

I also expressed my concern again today to Speaker Berri about the abduction of the seven Estonian cyclists in the Beqaa Valley. I take this opportunity once again to appeal for their immediate release so that they can return to their homes and families. No purpose whatsoever is served by their continued detention.

I will also be discussing these issues shortly with Minister of the Interior, Minister Ziad Baroud, later this afternoon.

There was another issue that we also discussed with the Speaker, namely the issue of Cote D'Ivoire. We are all conscious of the very difficult situation that remains on the ground and also of the fact that tens of thousands of Lebanese live in Cote D'Ivoire. Some have already returned to Lebanon. The good news is that we have no reports of any serious injuries and no fatalities amongst the Lebanese in Cote D'Ivoire. The United Nations, in association with France, is doing all it can to stabilize the situation on the ground. We will keep the Speaker and the Lebanese Government informed of that situation.

Thank you very much.
