

UNITED NATIONS



NATIONS UNIES

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 Maronite Patriarch Nasrallah Boutros Sfeir  
Bkirki, Lebanon**

Wednesday, 12 January 2011

Good afternoon.

I was very pleased to be received today by Patriarch Sfeir. I came to express my good wishes to him and to the Maronite Church and to the Lebanese people for the New Year 2011.

I also took the opportunity to express our profound condolences to the Patriarch after the terrible incident in Egypt, in Alexandria, against the Coptic Church on New Year's Eve. I believe all of us, the United Nations, the Church, the Governments in the region, must do everything to try to prevent such terrible tragedies from taking place.

We also talked this morning, the Patriarch and myself, about the latest developments here in Lebanon and we were both concerned at the possibility of a prolonged political crisis. I take the opportunity to praise the efforts of many of your friends and neighbors and above all President Assad of Syria and His Majesty King Abdullah of Saudi Arabia to make an initiative to strengthen stability in Lebanon. I still believe that it is something that everybody has to work for. Lebanon is renowned for its pluralism in every respect and I believe that that very pluralism demands of its politicians that they seek solutions to the problems before them no matter how deep those problems are.

Thank you very much.

\*\*\*