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**United Nations Special Coordinator for Lebanon Michael Williams
Statement After Meeting with Minister of Labor Mohammad Fneish
Beirut, Lebanon**

Thursday, 14 May 2009

I just had a very good meeting with the Minister of Labor, Mohammad Fneish. We discussed various issues, predominantly the situation here in Lebanon in the run-up to the elections. We hope to see very free and fair and calm elections and I think the Minister agrees with that.

He also told me about the Council of Ministers' meeting yesterday and I expressed regret that there wasn't ability to reach consensus decision and compromise. I expressed my strong hope to the Minister that a compromise would be found over the issue of the Constitutional Council because I think this is a very important institution for the elections here in Lebanon.

We also discussed the regional situation and I briefed the Minister on the data that the Israelis gave to General Graziano regarding cluster bomb attacks on Lebanon. This data is still being analyzed but we believe it is very significant and it is my sincere hope that even now, more than two and a half years after the war in 2006, that this data will be invaluable in stopping any further injuries and fatalities to innocent people in southern Lebanon.

I also discussed with the Minister the question of the reported Israeli spy rings here in Lebanon and I expressed our concern about this issue. I told him that we requested the Prime Minister to give detailed information on this to the United Nations.

Thank you very much.