

Special Coordinator Michael Williams
Statement After Meeting with Parliament Speaker Nabih Berri
Ein El-Tineh, Lebanon
Wednesday, 15 October 2008

Let me say how happy I am to be back here in Lebanon, in Beirut, not as a visitor this time, but in my new role as United Nations Special Coordinator for Lebanon. I just had a very good meeting with the Speaker, Nabih Berri, whom I have met on many occasions in the past and who I look forward to working with closely in the coming weeks and months.

I think I come fortunately at a good time in your history. We are pleased by what has taken place in Lebanon after the Doha Accord, the election of President Suleiman, the National Dialogue, the process of reconciliation and the passage of the electoral law. All these are issues which I discussed this morning with Mr. Speaker Berri and earlier with President Suleiman and with Prime Minister Fuad Siniora.

I am also delighted by the moves that have taken place within the last 24 hours to establish diplomatic relations between Syria and Lebanon. I think this is very important for your two countries and for your two peoples. But it also has wider regional and global significance. I think it is quite an historic moment. So I am very pleased that this is happening in my first few days in Lebanon.

Thank you.