

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 Minister of Finance Raya El-Hasan
Beirut, Lebanon**

Friday, 16 April 2010

Good morning.

This was my first meeting with Lebanon's Minister of Finance Raya El-Hasan. It was a very good meeting and an opportunity to touch on a number of issues.

I congratulated Minister El-Hasan on her submission yesterday of the State budget to Cabinet. The submission of the budget sends an important signal to the Lebanese people and to the international community of the commitment to a more stable future. All eyes are now on Cabinet and it is my hope that it will be able to agree on it as soon as possible. The budget also serves as a beacon for the investment decisions of the international community, including the United Nations. It would help us to understand better where the Government's priorities lie and how we should best deploy our own resources.

We also discussed today with the Minister the ongoing cooperation between the United Nations and the Lebanese Government, particularly in the areas of development. In that regard, we discussed ways in which the Government and the United Nations can cooperate more closely in meeting the development needs of the Lebanese people.

Thank you very much.

* * *