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Office of the Special Coordinator
for Lebanon

Bureau du Coordinateur Spécial
pour le Liban

**United Nations Special Coordinator for Lebanon Michael Williams
Statement after Meeting with Representatives from the Issam Fares Foundation
Akkar, North Lebanon**

Tuesday, 18 May 2010

Let me express my thanks to Mr. Sajih Attieh (Director of the Issam Fares Foundation) for welcoming me at the Fares Foundation's office.

My visit here comes at the end of a long day of talks in the Akkar region with religious leaders, with Members of Parliament, with members of foundations. This visit has greatly enhanced my understanding of Akkar, its problems and the issues that confront its people.

Clearly there are economic and social problems and this visit has helped me get a greater understanding, which will now inform my work and the policies of the United Nations. I think this region, like Lebanon generally, can be developed through the efforts of the national Government, of the international community including the United Nations but also the important work of foundations such as the Issam Fares Foundation.

In that respect, I would like to commend the work that the foundation is doing, not just in Akkar but you (Mr. Attieh) already outlined to me important social and economic work it is doing, assistance to the people. I know the work it does in helping education here and in other parts of Lebanon. We in the United Nations highly value and appreciate that work. Through you Sajih we hope you could extend our thanks and appreciation to Mr. Fares himself for the work that he does on behalf of his country.

Thank you very much.
