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**United Nations Special Coordinator for Lebanon Michael Williams
Statement Following Meeting with Foreign Minister Fawzi Salloukh
Beirut, Lebanon
Tuesday, 23 June 2009**

Good-morning Ladies and Gentleman

I just had a very good meeting with H.E. Foreign Minister, Fawzi Salloukh and was very pleased that he could meet me this morning because I know this afternoon he will be traveling to Cairo for a meeting with his colleagues, the Foreign Ministers of the Arab League, and then later on he will be traveling on to Italy, to Trieste, for a meeting of Arab League Foreign Ministers with the Quartet, including the Secretary General. And I hope that in his meetings in Cairo and Trieste he will also have the opportunity to raise some issues with regards to Lebanon and particularly Security Council Resolution 1701.

I took this opportunity to brief the Minister on the Secretary General's tenth report on Resolution 1701 that we expect to go to the Security Council at the end of this week. I will be personally traveling to New York next week to brief the Security Council in person. The UN continues to call on Lebanon and on Israel to work towards the full implementation of the resolution to improve and promote security and stability in Lebanon and the region. In that regard, we very much hope and expect that the new Lebanese Government will commit itself again to the implementation of the Resolution.

I also discussed with Minister Salloukh the recent parliamentary elections and commended him and through him the Lebanese Government and Lebanese people on the elections held on June 7 and the remarkable calm in which those elections took place. We look forward now to the election of a new Speaker, I think this Thursday, and to the early formation of a new government. I think this is imperative for the stability of Lebanon and also in a larger way for the region.

Finally, we also discussed the candidacy of Lebanon for membership of the Security Council. Lebanon is a candidate. It will be the first time, if elected, that it will be on the Security Council since I think the 1950s. This will be a very welcome role for Lebanon. It brings with it great responsibilities but I am sure that Lebanon can live up to those responsibilities.

Q: When will the Security Council meet to discuss Resolution 1701?

MCW: I think the Security Council will discuss the report probably on July 7.

Q: You are aware of the position of the Lebanese State on the resolution. Do you have any comments on that?

MCW: We discussed in detail the letter that has come from the Lebanese Government. I think it makes many strong points which we will be actively taking into consideration and I will need to reflect on the letter when I myself make an oral presentation to the Council on July 7.

Q: Do you think there might be problems facing the formation of a new government in Lebanon?

MCW: I don't think so. I am guardedly optimistic.

Thank you very much.
