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**Office of the  
Special Coordinator  
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**Bureau du  
Coordinateur Spécial  
pour le Liban**

**United Nations Special Coordinator for Lebanon Michael Williams  
Tripoli, Lebanon  
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**SCL Michael Williams Statement Following Meeting with Mufti Malek Shaar**

I am very pleased to be back in Tripoli today for my third official visit. Tripoli, Lebanon's second largest city, truly reflects the rich diversity of this country.

Before arriving in Tripoli, I visited this morning the Palestinian refugee camp of Nahr El-Bared. I wanted to examine the progress in the reconstruction work there and the needs of both the refugees living in the camp and those who are still waiting to return to their homes. The United Nations is still committed to improving the living conditions of the Palestinian refugees pending a longer term solution to their plight and continues to encourage donor assistance in that regard.

It was a great pleasure to meet again today with the Mufti, Sheikh Malek Shaar. We had a very good discussion. We exchanged views on recent developments in Lebanon and the region, particularly developments related to Tripoli.

I praised the continuous efforts of the Mufti in bringing together representatives of different political groups and communities and bridging any divides among them. We both agreed that dialogue is the strongest tool for resolving differences and allowing the country to move forward in its political, socio-economic and human development. Lebanon's greatness stems from its rich political, cultural and confessional diversity, which should be used as a source of strength, rather than division or weakness.

We also discussed today the socio-economic situation in Tripoli. I stressed the UN's belief that sustainable and balanced development in all Lebanese regions and cities is one important way to promote stability in the country. I reiterated the readiness of the United Nations to assist, when requested, with development projects in Tripoli and in north Lebanon.

## **SCL Michael Williams Statement following meeting with MP Samir Jisr**

Good morning

I would like to thank MP Samir Jisr for receiving me this morning. Our discussions today touched on the general situation in Lebanon particularly the developments in Tripoli. I told MP Jisr that the United Nations has been concerned by the recent escalation in political tension in the country but reassured that Lebanon's leaders and regional friends are all working to prevent the situation from escalating further.

We agreed today with MP Jisr that any disagreements, no matter how sensitive, can only be resolved through dialogue. We also stressed the importance of the work of the state institutions, which in Lebanon, as in any other country, are the pillars of stability and security.

MP Jisr reassured me today that, despite a few isolated incidents, the situation in Tripoli remains quiet and that all sides are working to maintain the calm.

Thank you

## **SCL Michael Williams Statement following Meeting with Rifaat Ali Eid, leader of the Arab Democratic Party**

Good Afternoon

I just had a good meeting with Mr. Rifaat Ali Eid. We discussed the situation in Tripoli in light of recent developments.

Mr. Eid raised some of the security concerns in the area. We both agreed that peaceful dialogue is the best means of overcoming any differences of problems.

We also discussed the socio-economic situation in this area. We also agreed that sustainable development and improving the living conditions of the residents here as in any other area would play a role in promoting stability and reducing the tension. As discussed with my other interlocutors today in Tripoli, there is a need for collective effort by the government, the local authorities, the civil society and international donors to help improve the socio-economic conditions in Tripoli and in north Lebanon.

