



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 MP Michel Aoun
Rabieh, Lebanon**

Friday, 30 July 2010

I was very pleased to meet this morning with General Michel Aoun, MP, and particularly pleased to meet with General Aoun on a very important day for Lebanon, perhaps an historic day, as today, as you well know, Lebanon will receive both His Majesty King Abdullah of Saudi Arabia and President al-Assad of Syria, as well as later today, the ruler of Qatar, Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa.

I think the visit of these Arab heads of state will be enormously important and beneficial for Lebanon's stability and future. I think they have very important contributions to make in that regard, and I warmly welcome the engagement of Lebanon's partners and friends.

With General Aoun, we also discussed some of the recent tensions and concerns in the country, and I am hopeful that the engagement of Lebanon's external friends and partners, together with the efforts internally, of President Sleiman, of General Aoun, of other political leaders, will play a very, very important part in resolving the issues that face Lebanon and bring stability for the coming months.

Thank you.

QUESTION: Are you afraid about the Palestinian implementation (resettlement) here in Lebanon?

SCL MICHAEL WILLIAMS: You mean the legislation? We discussed this with General Aoun. I know there are some difficulties and sensitivities, but I think there are good ideas now for going forward with legislation in Parliament in August. I believe everybody is now approaching this in a constructive and positive manner and, in particular, looking for advances with the regard to the right of work for Palestinians. This is the crucial issue, I think.

QUESTION: Is it the first step to let the Palestinians [settle permanently] in Lebanon?

SCL MICHAEL WILLIAMS: No, no, I think this is completely different and separate altogether. I think it would be for the benefit of Palestinians but also for Lebanon if Palestinians are given, accorded the right to work.

QUESTION: (Do) you have total confidence in the Tribunal of Hariri, even with everything happening nowadays?

SCL MICHAEL WILLIAMS: I don't make any comments on the Tribunal. In all my career, I have not made comments on issues which are still not resolved and which will evolve. We are not sure [yet] which way events will evolve, but obviously we're very concerned about some of the tensions that have taken place here, and we want to see if those can be settled. I believe they can.

Thank you.
