



Office of the Special Coordinator
for Lebanon

Bureau du Coordinateur Spécial
pour le Liban

**United Nations Special Coordinator for Lebanon Ad Interim Robert Watkins
Statement Following Meeting with Prime Minister Najib Mikati
Beirut, Lebanon**

Monday, 14 November 2011

Good morning to you all.

I just had a meeting with Prime Minister (Najib) Mikati. I wanted to speak to him about the UN Security Council Resolution 1701 report, which is just about prepared. It is going to be sent off tomorrow to the Security Council and it is going to be discussed at the Security Council on the 29th of November.

I wanted to make him aware of the content of the report. Basically, we were very pleased with the overall stability that has taken place in the south in the last period. There have been very few incidents and no major incidents to speak of. There has been some progress made in the marking of the Blue Line, which is also very good news.

That being said however, on both sides there are still some issues that we had to take up. We brought these issues to the attention of the Israeli authorities a couple of weeks ago and we have raised the questions of Lebanese issues with the Lebanese authorities over the last two weeks as well.

Basically there has been a fairly stable period in the south. There has been no progress made towards a permanent cease fire, which is of concern to us. Main issues on the Israeli side are the continued air violations over Lebanon. There has been no progress also on the handing over of the northern part of the Ghajar village to the Lebanese authorities.

On the Lebanese side, we continued to be concerned about the security of the UNIFIL forces. We appreciate the support that we are getting from the Lebanese Armed Forces and the security services. That remains an issue of concern. Regarding the national dialogue in Lebanon, we are still anxiously awaiting for some developments so that Lebanon can start moving towards the development of a more coherent national defense strategy. We are also concerned about border management issues, particularly on the border with Syria where we have noted over the period a number of incursions of the Syrian military into Lebanese territory. We are very concerned about these developments and what this implies about the lack of control that the Lebanese government has over the borders with Syria and how important it is for those borders to be demarcated so that there is clarity about those issue.

I think that is all I have to say at this time.

Thank you for your attention.
