



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**

Wednesday, 21 September 2011

Bonjour

I want to thank Gen. (Michel) Aoun for receiving me today. I also want to express my thanks to him for meeting with me many times over the past three years. Sadly I will be leaving Lebanon soon but I want to declare that Gen. Aoun has always received me with great courtesy. We have discussed difficult questions and issues about Lebanon and about the region and every time we have had a very profound and useful exchange of views.

I am very pleased to hear that now I believe the work on the electricity bill by the Parliament is completed or nearly completed and I think this is an enormous gain and I hope that the Parliament can go forward with future reforms, tackling issues like water for example.

We also discussed with Gen. Aoun the question of Palestine and especially now the expectation that in New York important things will happen in the next few days when we expect President (Mahmoud) Abbas to meet with the Secretary-General (Ban Ki moon) and to deliver a letter on the question of the recognition of Palestine.

We also discussed the situation in Syria. I hope that there can be an end to violence very soon. And with Gen. Aoun we recognized the need for reforms, I think profound reforms, to stabilize the situation in Syria but also in the wider region.

Thank you very much. Shoukran Jazilan.

QUESTION: Avec quelle impression vous quittez le Liban?

SCL MICHAEL WILLIAMS: Well first of all I leave Lebanon with real sadness. I think that there is a great resilience in Lebanon, a great strength, with the people. There are many differences but this is normal in your political life. And in the past three years there have been great problems but I have seen a recognition by all political forces that these must be tackled in a cooperative manner. I think the future for Lebanon is a very good future. Hopefully you will find many natural resources, for example oil and gas, in the Mediterranean. And I also believe that if there is progress in the Arab world, including

Syria, in the direction of reform this will only benefit Lebanon. So I wish Lebanon every success in the future. Merci bien. Thank you very much.
