

## **Statement Attributable to the Spokesperson of the Secretary-General on the Special Tribunal for Lebanon**

**21 December 2007 -**

Earlier today, the United Nations and the Kingdom of the Netherlands signed a Headquarters Agreement that will enable the seat of the Special Tribunal for Lebanon to be based in the Netherlands. Mr. Larry D. Johnson, Assistant Secretary-General for Legal Affairs, signed on behalf of the United Nations and Permanent Representative Frank Majoor signed on behalf of the Netherlands. This step is the outcome of three months of negotiations that began when Prime Minister Jan Peter Balkenende informed the Secretary-General that the Government of the Netherlands was favourably disposed to hosting the Special Tribunal. The Agreement will now be submitted to the Parliament of the Netherlands for ratification. In the meantime, the United Nations and the Netherlands authorities will continue taking steps to establish the Tribunal in The Hague.

In a further development, the Secretary-General has received the report of the Selection Panel constituted pursuant to article 2 of the Annex to Security Council resolution 1757 (2007) to make recommendations regarding the selection of judges of the Special Tribunal. The Panel was composed of Judge Mohamed Amin El Mahdi, formerly of the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia; Judge Erik Møse, of the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda; and Mr. Nicolas Michel, the United Nations Under-Secretary-General for Legal Affairs, the Legal Counsel. The Secretary-General has accepted the Selection Panel's recommendations and will announce the names of those selected at an appropriate time in the future. The judges will assume their functions on a date to be determined by the Secretary-General as set forth in the Annex to resolution 1757 (2007).

In addition, pursuant to article 6 of the Annex and a subsequent agreement between the United Nations and the Government of Lebanon, the Management Committee of the Special Tribunal will soon be established. It will be composed of the major donors to the Special Tribunal and will have as its main responsibility providing advice and policy direction on all non-judicial aspects of the operations of the Special Tribunal, including questions of efficiency.