

**UNITED NATIONS INTERIM FORCE IN LEBANON
(UNIFIL)**

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PRESS RELEASE

UNIFIL reaches 5,000 troops

UNIFIL strength has reached approximately 5,000 troops after the three new contingents: from France, Italy and Spain, arrived in South Lebanon. This concludes the first phase of UNIFIL deployment. Additional contingents are planning to join UNIFIL in October-November.

“I am fully satisfied with the first phase of the deployment of UNIFIL II,” said UNIFIL Force Commander **Major-General Pellegrini**, *“Notwithstanding some of the obstacles we had to deal with, including of a logistical nature, UNIFIL now is at 5,000 strength. I look forward to inspecting all the new contingents as soon as they are ready to deal with the tasks ahead. This, of course, is dependent on acquiring appropriate premises and land for the newly arrived troops which has not been fully resolved yet.”*

Trilateral meeting discusses further IDF withdrawals

On 19 September, a trilateral meeting was held between the Force Commander and senior officers from the Lebanese Armed Forces (LAF) and the Israeli Defense Forces (IDF). Further IDF withdrawals and LAF deployment were discussed. In addition, the participants focused on alleged violations of the Blue Line and of the cessation of hostilities.

“The meeting was positive, we are making progress. IDF withdrawals and LAF deployments are on track,” said **Major-General Pellegrini**.

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