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PRESS RELEASE

UNIFIL HONOURS FRENCH PEACEKEEPERS WITH UNITED NATIONS MEDAL

Tyre, Lebanon – The United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) today showed its gratitude to members of the French contingent serving with the peacekeeping mission in a medal ceremony held in Tyre's ancient hippodrome.

Representatives from the various French units which have served with UNIFIL for three months were presented with the United Nations Medal at the ceremony, which was presided over by the UNIFIL Force Commander, Major-General Alain Pellegrini. Also in attendance were France's Ambassador to Lebanon and UNIFIL Chief of Staff, French General Philippe Stoltz, as well as official representatives from Lebanon's civilian, religious and military institutions.

A total of 1600 French peacekeepers have been deployed in UNIFIL's area of operations since the cessation of hostilities in southern Lebanon. In addition to their operational responsibilities, the peacekeepers are also providing humanitarian assistance to the local population. This includes medical aid and the distribution of educational tools as well as help with reconstruction. In addition, French engineers have so far destroyed around 1500 unexploded devices.

The United Nations Medal for peacekeepers serving in UNIFIL is a bronze medallion attached to a ribbon with colours representing the UN and Lebanese flags. It is presented to peacekeepers, on behalf of the Secretary-General, who have served 90 days in the area of operations.

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