PRESS RELEASE

UNIFIL FORCE COMMANDER TRANSFER OF AUTHORITY CEREMONY

Naqoura, Lebanon – The formal ceremony marking the transfer of command of the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon took place today between Major-General Alain Pellegrini (France) and his successor, Major-General Claudio Graziano (Italy). The ceremony took place in front of a cenotaph, dedicated to fallen UNIFIL peacekeepers, located within the mission’s headquarters in the southern Lebanese coastal town of Naqoura.

Major-General Pellegrini, who has been UNIFIL Force Commander since 13 February 2004, extended his appreciation to colleagues in peacekeeping, the Lebanese Army and to the communities in southern Lebanon.

“We have come through some difficult days together. I leave with the conviction that we have together laid new foundations for a solid and, I hope, lasting stability,” said Major-General Pellegrini.

The incoming commander expressed his appreciation to Major-General Pellegrini and underscored his own determination to ensure that UNIFIL accomplishes the job with which it is tasked.

“I am taking command of a well established and strong mission that is in good shape, said Major-General Graziano, “UNIFIL has in recent months successfully transformed itself to meet new challenges and is ready to face them. I pay fulsome tribute to Major-General Pellegrini for his leadership.”

Dignitaries attending the ceremony included Lebanese officials, Lebanese Army officers, Ambassadors of troop contributing countries, the Personal Representative of the Secretary-General for Lebanon, as well as senior officials of the United Nations Truce Supervision Organization (UNTSO), United Nations Disengagement Observer Force (UNDOF) and UNIFIL.

***

For further information, please contact the UNIFIL Public Information Office:
Spokesman, Liam McDowall: +961 1 827 060
or PIO: +961 1 827 068 or 827 020
Fax: +961 1 827 016

View the UNIFIL website: