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## **PRESS RELEASE**

### **UNIFIL Troop Strength and Activities**

Naqoura, Lebanon – The strength of the UN Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) has risen to 13,433 peacekeepers. This current total is made up of 11,667 ground troops and 1,766 naval personnel, hailing from 30 countries.

Today marks the change-over of the flagship of UNIFIL's Maritime Task Force (MTF). The German Navy's Frigate FGS Schleswig-Holstein will take the place of Frigate FGS Brandenburg as the command platform for the MTF. The FGS Brandenburg had been operating in this capacity since December last year and it will now return to Germany for routine inspection and maintenance.

Currently, the MTF is made up of 16 naval vessels hailing from Germany, the Netherlands, Sweden, Turkey, Denmark and Greece.

In addition to their core activities focused on assisting the Lebanese Army in securing stability in southern Lebanon as part of Security Council resolution 1701, UNIFIL peacekeepers continued to provide humanitarian assistance to the local population, including medical, dental and veterinarian aid, as well as educational programmes and de-mining operations.

Between 1 April and 25 April, there were 238 instances where UNIFIL peacekeepers provided dental care, 45 occasions on which veterinary services were provided, and 2,201 instances where UNIFIL peacekeepers provided medical assistance. In particular, UNIFIL's Indian Battalion recently completed a ten-day project which provided artificial limbs for over 100 Lebanese victims of mine and cluster bomb explosions.

Meanwhile, between 27 March and 23 April, UNIFIL de-miners from various national contingents destroyed a total of 598 separate explosive devices. These include rockets, grenades, cluster bombs, anti-tank and anti-personnel mines. In that same time period, the de-miners cleared 151,870 square metres of explosive devices.

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