

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

Naqoura,
31 July 2006

PRESS RELEASE

According to UNIFIL reports, there were no incidents of rocket firing or aerial bombardment in the UNIFIL area of operations since 4am this morning, except in the area of At Tayyabah in the eastern sector, where two air strikes were reported around 10am. It seems that IDF forces maintain their presence in two locations inside Lebanese territory, in the general area of Marun Al Ras in the central sector, and the general area of Kafr Kila in the eastern sector. It was reported that some of the IDF forces withdrew from the area of Marun Al Ras yesterday evening. The situation in these areas is relatively quiet this morning, and there are no reports of serious fighting. Heavy shelling from the Israeli side is reported this morning in the general area of Ayta Ash Shab and Ramyah.

Exchanges of fire with somewhat reduced intensity continued yesterday along the length of the Blue Line. Hezbollah fired rockets and mortars from various locations. The IDF carried out shelling and aerial bombardment of the south. Intensive fighting on the ground was reported yesterday in the general area of Kafr Kila, Deir Mimess, Adaisseh, and Al Tayyabah.

Two tank rounds from the Israeli side impacted directly on a UNIFIL position in the general area of Hula yesterday afternoon, causing extensive material damage, including the ammunition shelter, but no casualties. One aerial bomb impacted in the vicinity of a UN position in the area of Alma Ash Shab yesterday morning, causing damage to the parameter wall. It was reported that Hezbollah fired rockets from the vicinity of this UNIFIL position prior to the aerial bombardment. Hezbollah also fired small arms fire from the vicinity of the same position. They also fired rockets from the vicinity of two UNIFIL positions in the area of Tibnin and At Tiri in the central sector. There was one more incident of firing from the Israeli side close to UNIFIL position in the area of Mays al Jabal, when 10 tank rounds impacted 100 meters from the UN position. UNIFIL strongly protested all these incidents to the Israeli and Lebanese authorities respectively.

All UNIFIL positions remain permanently occupied and maintained by the troops. UNIFIL dispatched a number of logistic convoys yesterday to re-supply the positions with water, food, and fuel. Additional re-supply convoys are planned for today. UNIFIL will attempt today to bring heavy engineering equipment to remove the debris in order to continue the search operation for the body of the fourth OGL military observer in Khiyam.

UNIFIL continued to provide medical assistance to the local population in different areas and evacuated one pregnant woman to the hospital in Tibnin. It also continued efforts to extricate and provide escorts for a number of foreign nationals from Rmeich and the neighboring villages to Naqoura for evacuation from the country. Twelve Australian nationals from Ramyah were sheltered inside UN position in Marwahin yesterday. UNIFIL also supplied water to the civilian population in Ibil As Saqi.

A French ship, which arrived to the waters of Naqoura yesterday, continued to offload essential supplies for UNIFIL humanitarian efforts and the troops. The ship is also to evacuate a number of dependants of UN staff and foreign nationals from the border area.