

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

Naqoura,
10 August 2006

PRESS RELEASE

Exchanges of fire continued in the past 24 hours with heightened intensity throughout the UNIFIL area of operation. Hezbollah fired rockets in significantly larger numbers from various locations. The IDF intensified shelling and aerial bombardment across the south.

The IDF has maintained their presence and continues to operate inside Lebanese territory in different areas. It substantially reinforced the number of troops in the general areas of Sarda and Deir Miness in the eastern sector. From this location, they advanced during last night and this morning to the north. Intensive shelling, bombardment, rocket firing, and ground exchanges were reported in the general areas of Khiyam, Qulayah, Bouj Al Malouke, and Marjayoun, including the inhabited areas, during the night and this morning. There are also reports of intensive exchanges this morning north of Marjayoun in the direction of Dibbine. According to information available to UNIFIL, the Lebanese Joint Security Force remains inside its headquarters in Marjayoun.

Yesterday, intensive ground exchanges, shelling and bombardment were reported in the areas of Tayr Harfa/ Al Jibbayn, Ayta Ash Shab/Dibil in the western sector, and Aynata in the central sector. Sporadic exchanges were also reported in Kafr Kila, Tayyabah, Markaba and Mays al Jabal.

Four mortar rounds from the Hezbollah side impacted directly inside a UNIFIL position in the area of Deir Miness yesterday evening, causing extensive material damage, and destroying a fuel storage tank, but with no casualties. Two rockets from an unknown source impacted directly inside a UNIFIL position in the area of Tibnin within one hour yesterday evening, also causing extensive material damage, but no casualties. There were five incidents of firing from the Israeli side close to UN positions in the areas of Ghanduriyah (2), Deir Miness, Brashit and Tibnin. There was one incident of firing from the Hezbollah side close to a UNIFIL position in the area of Hula. Hezbollah also fired rockets from the vicinity of UN positions in Labouneh, Tibnin and At Tiri. UNIFIL strongly protested all the incidents to the Lebanese and Israeli authorities respectively.

All UNIFIL positions remain permanently occupied and maintained by the troops. 19 UN positions, including the UNIFIL headquarters in Naqoura, are currently in the areas where the IDF operates inside Lebanese territory and where intensive shelling and ground exchanges are taking place.

UNIFIL's freedom of movement and the ability to re-supply positions and provide humanitarian assistance were denied because of the lack of security clearance from the IDF and due to the intensive hostilities on the ground.

Attempts are being made today to re-supply UNIFIL forward positions of the Indian battalion in the eastern sector which are facing critical shortages of fuel. If UNIFIL is not able to re-supply these positions in the next 24 hours, it may face the situation where it would be impossible to maintain these positions.

The IDF has not responded yet to the repeated requests by UNIFIL to reopen the road between Tyre and Beirut by putting up another provisional bridge over the Litani River.

A humanitarian convoy to distribute food to the villages in the western sector, and other humanitarian activities planned by UNIFIL, could not proceed in the last four days due to the denial of consent by the IDF.

UNIFIL position in the area of Duhayra provided medical assistance to a wounded Lebanese civilian and relocated him to the UNIFIL hospital in Naqoura.