

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

Naqoura,
14 August 2006

PRESS RELEASE

The cessation of hostilities, in accordance with UNSC resolution 1701, came into effect at 08.00 hours local time today.

The parties are expected to cease firing into the territory of or at the other side by any type of weapons from the ground, air or sea. No force should occupy or seek to occupy any additional territory from the other side. All sides should also ensure full cooperation, the security and safety, and the freedom of movement of the UNIFIL force to monitor compliance with the cessation of hostilities.

UNIFIL dispatched a number of patrols throughout its area of operation this morning to assess the situation on the ground and to monitor the cessation of hostilities.

There were no reports of incidents or breaches of the agreement in the UNIFIL area of operations until 1300 hours today.

UNIFIL Force Commander, General Pellegrini, has met with the senior representatives of the Lebanese Army and the Israeli Army at noon today, inside the UNIFIL position at the border crossing at Ras Naqoura, to discuss the implementation of and compliance with the agreement. They also discussed the withdrawal of the Israeli army and the deployment of the Lebanese armed forces in the South.

During the 24-hour period prior to the cessation of hostilities coming into effect, exchanges of fire continued with same intensity throughout the UNIFIL area of operation. The IDF intensified shelling and aerial bombardment across the south, especially in the general areas of Khiyam in the eastern sector, Tibnin in the central sector, and between Tyre and Naqoura along the Mediterranean coast. Hezbollah fired rockets in somewhat reduced numbers from various locations.

The IDF has maintained their presence and continued to operate inside Lebanese territory in different areas. It seems that the IDF tried to advance during last night in the general area of Tibnin and Haris in the central sector. Intensive shelling and ground exchanges in this area were reported. There were no significant changes on the ground in other areas despite heavy fighting in some of them.

Yesterday and during last night, there were a number of serious incidents of firing from the Israeli side directly on UN positions in various locations:

Tibnin (4), Haris (2), At Tiri (2) and Marun al Ras (1). A total of 85 artillery shells impacted directly inside these UNIFIL positions, (of which 35 impacted inside the position in the area of Tibnin), causing massive material damage to all the positions. All UNIFIL personnel were forced into shelters for the entire period, which prevented casualties. In addition, 10 aerial rockets and 108 artillery rounds from the IDF side impacted in the immediate vicinity of these and other UN positions, including the UNIFIL Headquarters in Naqoura. UNIFIL strongly protested to the IDF command all these grave incidents which endangered the security and safety of UN personnel and caused enormous material damage to UN property.