

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

Naqoura,
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PRESS RELEASE

**UNIFIL discuss with IDF and LA further IDF withdrawals and LA
Deployment**

On 4 September, UNIFIL Force Commander Major-General Alain Pellegrini met with the senior representatives of the Lebanese Army (LA) and the Israeli Defense Forces (IDF) on the premises of the UNIFIL position at the border crossing at Ras Naqoura. They discussed coordinating the process of the IDF withdrawal and subsequent deployment, in conjunction with UNIFIL, of the LA in specific areas in the South in line with UN Security Council Resolution 1701.

Major-General Pellegrini said: "The meeting was productive and I think we are on the right track in securing the full withdrawal of IDF from Lebanon and finally ensuring that the Lebanese Army will take control of the whole border area in the South."

Italian troops join UNIFIL II

On Saturday and Sunday, 2-3 September 2006, the first large contingent of Italian troops arrived in Lebanon, joining UNIFIL II. The Italian troops, totaling 880, arrived by helicopter in Tyr, by boat in Naqoura, and by fixed wing aircraft in Beirut. They are from the Navy San Marco Regiment and the Army Lagunari "Serenissima" Regiment. In addition, 159 tracked and wheeled vehicles disembarked in Naqoura, Tyr and Beirut during the weekend.

The Italian contingent is now deployed at a staging camp in the area of Jabal Marun (Burj Qallawiyah) where they are preparing for their mission. Today a UNIFIL demining team, in coordination with the Engineering Support Services, is certifying the area of future deployment by Italian peacekeepers in Maarakeh.

It is expected that on 10 September, an additional Italian company of 120 officers and soldiers will arrive in South Lebanon.

The Italian contingent is the largest single deployment of troops to UNIFIL II since the adoption of UN Security Council Resolution 1701 that mandated an increase of UNIFIL to up to 15,000. The total number of UNIFIL troops is currently estimated at approximately 3100.