



Office of the Special Coordinator
for Lebanon

Bureau du Coordinateur Spécial
pour le Liban

PRESS RELEASE

**UN Special Coordinator for Lebanon Derek Plumbly Attends Meeting
on Non-partisan Electoral Observation and Monitoring**

Beirut, Lebanon

Wednesday, 24 April 2013

United Nations Special Coordinator for Lebanon Derek Plumbly spoke at the opening of the first implementation meeting of the “Declaration of Global Principles for Non-partisan Election Observation and Monitoring by Citizen Organizations” that was hosted today in Beirut by the Lebanese Association for Democratic Elections (LADE) and the National Democratic Institute (NDI). The meeting is a two-day international gathering to discuss implementation of the declaration that was launched in New York at UN Headquarters one year ago this month.

The meeting was also attended by Former Minister Ziad Baroud, representing Lebanese President Michel Sleiman, Gen. Elias Khoury, representing the caretaker Minister of the Interior, the head of the EU delegation in Lebanon Angelina Eichhorst and representatives from civil society organizations from all over the world.

Speaking at the opening of the event, Mr. Plumbly said, “The breadth of international support for the Declaration is an encouraging demonstration of the near universal recognition now of the importance of domestic monitoring, to high international standards, in ensuring that elections are free, fair and transparent and in promoting political participation.”

Regarding the electoral situation in Lebanon, Mr. Plumbly said, “Lebanon has a long and deeply engrained tradition of democratic elections, and it welcomes domestic and international observation and monitoring. Its experience is of particular value at this time of democratic change and challenge across the region.” He also commended the role played by civil

society in Lebanon in raising the profile of electoral reform. “Their work in this regard is a reflection of the vibrancy of civil society here as a whole, and the UN and friends in the international community have joined them in advocating reform for example with regard to women’s representation.”

Special Coordinator Plumbly acknowledged the timeliness of the meeting in the Lebanese context. “Parliamentary elections are due to take place imminently in this country. Once again the electoral law is the subject of vigorous debate. That is welcome, but time is now very short indeed. The UN Security Council itself has spoken of the importance of swift progress to ensure that the elections take place on a consensual basis within the legal and constitutional framework. Lebanon’s political parties need I believe to show a new sense of urgency in order to make this possible, for the sake both of the democratic process and of stability. That this gathering is being held here today in Beirut bears witness to the international community’s expectations of the democratic process in Lebanon. I am confident that these expectations are not misplaced,” Mr. Plumbly said.

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