

Statement attributable to the Spokesperson for the Secretary-General

Exchange of fire between Lebanese Armed Forces and Israel Defense Forces

The Secretary-General is deeply concerned at the exchange of fire between the Lebanese Armed Forces and the Israel Defense Forces across the Blue Line in southern Lebanon this afternoon. He regrets the tragic loss of life and notes that this is the most serious incident between the Israel Defense Forces and the Lebanese Armed Forces since the adoption of Security Council resolution 1701 (2006).

The United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) took immediate steps through contacts with the parties and the presence of the Acting Force Commander alongside peacekeepers at the location to help restore calm in the area. As reported to the Security Council today, UNIFIL intends to investigate the circumstances which led to this exchange of fire.

The Secretary-General urges the parties to exercise maximum restraint and to work with UNIFIL and the UN Special Coordinator for Lebanon in taking steps to consolidate the calm now restored in the area. He calls on all parties to maintain the cessation of hostilities and to ensure full respect of Security Council resolution 1701(2006). He welcomes engagement between UNIFIL and the parties through the tripartite forum and hopes that this will help to constructively address the situation.

New York, 3 August 2010