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PRESS RELEASE

UNIFIL, LAF and IDF discuss 7 February exchange of fire incident, Ghajar, and Liaison and Coordination Arrangements

On 12 February, UNIFIL Force Commander **Major-General Claudio Graziano** chaired his first tripartite meeting with senior officers from the Lebanese Armed Forces (LAF) and the Israel Defense Forces (IDF) at the UN Position at the border crossing at Ras Al Naqoura.

The meeting took place following the incident near Marun al-Ras on 7 February when LAF and IDF exchanged fire. UNIFIL submitted the report and findings of the incident to both parties. Both parties agreed with UNIFIL's recommendation to improve UNIFIL's liaison and coordination with each of the parties to prevent and de-conflict such situations.

The parties also discussed the issue of the northern part of Ghajar, with a view to expediting the withdrawal of the IDF from this area to south of the Blue Line in accordance with Security Council resolution 1701 (2006).

UNIFIL Force Commander Major-General Claudio Graziano said: "*This was my first meeting with senior officers from the Lebanese Army and Israeli Army. I consider these meetings extremely important and the right mechanism to address the concerns of the parties and to avoid misunderstandings. The focus of today's meeting was on how to improve UNIFIL's liaison and coordination with both LAF and IDF in order to prevent the recurrence of similar events.*"

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