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Press Release

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UNOGIL SETS UP MORE OUTPOSTS, INCREASES AERIAL OBSERVATION ACTIVITIES

(The following was received here today from a UN Information Officer with the UN Observation Group in Lebanon.)

The UN Observation Group in Lebanon has now reached a stage which makes it possible to expand operations geographically at a rapid pace. During the last few days, three new observer outstations have been set up and preparations are being made for establishing others.

There are now seven main outposts, situated at Tripoli, Chtaura, Saida, Marjayoun, Bcharre, Zahle and Saghbine. From each of these, teams of observers traveling in pairs of jeeps, fan out across surrounding areas from dawn to dusk.

Aerial observation activities are also growing. Four Swedish planes are scheduled to arrive in Beirut from Sweden on 1 July for service with UNOGIL. They are white and will be painted with UN marking on arrival in Beirut.

The flight from Sweden is scheduled to take four days and because of the limited range of the planes, they will make overnight stops en route and will also re-fuel at various points. The final stopover is scheduled to be made at Rhodes. Permission to land and make overflights has been requested from the countries concerned.

A Swedish Vickers Varsity transport plane -- type TP82 -- carrying spare parts will accompany the smaller planes. The transport plane is scheduled to return to Sweden on 2 July.

The planes are being flown down by six Swedish pilots and six Swedish crew members.

The pilots are: Major Sven Erik Everstaal; Captains Sven Axel Viktor Sjostrand, Paul Lennart Rittby, Sten Lennart Wilhelm Sollenberg, Finn Engmar Hedlund; and Chief Warrant Officer Torsten Valter Bengtsson. Crew members are: Warrant Officer Fred Severin Frelin; Master Sergeants Kuno Holger Lindholm, Sven August Oneqvist, Stig Hugo Herbert Hestroemi, Sven Erik Ytterstroem, and Bror Jonas Joras William Petersson.

(more)

Today the two helicopters already in use by the observers will make their first flight inland. They are expected to land at Rayak in the central Bekaa area at 11:00 a.m. (local time).

Colonel Maurice Brown, the Chief UN Observer, yesterday made a flight in one of the helicopters along the coast northward from Beirut beyond Tripoli.

Five new observers arrived in Beirut from Ireland this morning. With the arrival of another observer from India, on Thursday, there are now 100 observers serving with UNOGIL. The five new arrivals from Ireland are: Lieut. Colonel Justin MacCarthy; Commandant Malachi Higgins, Commandant Gerald Coghlan; Captain Patrick Lavelle, and Captain Rory Henderson. The new observer from India is Colonel S. C. Vyas.

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