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**STATEMENT TO THE FIFTH COMMITTEE
OF THE 61st GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

**OLIVIER POULIN
REPRESENTATIVE OF CANADA**

ON BEHALF OF CANADA, AUSTRALIA, AND NEW ZEALAND

**Item 144b: FINANCING OF THE UNITED NATIONS FORCES IN THE MIDDLE EAST:
UNITED NATIONS INTERIM FORCE IN LEBANON**

NEW YORK, 13 DECEMBER 2006

**ALLOCUTION À LA CINQUIÈME COMMISSION
DE LA 61^e SESSION DE L'ASSEMBLÉE GÉNÉRALE**

**OLIVIER POULIN
REPRÉSENTANT DU CANADA**

**AU NOM DU CANADA, DE L'AUSTRALIE ET DE
LA NOUVELLE-ZÉLANDE**

**Point 144b: FINANCEMENT DES FORCES DES NATIONS UNIES CHARGÉES DU
MAINTIEN DE LA PAIX AU MOYEN-ORIENT: FORCE INTÉRIMAIRE DES NATIONS UNIES
AU LIBAN**

NEW YORK, LE 13 DÉCEMBRE 2006

Mr Chairperson,

I have the honour to speak on behalf of the delegations of Australia, New Zealand and Canada (CANZ). We thank Ms Pollard, Director, Peacekeeping Financing Division, Office of Programme Planning, Budget and Accounts and Mr Saha, Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (ACABQ) for introducing their reports (A/61/588 and A/61/616) relating to the financing of the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL).

Let us first commend the Secretariat and the troop contributing countries for the speedy deployment of UNIFIL's blue helmets in southern Lebanon. It demonstrates good progress on the capacity of the UN to deploy troops rapidly to hotspots around the world, which has been one of the major lacunae of UN peacekeeping.

Mr Chairperson,

We support the ACABQ's observation on the extensive use of commitment authority with assessment. While we understand the challenges facing the Secretariat, we trust that this will not become standard practice. We also support the ACABQ's caution on the presentation of *de facto* budget. Commitment authority requests containing a certain level of information shall not replace fully detailed and justified budgets.

We note the proposal to provide the Lebanese Armed Forces (LAF) with fuel and rations. This is an unusual practice for the UN. CANZ is looking forward to a clear explanation from the Secretariat on the rationale behind this proposal, and on any precedents.

Our delegations support the establishment of positions at headquarters for backstopping capacity. In light of the current surge in peacekeeping, we must reinforce DPKO to ensure proper management of all the operations. However, CANZ is of the view that it should be done through the peacekeeping support account for the 2006/07 period, and reported to the General Assembly in the context of the peacekeeping support account performance report.

We note the proposed establishment of a Strategic Military Cell for UNIFIL in New York, and, like the ACABQ, note that it reflects a departure from established structure and practices. While our delegations support the strengthening of the military function of DPKO, and innovative approaches such as the one at hand, the proposal to establish the Strategic Military Cell raises issues of administrative nature, such as the structure, line of accountability and status of the staff of the Cell. We are looking forward to hearing from the Secretariat on these points, and to having a constructive discussion during the informal consultations.

Finally, with regard to the ACABQ recommendations on a reduced assessment level, we would be grateful for the Secretariat's practical assessment of its impact on operations and cash situation of the Mission.

I thank you.