



U.S. DEPARTMENT of STATE

**Media Note**

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## **United States Offers Emergency Aid to Clean Up Lebanon Oil Spill**

On Monday, President Bush pledged the U.S. government would "assist with the cleanup of the Jieh oil spill and the resulting pollution, in order to restore livelihoods and protect people's health in coastal communities." See White House fact sheet, "United States Humanitarian, Reconstruction, and Security Assistance to [Lebanon](#)," describing the broad scope of United States efforts to help the Lebanese, at [www.state.gov/p/nea/rls/70947.htm](http://www.state.gov/p/nea/rls/70947.htm).

The initiative will include a U.S. team of oil response professionals coordinating with the Lebanese government to clean a high priority site in Lebanon, train clean-up crews, and provide the necessary equipment. It will also provide assistance in shoreline cleanup by implementing programs to revitalize livelihoods of coastal community. This aid will help coastal people who have lost their livelihoods due to the spill.

This action response was developed by an interagency team, led by the Department's Bureau of Oceans, Environment, and Science, with expertise contributed by National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, the U.S. Coast Guard, Environmental Protection Agency, and USAID.

This effort has been closely coordinated between Claudia A. McMurray, Assistant Secretary for Oceans, Environment, and Science, and Achim Steiner, UN Under-Secretary General and Executive Director of the UN Environment Program (UNEP). Mr. Steiner was pleased with the announcement, saying: "We welcome this valuable assistance from the United States as a further important contribution by the international community for helping to restore the environment and livelihoods of the Lebanese people."

Working with Lebanese and participating international aid organizations, the team will develop a wildlife protection plan, spill response and remediation action plans based on shoreline and aerial survey results to restore the coastal environment, protect shipping, and preserve sensitive habitats. This project should also ensure Lebanese civil and armed forces are trained and prepared to remediate fully the environmental impact of this spill over the long term and be able to respond directly to future spills.

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