



...And Lebanon will remain

...وسيبقى لبنان

The Arab NGO Network for Development Calls upon its friends and supporters all around the world

Today, July 30th, another massacre was committed in Lebanon: More than sixty civilians, among them 37 children, were killed by Israeli bombs while they were sleeping in shelters in the village of Qana. They died not very far away from the mass grave holding the bodies of 106 civilians burned by a previous Israeli attack in April 1996 inside a shelter provided by a UN battalion

Reacting to these terrible news, Pope Benedict XVI said today: "In the name of God, I call on all those responsible for this spiral of violence so that weapons are immediately laid down on all sides." And in more simple terms, the Swedish Foreign Minister expressed the feeling of citizens worldwide: "It is time to end this madness."

The only sane decision that needs to be made immediately is that of a ceasefire. A ceasefire would allow for humanitarian relief to reach the innocent victims, for the bodies to be buried instead of being eaten by the dogs, and for all the underlying problems to be negotiated and eventually solved. More victims can only produce more hatred.

In the last few days, Lebanon has been promised by the EU, the UK and the US help in rebuilding its infrastructure and humanitarian aid to assist the eight hundred thousand internally displaced persons and "humanitarian corridors", but they stopped short of demanding a ceasefire, which encouraged Israel to continue with its "mission" of unilaterally enforcing the resolution to disarm Hezbollah. With that same logic, Hezbollah could argue it has a mission to enforce the many UN Security Council resolutions demanding Israel to withdraw from the occupied Palestinian territories.

On July 27, Israeli Justice Minister Haim Ramon said that Israel had given civilians ample time to leave southern Lebanon. "All those now in south Lebanon are terrorists who are related in some way to Hezbollah," he said, according to the BBC. "Just because the Israeli military warned the civilians of Qana to leave does not give it carte blanche to blindly attack," said Kenneth Roth, Executive Director of Human Rights Watch. "Through its arguments, the Israeli military is suggesting that Palestinian militant groups might 'warn' all settlers to leave Israeli settlements and then be justified in targeting those who remained."

The escalating violence in Lebanon can not be solved unilaterally with self-proclaimed righteousness by any party. Peace is negotiated between enemies, not with friends. And the first step to any negotiation is a ceasefire. Or is it that every child has to die so that they do not grow into "terrorists"?

A year ago, the UK Prime Minister championed the cause of including in the UN mandate the "responsibility to protect populations from genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity". Yet the UN, the European Union, The United States and the United Kingdom have failed in their responsibility to protect the Lebanese children. Or even to clearly condemn that criminal act.

The Arab NGO Network for Development condemns the aggression against Lebanon and the lack of commitment with world peace that the UN, EU, US and the UK have shown in this situation.

ANND calls upon all its friends, colleagues, sisters and brothers from civil society organizations and concerned citizens across the world to join all their efforts in order to put an end to the escalating aggression against Lebanon.

ANND calls for an immediate and unconditional ceasefire in Lebanon.

Please take action now!

- Write an e-mail to annd@annd.org endorsing this call as an individual or organization (please give us your full name and nationality and, in the case of an organization, the name, country and city of its headquarters and position of the signing person)
- Write to the UN secretary general Kofi Annan, to President George W. Bush, to Prime Minister Tony Blair or to your own government asking them to engage actively in achieving an immediate cease-fire.