

....And Lebanon will remain



وسيبقى لبنان...

UPDATE FROM A LEBANON UNDER UNJUSTIFIED ISRAELI WAR RAGE
Sunday July 30th, 2006- 19th day of attack

Over 60 persons die in Israel's massacre in Southern Town of Qana
37 among them are children

Residents said the dead were from four families who had gathered to spend the night on the ground floor of a three-story building, believing they would be safer from bombings..."They are hitting children to bring the fighters to their knees," shouted a Qana resident (NY Times, 30.7.2006).

Civil defense workers that worked on the site of the Qana Massacre indicated that they were facing severe problems highlighting the presence of poisonous gases in the bombed area. He noted several cases of noxiousness and throwing up among the civil defense workers.



What do they say?? (Based on BBC coverage)

Lebanese Prime Minister: Out of respect for the souls of our innocent martyrs and the remains of our children buried under the rubble of Qana, we scream out to our fellow Lebanese and to other Arab brothers and to the whole world to stand united in the face of the Israeli war criminals. The persistence of Israel in its heinous crimes against our civilians will not break the will of the Lebanese people. There is no place on this sad morning for any discussion other than an immediate and unconditional ceasefire as well as the international investigation into the Israeli massacres in Lebanon now.

French President: unjustified action, need for an immediate ceasefire

British Foreign Secretary: Absolutely dreadful, quite appalling. We have repeatedly urged Israel to act proportionately.

EU Foreign Policy Chief: Nothing can justify that. European Union is continuously working to reach an immediate ceasefire.

Swedish Foreign Minister: It is time to end this madness.

Pope Benedict XVI: 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.

United Nations Secretary General, Kofi Annan: "We must condemn this action in the strongest possible terms"

US Secretary of State: We will work on finding adequate conditions for ceasefire.

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Israeli Prime Minister: We have no policy to target innocent civilians. Israel is in no rush to reach a ceasefire before we get to a point where we could say that we have achieved the main objectives we had set forth.

It is not the first time Israel attacked Qana. Ten years have passed since 105 Lebanese civilians were killed by an Israeli artillery barrage on a UN compound in Qana. As such Israeli attacks on UN posts are not new. Two Indian UN peacekeepers were wounded and four UN military observers were killed last week in an Israeli strike on their observation posts.

On April 18, 1996, when Shimon Peres was Israel's Prime Minister, approximately 800 civilians were sheltering in the UN base. Most residents of Qana and neighboring villages had fled north a week earlier seeking refuge in Beirut. Middle East correspondent, Robert Fisk reported:

"It was a massacre. Not since Sabra and Chatila had I seen the innocent slaughtered like this. The Lebanese refugee women and children and men lay in heaps, their heads or arms or legs missing, beheaded or disemboweled. There were well over a hundred of them. A baby lay without a head. The Israeli shells had scythed through them as they lay in the United Nations shelter, believing that they were safe under the world's protection. Like the Muslims of Srebrenica, the Muslims of Qana were wrong."

On April 25, 1996, the UN General Assembly adopted a resolution, characterizing Israel's actions during the "Grapes of Wrath" offensive as "grave violations of international laws relating to the protection of civilians during war." The US and Israel vigorously contended that the attack had been an unfortunate mistake, and the story gradually disappeared from all but the memories of those civilians, UNIFIL personnel and journalists who had witnessed the carnage at Qana.

From article by *Arjan El Fassed* is one of the co-founders of *The Electronic Intifada and Electronic Lebanon*. <http://electronicintifada.net/v2/article5327.shtml>

!!! In 1996, the US and Israel vigorously contended that the attack had been an unfortunate mistake. Today, Israeli government spokeswoman Miri Eisen told CNN "This was a mistake and we will have a full investigation."!!!