

....And Lebanon will remain



وسيبقى لبنان...

UPDATE FROM A LEBANON UNDER UNJUSTIFIED ISRAELI WAR RAGE
Sunday July 23rd, 2006- 12th day of attack

From the Lebanese Ministry of Finance: To express your solidarity with the plight of Lebanese people and aid Lebanon in its hour of need, please send your donations to one of the following accounts:

US\$:

Federal Reserve Bank of New York, New York
Bic code FRNYUS33 Routing Number **021084694**
Favor Banque du Liban account number **021084694**

Euros:

Deutsche Bank, Frankfurt
Bic code DEUTDEFF
Favor Banque du Liban account number **021084694**

Lebanese Lira:

Banque du Liban Account Number **01700362123**

Donations to the Higher Council of Relief:

Bank of Lebanon- Account number **411150067**

For more information, visit www.lebanonundersiege.gov.lb or contact relief@pcm.gov.lb

12th day of attack

The Associated Press news agency reported at least eight deaths on Sunday – an eight-year-old boy, a Lebanese photographer, three civilians fleeing in a minibus, and three Hezbollah fighters. **Death toll exceeds 370 Lebanese.**

URGENT URGENT URGENT URGENT URGENT URGENT URGENT URGENT

A briefing was held today by the coordinator of the main non-governmental group working on relief issues among Lebanese displaced, a group including 54 non-governmental organizations which are serving displaced people in over 30 schools in Beirut and surrounding cities. (Check these blogs for more on their work <http://sanayehreliefcenter.blogspot.com/>, <http://lebanonupdates.blogspot.com/>, <http://samidoun.blogspot.com/>). The coordinator noted that the budget needed to cover the expenses of each of the served persons goes on average up to \$10 per day (this includes among other stuff food, cleaning materials, medicines, transportation needs, water, and clothes). The mentioned group serves 15,000 persons on daily basis in the schools they cover. He noted that currently displaced Lebanese are around 700,000 and the government spokesperson said that the governmental agencies can cover the needs of only 13%.

So you can imagine the needs are huge and the resources are so limited. If you are able to donate anything or have contacts with people that want to support the relief coalition of NGOs, please send your donations to:

In all transfers, the following applies:

Account with institution: BKAWLBBE (this is the SWIFT code)
Bank of Kuwait and the Arab World s.a.l.
Beirut - Lebanon
Beneficiary Name: Green Line Association
Beneficiary Account: 10USD4612006189003

For USD transfers: The correspondents in USA with their SWIFT BIC codes are:

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1. Bank of New York New York USA SWIFT code: IRVTUS3N	2. HSBC Bank New York USA SWIFT code: MRMDUS33	3. American Express Bank Ltd. New York USA SWIFT code: AEIBUS33
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For Euro transfers: The correspondents in France and Germany with their SWIFT codes respectively are:

1. Societe Generale Paris - France SWIFT code: SOGEFRPP	2. Dresdner Bank AG Frankfurt - Germany SWIFT code: DRESDEFF
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Even a limited amount will make a big difference under the current very complicated circumstances. All donations will be channeled to relief efforts on the grounds and a full report will be prepared by the spending procedures.

For more information or to help please call Mr Nizar Rammal at 961-3-908-307 or email: nizarrammal@yahoo.com

ON THE HUMANITARIAN CONDITIONS IN LEBANON

The calm before the storm

At the Nasra School in Achrafieh, (currently housing 22 families) both a 1 1/2 month-old baby and a 7-month pregnant mother of three are in dire need of pajamas, and of the 10 boys only 3 have more than one pair of shorts. It's July in Beirut – meaning hot and sticky – and only so many families can hand-wash their laundry per day. People are donating clothing, but somehow we keep ending up with bags full of plaid business suits dating back to some winter in the mid-80s. Gasoline, like everything else in Lebanon, is becoming scarce – and expensive – and we didn't want to have to drive very far. It's also hard to predict what stores will be open where. The last few days in Beirut we've experienced very little bombing – Israel is not going to bomb Beirut while the foreigners are being evacuated on prime time TV – so a semblance of life has briefly returned to the city. There was even a traffic jam in Hamra, in West Beirut.

A sickly miasma of the calm before the storm is settling everywhere. The price of powdered milk has sky-rocketed, up to \$12 per 3 kilo bag. There are no more candles on the market. The pharmacies' cabinets are empty. The lines at the gas stations are impossible. Pampers for babies, cleaning detergents, rice, salt... everything is becoming more expensive as supplies dwindle. As for fresh fruits and vegetables – what's left is for the rich. Lemons are 5 times more expensive than normal. All the roads leading from Lebanon's farmlands (the Bekaa valley, the South) to Beirut are being bombed. And of course, all those ships coming in to evacuate the foreigners can't manage to bring with them food or medicine.

Regardless of whatever the Israelis do to most of Lebanon (carpet bombing, land invasion, etc), Lebanon will be a humanitarian crisis. One that could have been avoided: had Israel not blockaded Lebanon and destroyed the country's entire infrastructure; And one that could have been mitigated: had any country or international NGOs refused to respect the blockade and brought in supplies.

Over 700,000 people have already been displaced, with hundreds of thousands stuck in the South trying to leave and too scared by the Israeli jets overhead to risk the roads. Lebanon's population is only 4 million, so easily 25% of the Lebanese may end up refugees.

This update was prepared by the Arab NGO Network for Development- information was collected from various news agencies, but mostly from blogs created by civil society groups and individual activists- for more information please visit our website at www.annd.org, email us at annd@annd.org, phone us at 961-1-319366 or fax us at 961-1-815636

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Beirut doesn't have the supplies or ability to help. There are rumors that the big international NGOs have sent in relief crews with insane budgets (\$1 million for food, etc) and are unable to spend it. There's very little left to buy.

Meanwhile, back at Nasra School, Imane the infant is sleeping in a t-shirt knotted at the bottom, pregnant Oum Hassan is wearing her husband's clothing and not leaving their classroom at night, and the boys are getting filthy.

Back at my calm apartment, I stand in my kitchen, and worry. (Sonya Knox, West Beirut)

Beyond destruction, what Israel is doing to our kids...

...Haidar said the journey to Beirut was hellish. Some of the roads through the mountains had been damaged in air strikes, and they had to travel along dangerous tracks to avoid being bombed.

"I didn't cry... I was brave for mama," says Hadi, Haidar's son. "I still cannot sleep at night, as I can hear the Israeli bombs exploding in the nearby southern suburbs, and it makes me afraid that the bombs might hit us here in our house," Haider says. "Wherever we go, the Israeli bombs follow us."

The UN's Childrens Fund, UNICEF, says around half the estimated 600,000 people displaced in Lebanon to date, are children and women. "Out of those killed or injured, we were told that one third were children," says Soha Boustani, UNICEF Spokesperson in Beirut. Boustani says the less critical but lasting psychological impact of this conflict on children is not being addressed either.

Asked if he sleeps at night, eight year-old Hadi replies: "A little, I panic and wake up because of the bombs coming down and exploding like this," he says, making the sound of an explosion and waving his hands in the air. The Israeli air strikes have already taken their toll on Hadi's twin sister, Hiba. "I can still hear explosions here," she says, pointing to her head. "I have nightmares." Haidar says both her children sob and cry out in their sleep. "When they do manage to sleep, they are afraid to keep their eyes closed because they think the planes will come back," she says.

"Trauma is UNICEF's main concern because it is not visible to the eye but it has a long term effect," UNICEF's Boustani says. (IRIN News July 23, 2006)

Human cost of Israeli campaign (By Martin Asser- BBC News, Tyre)

In two rooms at Najm hospital lie two sisters and the two children of one of them. They are from Aita, another village on the front line with Israel. Soon after the bombardment started last week the family took refuge in the nearby Rmeich, one of the sisters told me. Rmeich is a Christian village where they thought they would be immune from attack, because Hezbollah is an overwhelmingly Shia Muslim organization.

But after a week all their food had run out and, anyway, the centre of Rmeich had still been targeted by Israeli artillery, the sisters said. Heading back down to Tyre, their car was hit by an Israeli missile at the Kafra-Yatar junction. Two of the sisters were killed and the others received fractures and shrapnel wounds.

After flagging down an empty taxi, the two women's bodies were put in the boot, and the four survivors were brought to hospital in Tyre. The children's father paces the hospital corridor. His dress, language, beard and the fact that he was "elsewhere" when the attack occurred, all indicate he may be a member of Hezbollah. "My daughter is nine, she is clever

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and a good pupil in school," he says with tears beginning to well up in his eyes. "I will not tolerate what they did to her and her younger brother."

Israel in violation of international law, the UN says:

The UN's Jan Egeland has condemned the devastation caused by Israeli air strikes in Beirut, saying it is a violation of humanitarian law. Egeland, the special envoy of the United Nations and assistant to the Secretary General arrived today to Beirut and started his field visit in order to assess the needs to launch a major emergency campaign. The campaign will include work for cease fire and work to secure safe transportation corridors. He estimated the immediate needs for relief work in Lebanon by 150 million dollars for the coming three months (for an initial relief phase). Egeland met with the prime minister and the speaker and some ministers. Egeland, who will continue his visits tomorrow to South Lebanon and Jerusalem, said that the UN will send significant relief support to Lebanon including 100 trucks. The UN will work on arranging the use of three sea routes for Beirut, Tyre and Tripoli, the airport, in addition to roads between Syria and Lebanon.

No Comment!!



Families from the south are sleeping in a park in central Beirut before being moved to schools in the city. Today, one target was the southern port of Sidon, a city not previously targeted by Israel, where 42,000 refugees from the surrounding area have flooded in the hope of safety. (Pictures from BBC)

Others did not get the chance to flee the Israeli bombs...



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Press Release: Innocence facing Brutality

"Lil Hayat" (For Life), a Lebanese civil society group, organized a gathering to mourn and honour the fallen martyred children due to the continued brutal Israeli aggressions on Lebanon. The group indicated that till date, the number of martyrs has exceeded 325, 45% (170) of which are children. "Lil Hayat" (For Life) demands an immediate ceasefire, and requests the United States of America and the International Community to exert utmost pressure to reach a ceasefire in order to preserve human life.

"Our silent vigil is an expression of the steadfastness of the Lebanese people in the face of the Israeli aggression, and not only a sign of sadness", they explained.

The group asks any person knowing the name of any of the children that fell martyr in this war to contact us on 03-581729 to add his/her name on the pedestal that is held next to the Martyr's memorial. As a commemoration to life, the group promised to plant a tree in the name of every child that fell as a Martyr.

