



August 9, 2006

STATEMENT ON ISRAELI DISREGARD OF HUMAN LIFE IN LEBANON

Frontiers (Ruwad) Association joins the whole of Lebanese society and people of conscience throughout the world in condemning Israel's disproportionate violent war against Lebanon, and its military's callous disregard of human lives and international law. Every hour that goes by without a ceasefire results in the loss of more lives and the destruction of more homes, and extends the time that will be necessary to achieve a lasting just peace in the Middle East.

As advocates for the rights of refugees and migrants, we wish to remind the world that those victimized by the Israeli assault on Lebanon include non-Lebanese who came to Lebanon in search of safe haven or a better life. These include Palestinians who fled Israeli ethnic cleansing decades ago, refugees from persecution in Iraq, Sudan, and many other countries, and workers who came to Lebanon temporarily simply to find employment. They are all among the many innocent victims of this war.

We appreciate the efforts of the United Nations, including the UN High Commissioner for Refugees, to deliver aid to displaced people both in Lebanon and in Syria. We note that many of these people are outside the mandate of the High Commissioner, and that he is assisting them as part of his broader humanitarian mission. In the past, the High Commissioner refused to assist many Iraqis, Sudanese, and other asylum-seekers in Lebanon because, in his view, they fell outside the strict limits of his mandate. We hope that after this war ends the High Commissioner will continue extending the flexibility he has shown during this war.

As advocates of international law, we urge the Security Council to impose an immediate ceasefire, and to mandate Israel to withdraw its forces from Lebanese territory immediately. Given the delay and equivocation displayed by some members of the Council, we urge the Government of Lebanon to consider ratifying the Rome Treaty of the International Criminal Court, so that the Court may have jurisdiction over those who commit war crimes during this conflict. We hope for the day when international law will apply equally to all, regardless of political clout or military might.

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