

**fidh**

Fédération internationale des ligues des droits de l'Homme  
International Federation for Human Rights  
Federación internacional de los derechos humanos  
الغدرالية الدولية لحقوق الانسان



EuroMed Non-Governmental Platform  
Plate-forme non gouvernementale EuroMed  
مركز المنظمات غير الحكومية للمنطقة الأورو-متوسطية

# ***Report***

## **International Fact-finding Mission**

### **Lebanon: Solidarity Mission**

**FIDH**

**EMHRN**

**EuroMed Non-Governmental Platform**



## **Introduction**

The International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH), the Euro-Mediterranean Human Rights Network (EMHRN) and the Euromed Non-Governmental Platform took a joint decision to send a mission to Lebanon. The mission was only able to travel to Lebanon on 11 August and stayed until 15 August 2006.

### **The mission had two objectives<sup>1</sup>:**

- To demonstrate solidarity with the Lebanese people through the member organisations of the NGOs that made up the mission
- To conduct a fact-finding mission to examine the possibilities of documenting statements by victims of serious violations of international humanitarian law and Human Rights

### **Composition of the mission :**

- **Souhayr BELHASSEN**, Vice President of FIDH
- **José Martin**, President of the Euromed Non-Governmental Platform
- **Michel TUBIANA**, Member of the EMHRN Executive Committee

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1. A mission with similar objectives, instructed by FIDH and EMHRN, was being carried out in Israel and the Palestinian Territories at the date of publication of this report.

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## Conclusions and Recommendations

### Conclusions

The observations of the members of the mission and the evidence gathered show that:

- The Israeli Army inflicted substantial damage to civilian buildings and infrastructures;
- Civilian convoys, including emergency vehicles, were bombarded by the Israeli Army.
- Emergency convoy traffic was hindered by the Israeli Army, which also severely restricted the number of humanitarian corridors, thus preventing the necessary aid from getting through.
- The members of the mission heard several complaints that phosphorous bombs, fragmentation bombs and cluster bombs were used. They were unable to verify these allegations themselves. They note that the American authorities have opened an inquiry into these charges.

The members of the mission consider that the scale of destruction observed refutes the claim by the Israeli authorities that this was all down to military necessity. Were this claim to be true, it would mean that, given the scale of destruction observed, every civilian target was connected, however tenuously, with a military target.

The action of the Israeli Army in fact reflects a deliberate blurring of the line separating civilian and military targets, which explains the destruction inflicted.

This being the case, warnings issued to the civilian population (by leaflet) appear more as a means of intimidation rather than a safety measure. In addition, the Israeli government has justified its actions by claiming that Hezbollah had to be isolated and cut off from supplies.

Nor can the fact that Hezbollah forces were able to take shelter near Lebanese civilian housing to fire rockets at Israeli territory justify the action taken by the Israeli Army. Apart from the fact that the Israeli Army makes this accusation without convincing evidence, the mobility of its adversary makes it pointless to bomb the place from which the rockets were allegedly fired and nothing can justify the destruction of bridges, power stations, etc.

In fact, Israeli Army action toward civilian populations is tantamount to deliberate collective punishment.

The members of the mission consider that there is sufficient evidence on which to base a conclusion at this time that the Israeli authorities violated Articles 17, 20, 21, 23 and 33 of the Fourth Geneva Convention.

Along with the organisations from which they received their mandate, the members of the mission are keen to point out in this connection that any deliberate attack, from whatever source, by whatever perpetrators, against civilian populations constitutes a war crime.

The humanitarian crisis initiated by the war has not ended with the ceasefire. Hundreds of thousands of people are now without housing; the infrastructure necessary for daily life (water, electricity, etc.) must be rebuilt and health care needs remain very high. The economic life of Lebanon has been severely affected by the effects of the war.

Lebanese civil society has proven highly effective in providing assistance, without discrimination, to the refugees. Its capabilities will not be sufficient to meet current and future needs.

The credibility of the Lebanese State hinges on its ability to organise the reconstruction without ceding its responsibilities to any group.

### Recommendations

The mission organised by FIDH, EMHRN and the Euromed Non-Governmental Platform recommends that:

- the United Nations Security Council ask the High Commissioner for Human Rights - or else that she take such a decision herself - to conduct an inquiry to examine the war crimes committed by all parties to the conflict;
- Lebanese civil society receive all necessary assistance in its ongoing fact-finding inquiry into war crimes committed;
- all perpetrators of war crimes be brought to justice and that the victims receive compensation;
- the international community take the necessary steps to ensure the reconstruction of Lebanon;
- the independence of Lebanon and its legitimate authorities be fully recognised and guaranteed.

## Chapter I- The mission's demonstration of solidarity

### I- 1- The civil society solidarity convoy to the south

The purpose of this convoy of fewer than a hundred cars, each carrying 4 to 6 people, which assembled on 12 August 2006 at Martyrs Square in Beirut, was to bring relief supplies and medicines to Nabatiyeh in southern Lebanon and to support the populations of the towns and cities along the route.

The humanitarian convoy, a demonstration of "support for and solidarity with the Lebanese resistance", in which several national and international NGOs took part, received unofficial protection from members of Hezbollah. The convoy's only security, according to its organisers, was provided by international conventions, media coverage and the participation of the international NGOs.

At Martyrs Square, a single issue was the focus of outraged journalists and militants: the Marjayoun bombardment. On 11 August, a convoy of 4,000 civilians, for the most part Christian, accompanied by 350 Lebanese soldiers and gendarmes, was fleeing in 1,300 cars from Marjayoun (which had been attacked twice by the Israeli Air Force) to Beirut through the Bekaa Valley.

At approximately 9:30 p.m., two Israeli drones fired eight

rockets at the convoy, killing 7 people, including an emergency worker for the Lebanese Red Cross, Mikhael Jbaili, a married father of two (the second LRC volunteer - who number 2,500 - to be killed since the beginning of the war), and wounding 36.

The organisers said that even though the vehicles were covered with white sheets and Lebanese flags, the August 12 solidarity convoy was exposed to danger. It did not in fact get far, stopping at Damour, some fifteen kilometres from Beirut, on instructions from the Lebanese Minister of the Interior, because of the Israeli raids that had struck the Marjayoun convoy the day before.

We then left the convoy to go to Sidon.

### I- 2- Meeting with members of the Euromed Non-Governmental Platform

The President of the Euromed Non-Governmental Platform, José Martin, its Secretary General Michel Rubiana and Board member Souhayr Belhassen, met with the Lebanese NGO members of the Non-Governmental Platform, headed by Georges Abi Salah, who is also President of the Antalias Cultural Association, at the headquarters of the ANDD (Arab NGO Network for Development), headed by Ziad Abdessamad, in Beirut.

The following associations attended:

Nehme Joma'a	<i>Association libanaise des droits de l'Homme</i> (Lebanese Human Rights Association)
Rabei Fakhri and Sabah	<i>Réseau des ONG libanaises</i> (Lebanese NGOs Network)
Ziad Abdessamad	Arab NGO Network for Development
Wafa'a Abed	<i>Union progressiste des femmes du Liban</i> (Progressive Lebanese Women's Union)
Qassem Aina	<i>Forum pour la Coordination des ONG travaillant sur la communauté palestinienne au Liban</i> (Coordination Forum of the NGOs Working among the Palestinian Community in Lebanon)
Mouna Morad	<i>Association pour la responsabilité civique</i> (Association for Civic Responsibility)
Fahmiyah Charafeddine	Lebanese Women Network
Habib Maalouf	Lebanese League for Development
Nizar Ameen	<i>Mouvement social libanais</i> (Lebanese Social Movement)
Widad Chakhtoura	<i>Rassemblement démocratique des femmes libanaises</i> (Democratic Lebanese Women's Association)
Kamel Mohanna	Amel Association
Sally Nasr eddine	<i>Lebyouth Association de la femme libanaise</i> (Lebyouth Lebanese Women's Association)
Nicola Assaf	<i>Lebyouth Association de la femme libanaise</i> (Lebyouth Lebanese Women's Association)
Linda Matar	<i>Ligue des droits de la femme libanaise</i> (Lebanese Women's Rights League)
Walid Fakhreddine	Lebanese Association for Democratic Elections

The NGO representatives had come together, said George Abi Salah, "to remind governments of the rights of the citizen, first and foremost among them the right to life." For all those present, human rights are universal and defending them is essential in the face of "total and deliberate aggression against Lebanon".

For the participants, the solidarity networks that were spontaneously set up during this conflict have made it possible for the various communities to "discover" each other. Druze and Christian participants discovered, for example, that Shia use "contraceptives, pills and ask for curtains so that couples can have privacy," said the head of a women's association, still astonished.

The second finding, presented by Ghassen Aïna of the Coordination Forum of the NGOs Working among the Palestinian Community in Lebanon, relates to the assistance provided by the Palestinians to the Lebanese, particularly by welcoming them in their camps.

Mouna Morad of the Association for Civic Responsibility illustrated her comments with statistics showing the assistance provided to displaced persons in Beït Mery (Beirut). 1,086 people were cared for by her association, including 389 men under the age of 60 and 402 women in the same age group, as well as 41 people over the age of 60. There were also 254 children under the age of ten. She said there had been many miscarriages and premature births and that the priority was providing food, health care and hygiene.

The associations represented welcomed the solidarity mission undertaken by our organisations and provided a summary presentation of the situation. All are engaged in providing humanitarian assistance to the refugees and whatever their views of the initial action taken by Hezbollah, they are all disgusted at the action of the Israeli Army.

They all stress that refugees are being welcomed regardless of religious affiliation, which constitutes a major step forward and represents a change for the future. These facts and this analysis were often repeated during our later talks with others.

They all call for the prosecution of war crimes to be initiated.

### **I- 3- Meeting with human rights NGOs**

On our arrival in Beirut we were welcomed at our hotel by the heads of two Lebanese NGOs, Ziad Abdessamad, President of ANND (Arab NGO Network for Development) and Wadih El Asmar of Solida (Support for Lebanese Detained Arbitrarily) who did everything in their power to assist the mission and to ensure that in the relatively short period of time we were able to meet the maximum number of people and go to places where we could collect information.

The Human Rights NGOs we met gave priority to humanitarian relief. In addition, because of the difficulty they experienced in moving around, the reports they have drawn up on the events were based primarily on facts reported in the newspapers.

#### **I- 3- a- ALDHOM and the Lebanese Human Rights Foundation**

The Director of the *Fondation libanaise des droits de l'Homme et du droit humanitaire* (Foundation of Human & Humanitarian Rights Lebanon) informed the delegation that a "scientific" report is being drawn up. It will focus essentially on violations of international conventions by the warring parties in this new Lebanese war.

In Sidon, at the premises of the *Association libanaise des droits de l'Homme* (Lebanese Human Rights Association), its President Nehme Joma'a provided us with files on the "47 massacres" that have occurred in the country since 12 July. The work was based on reports in the press concerning the events in Sidon, Tyre and at Bent Jbail in the western Bekaa, in Nabatiyeh and in Shahim. (See appended table drawn up by ALDHOM)

#### **I- 3- b- PHRO**

The PHRO (Palestinian Human Rights Organisation in Lebanon) has drawn up a report on the crisis in Lebanon between 12 and 27 July 2006 entitled "Lebanon Crisis...Israel Severe Breaches to the International Law". The report describes the humanitarian situation in Lebanon, the crimes perpetrated against civilians, the destruction of infrastructure and the "use of prohibited weapons". Cases of collective punishment are listed as are the short and long term consequences of the "Israeli aggression against Lebanon".

As this report was being finalised, it says, the "Qana Genocide" took place. It concludes: "Stop the violence. Let us end this catastrophic situation and save human rights".

Rula Badran, the PHRO representative who met with the mission, laid particular emphasis on the arbitrary measures and discriminatory procedures applied by Syria against Palestinians refused entry into that country. On 20 July, 315 Palestinian refugees residing in Lebanon were prevented from entering Syria. "In the name of international conventions and in the name of the right to security and life, we ask that they be given the same treatment as the Lebanese." It is with that goal that the PHRO issued a press release calling on national and international NGOs to put pressure on Syria.

Rula Badran confirmed that "Palestinian refugees, who make up 10% of the Lebanese population and live in the south of Lebanon, are the victims of the most serious violence, even though they opened their camps to Lebanese displaced persons."

While it is true that the Israeli Army dropped leaflets over the camps to warn of Israeli air raids, the situation in the camps is "disastrous" and "we asked," says Rula Badran, "the United Nations and its agencies working with Palestinians in the Middle East, the OHCHR and the EU to draw up an emergency action plan to provide them with the necessary protection in line with the Fourth Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War." She adds, "This includes the evacuation of civilians, ensuring their protection, medical aid (vaccines, treatment of chronic diseases, ambulances) and setting up morgues for those killed in order to avoid epidemics."

"While we deplore the deaths of the four UN personnel," she said, "nothing justifies the refusal to provide UNIFIL protection to citizens, leaving them to their own devices and at risk of being killed. This does not correspond to the unit's protection mandate."

### I-3-c- René Moawad Foundation

The René Moawad Foundation is one of the associations and groups that joined the national and international NGOs to take emergency action, doing their utmost to provide solidarity and make effective fund-raising representations to donors and also to ECHO, with a view to receiving the aid promised by the European Commissioner

for Development and Humanitarian Aid, Louis Michel, which had still not arrived after two weeks.

The Foundation is working in 15 schools transformed into centres for displaced persons in Beirut and three others in Baabda, which together house 430 people.

Delphine Compain, a representative of the Foundation, talked about the "violence and speed" of the attacks, the blockade preventing food from reaching Nabatiyeh and the raids targeting the Christian communities of Rmeich, Ain Ebel and Bent Jbeil, which displaced 7,000 people who were taken in by the Foundation, 80% of whom fled during the 29-30 July truce.

She reports that the Foundation cared for three waves of refugees:

- The first was from Tripoli, during the first week of the war, when 400 refugees arrived;

- The second was from Zgharta, also in the North, on 28 July with 3,000 refugees;

- The third, again in the North, comprised 3,000 refugees.

In the hospitals and in the schools and homes operating as centres for displaced persons, and in talking to NGOs, we found that the support and assistance afforded to displaced persons was primarily the result of spontaneous solidarity. But behind this "national unity", which some see as a reflection of Hezbollah's demonstrable presence throughout the country, others see a willingness to act and to proclaim that Lebanon is still a mosaic in which everyone must make his or her contribution to avoid being sucked into the triumphant spiral of Hezbollah.

We saw this in our discussions with NGO representatives, with a number of women's organisations and above all with activists running centres for displaced persons. "It is not just Hezbollah that is resisting," said a representative of a civic organisation. "Our action can, and I hope it is perceived this way, constitute ideological resistance to Hezbollah. We want to tell the Lebanese and the world that it is not just Hezbollah that is resisting, it is not just Hezbollah that is taking action."



## Chapter II- Investigation of victims of serious violations of international humanitarian law and human rights

### II- 1- Hyet Hraïk Neighbourhood

Hyet Hraïk is a southern suburb of Beirut and was the general headquarters of Hezbollah. Burnt cars and buses lead the way to a field of ruins covered in a grey dust cloud. A nauseating sour smell fills the air.

In Hezbollah's so-called Security Quadrilateral, the destruction is massive and systematic. This was the headquarters of the secretary general of Hezbollah, and of many health institutions and other institutions.

In some cases, like the Hezbollah Centre for Strategic and Ideological Research and Documentation, the bombing was targeted. In other cases, buildings were bombed and the reasons for this remain unknown. All of the surrounding buildings were effected. Floors of buildings collapse upon floors of buildings forming a pile of concrete slabs. In the middle of the ruins, an elevator cage, oddly intact, has been hurled into the midst of the buildings which remain standing. And through windows and doors which have been reduced to mere holes devoid of panes or window sills can be seen tables still set for a meal, a sewing-machine, bicycles parked on balconies, clothing still hanging up at the dry cleaner's, lemonade bottles neatly lined in refrigerated display cases. On the wall of what was once a butcher's shop, a calendar hangs showing the date: 12 July 2006. The most striking sight is the jeweller's shop. Necklaces and rings remain proudly on display. It is a modern day Pompeii, one person remarks. 500,000 people have been evacuated from Hyet Hraïk. We're told that the bombs followed them to the suburbs where they went to seek refuge.

We notice that Hezbollah has taken to patrolling the area at all times. Someone in our group picks a book up off of the ground: "The New Testament" in Arabic. A young man approaches us and discretely asks us to put the book back where we found it. This type of control over the area is the only means of ensuring that a shop owner might one day find his cash register exactly as he left it.

Suddenly, we are told abruptly to get into minibuses: there is a chance that there may be more Israeli air raids. Two hours later, from the neighbourhood where we've been taken, we do indeed hear explosions.

### II- 2- Hospitals

#### II- 2- a- Rafik Hariri Hospital

Here we meet an elderly woman from the South. She was injured in the bombings. She is with her two grand-daughters who live in the southern suburb of Borg El Brajne. Her grand-daughters had to take refuge elsewhere. We also meet two women from Tyre. The first, a 35 year old, lost her two children, 9 and 11 years of age, in the bombings. She is devastated. The second lost her whole family except her husband. She is paralysed on the left side of her body. In another room we meet Firas Chahed, 23, whose back is broken.

In the next bed lies Ali Sâad, 40, who has undergone an eye operation. The doctor will not yet give his prognosis. Ali Sâad lived one kilometre from the southern border. He is a farmer. At 1 a.m. on the fourth day of the war, Sâad and his family were subjected to the bombardment. His 22 year old cousin, his 6 month old daughter Salma and his oldest son Zeïneb, 23 years old, were all buried under the rubble. Of 16 people, only 6 people were recovered. All 16 were injured.

The two doctors with whom we spoke at the hospital could not say whether or not phosphorous bombs were used as the burn victims who arrived at the hospital had already been treated in the South prior to arrival. They did say, however, that none of the injuries they treated lead them to believe that cluster bombs had been used.

#### II- 2- b- Mont Liban Hospital

Ali Rmaïti, is 53 years old. His leg is in plaster and his head is shaved. Despite the bandages, we can see a scar on his head. He is seated next to his 9 year old son's bed. His son is playing with a "play station" while lying in bed with both his legs in plaster.

Ali Rmaïti leaves the room. He doesn't want to speak in front of his son because his son doesn't yet know that his mother Sâadia Rmaïti, his brother M'hamed Rmaïti, 21, and his sisters Fatma, 18, and Malek, 14, were all killed.

The Rmaïtis lived in a small 3 storey building in Chayeh, a suburb south of Beirut.

"My 65 year old mother, Fatma Younès Rmaïti, lived on the 2nd floor with my 22 year old disabled sister Ibtissem Rmaïti. My brother, a state employee who worked at the airport, his wife Sabah, seven months pregnant, and their 5 year old daughter lived on the 2nd floor. My sister Maryem Rmaïti, 32, her husband Mustapha and their 13 year old daughter also lived on the second floor."

"On 7 August we were all watching television on the veranda at my mother's house. At 8 p.m. a missile fell. In a family of 15, only two people survived. I was pulled from the rubble. My nephew's wife, who was just visiting, was never found. They are now buried three to a grave in common graves in Dahye."

The ground floor of the Rmaïti's building was empty. It remains unknown as to whether it was used by Hezbollah activists. Mr. Rmaïti states that he is a simple green grocer. He is not involved in politics.

Samira Trad, director of the human rights organization Frontiers, after leaving the hospital, wished to take Souhayr Belhassen to see the place where the Rmaïti's used to live in Chayeh, however they changed their minds after hearing the sound of bombs falling in that district.

## **II- 3- Centres for displaced persons**

### **- Welfare Shelter**

Father Antoine Dib, director of the "welfare shelter" shows us round.

We meet Christian refugees from Tyre. One is an elected official who left the village on 12 July 2006 and came to this shelter. He speaks of the bombings, yet it is obvious that he left the village before the last bombings took place. Another refugee accuses Hezbollah of having dragged Lebanon into a war at its own instigation. He then highly criticizes the Israeli stance.

"Since 11 July, the Israelis have been dropping leaflets by plane over the Christian neighbourhoods of Tyre warning us to evacuate as Tyre was to be bombed," one refugee tells us. "We were able to leave the city of Tyre safe and sound, thanks to the ICRC which accompanied the convoys." Others tell us that they only learned about the bombings through word of mouth and more specifically through the children's game "Chinese whispers" (where one person whispers a message to another and so on...)

"It wasn't right to start a war without consulting the Lebanese people. A person who has been attacked has, nonetheless, the right to respond", adds another refugee in this Christian neighbourhood of Tyre. A mother leaves the table where several people are still eating lunch to come over to tell us that "if a ceasefire is reached, then we will go home at once. We left everything behind. My husband went back to Tyre to see if our house was still standing. Thank god it is still there."

The shelter has opened its doors to 2,500 people since the beginning of the war. 225 to 300 people live here permanently. According to Father Antoine Dib, all of the funding for logistical needs is given by the churches of the Middle East, the Patriarchate and Caritas. More concretely, people from the area volunteer to drive trucks to and from Beirut for supplies of medicine and food as, according to Father Antoine Dib, the local agriculture has been destroyed.

### **- The "Muwatinun" Centre**

Opposite the Sanayah garden, in a beautiful run-down building, a group of seven young adults have decided to step in where (according to them) "the political parties and associations have failed," i.e. provide shelter for displaced persons.

These seven people now have 150 volunteers and a budget of 160,000 dollars in donations and in grants from the Swiss Embassy. They also were given a broadband internet connection. At the time of our visit, the shelter housed 5,000 people scattered throughout buildings in Hamma and Jnah in the west of Beirut. The shelter had five cars which were rarely used due to fuel restrictions. Instead they bought one van to travel to five different points such as Ramcheh or St. Joseph, where weekly food supplies are distributed to families. A team has been set up to check the declarations made by people demanding assistance in the form of food and other necessities donated to the centre. At the time of our visit, a team of volunteers was handing out rice, sugar, lentils, pasta, detergents, drinking water, and medicines.

Mouna Fawez, 45, provides shelter for around 40 displaced persons from the city of Dahye (Southern Beirut) and from Barbouch in her 5 room apartment. "I can get everything I need here. If it weren't for this shelter I wouldn't be able to feed all of the people that I've been housing since the 16 or 17 July."

A man fled Mazrâa about that time (July 16). He travelled to Beirut with 18 people in two cars. The journey took them 10

days. He came to the shelter in search of "water, biscuits, and nappies for the children." He states that he doesn't want to return right now. He is afraid of the effect that the pollution could have on the children.

**- Ras Beirut High School**

In a small public high school in Ras Beirut, the tables and benches are piled in the hallway and the courtyard has been transformed into a kitchen where women are bustling about. Upstairs, the classrooms, with the blackboards still on the walls, have been partitioned using curtains in order to give a little privacy to the refugees.

Wafa Farhat, 23, is lying on a mattress. Her face is disfigured and her thighs are covered with wounds. She can not hear very well. On 28 July 2006, the day of the truce, she was leaving Aytaroun in a three car convoy. The cars were covered in white flags. There were six people in the first two cars and five in the last one. She tells us, "we didn't hear a thing, when I opened my eyes, I was being pulled from the car through the roof. Then, I found myself in a hospital in Tyre. From there we were evacuated to Beirut."

A volunteer doctor says this is not a matter of injuries or "classic" burns. He expresses his disgust with the "non-existent" Lebanese state and with the fact that NGOs must aid people like Wafa in denouncing Israel because, he says, "Wafa's wounds are unlike anything we have ever seen before." It is Samira Trad's belief in these statements that brings us here to witness this "special case."

## Chapter III- Meetings with International Institutions

### III- 1- The European Union

Our dialogue with the representative from the European Union Delegation and with its collaborators was open and frank. The questions asked by the officers in charge of the mission concerned the role and the activities of the European Delegation on site during this time of crisis, the tools used and the extent of the humanitarian contribution, the European Union's reaction to the violation of fundamental human rights and what can be expected of Europe.

At first it seemed that the European Union deserved criticism for its slow reaction and political intervention. A representative from the Delegation points out, however, that considerable efforts have been made. ECHO (European Commission's Human Rights Office) has proved to be very efficient in delivering humanitarian assistance. The EU is prepared to make a substantial contribution to the clean-up operation on the Lebanese beaches polluted during the bombing (especially the bombing of the Jiyeh electrical station). The EU will also aid in rebuilding efforts in Lebanon.

A memo dated 8 August 2006, entitled " European Union's response to the Lebanese conflict," was sent to the mission. The memo recalls the diplomatic efforts made to organize the Rome conference on 26 July 2006, where European Foreign Affairs Ministers chose the wording "immediate end to hostilities" which was less restrictive for Israel than "immediate cease fire" and declared it was prepared to take part in an international force to back up the United Nation's efforts.

The Delegation's representative announced that humanitarian aid amounting to 100 million Euros would be made available. Louis Michel, the Humanitarian Aid Commissioner, was to assess the ever increasing areas of need on his trip to the area from 14 to 17 August.

This aid first consisted of evacuating 40,000 European Union citizens with the assistance of the Office of International Migrations (OMI). 11 million Euros were used for this and for the evacuation of 10,000 European Union citizens, especially women, from Syria. Nearly 8,000 people were returned home to Cyprus, Jordan and Syria thanks to the European Union's aid.

The European Delegation provided food, water, powdered milk, medicines, vaccines, toiletries, social and psychological assistance, especially for women and children, sundry equipment, beds, and tents. Most importantly, thanks to the European Delegation in Tel-Aviv, humanitarian corridors were opened for the arrival of humanitarian aid, humanitarian aid boats, the Red Cross, and international experts. ECHO, under the authority of the European Delegation to Beirut, and along with the United Nations High Relief Commission is coordinating aid from European States.

According to the EU delegate, at the time of the meeting with the mission, 280,000 people had left Southern Lebanon, and more than 700,000 had left their homes. Half of them were children and 100,000 were being housed in schools. The majority of these people were staying with family or friends. 120,000 have found refuge in Syria.

### III- 2- The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)

For one director of the HCR, humanitarian assistance involves:

- 1- Good coordination between United Nation's bodies, leading to heightened efficiency.
- 2- A strong response from the Lebanese community
- 3- Exceptional work by the municipalities
- 4- Spontaneous provision of humanitarian aid which has lead to a blurring of the Shiite/Christian distinction both generally and also among families.

During our mission many Lebanese talked proudly of a "national consensus". Our interlocutor from the UN spoke of three levels of this "national consensus": "unconditional", "conditional", and "calculated". He was very quick to add that the cumulative effect of different players in the centres for displaced persons will lead to conflict, especially in the regions. This is due primarily to the political motivations that spur them on. According to the UN delegate, Hezbollah has, without a doubt, won politically and Nasrallah's popularity places the movement as an essential player with absolute control over the social networks. As for the rest of Lebanese

society and the political parties, will they be able to do anything to offset Hezbollah now that Iran is ready to make six million dollars available to the latter?

The HCR representative believes that the international players were slow in reacting and states that the Israeli blockade played a role in this. "4/5ths of our logistical capacity is blocked. At a time when 250,000 people need our assistance, we can aid only 50-60,000 people. On a positive note, asylum seekers from Somalia, Sudan and other countries, who were held in large numbers in detention centres or even in the Roumyeh prison, were freed because of the danger that they faced."

### **III- 3- OCHA**

We met with a representative from the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs of the United Nations (OCHA) and discussed the numerous humanitarian rights violations. The discussion focused on the bombing of the Marjayoun convoy and of the incomprehensible attitude of UNIFIL, which had negotiated the departure of the convoy and was to escort it to its final destination. The Minister of the Interior agreed to this on behalf of the Israeli army. However, UNIFIL escorted the convoy to Hezbaya and even stopped the convoy because of bombings along the route. Then, UNIFIL literally disappeared. According to this representative, UNIFIL was instructed to not contravene the Israeli curfew which meant it could not escort the convoy beyond the hours set by the curfew.

## Chapter IV- Meetings with political leaders

### IV- 1- The Minister for Labour

Michel Tubiana met with the Minister for Labour, a member of Hezbollah, who declared in substance that:

- Hezbollah is opposed to Israel because of the Sheba farms, the prisoners, and the occupation of Palestine.
- There will be no peace until Palestine is free, that means one State for two peoples, but if, in the meantime, there needs to be two separate states for 30 or 40 years, that is acceptable.
- Admits to and is proud of having close relations with Iran.
- Expressed reserves about Syrian policy. He voiced his agreement to the dismantling of the Hezbollah army within the Lebanese army but stated that now was not the time for this as it would be seen as a gift to Israel.
- He will do all possible to remain in the government, reaffirmed that the National Union takes precedence over all else.
- These are Hezbollah's true views, all other views are not Hezbollah's.

### IV- 2- President of the Hariri Foundation

In Sidon, we notice a number of bridges destroyed along the road. The electricity plant on the way in to Sidon was bombed and is still smoking. Some of the reservoirs have been destroyed which has led to the pollution of the sea below the city. This pollution has spread all along the coastline. The nature of the pollution is not fully known (fuel and various chemicals).

It is important to emphasize that the destruction of civilian infrastructures was witnessed by members of the mission as soon as they arrived in the North of Lebanon. Getting to Beirut was therefore problematic as two motorway bridges had been destroyed.

The mission went through two towns (Rmelyeh et Nâmir) which were literally ghost towns. Not a living soul in sight. The little restaurants which were preparing for the summer season as well as the boutiques were closed. The only open fuel station led to a tailback of vehicles several kilometres long. Shelling of fuel stations has made it possible to buy fuel only with coupons or through the army. Those arriving from Syria fill their car boots with jerry cans of fuel.

The river Quali is nothing but a crater and the bridge which crossed it is reduced to stalactites of concrete hanging from the twisted iron framework. All that remains standing are the banana plantations whilst greenhouses of fruits and vegetables have been abandoned, their plastic roofs blowing in the wind.

The Hariri Palace towers over the desert town of Sidon. The palace is reached by an alley lined with cedars each sporting a Lebanese flag. In an enormous courtyard trucks are lined up from which boxes of food are being unloaded.

Bahia Hariri, a member of the Lebanese parliament from the Hezbollah aligned Amal party answers, when asked whether Hezbollah come out stronger after this war, that, "all parties are solidly behind the Lebanese government", and adds, "we are hoping for peace, but after seven invasions, we're sceptical. This war is like no other. 85% of civilian infrastructures have been destroyed. Lebanon has been turned into Bantustans surrounding and isolating the Lebanese people both in the south and in the Bekaa. The Shiites have been uprooted from their land". She gives the example of Baalbek<sup>2</sup>.

Bahia Hariri strongly denounces the attack on the civilian convoy in Marjayoun. She maintains that the convoy had permission to travel, yet it was bombed, in Marjayoun on the eve of Friday 11 August at the beginning, midway, and at the end of the convoy. Marjayoun is in a zone subject to the Israeli curfew. She is furious with the international community which she believes "lets the Zionist state do as it likes".

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2. Since 13 July 2006, in fact, the Shiite neighbourhoods in Beirut and also the city of Baalbek in the Bekaa valley, were the target of Israeli raids which claimed the lives of 27 including 10 children. The Israeli army carried out its most severe raid in this region on 21 July. On 2 August, the Israeli army, in a helicopter raid on Baalbek, 100 km from the border, kidnapped 5 members of Hezbollah.

She is appalled that the dead have not yet been buried. A "Fatwa" has been declared until they can be buried. In Sidon there are 10 bodies awaiting burial, in Tyre more than 100, and in Chayeh, in the southern suburbs of Beirut, some of the dead remain under the rubble. She tells us that the Hariri Foundation is taking care of two thirds of the 130,000 refugees in Sidon.

Bahia Hariri tells us about the displaced persons in Sidon, the rescue efforts that her foundation have carried out, and says that Hezbollah will accept the then almost finalized resolution of the Security Council. To Bahia Hariri one thing is sure: "displaced persons must return to their homes. Even if we have to put up tents in all of the cities of this country, these people need to go home and as quickly as possible".

### **IV- 3- The Archbishop of Sidon**

#### **The Archbishop Selim El Ghazi**

We visit Monsignor Selim El Ghazi, Archbishop of Sidon. Monsignor Selim offers shelter to refugees both Christian and Shiite in a community centre. Mgr Selim emphasizes the ecumenical nature of all of the shelters throughout Lebanon. "We are, above all, Lebanese. We've been dragged into another war between religions and we are struggling with all our might to avoid just that." The archbishop believes that peace can be built on two conditions: "Hezbollah becomes a part of political scene in Lebanon and the Palestinians are granted their rights".

### **IV- 4- The Mayor of the City of Sidon**

The town hall of Sidon is teeming with activity. Nowhere else in this city is there so much going on. This is because 110,000 displaced persons reside here who have come to Sidon, a Salâa town, mainly from Tyre and from neighbouring villages like Srifa which is 3 km south of the Litani River (an area which suffered the most intense bombing by Israel between the 13 and 14 August, when 32 bodies were pulled from beneath the ruins), Aïnoua, Al Houch, Zaïkin, Chahoum, Bafali, Marouahin, Ghassania and Mâarouis. A sign on the swinging double doors of the entrance shows the names of these places and tells people where to go.

In one month Sidon, which is home to 125,000 refugees, 30% of whom are Palestinians, has seen its population double. The bombing of the electrical plant that very morning has not helped matters.

Mayor Abderrahman El Bezri, surrounded by 15 representatives from different NGOs and in contact with a sizeable international (European, American, and Arabic) network, is the perfect example of how efficient mayors have been in this war. Especially considering, according to the Mayor, the slow reaction of the UNHCR (among others).

He strongly denounces the State of Israel and war crimes against civilians.

"Qana, Srirfa, and El Ghazieh are completely destroyed. Nonetheless, the majority of the displaced persons will go home as soon as it is possible."

He pointed out that Spain and South Africa provided important assistance. In the case of South Africa, Thomas M'Beki personally ensured that the aid was delivered. He stated that food stuffs have been of high quality but are not sufficiently varied. Moreover, 19% of illnesses in the area are chronic and it is "difficult to find medicine on a daily basis".

### **IV- 5- President of the Human Rights Commission of the Lebanese Parliament**

One of our first meetings was with Michel MOUSSA, a doctor, member of Parliament, and President of the Lebanese Parliament's Human Rights Commission. From our first discussion on the situation it emerged that he had no reliable information which would lead him to believe that prohibited weapons, such as cluster bombs, were used.

### **IV- 6- Member of Parliament in charge of recording war crimes and instigating legal proceedings**

#### **Meeting with lawyer, Ghassen MOUKHAÏBER**

A lawyer and member of Parliament, he has been personally entrusted, by the President of the Parliament, with the job of recording war crimes and instituting legal proceedings. He called a meeting in Parliament on 14 August with all interested organizations (UN, NGOs, etc.). The Justice Minister will handle any legal proceedings that might take place before the International Court of Justice (ICJ) or the International Criminal Court (ICC).

When asked what repercussions there might be if the Lebanese government were to file a suit before the ICC, he stated that the perpetrators of war crimes should be brought to justice.

## **Lebanon: Solidarity Mission**

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A number of Lebanese NGOs, the representative from the High Commissioner of Human Rights, as well as the OCHA representative were all present at the meeting called by Ghassen Moukhaïber. The idea was to create informal coordination in recording war crimes and to decide what type of action should be taken. All of the Lebanese participants at the meeting were in agreement and Michel Tubiana indicated that FIDH was in favour. Another meeting was held the same day at the lawyer's home, to discuss similar matters with the Beirut Bar Association and the Human Rights Organization of the Beirut Bar. All of the participants stated their desire to work together with all partners and felt that the Human Rights Organization of the Beirut Bar Association would be the best organization to handle coordination of these efforts.



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**Appendix : Table of mass killings by the Israeli army during the summer of 2006 invasions. Source:ALDHOM**

No.	Location	Region	Date	Target Site	Number of Deaths	Number of Injured	Source of information	Comments
1	Sarifa	Tyre	Night of 18/19 July 2006	Residential complex. Complete destruction of a dozen homes.	27	30	Essafir and Al Balad newspapers of 20 July- Annahar: 20 and 27 July 2006	Decaying corpses are still buried under the rubble
2	Aïnata	Bent Jébil	19 July	Sami Déroutiche's Home	4	5	Essafir 20 and 27 July	2 bodies remain under the ruins
3	Sélaa	Tyre	19 July	Hassen Mustapha Ayoub's home	6	Unknown	Essafir and Al Balad, 20 July 2006	Bodies remain under the rubble
4	Civil defence building	Tyre	16 July	8 storey building	11	Unknown	Al Balad of 17 July and Annahar of 21 July 2006	The offices of civil defence and of the former Minister Baydhouh and of the Mufti of Tyre were located in this building.
5	Maaraboun	West Bekaa	17 July	Convoy of farmers' pick-up trucks	5	Unknown	Essafir 20 July 2006	
6	Nabatia I	Nabatia	19 July	"Le Capitole" office building in city centre	5	5	Essafir 20 July 2006	One ambulance was hit.
7	El Houch	Tyre	17 July	Town of Kodsî	4	3	Essafir 18 July 2006	Rubble removal by UNIFIL
8	Emnabi Shiite	West Bekaa	19 July	Hassen Chokr's home	7	3	Essafir 20 July 2006	Displaced persons from Mays El Jabal were among the victims

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<b>9</b>	Aaytaroun	Bent Jébayl	12 July	Ali and Hassen El Akhras' Homes	11	Unknown	Annahar 13 and 19 July 2006	The members of the Lakhra's family are Canadian citizens.
			17 July	Med and Hassen Aouadha's Homes	13	Unknown	Annahar and Assafir 19 July	Bodies remain under the rubble
			19 July	One convoy of cars on the Borg Nord road	4	Unknown	Essafir 20 July 2006	
<b>10</b>	Zabkine	Tyre	13 July	3 storey home owned by Nâim Bziâa	12	Unknown	Annahar 14 July and 21 July 2006	
<b>11</b>	Mafrak El Abbassia	Tyre	16 July	Building on the main avenue	8	Unknown	Al Balad 17 July and Annahar 21 July	Annahar of 20 July identified 5 more victims
<b>12</b>	Abba	Annabatya	16 July	Abdelaziz Tathimi home	8	16	Al Balad of 17 July 2006	
<b>13</b>	Ach-chamis	Chahim	17 July	Home on the outskirts of the village	5	10	Annahar of 18 July	
<b>14</b>	Chohour	Tyre	13 July	Ali Khaheb home	2	Unknown	Annahar of 14 and 21 July	Bodies remain under the rubble
<b>15</b>	Borg Chamali	Tyre	16 July	Ramez Zayet home	5	8	Al Balad of 17 July, Annahar of 21 July	
<b>16</b>	Bater	Bent Joubayl	14 July	Abou Okayl Souiden home	5	Unknown	Annahar of 21 July	

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<b>17</b>	Doueyr	Annabatya	13 July	Ali Akécha home	12					The entire family was killed. The children were all under 18 years of age
<b>18</b>	Bafley	Tyre	13 July	Mounir Anzine Home	8	Unknown	Annahar of 14 and 21 July	Annahar of 14 and 21 July	Victims included 2 Kuwaitis	
<b>19</b>	Marouahyn	Tyre	15 July	Car Convoy of displaced persons from the village, raid in Bayadha	16	Unknown	Annahar of 21 July	Annahar of 21 July		
<b>20</b>	Annabatya II	Annabatya	25 July	Sâad Hamza home	7	Unknown	Essafir of 26 July	Essafir of 26 July		
<b>21</b>	***	Bent Joubayl	****	Hassine Med Sabra home	***	Unknown	Annahar and Essafir of ****	Annahar and Essafir of ****	Neighbouring village was the target	
<b>22</b>	Kafir Jouz	Annabatya	28 July	D. El Khaij building	6	Unknown	Essafir and Annahar of 29 July	Essafir and Annahar of 29 July	Neighbouring buildings were targeted	
<b>23</b>	Dir Kanoun Ennahr	Tyre	28 July	Abd Ezeddine home	4	Unknown	Essafir and Annahar of 29 July	Essafir and Annahar of 29 July		
<b>24</b>	Bater II	Bent Joubayl	28 July	Interior roads and homes	4	Unknown	Essafir of 30 July	Essafir of 30 July	Various buildings destroyed	
<b>25</b>	Toumayria	Annabatya	29 July	Harki and Badir homes	7	Unknown	Essafir of 30 July	Essafir of 30 July	Various buildings destroyed	
<b>26</b>	Ain Arab	Al Bikâa	29 July	Identity of home not determined	6	Unknown	Essafir of 30 July	Essafir of 30 July		
<b>27</b>	Baroun	Bent Joubayl	30 July	Home in which civilians were hiding	6	Unknown	Essafir of 31 July	Essafir of 31 July	Bodies remain under the rubble	
<b>28</b>	Fire in New Qana	Tyre	31 July	Chanhoub buildings	60	9 min	Essafir of 31 July	Essafir of 31 July	Fire draws international attention	

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<b>29</b>	Targeted Churches	Safed * Battikh, Raehya El Fokhar	30 July	First the Church of Raehya El Fokhar on a previous date, then the Church of Safed El Battikh	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown	Essafir of 30 July	
<b>30</b>	Haris	Bent Joubayl		Khalil Jrad and Ghani Châabane Home	16	Unknown	Unknown	Essafir of 1 and 2 August	According to Safir, the destruction took place one week before.
<b>31</b>	Louisa	Ettouffeh	1 August	Salim Hachem home	5	1	Unknown	Essafir of 2 August	Victims still under rubble
<b>32</b>	El Haloussya	Tyre		Hassine Moannes home	8	Unknown	Unknown	Essafir of 1 August	Victims remain under rubble
<b>33</b>	Mâaroub	Tyre		Abdelhassine Taleb home	5	Unknown	Unknown	Essafir of 30 July	Victims pulled out from the rubble
<b>34</b>	Bâalabek	Bâalabek	Night of 1 and 2 August	Parachute operation **	17	8	Unknown	Essafir of 2 and 3 August	The operation led to the capture of 5 civilians
<b>35</b>	Ettouffeh *	Ettouffeh *	4 August *	*****	***	Unknown	Unknown	Essafir of ***	
<b>36</b>	Ettiba	Marjayoun	4 August	1 home	7	10	Unknown	Essafir of 5 August	
<b>37</b>	Nakoura	Tyre	6 August	Gharib homes	3	1	Unknown	Essafir of 7 August	
<b>38</b>	Ansar	Annabatya	6 August	Bahim Aassi homes	5	8	Unknown	Essafir of 7 August	9 neighbouring homes were hit
<b>39</b>	Houla	Marjayoun	7 August	A group of homes including a shelter	5	Unknown	Unknown	Essafir of 8 August	Building destroyed *****
<b>40</b>	Kafir Tablit	Annabatya	7 August	7 homes destroyed	5	18	Unknown	Essafir of 8 August	*** also targeted

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41	Britel	Al Bikâa	7 August	Several homes hit or destroyed	14	21	Essafir of 8 August	***
42	Ghassanya	Sidon	7 August	Abdallah Tâama home	6	Unknown	Essafir of 8 August	
43	El Ghazia	Sidon	7 August	Many houses in different locations	20	30	Essafir of 8 August	
44	Echayeh	Beirut	7 August	1 eight storey building	20	30	Essafir of 8 August	The number of victims has increased
45	New Ghazia	Sidon	8 August	Several buildings near the cemetery	14	50	Essafir of 9 August	The killing took place during the burial of victims from the first massacre
46	Mâaroub	Tyre	8 August	***** Imam Ali	4	1	Essafir of 9 August	Victims remain under the rubble
47	Mouchaghara	West Bekaa	Night of 8/9 August	Homes of Ahmed and dib Sader	6	1	Essafir of 10 August	Two homes completely destroyed
48	Aarsel	West Bekaa	9 August	Agricultural land	4*	Unknown	Essafir of 9 August	Farm workers including two Syrians

**Note : all of these slaughters were caused by air raids**





# fidh

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الفدرالية الدولية لحقوق الانسان

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