

PRESS RELEASE**“Middle East Crisis”**

In the Name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful

The international community is witnessing, with horror and indignation, the daily exacerbation of two cases of blatant and pre-meditated aggression and multiple war crimes perpetrated by the Israeli regime against the people of Palestine and Lebanon under absurd and all too familiar pretexts.

Days of blanket and indiscriminate air, missiles and artillery strikes against civilians and civilian infrastructures across Lebanon have gone by, while more than 300 innocent civilians have been murdered, over a thousand maimed and hundreds of thousands turned homeless in a proclaimed response to the capture of two soldiers.

No stretching of international law and the UN Charter principles can logically sell such unbridled, disproportionate and indiscriminate barbarism and collective punishment against civilians as self-defense. The new round of aggression is more alarming as it occurs at a sensitive time when various Lebanese communities and parties are engaged in a national endeavor to reach a comprehensive understanding through an all-inclusive national dialogue – an effort that the aggressors aim to defeat too.

While the massive propaganda machine may try to reverse the truth and spread smokescreens to hide the ugly face of aggression, millions of the peoples who have turned out in the streets across the globe know exactly where the blame should lie, which regimes rightly belong in the axis of evil and terror, and who are the culprits and their supporters who have destabilized the region, frustrated the aspirations for peace and justice, punished entire populations for their democratic choice, plunged the Middle East into chaos and are actively provoking a wider conflict.

Terrorism in the truest sense of the word is in display, as the aggressor gives short notice before beginning to bomb entire neighbourhoods and regions. With bridges, roads, tunnels, sea and air ports already hit, and a complete blockade imposed, terrorized civilians are left to wonder how to flee and where to seek refuge. Still more daunting, with the increasing lack of food and medicine, attacks on humanitarian convoys and disrupted water and electricity supplies, a serious humanitarian crisis is in the making.

Israeli onslaught is part of their designs on Lebanon. Wide-rang operations, aiming at, among other things, imposing sea, air and land blockade on a whole country in a sensitive region, could not have been carried out without prior planning as well as prior coordination with the supporting power and the receipt of the necessary green light.

More importantly, it is regrettable that the Security Council, long after such grave breaches of international peace and security and the threat of their spillover into adjacent areas, has been rendered incapacitated to address the crisis, utterly failing to live up to its responsibilities under the UN Charter - a failure that has been taken as a license by the aggressors to kill and wreak havoc across Gaza and Lebanon.

While many lives are being shattered, families broken apart, civilian infrastructures devastated and the stability in the wider region threatened, it is cynical to place the plans and interests of the occupying regime ahead and refrain even from calling for a quick cease-fire. An immediate and unconditional cease-fire is what the peoples of Lebanon demand and what the Security Council should try to achieve. The European Union should, as always claims, react strongly to state terrorism and condemn severely the inhumane aggression of Israel. It is time also for the EU to show its will to help the innocent people of the region to live in peace and security.

Islamic Republic of Iran supports a comprehensive solution for the crisis, which takes the legitimate demands of the aggrieved people into account, including the release of the Lebanese and Palestinian detainees, bringing the occupation of the Sheba'a Farms to an end, and holding the aggressors accountable for the lives perished and infrastructures devastated. Nevertheless, some baseless allegations by Israel's Regime deflect attention from the root cause of all tensions in the Middle East; that is occupation, and its fallouts, including the illegal detention of thousands of Arabs and the violation of their rights.

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