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FOREIGN POLICY

Saudi Arabia condemns Israeli strike on Lebanese town of Qana

Saudi Arabia condemned the Israeli strike on Qana, Lebanon in a statement July 30. A Saudi official said in a statement that most of those killed in Qana were women and children seeking shelter from Israeli attacks.

"The Kingdom condemns this brutal act which has no respect for law, sanctity or covenant," the official said, adding that the war has destroyed lives as well as the Lebanese economy.

Israel would not have violated Lebanon in this way if the international community had reached an agreement on a cease-fire. In addition, the attacks would not continue without the moral, political and material support of some countries to Israel, the official said.

Saudi Arabia calls for an immediate cease-fire as demanded by the Lebanese government, the official said. The Kingdom also warns of the consequences of the Israeli aggression that could expand the cycle of violence.

King Abdullah held several meetings this week with foreign leaders about the crisis in Lebanon, including Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak, Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas, Jordan's King Abdullah and Lebanese Prime Minister Fuad Siniora.

Saudi Ambassador calls for a quick end to the war in Lebanon

In July 31 remarks at an event hosted by the New American Foundation, Saudi Ambassador to the US Prince Turki called on the international community to move quickly to end the war in Lebanon, protect the Lebanese people and support the Lebanese government as it seeks to establish its authority throughout the country. In particular, Prince Turki urged international leaders, especially the US and the UN, to send an international force to Lebanon.

A lasting peace requires balancing the interests of all parties so that they feel they have achieved something without losing face. "The question for us today is how to arrive at that point of balance – through the continued ruthless exercise of power or under the umbrella of a cease fire," Prince Turki remarked.

“The Kingdom is doing what it can – brokering peace and providing aid. We understand that we live in an age in which the problems of one nation or one people are the problems of the world,” Prince Turki said. “The United States must play the role of pacifier and lead the world to peace and not be led by Israel’s ambitions.”

FOREIGN AID

Telethon for Lebanon raises over \$29 million

A July 26 telethon to raise funds to aid Lebanon has raised over SR 109 million [\$29 million] so far. The fundraising campaign was held on the directives of King Abdullah, who made a personal donation of \$2.67 million. Proceeds from the fundraiser are in addition to the aid package for Lebanon that Saudi Arabia announced July 25, which includes a \$500 million grant for the reconstruction of Lebanon and a \$1 billion deposit with the Central Bank of Lebanon to support the Lebanese economy.

In addition, the Saudi Popular Campaign for the Relief of the Lebanese People has allocated \$5.7 million for urgent relief assistance including foodstuffs and medical supplies to the people of Lebanon.

Saudi field hospital dispatched to Lebanon

A fully-equipped Saudi field hospital was dispatched to Lebanon July 27. The hospital will conduct both minor and major operations, and includes laboratories as well as ambulances. It will be supervised by the Saudi Red Crescent Society.

Medical staff for the hospital arrived in Beirut July 31, including 18 physicians, 15 male nurses, 12 pharmacists, 5 emergency technicians, 8 X-ray technicians and 3 lab technicians. A preliminary medical team arrived July 26.

Kingdom donates \$6 million for medical equipment in Baton Rouge

Saudi Arabia has donated more than \$6 million to replace Baton Rouge-based Louisiana State University (LSU) medical equipment destroyed by Hurricane Katrina, the Baton Rouge Advocate reported July 25. The donation includes \$1 million for an MRI machine to help Baton Rouge’s poor and uninsured.

LSU determined equipment needs, and then the Saudi government provided the funding in cooperation with Siemens, Nail Al-Jubeir, director of the Saudi Arabian Information Office in Washington, DC, told the Advocate.

