



JANUARY 6, 2009

PALESTINE-ISRAEL

Arab foreign ministers meet to discuss Gaza crisis

Foreign Minister Prince Saud al-Faisal chaired an extraordinary meeting of the foreign ministers of the Arab League countries in Cairo on December 31 to discuss the crisis in the Gaza Strip.

Prince Saud characterized the Israeli attack on Gaza as a massacre and a crime against humanity that will only lead to more violence and extremism. He noted that hundreds of people have been killed and more than 1,000 injured, including women and children.

However, Prince Saud noted that the terrible violence would not have occurred if the Palestinian people were unified behind one leadership. It is high time, he said, for all Palestinian factions to hold a decisive meeting that leads to a government of national unity.

Prince Saud called on his fellow Arab foreign ministers to adopt serious and effective measures that will bring about an immediate end to the Israeli aggression.

Cabinet condemns lack of response to Israeli attacks

King Abdullah condemned the flagrant Israeli attacks against the Palestinian people during a January 5 Cabinet meeting. He highlighted Saudi Arabia's efforts to end the violence, and its attempts to promote a unified Palestinian leadership.

The Cabinet condemned the weak international response to Israel's actions and vowed to continue the Saudi policy of assisting the Palestinians in every way possible. The ministers declared that the Kingdom will be at the forefront of any Arab or Islamic joint action to resolve the crisis.

FOREIGN AID

Country-wide campaign launched to raise money for Palestinian relief

The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia has launched the "Custodian of The Two Holy Mosques Campaign to Provide Humanitarian Relief to the Palestinian People in Gaza."

King Abdullah initiated the fund with a donation of \$8 million, while Crown Prince Sultan provided an additional \$2.7 million.

During an eleven-hour charity telethon launched January 3 live on Saudi Television, a total of \$31.8 million was raised for Palestinian relief. The fund continues to receive donations from citizens and residents throughout the Kingdom.

The Campaign plans to send shipments of food and high-tech medical equipment to Gaza this week.

Meanwhile, Interior Minister Prince Nayef bin Abdulaziz, the General Supervisor of the Saudi Committee for the Relief of the Palestinian People, ordered the committee to provide \$2.9 million in urgent food, shelter and medical aid to the people of Gaza.

Saudi planes deliver aid to Palestinians and evacuate the injured

King Abdullah has ordered the delivery of medical aid to civilian victims in Gaza, as well as the transportation of the wounded to Saudi Arabia for treatment at Saudi hospitals.

"This is an effort by the Saudi people to help alleviate the tragic humanitarian situation of the people in Gaza," said Saudi Ambassador to the United States Adel A. Al-Jubeir.

The Kingdom delivered its first shipment, two cargo planes with more than 20 tons of medical supplies, on December 30. By January 6, an additional eight shipments had been delivered, carrying between 12 and 20 tons of supplies each.

Ministry of Health Spokesman Dr. Khalid Mirghalani announced January 5, "Every morning, a Saudi relief aircraft will take off for Al-Arish [an Egyptian town near the Gaza border] to deliver necessary medicines and treat injured Palestinians."

Simultaneously, Saudi Medevac planes have been airlifting injured Palestinians to Saudi hospitals, including King Faisal Specialist Hospital, where King Abdullah personally paid a visit to wounded Palestinian youths on January 2.

"The Saudi people are committed to help alleviate the tragic humanitarian situation in Gaza and will continue to show their support," said Ambassador Al-Jubeir.

