



Mission permanente d'Israël  
auprès de l'Office des Nations Unies  
et des Organisations Internationales à Genève

משלחת ישראל  
ליד משרד האומות המאוחדות  
והארגונים הבינלאומיים בג'נבה

## CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

### **STATEMENT BY H.E. AMBASSADOR ITZHAK LEVANON PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF ISRAEL BEFORE THE SECOND SPECIAL SESSION OF THE HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL**

Geneva, 11 August 2006

Mr. Chairman,

At the outset, it seems paradoxically appropriate that I should thank the signatories, who called for this special session of the Human Rights Council, for so clearly unveiling the hypocrisy that lies behind this session.

After a month of pain and suffering on both sides of the border between Israel and Lebanon, the Arab States and the Organization of the Islamic Conference have asked to convene this Special Session to deal exclusively with the suffering on only one side of the divide. But the suffering knows no boundaries. And the peoples of Lebanon and Israel together are paying the price of the vicious campaign of terror waged by Hezbollah.

The simple fact of how this crisis started seems to have evaded the memory of many in the Council.

On 12 July 2006, it was Hezbollah, a terrorist organization, which perpetrated an unprovoked attack across an international border, descending a rain of missiles over Israeli homes, towns and villages, followed by the abduction of two Israeli servicemen and the murder of eight soldiers. It is Hezbollah that has since launched over 3,500 rockets into Israel, killing and injuring thousands of Israeli civilians, sending close to one million into basements and bomb shelters and away from their homes, and destroying thousands of houses. And it is Hezbollah that continues to preach and to practice its genocidal philosophy calling for the destruction of Israel.

As Hassan Nasrallah declared in an interview given to the Middle East Insight Magazine: "I am against any reconciliation with Israel. I do not even recognize the presence of a state that is called Israel. There is no solution to the conflict in this region except with the disappearance of Israel".

But if Hezbollah is the immediate cause of this conflict, the deeper cause must also be recognized: those cowardly states which cynically seek to fight their battles through others, on foreign soil. It is they who armed and trained, fund and direct Hezbollah's murderous campaign. The Syrian Foreign Minister, in the last Arab League meeting in Beirut, proudly declared to the media on 7 August 2006 : " I am ready to be a soldier at the disposal of Hezbollah chief, Nasrallah." And President Ahmadinejad of Iran said recently at the OIC gathering in Malaysia on 7 August 2006: "The definite solution to the Middle East crisis is the elimination of the Zionist regime". Today, the tentacles of Syria and Iran are supported with evidence on the ground.

Mr. Chairman,

That is the reality, far far removed from that presented here in this Council. As we sit here, listening to distorted accusations, sirens wail in the North of Israel – in cities like Haifa and Afula, Nahariah and Metullah, Kiryat Shemonah, Carmiel, and the holy cities of Nazareth and Tiberias – while lethal rockets fall indiscriminately upon innocent civilians, targeting men, women, and children, Jewish, Moslem and Christian alike.

These blatant violations of the most fundamental of all basic human rights, the right to live, regrettably did not attract this Council's attention or condemnation when it comes to Israelis.

Hezbollah not only targets Israeli civilians deliberately and indiscriminately, but also callously seeks to create civilian casualties on the Lebanese side, cynically hiding its infrastructure, weapons and launch sites among homes and hospitals, mosques and schools.

In such a situation, civilian casualties are unavoidable. In this impossible situation in which Hezbollah flouts the fundamental humanitarian principles, Israel makes tremendous efforts to defend itself in accordance with the principles of international law, to direct its attacks against terrorist targets, and to avoid the disproportionate damage to the civilians used as cover by Hezbollah.

I ask every representative in this hall: if your country faced the intolerable threat that my country is facing, would you sit idly by? Would you do any less that Israel has done to protect the lives of your citizens?

Mr. Chairman,

Today I stand before you as the voice of 6 million Israelis currently living under a daily barrage of Iranian and Syrian missiles, launched with the sole purpose to massacre scores of innocent Israelis. Do not such grand ambitions of genocide violate the fundamental human rights and freedoms of individuals, rights that this very body was created to serve and protect? Where then, I ask you, where are the calls to investigate Hezbollah, Syria and Iran's committed atrocities?

Mr. Chairman,

The kidnapped Israeli soldiers should be released unconditionally and the threat on Israeli population must stop. The situation, which prevailed before Hezbollah's flagrant attack against us, is over. It cannot return. We must instead work to build a new reality – one in which the peoples of Israel and Lebanon can finally live free from the threat of terrorism.

Thank you.