

15 September 2006

Mr Grahame J. Leonard
President
Executive Council of Australian Jewry
2nd Floor, 306 Hawthorn Road
CAULFIELD SOUTH VICTORIA 3162

Dear Mr Leonard

Thank you for your letter dated 25 August 2006 regarding Amnesty International's press release of 23 August 2006 in relation to the conflict between Israel and Hizbullah.

Amnesty International has made clear in the report dated 23 August 2006 (**enclosed**) and in previous statements that Hizbullah and Israel have both committed serious violations of international humanitarian law. This is why we called for both parties to the conflict to cease those violations and for an independent investigation into the conduct of both parties in respect of those violations.

The impact of this conflict on the civilian population of Lebanon has been devastating, with more than 1000 killed, more than a quarter of the population of Lebanon been displaced, over 100,000 remaining homeless. Israeli military action has caused massive destruction to the infrastructure which will have a continuing impact on the civilian population. It is fitting therefore that our initial focus has been to address the impact of this conflict on the people of Lebanon.

We want to assure you that our research into the attacks by Hizbullah into Israel is ongoing. We have delegates in Israel and Lebanon who will continue to investigate the attacks by Hizbullah. I **enclose** a copy of Amnesty International's report on Hizbullah's attacks on northern Israel, released yesterday, for your information.

Amnesty International does not condemn or condone war itself, but we do condemn grave violations of human rights and international humanitarian laws wherever they occur and whoever has committed them.

Amnesty International Australia appreciates the concern your organisation has for civilians in Israel, their safety and the terrible effect this war is having on their human rights and futures. We assure you that we share your concern.

Yours sincerely



Georgina Perry
National President

global defenders of human rights

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