

Mr Matthiessen
Personal Representative of the SG/HR for Human Rights
European Council

Brussels, 14 September 2006
Our ref : B 580

Dear Mr Matthiessen

Subject : Amnesty International's report on Hizbullah's attack on northern Israel

I am writing you to draw your attention to Amnesty International's report, documenting violations of international humanitarian law during the Israel-Lebanon conflict. This latest report focuses on Hizbullah's attacks in northern Israel, complementing our previous report on violations committed by Israel.

Amnesty International notes that Hizbullah's rocket attacks on northern Israel amounted to direct attack on civilians and civilian objects, as well as indiscriminate attacks on civilians. Both constitute war crimes under international law. Moreover, its attacks also violated a number of other rules of international humanitarian law, including the prohibition on reprisal attacks on the civilian population. Amnesty International believes that international humanitarian law must be respected in all circumstances. Violations must be documented, recorded and punished by the appropriate international body.

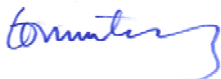
Amnesty International welcomes the recent visit to Lebanon and Israel of four independent experts of the UN Human Rights Council to investigate the impact of the conflict on the right to life, health and housing, and the situation of the internally displaced. However, Amnesty International has expressed deep regret that the resolution of the Human Rights Council setting up this inquiry was exclusively focused on Israel and did not address the conduct of Hizbullah.

Amnesty International, therefore, urges the EU Presidency in its political discussions to:

- call for a comprehensive, independent and impartial inquiry to be conducted by the UN into violations of international humanitarian law by both sides in the conflict;
- request the UN Secretary-General to establish a panel of independent experts to conduct this inquiry; and
- urge that the outcome of the inquiry is made public and include recommendations aimed at ending and preventing further violations.

Please find attached a copy of both reports for your information and reference. On behalf of Amnesty International, I look forward to hearing from you with regard to these matters.

Yours sincerely,



Dick Oosting
Director Amnesty International EU Office

Annex: *Israel/Lebanon: deliberate destruction or "collateral damage"? Israeli attacks on civilian infrastructure, AI index: MDE 18/007/2006*

Israel/Lebanon: civilians under fire, Hizbullah's attacks on northern Israel, AI index: MDE 20/025/2006

CC: Mr Tuomioja, Mr Solana, Mrs Ferrero-Waldner