



July 2006

Dear friend

Humanitarian crisis in the Middle East – please give what you can

The current crisis in Lebanon is seeing civilians pay with their lives, and severely damaging roads, homes and essential services. 'From being alive, peaceful and secure, Lebanon has become a shattered country in urgent need of relief,' says Ameer Makhoul of Ittijah, a Christian Aid partner organisation in Haifa, Israel.

At the time of writing, an estimated 500,000 people are displaced throughout Lebanon. **Christian Aid partner organisations are there and already hard at work, but they need your help.** Even if a diplomatic solution is found to the current crisis, there will still be a desperate need to help communities rebuild their lives.

'We are doing all we can, but we lack water and food,' says Pascal Kolakz from a school in Beirut, hastily converted by Christian Aid partner Mouvement Social into a centre for families fleeing the bombing. At each of Mouvement Social's centres, around 300 people find a temporary refuge from the violence, but conditions are crowded and supplies are short. 'There are 150 schools in Beirut all in the same situation,' she says.

A gift of £11 could provide essential food, water, medicine and accommodation for a family of four for a day.

And it's not just those in Lebanon who need your support; the violence is affecting people in Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territories too. In towns in northern Israel, many people are spending their days in bomb shelters, and the Israeli organisations we work with are monitoring needs that arise.

In the Gaza Strip, recent air raids have damaged electricity and water supplies. Clean water is scarce and there is an increased threat of disease from untreated sewage. These new problems are hitting the area hard after vital international aid for the Palestinian Authority was withdrawn following January's elections.

The United Nations has described the situation as 'dangerous and desperate... the Palestinians are struggling to survive; their preoccupation is security, water, food and electricity. It doesn't get any more basic than that.' We have already made a grant of £20,000 to longstanding partner the Palestinian Agricultural Relief Committee to start purchasing water tanks.

Christian Aid has more than half a century of experience of working with local organisations in the Middle East. We are gravely concerned about the immediate humanitarian impact this crisis is having on hundreds of thousands of people, and about the destruction to their communities and livelihoods.

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Christian Aid works with the world's poorest people in more than 50 countries, regardless of race or faith. We tackle the causes and consequences of poverty and injustice. We are part of ACT International, the ecumenical relief network.

UK registered charity no 1105851 Republic of Ireland charity no CHY 6998
Christian Aid is a company limited by guarantee, registered in England and Wales,
at 35 Lower Marsh, London SE1 7RL, no 5171525

With your help, as the situation changes we will be able to respond appropriately through our partner organisations across the region. We will also be there in the long-term, helping people rebuild their lives and cope with their new circumstances.

We are so grateful for the support of churches for our ongoing work. Please also respond to this appeal, if you can, with a collection in your church. We will use your money wherever the need is greatest. Whatever happens over the next few days and weeks, people in the Middle East will need your prayers and support as they seek to rebuild their lives.

Yours in Christ,



Daleep Mukarji, Director

PS So your congregation can make the maximum difference, please use Gift Aid envelopes for your collection – request them by calling 08700 787 788 or contacting your local Christian Aid office. Thank you.

A prayer for those in need

Prince of peace, we dare to hope for an end to conflict in the Middle East.

We pray for the peace and safety of all – Israelis, Palestinians, Lebanese – who live in the region.

Turn hearts from hatred, and hands from violence. Set minds to work for the good of all.

In your precious name, Amen.

■ **£11 could provide a day's essential food, water, medicine and accommodation for a family of four in Lebanon**

■ **£38.30 could provide a water tank that holds enough to provide a family of seven in the Gaza Strip with clean, safe water for up to three days**

■ **£132 could run an ambulance service in the Gaza Strip for three days**

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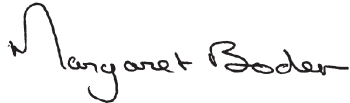
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Margaret Boden, General Secretary,
Christian Aid Ireland

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Gavin McLellan, National Secretary,
Christian Aid Scotland

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