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**Written statement* submitted by BADIL Resource Center for Palestinian Residency
and Refugee Rights,
a non-governmental organization in special consultative status**

The Secretary-General has received the following written statement which is
circulated in accordance with Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

[10 August 2006]

* This written statement is issued, unedited, in the language(s) received from the
submitting non-governmental organization(s) and its content is the author's sole
responsibility.

A Piecemeal Approach to International Law Will not Bring Peace

The root causes of the conflict in Lebanon and occupied Palestine must be addressed in a way that is comprehensive and inclusive of all relevant UN resolutions. Selective enforcement of UN Resolutions, without enforcing past UN resolutions, such as Resolutions 242 and 338, demanding the immediate withdrawal of Israel from lands illegally occupied in the 1967 war, including the Golan Heights, the West Bank (including East Jerusalem) and the Gaza Strip, as well as Resolutions 194 and 237 calling for the return of Palestinian refugees will never bring peace to the Middle East, especially, in Lebanon and occupied Palestine.

Bethlehem, 9 August 2006 - On July 12th, Israeli Defense Forces (IDF) began its military operation with the objective of eliminating Hezbollah forces from Southern Lebanon. As of August 9th, the Government of Lebanon's (GoL) Higher Relief Council (HRC) reported 1,020 people have been killed and 3,508 injured, the vast majority of whom are civilians.

The HRC further reported that an estimated 960,000 people (25% of the Lebanese population) had fled their homes, including 210,000 persons who have fled to neighboring countries (OCHA Situation Report). It is estimated that in the next three months the number of those fleeing Lebanon to Syria will total 300,000 Lebanese as well as 15,000 Palestinian refugees and 20,000 Third Country Nationals (Lebanon Crisis 2006-UN Flash Appeal).

Exacerbating an already trying situation for Palestinian refugees

Palestinian refugees are amongst the most vulnerable communities in Lebanon. Yet, they are currently providing refuge to internally displaced persons (IDPs) in Lebanon. For instance, as of July 29th, Ein el-Hilweh, the largest Palestinian camp in the region, hosted some 8,000 Lebanese refugees and as of August 8th, some 500 Lebanese families were sheltered al-Bas Palestinian camp in central Tyre (Reuters Foundation-AlertNet, Monsters and Critics.com).

Although they are providing shelter to IDPs, Palestinian refugees have also been displaced. Palestinians from Wavell, Rashidiieh and el-Buss camps in Lebanon have fled. The total number of displaced refugees amounted to 15,645 persons as of August 7th. UNRWA is also assisting around 2,000 Palestinian refugees who have sought refuge in Syria, most of whom in Yarmouk camp, Damascus. UNRWA has faced difficulties in reaching and providing for Palestinian refugees and the displacees, and without an active international agency with an express protection mandate, Palestinian refugees' rights cannot be upheld.

Palestinian refugee camps have not been immune to Israeli bombardment either. On July 24th, the IDF bombed Rashidiyeh refugee camp near Tyre with artillery fire. Six people were wounded and five shelters were destroyed and on 9 August, an Israeli strike on the Palestinian refugee camp of Ein Al Hilweh killed two and injured 10.

A forgotten crisis

Whereas Israel is engaged in Lebanon, it has also been conducting a military campaign, code-named Operation Summer Rains, since June 28 in the Gaza Strip. Over 184 Palestinians, most of whom are refugees, have been killed, and over 650 injured. At least 12 homes have been demolished and up to 3,400 Palestinians have been displaced and sought shelter in UNRWA installations.

A call for action

The continuation of the conflict in both Lebanon and the occupied Palestinian territories and the disproportionate, unnecessary and indiscriminate nature of the attacks have led to war crimes and crimes against humanity. Moreover, current Israeli policies of occupation and colonization in the occupied Palestinian territories and Arab territories contravene the principles of peace and international stability and fuel the conflict in the region. Hence, ongoing violations of human rights and humanitarian law in Lebanon and occupied Palestine necessitate the strongest condemnations and actions from the United Nations, including sanctions against the state of Israel until it complies with international law and all relevant UN Resolutions pertaining to the conflict in Lebanon and occupied Palestine.
