

PROPHETIC TIMES

WEEKLY WORLD NEWS UPDATE

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AL-QAIDA DEPUTY CALLS FOR WORLDWIDE WAR ON ISRAEL

July 27, 2006 The Guardian.com.uk reported: "Osama bin Laden's deputy issued a worldwide call today for Muslims to rise up in holy war against Israel and join the fighting in Lebanon and Gaza, until Islam reigns from "Spain to Iraq". Ayman al-Zawahiri warned that al-Qaida would not stand "idly by, humiliated", as Israeli "shells burn our brothers".

In a video tape broadcast by al-Jazeera, the Egyptian terror leader said: "How can we remain silent while watching bombs raining on our people? Oh Muslims everywhere, I call on you to fight and become martyrs in the war against the Zionists and the Crusaders. "

He said that the weapons being used by the Israelis were from the "crusader coalition" and added that "every participant will pay the price".

Zawahiri, wearing a grey robe and white turban, and speaking in front of a picture of the World Trade Centre on fire, said al-Qaida now saw "all the world as a battlefield open in front of us".

He said: "The war with Israel does not depend on ceasefires It is a jihad for God's sake and will last until [our] religion prevails ... from Spain to Iraq ... We will attack everywhere."

In another section of the tape, he said: "The shells and rockets ripping apart Muslim bodies in Gaza and Lebanon are not only Israeli [weapons], but are supplied by all the countries of the crusader coalition. Therefore, every participant in the crime will pay the price."

The Arab broadcaster appeared not to have transmitted the entire tape, using instead selected quotes interspersed with commentary from an anchor. There are long-standing fears that tapes from al-Qaida leaders might contain coded messages to followers."...

ROME CONFERENCE ENDORSES UN FORCE IN MIDDLE EAST

July 26, 2006 EUobserver.com reported: "A high-profile international conference on the Middle East, attended by a top-level EU delegation, has under US pressure not called for an immediate ceasefire in the region - but has endorsed the idea of a peacekeeping force "under a UN mandate."

The extraordinary meeting in Rome, chaired by Italian foreign minister Massimo d'Alema, addressed the ongoing bloodshed between Israel and Islamist Hezbollah fighters in Lebanon, with US foreign secretary Condoleezza Rice and UN secretary general Kofi Annan participating in the talks.

Arab states such as Saudi Arabia, Jordan and Egypt, as well as Lebanon itself, were also present at the talks and had lobbied for the final declaration of the text to include a call for an immediate cease-fire, according to press reports.

But the final Rome declaration only offers a watered-down version of this demand, stating "Participants expressed their determination to work immediately to reach, with utmost urgency, a ceasefire that puts an end to the current violence and hostilities. The ceasefire must be lasting, permanent and sustainable."

Ms Rice stressed after the talks that "we cannot return to the status quo ante" and that any ceasefire must be "sustainable this time," reflecting US demands that Israel should be given security guarantees against Hezbollah before a cease-fire.

The EU attended with a top delegation from both the EU institutions as well as individual member states. Finnish foreign minister Erkki Tuomioja represented the bloc's current presidency and was accompanied by EU foreign policy chief Javier Solana as well as external relations commissioner Benita Ferrero-Waldner.

The EU's big three, France, Germany and the UK, also had a place around the table, as well as Mediterranean member states Spain, Greece and Cyprus.

The EU was itself divided at the meeting, with France joining UN chief Kofi Annan in calling for an immediate ceasefire while the UK was more in line with the US, according to press reports."..."

SYRIA INCREASES ALERT OF WAR WITH ISRAEL

July 26, 2006 The Middle East Newline reported: "Syria has been preparing for war with Israel. Israeli intelligence sources said the regime of Syrian President Bashar Assad has placed the military on alert. The sources said Syrian infantry commandos, armored units and anti-aircraft batteries have been ordered to launch preparations for an Israeli strike.

"Neither Syria nor Israel is interested in a military clash but the situation is explosive and the events may potentially be incorrectly

interpreted," Israeli military intelligence chief Maj. Gen. Amos Yadlin told the Knesset Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee on Tuesday. "This could entangle Syria up in a battle against us."

Last week, Syrian President Bashar Assad placed his military on alert for an Israeli strike. Israel has repeatedly said it would not attack Syria..."

PM OLMERT: ISRAEL DETERMINED TO CONTINUE FIGHT AGAINST HEZBOLLAH

July 25, 2006 Haaretz.com reported: "Israel is determined to continue its fight against Hezbollah guerrillas and will take the "most severe measures" against those firing rockets on Israel, Prime Minister Ehud Olmert said Tuesday.

"Israel is determined to continue on in the fight against Hezbollah. We will ... stop them. We will not hesitate to take severe measures against those who are aiming thousands of rockets and missiles against innocent civilians for the one purpose of killing them," Olmert said.

Olmert acknowledged "humanitarian difficulties" caused by Israel's two-week military campaign in Lebanon, and said Israel would work with the U.S. to try to solve some of those problems.

Olmert spoke at the start of a meeting with U.S. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice, who called for a cease-fire, but not at any price. "We need to ensure that we will not return to the previous situation," Rice said.

"And that is why we have, and President Bush, has talked about an enduring cease-fire, an enduring cessation of violence which would indeed make the security situation better than it was before," Rice said. "We need to begin to really lay the ground work for an enduring peace in this region."

IRAN REJECTS DEMANDS TO FREEZE NUCLEAR WORK, WARNS UN

July 20, 2006 SpaceWar.com reported: "Iran on Thursday again rejected international demands it freeze its controversial nuclear programme and warned the UN Security Council against choosing a "path of confrontation".

In a statement read on state television, nuclear negotiator Ali Larijani also said Iran would take until August 22 to reply to an international offer of incentives in exchange for a halt of uranium enrichment.

But he also accused the United States, which has lumped Iran into an "axis of evil", of trying to derail diplomatic efforts to resolve the crisis.

"According to the adopted plan to generate 20,000 megawatts of atomic energy over the next 20 years, the Islamic republic has decided to make some of its own nuclear fuel inside Iran," said the statement from Larijani, the head of Iran's Supreme National Security Council.

He said Tehran was "ready to find a diplomatic solution with a suitable calendar for both parties" but issued a warning to the Security Council -- currently discussing ways to pressure Iran into freezing enrichment.

"If the path of confrontation is chosen instead of the path of dialogue, and if there is any action to limit the absolute rights of the Iranian people, the Islamic republic will have no choice but to revise its policy," the statement warned.

Iran says it only wants to enrich to the low levels needed to make reactor fuel and that this is a right under the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty.

The technology can, however, be extended to make weapons. Iran's failure to disclose its programme for nearly two decades aroused suspicions that it wants weapons and thus brought demands for a suspension.

Several top officials have already threatened to prevent International Atomic Energy Agency inspections and even quit the NPT if the pressure mounts.

Last week Britain, China, France, Germany, Russia and the United States decided to send Iran's case back to the Security Council after Tehran failed to respond to their offer, billed as a way to guarantee Iranian access to civilian nuclear technology while preventing it from getting the bomb.

Tehran has repeatedly insisted that it is ready to negotiate, but at the same time has rejected any "preconditions" being imposed.

"Iran has welcomed the offer from the big powers, and the examination of it is continuing. This takes time, and the reply will be given on August 22," said the statement, billed by state television as an "important announcement"..."