

Dear SPAN, and dear parishioners.

Email from House of Light and Hope, Beirut, Lebanon on 8<sup>th</sup> Oct 2024.

Salam el Masih / The Peace of Christ,

We hope you are all doing well, **MISSIO (Pontifical Mission Society) in Germany**, one of our partners and benefactors supporting The House of Light and Hope (Beit-el-Nour) is asking from its partners in Lebanon a briefing on the situation in Lebanon, **currently very dramatic and catastrophic**. Our president Father Elie Chatawi and myself we did our best to answer the day before yesterday the 6 questions they asked us.

Therefore, we are also sharing this information with you.

Your brothers in Christ            Father Elie Chatawi    and    Dr. Robert Caracache

**Subject:** Request for Insights on the Current Situation in Lebanon (from the German media's side) - your help needed.

Dear Partners in Lebanon,

I hope this message finds you well.

We have received inquiries from the German media regarding the current situation in Lebanon. To ensure the most authentic and accurate response, I would be immensely grateful if I could incorporate your on-the-ground experiences. I fully understand the immense challenges you are currently facing, and the crucial work being done. Nevertheless, any feedback you could provide, even short, would be invaluable in helping us present a true and authentic picture to the German public, something only made possible through the insights of our trusted partners.

Here are a few questions I've been asked, which I would love to include your perspectives on:

**1. What are the effects of the Israeli army's current ground offensive on Christians in Lebanon and the region? Are communities following evacuation orders?**

**Our answer:** *The whole military offensive has a dramatic impact on all the Lebanese people, especially on the Christian community already weakened by the politico-economic crisis since 2019. Actually the Christian, and the whole population in the south, are finally evacuating their villages to find refuge in the region of Saida as well as in Beirut and Mount Lebanon. (Father Elias Chatawi)*

**2. How has the war affected your organization's work and the ability to provide support to those in need?**

**Our answer:** *A great flood of refugees arrives every day in a state of distress to knock on the doors of our centers, churches, schools etc....in order to find refuge and ask for help. Our work teams are overwhelmed and under stress because of the urgent and enormous needs of these unfortunate people who have fled their homes, leaving everything behind. In our Nabaa center, for example, we decided last week to open the center's doors (evenings only) to accommodate women (not men) who have no place to sleep and are practically on the streets..... It's heartbreaking (Dr. Robert Caracache).*

**3. Do you anticipate a further exodus of Christians from Lebanon as a result of the ongoing hostilities?**

**Our answer:** *With ongoing hostilities we are expecting undoubtedly and ultimately the evacuation of the villages of East Saida and Jezine in majority Christian. (Father Elias Chatawi)*

**4. Who do Lebanese Christians, including the Maronite clergy, consider responsible for the escalation in violence?**

**Our answer:** *Both sides i.e. Israel and Hezbollah are co-responsible of this escalation of violence (Father Elias Chatawi)*

*I would add, however, that Hezbollah, which is a state within a state in Lebanon, has linked its destiny with the pro-Iranian Hamas party in Gaza, and has allowed itself to be dragged into this war, against the will of almost all the other communities in Lebanon, who are seeking neutrality and peace. (Dr. Robert Caracache)*

**5. How has the conflict impacted relations between the major religious groups in Lebanon?**

**Our Answer:** *This conflict has a positive impact; it reinforces the humanitarian bonds between all the components of the country (Pere Elie Chatawi)*

**6. What kind of assistance do Lebanese Christians urgently need right now?**

**Our answer:** *All what our communities need is an immediate and stable ceasefire (Father Elie Chatawi)*

*I'd like to add that if you're organizing relief for Lebanon, please think of us too. Every euro for the refugees makes a big difference. Thank you for your support. (Dr. Robert Caracache)*

Your feedback is critical in helping us convey an accurate and comprehensive narrative to the media. I deeply appreciate any time you can spare, given the current circumstances.

Thank you for your tireless work and commitment. I look forward to your insights and wish you continued strength and protection.

Warm regards  
Romina

**missio - Internationales Katholisches Missionswerk e.V.**

Pontifical Mission Society / Oeuvre Pontificale Missionnaire