

Benita Ferrero-Waldner
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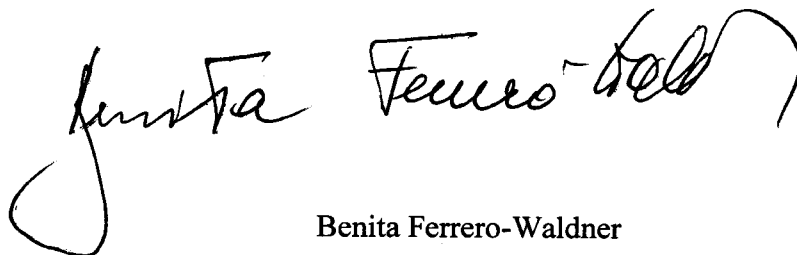
Brussels, 3 September 2006
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Dear Dr Lucas,

With reference to your email of 11 August 2006, let me first of all assure you that I fully share your concern about the human sufferings created by the recent conflict in the Middle East. Concerning the disproportionate use of force, I may refer to my statement of 30 July 2006 on the occasion of the tragic incident at Qana (full text attached). The Commission has, on numerous occasions during the crisis, insisted on the need for all actors in the conflict to respect international humanitarian law.

Concerning your specific suggestion to suspend the EU-Israel Association Agreement, as with all Euromediterranean partners, the Association Agreements with Israel and Lebanon establish the framework for political dialogue. The Commission considers it vital, particularly in a crisis, to keep all channels of diplomatic and political contact open. Suspending relations with one partner is likely to negatively affect the EU's influence in the region. The Commission, in its meetings with Israeli authorities, has reminded them on a number of occasions of Israel's obligations under international law. Notwithstanding real security risks, this means avoiding disproportionate military action, including attacks on civilian targets.

Yours sincerely,



Benita Ferrero-Waldner

Dr Caroline Lucas
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Rue Wiertz
B-1049 Brussels

MIDDAY EXPRESS

News from the Communication Directorate General's midday briefing

31 / 07 / 06

- **Reaction to the attack on city of Qana by Benita Ferrero-Waldner, EU Commissioner for External relations and European neighbourhood policy**

"Israel's attack on the city of Qana means an escalation of violence that is unjustifiable at a time when the international community is jointly working to find a solution to the conflict. Immediate cessation of violence and hostilities is now more important than ever. The killings of innocent people, particularly of children, must stop now. We keep supporting UN Secretary General Kofi Annan in his efforts and approach to peace and call on all sides to restrain from further violence."