
BOARD OF INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

27 July 2006

To all College members in the Middle East

Dear Colleagues

The devastating developments in the latest crisis in the Middle East are of great concern to us all at the College.

Our thoughts and deepest sympathy, of course, are with those in Israel, Lebanon and Pakistan, but also in other countries in the region and beyond, who have been affected by the current hostilities. On behalf of the Royal College of Psychiatrists we are writing to pledge our support - if there is anything our members can do to help do let us know.

Although the mental health consequences on the civilian population of this type of armed conflict may not be immediately apparent, we can expect that the number of those with PTSD or suffering from grief or requiring a wide range of short, medium and long term psychological responses will be substantial. We are particularly worried about the long-term effects the current destructive policies will have on the wellbeing of children growing up in this violent and volatile environment.

As psychiatrists, we have a particular responsibility and ability to respond to the needs of those who are most vulnerable in our societies. Whenever required, we would happily be guided by our colleagues and sister organisations in the Middle East to provide the appropriate and effective help with the longer-term psychological consequences. In the meantime, we are calling on the governments involved, the United Nations and the international community for the immediate cessation of fighting and a lasting resolution to this conflict.

With our very best wishes,



Sheila Hollins
President



Hamid Ghodse
Director of International Affairs

Copy to:

President of the Israel Psychiatric Association
President of the Lebanon Psychiatric Association

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