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## **Kofi Annan - Israel attack kills 4 UN officials**

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**27 July, 2006**

## THE ARTICLE

### **Kofi Annan - Israel attack kills 4 UN officials**

An Israeli air strike has killed four United Nations military observers in southern Lebanon. UN Secretary General Kofi Annan has created a diplomatic storm by accusing Israel of striking the UN military position on purpose. In an unusually intense and damning statement, he said: "I am shocked and deeply distressed by the apparently deliberate targeting by Israeli Defence Forces." He added: "The coordinated artillery and aerial attack on a long established and clearly marked UN post...occurred despite personal assurances given to me by [Israeli] Prime Minister Ehud Olmert that UN positions would be spared Israeli fire." The officials who died in the aerial bombing were from Canada, Austria, China and Finland. Chinese officials also responded quickly to the attack and rebuked Israel for its actions and demanded a swift explanation.

The Secretary General's accusation has outraged Israeli officials, who have called for an immediate apology for what they view as Annan's rash and ill-conceived words. Israel's ambassador to the UN Dan Gillerman reacted furiously, calling Annan's comments "premature and erroneous". He expressed regret for the tragedy and sent condolences to the families of those who were killed. However, he confessed he was "shocked and deeply distressed" by what he termed as Annan's "hasty statement". He said the UN leader "went far too far for a seasoned and experienced diplomat [and] that his statement was irresponsible, unfortunate and deplorable". He accused Annan of "jumping to conclusions" and urged him to retract his statement. Gillerman defended Israel's actions by saying Annan's statement: "adds to a litany of UN accusations against Israel which have eventually proved to be totally untrue."

## WARM-UPS

**1. ON THE GROUND:** With your partner(s), role play a conversation between people on the ground in the Israel/Lebanon conflict. Take turns at being two Lebanese, two Israelis, a Lebanese and Israeli, etc. After the role play(s), find a new partner and describe what you talked about.

**2. CHAT:** In pairs / groups, decide which of these topics or words from the article are most interesting and which are most boring.

*Air strikes / diplomatic storms / distress / United Nations personnel / Prime Ministers / outrage / apologies / condolences / hastiness / jumping to conclusions*

Have a chat about the topics you liked. For more conversation, change topics and partners frequently.

**3. UNITED NATIONS:** Ask your partner(s) what they know about the following UN organizations. Share your findings with new partners. (You may need to use the Internet.)

- |  |          |
|--|----------|
| • UNIFIL - UN's Interim Force in Lebanon | • UNESCO |
| • UNICEF                                 | • FAO    |
| • WFP                                    | • UNHCR  |
| • UNU                                    | • UNAIDS |
| • WTO                                    | • WIPO   |

**4. QUICK DEBATE:** Students A believe a UN Secretary General should say what he/she believes. Students B believe the UN Secretary General should be diplomatic at all times. Debate this with your partners. Change partners often.

**5. OPINIONS:** With your partner(s), talk about the following opinions on Kofi Annan's comments. Change partners and share your findings.

- It's about time a diplomat says what he feels – Kofi should be applauded.
- Kofi Annan's comments were premature and erroneous.
- There must be truth in his words – he is usually so careful in what he says.
- Kofi Annan is just another politician who opposes everything Israel does.
- Annan went far too far for a seasoned and experienced diplomat.
- Kofi Annan should stick to refugees and famines and stay out of wars.
- Annan's words were irresponsible, unfortunate and deplorable.
- Kofi is simply fed up with his people being killed in conflicts.

**6. KOFI ANNAN:** Spend one minute writing down all of the different words you associate with UN Secretary General Kofi Annan. Share your words with your partner(s) and talk about them. Together, put the words into different categories.

## BEFORE READING / LISTENING

**1. TRUE / FALSE:** Look at the article's headline and guess whether these sentences are true (T) or false (F):

- |  |       |
|--|-------|
| a. Israeli tanks shelled a UN post, killing four UN officials inside.      | T / F |
| b. Kofi Annan said the attack on UN officials was not accidental.          | T / F |
| c. The bombed UN post is a recent addition to the Lebanese landscape.      | T / F |
| d. The Israeli Prime minister had promised not to hit UN posts.            | T / F |
| e. Kofi Annan has angered Israel's ambassador to the UN.                   | T / F |
| f. The ambassador said Annan had spoken too soon about the incident.       | T / F |
| g. The ambassador agreed Annan wasn't jumping to conclusions.              | T / F |
| h. The ambassador said it was a first for the UN to falsely accuse Israel. | T / F |

**2. SYNONYM MATCH:** Match the following synonyms from the article:

- |               |             |
|---------------|-------------|
| a. strike     | catalog     |
| b. damning    | intentional |
| c. deliberate | experienced |
| d. assurances | reckless    |
| e. rebuked    | incorrect   |
| f. rash       | attack      |
| g. erroneous  | admonished  |
| h. seasoned   | withdraw    |
| i. retract    | strong      |
| j. litany     | promises    |

**3. PHRASE MATCH:** Match the following phrases from the article (sometimes more than one combination is possible):

- |  |                               |
|--|-------------------------------|
| a. Kofi Annan has created a diplomatic | aerial attack                 |
| b. the apparently                      | condolences to the families   |
| c. coordinated artillery and           | rebuked Israel                |
| d. occurred despite personal           | to conclusions                |
| e. responded quickly to the attack and | and experienced diplomat      |
| f. Annan's rash                        | deliberate targeting          |
| g. sent                                | UN accusations against Israel |
| h. far too far for a seasoned          | storm                         |
| i. accused Annan of jumping            | assurances given to me        |
| j. adds to a litany of                 | and ill-conceived words       |

## WHILE READING / LISTENING

**GAP FILL:** Put the words in the column on the right into the gaps in the text.

### Kofi Annan - Israel attack kills 4 UN officials

An Israeli air strike has killed four United Nations military \_\_\_\_\_ in southern Lebanon. UN Secretary General Kofi Annan has created a diplomatic \_\_\_\_\_ by accusing Israel of striking the UN military position on purpose. In an \_\_\_\_\_ intense and damning statement, he said: "I am shocked and \_\_\_\_\_ distressed by the apparently deliberate targeting by Israeli Defence Forces." He added: "The coordinated artillery and aerial attack on a \_\_\_\_\_ established and clearly marked UN post...occurred despite personal \_\_\_\_\_ given to me by [Israeli] Prime Minister Ehud Olmert that UN positions would be spared Israeli fire." The officials who died in the \_\_\_\_\_ bombing were from Canada, Austria, China and Finland. Chinese officials also responded quickly to the attack and rebuked Israel for its actions and demanded a \_\_\_\_\_ explanation.

*deeply*  
*aerial*  
*storm*  
*assurances*  
*long*  
*observers*  
*swift*  
*unusually*

The Secretary General's accusation has \_\_\_\_\_ Israeli officials, who have called for an immediate apology for what they view as Annan's \_\_\_\_\_ and ill-conceived words. Israel's ambassador to the UN Dan Gillerman reacted furiously, calling Annan's comments "\_\_\_\_\_ and erroneous". He expressed regret for the tragedy and sent \_\_\_\_\_ to the families of those who were killed. However, he confessed he was "shocked and deeply distressed" by what he termed as Annan's "hasty statement". He said the UN leader "went far too far for a \_\_\_\_\_ and experienced diplomat [and] that his statement was irresponsible, unfortunate and \_\_\_\_\_". He accused Annan of "jumping to conclusions" and urged him to \_\_\_\_\_ his statement. Gillerman defended Israel's actions by saying Annan's statement: "adds to a \_\_\_\_\_ of UN accusations against Israel which have eventually proved to be totally untrue."

*retract*  
*premature*  
*deplorable*  
*seasoned*  
*outraged*  
*condolences*  
*rash*  
*litany*

## LISTENING

Listen and fill in the spaces.

### **Kofi Annan - Israel attack kills 4 UN officials**

An Israeli air strike has killed four United Nations military \_\_\_\_\_ in southern Lebanon. UN Secretary General Kofi Annan has created a diplomatic storm by accusing Israel of striking the UN military position \_\_\_\_\_. In an unusually intense and \_\_\_\_\_ statement, he said: "I am shocked and deeply distressed by the apparently \_\_\_\_\_ targeting by Israeli Defence Forces." He added: "The coordinated artillery and aerial attack on a long established and clearly marked UN post...occurred despite personal \_\_\_\_\_ given to me by [Israeli] Prime Minister Ehud Olmert that UN positions would be \_\_\_\_\_ Israeli fire." The officials who died in the aerial bombing were from Canada, Austria, China and Finland. Chinese officials also responded quickly to the attack and \_\_\_\_\_ Israel for its actions and demanded a swift explanation.

The Secretary General's accusation has outraged Israeli officials, who have called for an immediate apology for what they view as Annan's \_\_\_\_\_ and ill-\_\_\_\_\_ words. Israel's ambassador to the UN Dan Gillerman reacted furiously, calling Annan's comments "premature and \_\_\_\_\_". He expressed regret for the tragedy and sent condolences to the families of those who were killed. However, he confessed he was "shocked and deeply distressed" by what he termed as Annan's "hasty statement". He said the UN leader "went \_\_\_\_\_ a seasoned and experienced diplomat [and] that his statement was irresponsible, unfortunate and \_\_\_\_\_". He accused Annan of "jumping to conclusions" and urged him to \_\_\_\_\_ his statement. Gillerman defended Israel's actions by saying Annan's statement: "adds to a \_\_\_\_\_ UN accusations against Israel which have eventually proved to be totally untrue."

## AFTER READING / LISTENING

**1. WORD SEARCH:** Look in your dictionaries / computer to find collocates, other meanings, information, synonyms ... for the words '**air**' and '**strike**'.

- Share your findings with your partners.
- Make questions using the words you found.
- Ask your partner / group your questions.

**2. ARTICLE QUESTIONS:** Look back at the article and write down some questions you would like to ask the class about the text.

- Share your questions with other classmates / groups.
- Ask your partner / group your questions.

**3. GAP FILL:** In pairs / groups, compare your answers to this exercise. Check your answers. Talk about the words from the activity. Were they new, interesting, worth learning...?

**4. VOCABULARY:** Circle any words you do not understand. In groups, pool unknown words and use dictionaries to find their meanings.

**5. STUDENT "KOFI ANNAN" SURVEY:** In pairs / groups, write down questions about Kofi Annan and the role of the UN in the Israel-Lebanon conflict.

- Ask other classmates your questions and note down their answers.
- Go back to your original partner / group and compare your findings.
- Make mini-presentations to other groups on your findings.

**6. TEST EACH OTHER:** Look at the words below. With your partner, try to recall exactly how these were used in the text:

- |              |              |
|--------------|--------------|
| • storm      | • accusation |
| • purpose    | • premature  |
| • deliberate | • sent       |
| • long       | • hasty      |
| • spared     | • retract    |
| • swift      | • litany     |

## DISCUSSION

### STUDENT A's QUESTIONS (Do not show these to student B)

- a. Did the headline make you want to read the article?
- b. What do you think of Kofi Annan?
- c. Do you think he was wrong to say what he did?
- d. If he is correct, should the Israeli government make an apology to him?
- e. If his comments were indeed "premature and erroneous", should he apologize to Israel?
- f. What compensation should Israel pay for the deaths of the four UN observers?
- g. Do you think the Israeli military made a genuine mistake in bombing the UN post?
- h. Do you think the deaths will make Israel change its tactics in any way?
- i. Do you think Israel can destroy Hezbollah?
- j. Have you ever made a hasty comment that you later wanted to retract?

### STUDENT B's QUESTIONS (Do not show these to student A)

- a. Did you like reading this article?
- b. What do you think about what you read?
- c. Do you think it is the UN Secretary General's job to make comments about one side's actions in a war?
- d. Do you think the UN has made many false accusations against Israel?
- e. Would you serve as a UN observer in a war zone – for good money?
- f. Do you think the four deaths will be forgotten as "collateral damage"?
- g. What do you think Israel's Prime Minister will or should say to Kofi Annan after making assurances that UN posts would not be hit?
- h. Do you think world opinion towards Israel and Hezbollah is changing because of the current conflict?
- i. How quick are you at jumping to conclusions?
- j. Did you like this discussion?

**AFTER DISCUSSION:** Join another partner / group and tell them what you talked about.

- a. What was the most interesting thing you heard?
- b. Was there a question you didn't like?
- c. Was there something you totally disagreed with?
- d. What did you like talking about?
- e. Which was the most difficult question?



## SPEAKING

**ROLE PLAY:** Should anyone be punished for the deaths of the four UN observers? Team up with classmates who have been assigned the same role to develop your roles and discuss ideas and “strategies” before the role play begins. Introduce yourself to the other role players.

### Role A – Israeli Citizen

You live in fear in Haifa. Hezbollah shells your neighborhood every day and kill innocent people. Suicide bombers regularly bring carnage to your city. The Israeli military made a mistake. Lots of innocent people are killed in war zones. The most important thing is to move on and destroy Hezbollah so the whole region will be safer.

### Role B – Lebanese Citizen

You are fed up with Israel bombing your country, as it has done over the past decades. Thousands of innocent Lebanese die. This time UN observers are dead. Israel doesn’t care about non-Israeli life. You think America should come and protect Lebanon from further destruction. The world should try the Israeli military as war criminals.

### Role C – Kofi Annan

You totally stand by your comments. It is time for militaries of any kind to stop killing your people. They do a very valuable job and should be protected. You want to stop both Israel and Hezbollah to stop their indiscriminate slaughter of innocent lives. You want Israel to apologize for the deaths of your workers and admit responsibility.

### Role D – UN military observer

You are amazed that a military with Israel’s sophisticated intelligence can make such a mistake and bomb a UN post. Such mistakes should never happen today. You think an international tribunal should be set up to find out what went wrong. You want thousands of UN peacekeepers to keep Israel and Hezbollah apart.

After the role play, discuss whether you really believed what you were saying in your role.

## **HOMEWORK**

**1. VOCABULARY EXTENSION:** Choose several of the words from the text. Use a dictionary or Google's search field (or another search engine) to build up more associations / collocations of each word.

**2. INTERNET:** Search the Internet and find information on the background to the Israel-Lebanon conflict. Talk about what you discover with your partner(s) in the next lesson.

**3. POSTER:** Make a poster that includes information about the life and times of Kofi Annan. Include a summary about what kind of UN leader he is and the impact he has made. Show your poster to your classmates in the next lesson.

**4. LETTER:** Write a letter to UN Secretary General Kofi Annan. Tell him what you think of his statement. Give him advice on what he should do from now. Ask him three questions. Read your letter to your classmates in the next lesson. Your partner(s) will answer your questions. Which letter did you like best and why?

## ANSWERS

### TRUE / FALSE:

- a. F      b. T      c. F      d. T      e. T      f. T      g. F      h. F

### SYNONYM MATCH:

- |               |             |
|---------------|-------------|
| a. strike     | attack      |
| b. damning    | strong      |
| c. deliberate | intentional |
| d. assurances | promises    |
| e. rebuked    | admonished  |
| f. rash       | reckless    |
| g. erroneous  | incorrect   |
| h. seasoned   | experienced |
| i. retract    | withdraw    |
| j. litany     | catalog     |

### PHRASE MATCH:

- |  |                               |
|--|-------------------------------|
| a. Kofi Annan has created a diplomatic | storm                         |
| b. the apparently                      | deliberate targeting          |
| c. coordinated artillery and           | aerial attack                 |
| d. occurred despite personal           | assurances given to me        |
| e. responded quickly to the attack and | rebuked Israel                |
| f. Annan's rash                        | and ill-conceived words       |
| g. sent                                | condolences to the families   |
| h. far too far for a seasoned          | and experienced diplomat      |
| i. accused Annan of jumping            | to conclusions                |
| j. adds to a litany of                 | UN accusations against Israel |

### GAP FILL:

#### Kofi Annan - Israel attack kills 4 UN officials

An Israeli air strike has killed four United Nations military **observers** in southern Lebanon. UN Secretary General Kofi Annan has created a diplomatic **storm** by accusing Israel of striking the UN military position on purpose. In an **unusually** intense and damning statement, he said: "I am shocked and **deeply** distressed by the apparently deliberate targeting by Israeli Defence Forces." He added: "The coordinated artillery and aerial attack on a **long** established and clearly marked UN post...occurred despite personal **assurances** given to me by [Israeli] Prime Minister Ehud Olmert that UN positions would be spared Israeli fire." The officials who died in the **aerial** bombing were from Canada, Austria, China and Finland. Chinese officials also responded quickly to the attack and rebuked Israel for its actions and demanded a **swift** explanation.

The Secretary General's accusation has **outraged** Israeli officials, who have called for an immediate apology for what they view as Annan's **rash** and ill-conceived words. Israel's ambassador to the UN Dan Gillerman reacted furiously, calling Annan's comments "**premature** and erroneous". He expressed regret for the tragedy and sent **condolences** to the families of those who were killed. However, he confessed he was "shocked and deeply distressed" by what he termed as Annan's "hasty statement". He said the UN leader "went far too far for a **seasoned** and experienced diplomat [and] that his statement was irresponsible, unfortunate and **deplorable**". He accused Annan of "jumping to conclusions" and urged him to **retract** his statement. Gillerman defended Israel's actions by saying Annan's statement: "adds to a **litany** of UN accusations against Israel which have eventually proved to be totally untrue."