

The Iran Crisis #12: Rami Zurayk on the dire effects of Israel's attacks on Lebanon

Transcript of the conversation Helena Cobban had with Prof. Rami Zurayk on 4/12/2026. The video is [here](#).

[Helena Cobban]

Hi, everybody. I'm Helena Cobban from Just World Educational. And this is the 12th episode in our series, ongoing series on the Iran crisis that we started back in late February before the current US-Israeli assault against Iran started.

Today is April 12. And I am really delighted that my guest today is Dr. Rami Zurayk, who's a social activist and researcher with us from Beirut. Welcome, Rami.

[Rami Zurayk]

Hi, Helena. Good to see you again. It's been a while.

[Helena Cobban]

Yeah, it really has. You know, back in the day, I published your book, *War Diary 2006*. And here we are 20 years later.

And you say you've been doing some of the same kind of things. I know in the book, you got on a motorbike and rode around South Lebanon on a motorbike. I wonder if you've been doing that this time?

[Rami Zurayk]

Not on a motorbike! 20 years, I got old in 20 years. But, but I have done a lot of work on documenting the Israeli ecocide on South Lebanon.

You know, I'm a researcher in the sciences of the environment and in socio ecological systems, in food and farming. And I spent a lot of time ever since, you know, the beginning of the early, early, early war 2023. Until today, taking samples, analyzing them, archiving digitally what has been done.

I have a really big team that I will acknowledge as we as soon as we start talking about this. So that's an area of work that I keep, I'm still, you know, involved in.

[Helena Cobban]

Well, that's really important. Because, you know, actually, if you can share some links with us, we can put them onto our web page. And I know you said you've been doing a lot of work with the displaced people there.

We have so much to talk about. I mean, goodness, like, going back to, okay, the pager war, the pager event of September 2024. And here we are today.

And I'm in Washington, DC. And we're about to welcome your Prime Minister, I think, Nawaf Salam, who's coming to--

[Rami Zurayk]

I think he cancelled

[Helena Cobban]

Oh, did he? Okay.

[Rami Zurayk]

I mean, he says he cancelled. The detractors-- But I mean, I don't think he's going anymore.

[Helena Cobban]

We can talk a little bit about that. And about the whole history. I mean, you're there in Beirut. Could you first of all give us a few sentences description of what it was like on Wednesday, April 8, when it looked like just a paroxysm of violence there in Beirut that the Israelis unleashed.

[Rami Zurayk]

Let me just put it in, in, in very concrete, quantitative terms. The death toll is about is more than twice that of the Beirut port explosion. The Beirut port explosion [of 2020] was the largest non-nuclear explosion in the world in in the 20th century. In one go, this was actually worse. But it was distributed.

These days, the Israelis do not hit an apartment, they hit a building. There is no such thing as surgical strike, there is complete ablation of entire 12 story buildings with everyone who lives inside them.

Because they believe, or they were made to believe by their, their agents, that there may be people from the resistance hiding in there. That is a point of contention, which we can come back to. But the fact is that the massacre in Beirut, and in the Bekaa, and in Kayfun in the mountain, was extremely, extremely bloody.

And more importantly, this time they actually targeted the the civil support system. If you look carefully at who was, you know, who was killed, you will see that there is a proportion of the people who were killed in their job. And their job was sometimes in a pharmacy.

And the lady pharmacist from the Amhas family who was in Kayfun, and who was martyred, was running the pharmacy, where they were actually distributing free medication to those displaced people who could not afford medication that was targeted, you know, that particular place was targeted. So it wasn't only about what they consider to be the military,

not that it's wrong to be a military, but this was in the support system to civilians in the humanitarian support system.

[Helena Cobban]

Very similar to what we've seen in Gaza, of course, you know, with targeting medical workers, civil defense workers, hospitals and so on. I mean, these are all essential portions of the civil society, the community.

[Rami Zurayk]

Oh, absolutely. Absolutely. Absolutely.

I mean, they, as I was telling you before, they're not very imaginative. Honestly, I mean, there is really not a lot of creativity in the world. I mean, their plan is simple and has always been quite simple and straightforward: destroy everything.

Today, there is, you know, the person who has been selected just extremely symbolically, has been selected to carry the flame of the, quote unquote, independence of the Zionist entity is very symbolically, a person who as a soldier, in the Israeli army, a rabbi, I hear, whose claim to fame is that he drives, he operates a D9 caterpillar, which is used, which has been used to destroy hundreds of houses in Gaza. And that is being used to destroy hundreds of houses in South Lebanon today.

And this person was bragging about his ability to, on scale, destroy from behind his D9 caterpillar, masses of houses, with everything that comes to it. Now, these houses are inhabited by civilian people, by people who have also agricultural fields that have been burned by white phosphorus, polluted by heavy metals, and so on and so forth. So this is, and every now and then, you know, I mean, the absurdity, you don't know, if it wasn't so sad, you would actually be laughing at this.

You know, every now and then, they find a *Mein Kampf* in a school. I mean, aren't they tired from this? I mean, who, who buys this anymore?

You know, I mean, who believes that thing? And therefore, this means that the schools have to be a target, and then they destroy the school. I mean, that's insane.

Who falls for that anymore?

[Helena Cobban]

But you know, they did it, first of all, this destruction, this complete destruction in Lebanon, and then they called it the Dahiyya Doctrine. And then they said, when they were destroying in Gaza, they said, we're going to apply the Dahiyya Doctrine. Now, it's coming back even more, and it's maybe called the Gaza Doctrine.

[Rami Zurayk]

Yes, they're very good at doctrines of death. They also, I remind you, have the Hannibal Doctrine. I don't know why they call it Hannibal, you know, Hannibal was a Canaanite, you know, I don't think they took this as an example.

But, you know, the Hannibal Doctrine, which they kill each other in order to make a point. So very good on doctrines of death. That is definite, for sure.

But now that you mentioned the Dahiyya doctrine, the Gaza doctrine, etc. I'm going to say something that may not sound very, very popular, or even very humane. In all honesty, you know, we're aligned.

Our ultimate goal is to continue to resist the Zionist entity and to liberate ourselves from it. If the cost is stones and walls, we pay that cost. Other families are paying a blood tax for this every single day.

The people who die on the front are the children of people who have also been martyred in 1982. No one is forcing no one. There is no conscription like other countries.

People, there is too many, there are too many people who actually want to go and fight, because they fight for survival, they fight for liberation, as you have seen in all other liberation movements in the world. I can't remember that the Viet Cong had a conscription. People fight because they fight for liberation, they fight for the land, they fight for survival.

So the whole Dahiyya doctrine, in the same way as the Gaza doctrine, by the way, means that it only affects the very basic materialistic approach. We fight for other things. You can destroy the houses, we will rebuild them.

Your Dahiyya doctrine makes no sense to us. We are the children of this earth. Our genes in this earth go back 3000 years.

You know that, and we know that. That's a science. That's not just allegories.

[Helena Cobban]

So I want to come back to this question of ecocide, because that is one of your many areas of expertise. Do you have teams who are documenting the white phosphorus, teams that are documenting the other forms of ecocide that Israel is unleashing in the south and elsewhere in Lebanon?

[Rami Zurayk]

Indeed, absolutely. Let me just start by historicizing this little bit, Helena. Bear with me in our conversation.

You know that the great, the grand claim to fame of the Zionist movement was greening the desert. I'm sure you remember this. Make the desert bloom, greening the desert, which is really at the core of eco-colonialism.

Why? Because it presumes that the desert is not a valid ecology. It is something that you need to get rid of.

Ecology as a science teaches us exactly the opposite. Complete. You know, the exact opposite of this.

It teaches us that the desert has a very, very precious ecosystem that needs to be conserved. What does it mean when the colonials come, because that's what they are, and make the desert bloom or green the desert. It means they replace the native system with a system that resembles the ecology from where they came.

The French did this in Algeria. The Israelis have done this since the first colony, pre-1948. Why?

Because that is how they understood nature. They only understood nature in as much as it resembled Europe, which is their place of origin, most of them. Of course, there are Israelis who are from Iraq, from Yemen, from all other countries, by the way.

And incidentally, these are the people who die in the army. But that's a different conversation. If you look at how the IOF is constructed, you will see that the biggest contingents are Iraqi and Syrian Jews, and Yemen.

Okay, but let's talk about this on a different day. Now, the eco side starts there. Because they understand that there is no ecology.

Intuitively, there is a link between people and the land. People are part of a global bigger system that involves nature. And they hate it so much that they need to destroy both the people and the nature.

They destroy the nature that nurtures the people, the people that steward the nature. This is a movement of erasure and replacement. That's what settler colonialism is.

By the way, the French did this in Algeria. So they don't even have, you know, the claim to the originality. That's not original at all.

You know, I mean, this has been done everywhere where you have settler colonialism. Now, in South Lebanon, their grand scheme is let's destroy nature, so that people do not come back. Okay, that's anything that holds in one sentence is suspicious, you know, suspiciously dumb, because life is complex and complicated.

So they're, they're very simple, you know, let's go in and burn everything approach means that they actually think that they can destroy nature, they can destroy the ecology. This ecology has been around, you know, at least 10,000 years, more. But since settled agriculture in the area, they, whatever they do, it's going to be very difficult.

But this is their attempt. So this is what they do, right? They think the following way.

They think the resistance finds, you know, hides in the dense thicket of oak, let's burn it. So they use glyphosate, and they use white phosphorus in order to burn the native oak trees.

Okay, the native thicket, you know, the analogy of what's happening, again, you know, no authenticity and no originality.

The, you know, with what's happening today, with the resistance, France, is just mind blowing. Because in France, the resistance movement was called les maquisards, the people of the maquis. And the maquis is the Mediterranean dense oak thicket, under which the resistance dug itself.

In France, I'm talking, right. Okay. So in France, they wanted to destroy the *maquis* in order to destroy the resistance.

Here, they want to destroy the maquis in order to destroy the resistance. Now, the roles have changed, the actors may have changed, but the driving force, the imposition of power over nature is still the same, we draw our strengths from nature, it hides us, they want to destroy nature. So hence, the ecocide needs to be seen in this perspective.

And pardon me if I went for too long, but there was an origin, there is a need to historicize this thinking.

[Helena Cobban]

Definitely, definitely. And your mention of the *maquis* in France, which was when the French were fighting against Nazism, in case people are not familiar with that. So you say that you, you spoke a little bit about doing some work, community work with the displaced people.

And you had earlier mentioned an organization called DALLA. Can you just describe a little bit about what you're doing, what DALLA is doing? And can people support it from outside?

[Rami Zurayk]

Oh, that would be fantastic. I can share with you, we have a WordPress site, and it's DALLA...

[Helena Cobban]

That's okay, you can send it to me later or put it into the chat.

[Rami Zurayk]

It's DALLA Lebanon in WordPress. So it's actually easy to find. And there are there, you can find indications about how to send any funds.

Let me just put it this way, you know, every meal per day costs us \$3. So you give \$10, that's meals for 10 people for a day, you know-- \$30, pardon me, and so on and so forth. That's what it costs.

We build kitchens, we give people agency in the selection of their food. We also distribute dignity kits for women. And although it may it may not be the best choice, but we also distribute diapers, because cleaning and washing is not really very easy.

These days, we understand the problematic of diapers, yet, at this stage in a war, that is what you can do. So if you can see, we're, we are very focused on women, you know, and women and children. And it's because this NGO was founded by women and run exclusively by women.

I am, I'm the only person who is not a woman in in that NGO. I don't know how I made my way into that. But it came naturally, we started working, and then we created the structure, not the other way around.

We started working from 2020 to 2023. We started bringing things together. And we've been doing it ever since we're building.

Comrades from Bolivia have sent us a lot of funds to build an agro-ecological healing center in Ainata, which is today, which is next to Bint al-Jbeil, an area that is today in the center of the resistance fighting. We are sure that we will go back and build where we're, I have no doubt.

[Helena Cobban]

So the projects that you have been running in South Lebanon, I mean, are they still functioning at all?

[Rami Zurayk]

Or have you had to move everything to we've had to move everything, because we do projects with people not with stones.

[Helena Cobban]

Yeah.

[Rami Zurayk]

And even with that. So we follow the people.

[Helena Cobban]

I mean, the images that I've seen since April 8, of the Israelis undertaking systematic wide scale demolition of entire villages and towns in South Lebanon is horrifying. Like, it's-- Tell me about your government. What are they doing? Apart from very eager, it seems to negotiate a peace treaty with Israel.

[Rami Zurayk]

So let's-- I mean, I don't live in the brain of the government. And so I, you know, I don't want to launch into accusations. All I can say is, at a personal level, personally, me, and a lot of people around me who are from the south with the south, who've been working very, very hard on trying, you know, to establish a culture of liberation, are shocked, completely shocked by this, you know, by this attempt.

This has been overanalyzed, you know, trying to pull the carpet from under or pull the rug, pardon me, from under the Iranian feet in order to disengage Lebanon from Iran. I mean, there are a lot of things that have been offered. But for me, for me, and for many, many of the people who are around me, the idea that we will have a peace treaty with the Zionist entity at a time where we estimate the delayed morbidity in Gaza to exceed a million.

Ghassan Abu-Sitta has been very clear about this. This is his business, his job. It's not just anyone talking, you know, the delayed morbidity in Gaza will be even worse than the immediate killing.

When this is happening, us seeking a peace agreement with the Israelis at the moment, it appears to me to be just deliberately giving in. Although at the same time, the fighters of the resistance are holding very strongly in the south. It is true, Israel has been advancing, you know, 450,000 people fighting 20,000 people.

Okay, that reminds you of a lot of battles in ancient times that have become legends, have been holding strong.

[Helena Cobban]

So hang on, the 450,000 are the people of south Lebanon?

[Rami Zurayk]

No, no. 450,000 in the Israeli army. Yeah, they brought the 200,000 at the border. These are their figures, not mine.

[Helena Cobban]

Right. So and the 20,000 is the estimate of the number of resistance fighters.

[Rami Zurayk]

Yeah, I mean, you know, that's, that's, that's what they are. Everybody knows this as well. You're talking about the population of 1.2 million on the best day. The population, I mean, the people who are, you know, the, the community that is providing the fighters, that is generally the Shia in Lebanon, people from the south and from the Bekaa, that's a community that's 1.2 million. Half the people of Gaza, by the way, just so that we're, we keep the, the, you know, the figures, the numbers in our head. And so you have people who don't fight, elderly children.

Not everyone is a fighter among the youth. Yeah, you know, we're, we're talking here about tops 20,000 holding 200,000, 1 to 10 with air superiority. I mean, undisputed air superiority, undisputed, you know, the, and also sanguinary madness, you know, that also characterizes the Israelis, you know, you're you're remember, I mean, one pilot was asked, how do you feel when you bomb a family with children?

And his answer was, "a slight tremor in the wing of the plane." So that's the way these things are perceived. So I don't understand why the Lebanese government would want to rush into this, when in the field, it is still strong.

Yes, there is a price to pay. I understand the narrative that they have is we're concerned about the people about the economy, etc. But the same people are not concerned about themselves.

You know, you know, they're telling their sons on the battlefield, keep fighting, son. We will get it back. Why do you want to give in something that you have acquired with the blood of your citizen?

So these are the big questions that are being asked. And these are questions that can only be answered by a pressure from the US and Israel and some, you know, other regional powers to counterbalance the Iranian pressure. So we are fighting a geopolitical war with the citizen of Lebanon, and with the standing of Lebanon, which is set to become a vessel of the Israelis and the Americans. I mean, it's already a vessel of the Americans, but I would hate it. I would hate to see it become a vessel of the Israelis. I just can't fathom that.

Anyway, they tried this in 1982. It didn't work so well for them. So even if that was the case, any agreement that was signed, the March 17 agreement that was overturned, the Israelis were going around in Beirut, shouting loudly, please do not shoot at the Israeli army.

We're leaving Beirut. I was in Beirut. I was in Beirut at that time.

[Helena Cobban]

So, yeah, that was after the 1982 invasion. Yes, after the 1982 invasion, they started- And they did manage to get a peace agreement in, I think it was May of 1983.

[Rami Zurayk]

17 May 1983.

[Helena Cobban]

And so they thought that that was, you know, all done and complete and successful. And it was that occupation that actually gave birth to Hezbollah, which never existed before.

[Rami Zurayk]

Indeed, absolutely. Absolutely. That's, you know, and it will continue to give birth to resistance movements because this is the dialectic that runs life.

[Helena Cobban]

So, what do you see happening with the current negotiations? I mean, are the negotiations going to happen, these Lebanese peace negotiations with Israel? I gather they're supposed to start on Tuesday.

[Rami Zurayk]

Yes, they will. They will. I'm not sure in what form.

I think there is a quid pro quo between the Israelis and the Lebanese. The Israelis think that the Lebanese are going to negotiate a surrender and a signature of the Abraham Accord. I am not sure what the Lebanese are planning.

But I don't think that a surrender is going to fly very high in Lebanon.

The Israelis have expressed several times their wish to create a civil strife in Lebanon. You can actually look at the analysis. All of this is well documented from more than one place.

[Helena Cobban]

Just as they have done in Syria, you know, where they're trying to set the Druze against these, against the Christians.

[Rami Zurayk]

Absolutely. And of course, as they have done in Palestine, several times. Mahmoud Abbas and the *Sulta* and Hamas have been in a war for the longest time.

And so that is something that I hope our government will not allow to happen. Because it wants so badly to save, quote unquote, Lebanon. But saving what Lebanon? At what cost? They ask us this question. We ask them the same question.

They say: you want to liberate at what cost? And people from the resistance side say: you want to surrender at what cost? And so there is this big division in Lebanon today over this.

[Helena Cobban]

So tell me about Hezbollah's political support, because they do have, you know, their own members in the parliament, and they have allies in the parliament. And I always thought until recently that that was a fairly strong position. Has that become weaker in parliament and in society?

And why and how?

[Rami Zurayk]

Okay, so that has to do with the nature of Lebanon. You have lived, Helena, long enough in Lebanon, you've been covering it for long enough to understand that in Lebanon, there are no confessional title. So you don't actually need, you can be an atheist and still be from this sect or that sect, you're born into it, you cannot leave it.

[Helena Cobban]

It's on your ID card, you can't escape it.

[Rami Zurayk]

You can't escape it. Because even the division of, I mean, your ability to get a job is determined by which tribe do you belong to. And tribes are not equal.

And tribes perceive Lebanon, these sectarian tribes, as a zero-sum game. That's the main problem. Okay, it's a zero-sum game.

You're strong means I'm weak. You're weak means I'm strong, and so on and so forth. So this situation, which has been over explained and overanalyzed, so I'm not going to bore you with it, means that eventually, there comes a time where all the tribes become, you know, all the tribes can come together in order to defeat a tribe that has become, in their opinion, too powerful.

So Hezbollah became super strong after the liberation in 2000. I mean, strong, societally and Arab wise, it became very strong in 2006. Yeah, in 2006 was interesting, because it was a remake of today, in 2006.

By the way, if people remember, I think it's in my somewhere buried in the notebooks that you have published. The Lebanese government, the WikiLeaks, you know, tells us that the Lebanese government had asked for a ceasefire to be delayed, to be delayed in order to be able to destroy more Hezbollah and the resistance. It didn't happen.

It wasn't delayed. The Israelis said that was a fiasco. We lost that war.

But some part of the Lebanese insisted that no, no, the Israelis won, and the resistance lost. And we're in the same situation today. I mean, analogous situation, it's never the same, but it's an analogous situation.

It would be farcical if it wasn't that sad, you know, just to go, you know, history repeats itself, the famous Marxist adage, first as a tragedy, then as a farce. And then, you know, you have all the farcical players expressing themselves freely these days. So we're in that situation.

This is all the result of a big media preparation. This has been prepared since, you know, since 2000. And then since 2006, internal strife and so on and so forth.

We got to the point where today, most of the Lebanese are not siding with the resistance in terms of number. But the the Shia community, the community of the Bekaa and of the south that is mostly most concerned, is all behind the resistance. There are a lot of non-Shia, so Christians, Sunni, Druze, who belong to different, more marginal parties who are also on the side of the resistance.

But the core of the resistance today remains Shia. That is at the same time, an advantage and a disadvantage. I don't want to get into it, but it's a weakness and a strength.

[Helena Cobban]

How about the the Palestinians in Lebanon? I mean, you know, there are large, historically large Palestinian refugee camps in the south. Presumably those people have been displaced.

Where have they gone? What's the degree of support for the resistance from those people? Talk a little bit about the Palestinians.

[Rami Zurayk]

So, I believe that the camps in the south, you know that the Nabatiyeh camp, for example, was dismantled and everyone was killed by the Israelis in 1982. We were left with the camps of Saida and the camps of Tyre. Two camps in Tyre, one camp in Saida.

The Ain al-Hilweh camp is still there. In 1982, the Israelis could not enter. They just went around it.

They didn't enter it. In Sur, the camps are there. But you need to know that throughout the past 40 years, 30 to 40 years, you know, since 1982, the Palestinian presence in Lebanon has been forcibly eroded.

The numbers of Palestinians in Lebanon has decreased and declined tremendously. People have either migrated or emigrated or gone to other places. Successive governments have refused to give Palestinians the right to be--

[Helena Cobban]

To work--

[Rami Zurayk]

Exactly. To be citizens of a state, even non-voting citizens of the state.

Many were naturalised. Many of them, Christians, you know, were early naturalised, very early on. Lebanon is a country that keeps playing the demography game. So, you know, they will do that.

So, the Palestinians are not directly, you know, directly involved with what is happening, for a number of reasons. One of them is that their numbers have dwindled. The second is that there are a lot of people who are with Hamas, but they have their own internal dynamics within the camps with the Abu Mazen and Fatah people. So, they're constantly, you know, there is a strong tension there. And I think this is where most of the strategic work is going on.

In a nutshell, they're not part of this battle.

[Helena Cobban]

So, how does that leave the people of the Dahiyya, the southern suburbs of Beirut, or elsewhere in Beirut, where you have displacement camps and schools that are opening up to the displaced people?

[Rami Zurayk]

Not as much as in 2024, by the way. There has been a shift in the global popular mood towards the displaced, but the displaced are still there. There are about a million displaced.

There are places that have opened their arms, and there are places that have closed them. There are places where anybody who is from Dahiyya, from the south, is treated as a suspect or as a magnet for rockets. That is something the Israelis want to cultivate.

And there are places where people did not care. I'll give you examples of places where I work, where Dalla works. For example, you know, near Brummana, you have a town called Baabdat. Baabdat is a very upmarket town, a very nice area.

[Helena Cobban]

So that's in the mountains up above Beirut, basically.

[Rami Zurayk]

In the mountains above Beirut. A Christian area, if you need to just talk about it this way. And the municipality has opened the school and received displaced people in there.

The same thing has happened with Hammana. I'm just giving you places which are not Shia, not like people receiving. Hammana, Bhamdun, also Christian areas have been received.

Beit Shabeb, which is like really hardcore. In 2024, they had opened the school, received hundreds of families. This time people have received families in their own homes, because the school refused to open.

So while the general picture can be painted as being depressive, there are individual actions that are not sectarian, that are not affiliated. And people may not even be affiliated with the resistance. Politically, this is not a requirement.

People are few, but very impactful. People who still think in humanist terms. And I think that needs to be highlighted because it is important.

It forms a basis on which one can work out an image for a possible future.

[Helena Cobban]

Yeah, it sounds as though it's a fairly depressing situation altogether. But it's good that you have this kind of idea of starting to imagine how the future can be better. What do you think in terms of the relationship, obviously, between the Lebanon question and the big negotiations, which we've heard from Islamabad, that they're stalled right now.

And each side is claiming that it walked out in essence. JD Vance is saying that he couldn't negotiate on this basis. And the Iranian government negotiators are saying, well, we couldn't accept the American terms.

From your point of view in Lebanon, does that leave you feeling caught in the middle or depressed or what?

[Rami Zurayk]

I mean, you know, the situation that has been discussed in Islamabad is unfortunately bigger than Lebanon. I mean, Lebanon is just like a dot on this thing, because we're talking about a situation that could go beyond in terms of violence, in terms of impact on hundreds of millions of people that could go way beyond what we think. So in as far as Lebanon is concerned, and having I am not in the Islamabad, so I don't know, this is what I hear.

I am personally from the people who believe that Iran would have put Lebanon in one of the conditions, perhaps not the first one, but definitely out there. Why do I believe that? It's, you know, the relationship is strategic and historical.

And the Iranian government and state, which has its own sets of problems that one can also discuss, but has always shown an interest in the support of liberation movement in the region. I think it would have been very easy for Iran historically, to side with Israel and become the ruler of the region that you know, all it would have needed would be an agreement with the US about this. And they always refused to do that.

So I think that goes in their favor, that they would have taken it. There are of course, this is met by very pragmatic anti Iranian analysis that says, Oh, no, they're going to exchange you for hormones, etc. I don't know.

I believe it. You know, this becomes an article of faith based on some evidence, but I don't have a scientific proof of this. Do we feel depressed about this?

Not really. I think we feel much more depressed that Lebanon is rushing towards, you know, the direct negotiation potential peace agreement, etc. with Israel.

I think that that is anathema. But you know, we don't feel that what happens to Iran necessarily impacts us here that we should be their first, you know, their first priority. The Iranians have helped the resistance, essentially, hell enough, you remember, because no one else wanted to, no one else.

When the south of Lebanon was occupied, for the longest time, not a single Arab country extended its arm, not even Syria, especially not Syria.

[Helena Cobban]

Especially not Syria.

[Rami Zurayk]

But that also is another debate. But you know, this became, you know, people tell us, you know, I'd say France was liberated with the help of the Americans and the Brits. You know, that's, that's how World War II came.

That's how the French resistance survived. The goal was in London. So I don't think we have, you know, lessons in liberalism to take from anyone at that stage.

Resistance movements will go to wherever they can in order to free and liberate their country. If Iran is the only place where they can go, then they will. And I personally endorse that.

It doesn't mean that at all, by the way, you know, just to make it very clear to you that I endorse everything Iran does, and that I am a supporter of Wilayat al-Faqih, and so on and so forth. Yeah, you know, I'm completely on the side of this. And I say it very clearly in the book that you have.

[Helena Cobban]

So I think our time is just about up right now. Rami, I'm so happy to be able to discuss these matters with you and just really appreciate very deeply your willingness to give time to talk to us amidst all the horrors that you're living through there in Beirut. And so I'll just tell people that this is part of our ongoing project on the Iran crisis.

And maybe we will start a new branch of this project on the Lebanon crisis, because there's clearly a whole lot more that needs to be discussed. We are at a turning point in history. So thank you very much, Rami Zurayk, for being with us today.

[Rami Zurayk]

Thank you, Helena, for having me and for giving us a platform. It is important that voices be heard, so that, you know, the image that is passed does not end up being just a normative image of what is happening. There are a lot of nuances in the local politics.

But there are also some issues that are strong. Our opposition to Zionism is one of them.

[Helena Cobban]

And you're doing absolutely what you can there. Thank you, Rami. And you stay safe.

[Rami Zurayk]

Thank you. Thank you, Helena. Thank you.