

Foreign Secretary statement on the situation in Lebanon

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Foreign Secretary announces over £5m of emergency funding in support of the humanitarian work of the Lebanese Government.

I am gravely concerned about the developing conflict in Lebanon, and the scale of the humanitarian impact. We must not see a widening of this conflict which is already causing significant civilian casualties and mass displacement. Our immediate focus is our humanitarian response in Lebanon and our diplomatic efforts with allies to prevent escalation.

I strongly condemn Hizbollah's ongoing attacks against Israel. These must cease immediately. The actions of this proscribed terrorist group - at the instigation of the Iranian regime - are once again drawing the people of Lebanon into a conflict they do not want and which is not in their interests.

In recent days I have spoken to the Lebanese Prime Minister, the Israeli Foreign Minister and discussed the situation with European and US partners. We need clear diplomatic action to prevent this conflict widening.

I welcome the commitments made by the Lebanese Government, including the significant decision to ban all Hizbollah's military activities. We will continue to support the Lebanese Armed Forces and the Lebanese Government to assume full responsibility for security.

A further expansion of this conflict must be averted. The forced displacement of hundreds of thousands of Lebanese people as a direct result of Israeli operations is completely unacceptable and could have disastrous humanitarian consequences.

Today, I am mobilising over £5m in emergency funding including to the Lebanese Red Cross, the UN Lebanon Humanitarian Fund and the World Food Programme, in support of the humanitarian work of the Lebanese Government. This will help thousands of vulnerable and displaced civilians across Lebanon to meet their basic needs, including with food, shelter, water, sanitation and hygiene.

The shared focus should be on the threat from Hizbollah and on protecting civilians across Lebanon. I strongly welcome proposals for direct talks between the Lebanese Government and Israeli Government. This presents the best route to lasting peace and security for the people of Lebanon and the people of Israel. The UK stands ready to support these efforts alongside our partners.

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