

The United Kingdom is working closely with the Lebanese Government and humanitarian partners to support those affected by the current escalation: UK statement at the UN Security Council

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Statement by Ambassador James Kariuki, UK Chargé d'Affaires to the UN, at the UN Security Council meeting on Lebanon.

The United Kingdom joined the call for this meeting, alongside European and other partners, to address the serious escalation of violence across the Blue Line and in Lebanon.

We strongly condemn Lebanese Hezbollah's ongoing attacks against Israel and the region, which must cease. These actions - on behalf of the Iranian regime - have cost lives and have once again drawn Lebanese civilians into a conflict they do not want.

As we heard from the briefers today, the escalating violence has already had a devastating impact on civilians on both sides of the Blue Line. We do not want to see a widening conflict in Lebanon.

We are concerned by the civilian impact of Israeli military action in Lebanon including large-scale displacement. Access to essential and life-saving medical services is also becoming much more difficult, with five hospitals reportedly closed due to the fighting. We call upon Israel to uphold its obligations under international law, including with regard to protection of civilians and civilian infrastructure.

The United Kingdom is working closely with the Lebanese Government and humanitarian partners to support those affected by the current escalation.

The United Kingdom expresses its strong support to UNIFIL and urges respect for the mission's freedom of movement as it implements its mandate. We are deeply concerned by the 6 March strike on UNIFIL which seriously injured several Ghanaian peacekeepers, I take this opportunity to express our hopes for their swift and full recovery from their injuries.

We once again underscore that attacks on peacekeepers are completely unacceptable, and we urge all parties to ensure the safety and security of UNIFIL personnel, in accordance with international law.

The United Kingdom welcomes President Aoun's call for direct negotiations between the Governments of Israel and Lebanon and we encourage both governments to engage diplomatically and work towards de-escalation and full implementation of resolution 1701. We also commend the decision by the Lebanese Government to ban all Hezbollah's military activities. We continue to support the Lebanese Armed Forces as the sole legitimate armed force in Lebanon.

Expansion of the conflict across the Blue Line is in no one's interest and risks further destabilising Lebanon and exacerbating the regional crisis. We are committed to playing a full diplomatic role in efforts to secure lasting peace and security for the people of Lebanon and people of Israel.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/the-united-kingdom-is-working-closely-with-the-lebanese-government-and-humanitarian-partners-to-support-those-affected-by-the-current-escalation-uk-s-2>