

Israel's decision to expand its ground operations further into Lebanon undermines work to disarm Hizballah and threatens Lebanon's sovereignty: UK statement at the UN Security Council

31.3.2026 - | Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs

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

The United Kingdom strongly condemns the recent attacks on UNIFIL, including those which caused the deaths of three Indonesian peacekeepers and injured Polish peacekeepers.

Our thoughts are with the families of the deceased and with the injured. Such attacks are unacceptable.

We urge all parties to ensure the safety and security of UNIFIL personnel and premises, in accordance with international law.

I thank all peacekeepers serving in Lebanon for their dedication, bravery, and professionalism. Many of us here had the opportunity to meet them during our visit to Lebanon in December.

President, the UK is clear in its condemnation of Hizballah's decision to join Iran's attacks against Israel.

Hizballah's attacks on Israel, including civilian communities south of the Blue Line, 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.

I commend the Lebanese government's decision to ban all Hizballah military activity and initiate a plan to bring all weapons under state control.

We will continue to support the Lebanese Armed Forces as they undertake this task, as Lebanon's sole legitimate defender.

However, Israel's decision to expand its ground operations further into Lebanon undermines this work and threatens Lebanon's sovereignty.

Strikes on Lebanese Armed Forces positions are also deeply concerning.

President, as we've heard here, the conflict is causing a deepening crisis, with dire consequences for civilians.

The humanitarian toll is staggering.

More than one million people have been forced from their homes, with women and children facing the greatest risks.

Among the displaced are over 12,000 pregnant women, many struggling to access essential healthcare.

At least 121 children have been killed, and countless others are enduring the trauma of violence, loss, and upheaval.

Attacks impacting healthcare facilities have intensified, with more than 50 health workers killed to date. This is unacceptable.

All parties to the conflict must uphold international humanitarian law.

Civilians and critical infrastructure must be protected, and humanitarian access enabled.

The United Kingdom has provided \$12 million in support of the government of Lebanon's efforts to reach vulnerable communities.

We stand with those working tirelessly to protect civilians and deliver life-saving assistance.

And finally, President, we support the urgent need for direct negotiations between the governments of Israel and Lebanon.

This is the only path towards lasting peace and security for people both sides of the Blue Line.

Both Israel and Lebanon want to see an end to Hizballah's ability to threaten the region.

Further expansion of this conflict will only repeat the cycle of violence across the Blue Line and drag the region further into crisis.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/israels-decision-to-expand-its-ground-operations-further-in-to-lebanon-undermines-work-to-disarm-hizballah-and-threatens-lebanons-sovereignty-uk-sta>