

November 2024



Lebanese in the Diaspora: Stop the War, Restore Lebanese Sovereignty



We, Lebanese in the diaspora, are raising our voice today in defense of Lebanon, its citizens and its territories. We denounce the systematic and brutal Israeli aggression in full violation of international humanitarian law, amidst total impunity and a deafening silence on behalf of the international community. While Israel's actions infringe upon Lebanon's sovereignty, Hezbollah's dominance over Lebanese state institutions and Iran's regional ambitions have hijacked the collective will of the Lebanese. The Lebanese state, deliberately destroyed by the local political class, is unable to defend the interests of its own people.

Upholding Lebanon's national interest during this critical stage requires addressing a set of priorities in a coordinated and integrated manner to halt violence, restore sovereignty and preserve Lebanon's unity. These include:

- **An immediate ceasefire**, a decoupling of the Lebanese front from the Gaza front, and a return to the 1949 Lebanese- Israeli Armistice Agreement
- **Implementation of UNSCR 1701 in its entirety**, without any equivocation or procrastination
- **Full deployment of the Lebanese Armed Forces and total control over weapons by the Lebanese state exclusively**
- **Election of a president** and the formation of a rescue government
- **Sustainable return of displaced populations**

While these priorities are the cornerstone for emerging from the current crisis, **stabilization must coincide with the implementation of the constitution, the Taif Agreement, all relevant United Nations Security Council resolutions, and a commitment to rebuild the state and its institutions.**

We call upon all national and international parties to support these priorities and act in the best interest of Lebanon and its people, and we emphasize the responsibilities of the various parties as follows:

- **The Lebanese authorities bear the primary responsibility for the above priorities.** They are required to push for a ceasefire under a political settlement that prioritizes national interest, and to implement UNSCR 1701 in its entirety without succumbing to any external pressures. The Lebanese authorities must also commit to a full deployment of the Lebanese Armed Forces in the south, regain full control over weapons, and reach a final demarcation and control of Lebanon's borders.
With regard to the parliament, Members of Parliament must meet according to the constitutional mechanism to elect a president who is committed to the roadmap outlined above. In this context, the Speaker of Parliament bears a primary responsibility to complete the presidential election without delay, and then form a rescue and reform government.
The Lebanese government must deal responsibly with the new displacement crisis and ensure the sustainable return of refugees to their villages and cities. Transparency in the distribution of aid arriving in Lebanon is required; periodic reports must be issued detailing the distribution of this aid to ensure that it reaches its intended beneficiaries.
- **The international community bears a major responsibility towards Lebanon and the region in reaching a ceasefire agreement,** and exerting pressure on Israel to prevent further abuses to international humanitarian law.
The international community also has a responsibility to provide immediate support to Lebanon through effective and unconditional arming of the Lebanese Armed Forces and security forces, enabling them to defend Lebanon's sovereignty and territory and strengthening citizen confidence in the state's defense capacity.
- **As for Lebanese citizens, they have a collective responsibility of unity and solidarity.** The Lebanese have shown a high degree of social solidarity and support during these tumultuous times; they must now cling to national unity and reject internal strife in order to overcome the current ordeal we are facing.

Our nation today is at a critical crossroads that requires all parties to shoulder their responsibilities to save the country. This necessitates the conclusive commitment of all political actors and citizens to the state and its institutions. **Lebanon has been a battleground for far too long. The Lebanese deserve the chance of building a free, sovereign, and prosperous republic. Together, we can get there.**