



Deal Reached for a Ceasefire in Lebanon

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A truce between Israel and Hezbollah, negotiated with the participation of U.S. and French diplomats, went into effect on 27 November. The agreement, if adhered to by the parties, will stabilise the situation in Lebanon in the short term and increase external and internal pressure on the Israeli government for a ceasefire in the Gaza Strip.

What are the circumstances and conditions of the ceasefire?

The agreement aims to end the [confrontation between Israel and Hezbollah](#), which has been ongoing since 8 October 2023. The conflict expanded in recent months with Israeli air attacks that [killed the organisation's leadership and the 30 September entry of Israeli ground forces](#) into southern Lebanon. The weeks leading up to the truce were characterised by the intensification of Israeli airstrikes and other moves against targets in Beirut and Hezbollah shelling of central Israel. The Israelis, in official reports, say they have destroyed 80% of Hezbollah's rocket arsenal and killed about 3,000 of its members, while Lebanese authorities put the number of casualties (civilian and military) at around 3,800 killed and 15,700 wounded.

The state parties to the agreement are Israel and Lebanon, as well as the mediators, the U.S. and France. According to its terms, as of 27 November, Israel and Hezbollah, along with other armed groups, are to cease offensive operations. Within 60 days, Israeli and Hezbollah forces are to leave southern Lebanon. The only formations authorised to be present south of the Litani River are the Lebanese army and security services, coordinating with [UNIFIL](#) forces. Much of the agreement deals with the broadest possible disarmament of armed groups in Lebanon through, among other things, confiscation of illegal arsenals and restoration of state control over arms transfers. The provisions are to be monitored by a joint mechanism organised by the U.S., France, and UNIFIL, with which the parties are to cooperate.

In addition, the U.S. is to give Israel guarantees on the possibility of intervening in the event of violations of the

agreement by Hezbollah inside southern Lebanon, which, along with the parties' right to "act in self-defence", as noted in the deal, generates the risk of renewed fighting and re-escalation.

What does the truce mean for Hezbollah and Lebanon?

Hezbollah agreed to the ceasefire from its weakest position in its history, especially after losing most of its leadership. However, it still maintains [high combat capability](#), as demonstrated by, among other things, precision attacks on Israeli bases. It will try to rebuild its capabilities, which will expose it to a renewed Israeli response, including potentially [attacks on the organisation's resources in Syria](#). At the domestic level, the ceasefire and weakening of Hezbollah may motivate other political forces to take advantage of the situation in Lebanon, as well as external partners interested in ending the internal crisis and reforming and repairing state institutions. Significantly, the strengthening of the Lebanese army, upon which the implementation of the agreement will fall on the Lebanese side, may expose it to open confrontation with Hezbollah and its allies.

What is Israel's perspective of the deal?

In addition to seriously weakening one of its main [strategic adversaries](#), Israel views it as a success that it forced Hezbollah to abandon its earlier demand to tie a truce to a ceasefire with Hamas. At the same time, the terms of the agreement announced by Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu faced internal criticism from parts of his coalition and the public who are demanding a more robust weakening of Hezbollah or the creation of a buffer zone in southern Lebanon under the control of the Israeli army. At the same

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time, once the situation in the northern part of Israel has calmed down, public and international pressure will increase for a similar deal in Gaza that would guarantee the return of the hostages. However, in this case, [domestic considerations](#) will be much more critical to Netanyahu, including opposition to a deal with Hamas from the far-right members of the coalition.

What are the possible regional implications and involvement of outside actors?

After announcing the truce, Netanyahu put the focus on fighting harder against the [Iranian](#) threat. This could mean an intensification of attacks on [Iranian targets](#) in Iraq or Yemen, especially since some of the military pressure

exerted so far on Israel by Hezbollah within the “Axis of Resistance” may be picked up (e.g., in the form of drone attacks) by elements operating there, such as the [Houthis](#). Both Israel and Hezbollah may be willing to test the terms of the agreement, which is why U.S. and French involvement in maintaining the truce will be crucial. Particularly important will be the role of the U.S., as it has the greatest leverage over Israel and is a guarantor of the long-term truce provisions, such as border delimitation. It very likely will be necessary for external partners to direct more resources to the Lebanese army. In turn, France and [Arab states](#) may increase their activity in Lebanon’s internal situation to try to resolve some political problems, including [a presidential election](#).