

Middle East Situation

Information Cut-Off: 1100h (BST), 21 April 2026

Executive Summary

The Iran-US/Israel ceasefire will expire at 2000h (Eastern Time) on Wednesday (22 April).

Tehran remains publicly non-committal regarding the Islamabad negotiations, refusing to formalise talks with Washington while the maritime blockade of Iranian ports persists. President Trump has said that the blockade on Iranian ports will continue until there is a fresh agreement. It remains unclear whether the negotiations will take place before the end of the ceasefire.

Diplomacy

Islamabad is prepared to resume hosting negotiations within the next 24 hours. The US government has said that its delegation will only travel to Islamabad for negotiations if Tehran confirms its attendance, which it has not done. The latest reports are that Vice President Vance will depart for Islamabad later this morning (21 April), and will be ready to resume negotiations in the city tomorrow morning (22 April).

Iranian state media has said this morning that “so far, no delegation from Iran has travelled to Islamabad”, increasing speculation about Tehran’s negotiating position. President Trump has said that sanctions on Iranian ports will remain in place until Tehran agrees to a peace deal. Iranian Parliament Speaker Mohammad Bagher Ghalibaf, the government’s chief negotiator, has emphasised his discontent at being urged towards negotiations under the threat of US violence, and expressed Iranian preparedness to engage in combat if the ceasefire ends without an agreement.

The Iranian government has lodged a formal complaint with the United Nations and the IMO over the US seizure of the Iranian merchant vessel yesterday (20 April).

The next round of Israel-Lebanon negotiations has been confirmed for Thursday (23 April). The centrepiece of the talks is expected to be an extension to the ceasefire. The Israeli government has demanded that the Lebanese government take the lead on disarming Hezbollah.

Iran

According to state media, the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) has reported this morning (21 April) that its bomb disposal unit has defused three unexploded 2000lb bombs in Lorestan province.

The state has executed a man after being found guilty of leading a network linked to Mossad and of setting fire to a mosque in Tehran during the protests in January.

The Iranian military has said that an Iranian tanker successfully entered Iranian waters last night (20 April) despite the threats of the US military; there has been no US information about this so far.

Regional

Lebanon

The Israeli government has warned of its intention to continue operations in southern Lebanon, and has directly threatened to kill Hezbollah Secretary-General Naim Qassem, despite the ongoing ceasefire. Israeli artillery fire has been reported in Bint Jbeil district this morning (21 April).

United Arab Emirates

UAE authorities have said they have detained suspects accused of plotting attacks and channelling funds to unspecified foreign groups.

Travel

Aviation

From today (21 April), Qatar has authorised the gradual resumption of foreign airlines landing at its main airport following suspensions during the conflict. The national carrier, Qatar Airways, reportedly aims to reach over 120 destinations by mid-May 2026.

Russia's civil aviation authority Rosaviatsia has lifted restrictions on flights to and from the UAE and through Iranian airspace.

Advice

- Do not travel to Lebanon, especially south of the Litani River, Dahiyeh in Beirut, and in the Beqaa Valley.
- Reconsider travel to the Middle East, especially Israel, Iran and Iraq, but also the wider Gulf region.
- Remain aware of ongoing tensions, given the possibility of a sudden resumption in fighting.
- Monitor instructions from local authorities and any national embassy guidelines.
- Avoid any demonstrations or gatherings in the region.
- Globally, reconsider travel to any locations with links to Israel or Judaism.
- If you need further support, or wish to discuss options for evacuation, call NGS.

Contact us

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