

# Middle East Situation

**Information Cut-Off:** 1200h (BST), 23 April 2026

## Executive Summary

Iran and the United States continue to adhere to a ceasefire, despite the formal agreement expiring on 22 April. However, negotiations between the US and Iran have not resumed, and no date has been confirmed by the White House for the end of the ceasefire extension.

The US embassy in Beirut has issued a new security alert, and has urged US citizens to leave Lebanon while commercial flights are still available.

Despite the ongoing 10-day ceasefire between Israel and Lebanon, attacks have continued in southern Lebanon.

The Israeli Defence Force has been accused of directly targeting journalists in southern Lebanon, after one was killed and one injured in an attack.

## Diplomatic

The White House has not yet confirmed a date for when the extension to the ceasefire will end. Its spokesman said to the media yesterday (22 April) that the Iranian economy is losing USD500m per day.

Talks between the Lebanese government and Israel are scheduled to resume in Washington DC today (23 April), to negotiate an extension of the ceasefire. Hezbollah continues to have no presence at the talks.

The date and location for the next round of negotiations have not yet been agreed. The lead negotiator for Iran, Mohammad Bagher Ghalibaf, has once again stressed that a peace deal is only possible if the maritime blockade is lifted. President Pezeshkian has stressed that the blockade is the main obstacle to negotiations.

## United States

The US Secretary of the Navy John C Phelan left the Trump administration yesterday (22 April). It was eventually revealed that he had been fired for personal differences with the defence secretary.

Yesterday, the US Senate voted (along party lines) to reject a Democrat resolution intended to curb President Trump's powers to continue the war with Iran.

## Iran

The government said this morning (23 April) that it has collected its first revenue from tolls on vessels passing through the Strait of Hormuz.

## Israel

The government has reportedly placed a USD200m order for advanced airborne munitions from Israeli defence firm Elbit Systems.

A drone targeting IDF positions, launched from southern Lebanon, was intercepted this morning (23 April).

## Regional

### **Strait of Hormuz**

The IRGC navy said in a statement last night (22 April) that it had seized two vessels in the strait for violating maritime rules and moving without IRGC permission.

The US military has denied reports on social media that several commercial ships have been able to evade the blockade in the Strait of Hormuz.

### **Lebanon**

Despite the ongoing ceasefire, the US embassy last night (22 April) issued a new security alert, and has urged US citizens to leave Lebanon while commercial flights are still available. It warned those who remain to prepare for emergency situations and unexploded ordnance.

Two people were killed in an Israeli attack on a car in southern Lebanon yesterday afternoon; the IDF also bombed the town of Qantara. Two people were reportedly killed and several wounded in an IDF attack on Yahmar al-Shaqif. Several people were also wounded in an Israeli drone attack on Qaqaiyat al-Jisr.

Two Lebanese journalists reporting on an Israeli strike in At-Tiri were then reportedly targeted in a house in the town by Israeli air strikes. Lebanese media reported yesterday afternoon that a Red Cross vehicle carrying one of the journalists to hospital came under Israeli fire. The other journalist was reported dead yesterday evening. The IDF has denied that it conducts targeted attacks on journalists.

A French member of the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL), wounded in a (suspected) Hezbollah attack in southern Lebanon on Saturday (18 April), has died. Another French UNIFIL member died at the incident.

## Travel

### Maritime

The Pentagon said this morning (23 April) that it will take six months to clear all the sea mines from the Strait of Hormuz.

### Aviation

Qatar Airways has announced the resumption of daily flights from Doha to Dubai and Sharjah from today (23 April). A daily service to Damascus will resume on 01 May.

## 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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