

Middle East Situation

Information Cut-Off: 1200h (BST) 13 April 2026

Executive Summary

Negotiations have been held in Islamabad, but finished without reaching a final agreement. The talks were reportedly held face-to-face, and it appears that both sides are open to future negotiations, although no plans are officially in place.

The ceasefire has held, and attacks by Iran and the United States were not conducted during the period of the talks. However, with subsequent social media posts threatening to blockade the Strait of Hormuz, President Trump has continued to escalate the situation.

Heavy violence has continued between Israel and Lebanon, with air strikes having been conducted across southern Lebanon in the last three days, and Hezbollah rocket attacks continuing against Israeli positions.

Heading 2

US and Iranian delegations, led respectively by Vice President Vance and Parliament Speaker Mohammad Bagher Ghalibaf, concluded 21 hours of direct negotiations in Islamabad over the weekend (11–12 April). Preliminary understandings were reportedly reached regarding the unfreezing of certain Iranian assets and a reduction in strike intensity within Lebanon. There were reports that the environment was broadly positive, including direct negotiations between delegations. However, the session ended on Sunday (12 April) without a comprehensive agreement.

Significant friction remains concerning Iranian control of the Strait of Hormuz and US demands for nuclear non-proliferation guarantees, both of which Tehran has thus far rejected. No date or location has been set for future talks.

Lebanon's presidential office said on Friday (10 April) that negotiations between the Lebanese government and Israel are scheduled to take place in Washington tomorrow (14 April). The Israeli envoy to the United States has said that Israel will not discuss a ceasefire with Hezbollah; after that statement, Hezbollah media stated that the militia would "fight to its last breath" against Israel. Prime Minister Netanyahu has stated that he is open to a negotiations, as long as Hezbollah's weapons are dismantled.

Israel

Early on Saturday (11 April) morning, sirens were activated in Western Galilee, and the military said a drone was reportedly detected from Lebanon. On Saturday morning, an Israeli air strike reportedly killed at least six people at the Bureij refugee camp in the Gaza Strip. On Saturday evening, Prime Minister Netanyahu made a statement on social media that Israel would continue to fight against Iran and its proxies. On Saturday night, sirens sounded in Kiryat Shmona after a Hezbollah rocket launch.

On Sunday (12 April) morning, hundreds of Israeli nationals protested against the government in Tel Aviv, demanding an end to conflict. A Hezbollah drone was intercepted by Israeli air defences on Sunday morning, and a series of Hezbollah attacks was launched in northern Israel on Sunday afternoon.

This morning (13 April), sirens were heard in Upper Galilee, after Hezbollah rocket fire.

Iran

The blocking of the internet has continued, having passed 1,000 hours over the weekend.

Security authorities have arrested at least 50 people for "collaborating" with the US and Israel by sharing sensitive information, including locations of facilities and infrastructure.

Strait of Hormuz

President Trump claimed on social media on Saturday (11 April) morning that “massive numbers” of “completely empty oil tankers” were heading to the United States to load up with oil and gas. The US military also claimed that two US vessels were involved in clearing mines from the Strait of Hormuz, alongside several international allies. Iranian state media and the Iranian military strongly denied that any US vessel had crossed the strait. Early on Sunday (12 April) morning, the IRGC Navy warned that any military vessels trying to pass through the strait would be “dealt with severely”.

Yesterday (12 April) afternoon, President Trump warned on social media that the US Navy would blockade any vessel passing through the Strait of Hormuz that has paid a toll to Iran, hinting at future military action in the region. The threat has been criticised as non-compliant with international law.

US Central Command (CENTCOM) subsequently stated that it will begin a blockade of all maritime traffic entering and exiting Iranian ports from today (13 April) at 1400h (GMT). After the statements, traffic through the strait immediately halted.

The IRGC has stated that the strait is “open to the harmless passage of civilian vessels”.

Lebanon

Israeli strikes on Lebanon continued from Friday (10 April), with at least 12 security personnel killed in Nabatieh on Friday evening, targets that the Israeli government stated were Hezbollah locations. Hezbollah rocket attacks continued against Israeli military infrastructure in Lebanon throughout Saturday morning.

On Saturday (11 April) morning, Israeli air strikes were reported on the southern towns of Toul and Jebchit. Three people were reportedly killed in an Israeli air strike on Mayfadoun, southern Lebanon. At least 10 people were reportedly killed in Israeli air strikes on Kfar Sir and Zefta. Further air strikes were conducted on Seddiqine, Tibnin and Dibbine. Hezbollah targeted Israeli soldiers in the southern Lebanese town of Shamaa on Saturday morning with rocket fire. On Saturday afternoon, the Israeli military claimed to have attacked more than 200 locations in southern Lebanon over 24 hours.

On Sunday (12 April) morning, Israeli air strikes were reported in Kafra, Haris, Rachaf, Srebbine and Qana, all in southern Lebanon, with a rocket launcher reportedly destroyed in Jouaiya. At least 11 people were reported killed. Throughout Sunday, Hezbollah claimed to have attacked 43 Israeli positions in Lebanon and Israel.

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Nearly 1.2m people have become internally displaced people (IDPs) in Lebanon. The UN Refugee Agency has said that shelters for Lebanese IDPs are severely overcrowded, with nearly half the country's schools now being used as reception centres. UNICEF has called for humanitarian aid in southern Lebanon.

On Saturday evening, Hezbollah urged its supporters to refrain from holding demonstrations in Lebanon, out of a "keenness for stability and civil peace". However, protests broke out in Beirut over the concept of direct talks between Lebanon and Israel.

Twice yesterday (12 April), Israeli soldiers reportedly hit UN peacekeepers' vehicles with a battle tank.

Saudi Arabia

The government has said that operations have been resumed at the East-West pipeline, which was damaged last week. It has also reportedly resumed operations at the Manifa oilfield.

Travel

Maritime

Qatar announced the full resumption of maritime navigation from yesterday (12 April).

The United Kingdom Maritime Trade Operations (UKMTO) announced yesterday afternoon that a vessel in the Red Sea had been approached by an armed group off the coast of Yemen that unsuccessfully attempted to board it.

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.

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