

US Envoy Urges Israel to Honor Ceasefire

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BEIRUT – U.S. envoy Tom Barrack on Monday urged Israel to comply with commitments made under a ceasefire agreement that ended last year’s conflict, following Lebanon’s recent decision to advance with plans to disarm Hezbollah.

Following his meeting with Lebanese President Joseph Aoun, Barrack acknowledged Beirut’s unprecedented step to address Hezbollah’s arsenal. He stated, “He thinks the Lebanese government has done its part. They’ve taken the first step. Now what we need is Israel to comply.” Barrack emphasized that a full withdrawal from border positions is the “next step” toward fulfilling the agreement.

The November truce stipulated that all weapons in Lebanon be restricted to state forces and that Israel fully withdraw from Lebanese territory. While Lebanon’s government has now tasked its army with developing a detailed disarmament plan, Israel continues to hold five border positions it considers strategic. Barrack emphasized that a full withdrawal from these positions is the “next step” toward fulfilling the agreement.

Lebanon’s Cabinet recently tasked the army with developing a detailed disarmament plan for Hezbollah by the end of the year. This move is the first serious attempt to address the

group's military wing since the country's civil war militias were disarmed decades ago. Earlier this month, Lebanese ministers debated a U.S.-backed proposal outlining a timetable for disarmament and long-term security guarantees. The plan calls for the gradual elimination of all non-state armed groups in Lebanon, with the ultimate aim of consolidating weapons under government control.

Barrack said Washington is continuing consultations with Israel to clarify its stance. "In the next few weeks, you're going to see progress on all sides," he stated, adding that the process could open the door to broader regional dialogue. He also stressed the importance of pairing security measures with economic support, pointing to Lebanon's severe financial crisis. "The next step is we need participation on the part of Israel, and we need an economic plan for prosperity, restoration, and renovation," Barrack said.

The U.S. diplomat argued that sustained progress on security would benefit not only Lebanon but also regional stability. "It means a better life for the people ... and at least the beginning of a roadway to a different kind of dialogue," he added.

Hezbollah's disarmament has long been viewed as a complex challenge, given the group's military strength and political influence. The ceasefire's durability hinges on whether both the Lebanese government and Israel adhere to the terms.

For now, Washington is pressing both sides to show concrete steps in reducing tensions along the Israel-Lebanon border, which has remained a flashpoint for decades.