



By: TA | AP Brief

US envoy to discuss long-term ceasefire with Israel after Lebanon commits to disarming Hezbollah



The U.S. special envoy to Lebanon said that his team would discuss the long-term cessation of hostilities with Israel, after Beirut endorsed a U.S.-backed plan for the Hezbollah militant group to **disarm**.

Tom Barrack, following a meeting with Lebanese President Joseph Aoun, also said Washington would seek an economic proposal for post-war **reconstruction** in the country, after months of shuttle diplomacy between the U.S. and Lebanon.

Barrack is also set to meet with Prime Minister Nawaf Salam and Speaker Nabih Berri, who often negotiates on behalf of Hezbollah with Washington.

“I think the Lebanese government has done their part. They’ve taken the first step,” said Barrack, who is also the U.S. ambassador to Turkey. “Now what we need is for Israel to comply with that equal handshake.”

Lebanon’s decision last week to support a plan to disarm Hezbollah angered the Iran-backed group and its allies, who believe Israel’s military should first withdraw from the five hilltops it has occupied in southern Lebanon since the end of its 14-month war with Hezbollah last November and stop launching almost daily **airstrikes** in the country.

Naim Kassem, Hezbollah’s secretary-general, has **vowed** to fight efforts to disarm the group, sowing fears of civil unrest in the country.

Economic losses

Barrack warned Hezbollah that it will have “missed an opportunity” if it doesn’t back the calls for it to disarm.

Aoun and Salam both want to disarm Hezbollah and other non-state armed groups, and have demanded Israel halt its attacks and withdraw from the country.

Aoun said he wants to increase funding for Lebanon’s cash-strapped military to bolster its capacity. He also wants to raise money from

international donors to help rebuild the country.

The World Bank estimates that Hezbollah and Israel’s monthslong war in late 2024 cost \$11.1 billion in damages and economic losses as large swaths of southern and eastern Lebanon were battered. The country has also faced a crippling economic crisis since 2019.