



By: TA | AP Brief

Lebanon ready to negotiate to reach an agreement that would end Israeli strikes



Lebanon is ready to negotiate to reach an agreement that would end **Israeli strikes** on the country and lead to Israeli withdrawal from **five border hills** it has occupied since the Israel-Hezbollah war ended last year, President Joseph Aoun said.

In a televised speech marking Independence Day, Aoun added that Lebanese troops are ready to deploy in all points from where Israeli troops withdraw.

It was not immediately clear if Israel would accept the offer as it comes at a time when it has intensified its strikes in Lebanon.

On Tuesday, an **airstrike killed 13 people** in the Palestinian refugee camp of Ein el-Hilweh near the southern city of Sidon in the deadliest attack since a ceasefire went into effect a year ago.

Aoun did not say whether the negotiations with Israel would be direct adding that they could be sponsored by the U.S., the United Nations or the international community.

Aoun said the ceasefire monitoring committee that is made up of the U.S., France, Israel, Lebanon and the U.N. peacekeeping force known as UNIFIL, can then check that only forces of the Lebanese state are deployed along the border.

Hezbollah is trying to rebuild its capabilities

Israel said recently that Hezbollah is trying to rebuild its capabilities after it was weakened by the Israel-Hezbollah war.

Hezbollah fired rockets into Israel in solidarity with Hamas

The latest Israel-Hezbollah war began Oct. 8, 2023, a day after Hamas attacked southern Israel, after Hezbollah fired rockets into Israel in solidarity with Hamas.

Israel launched a widespread bombardment of Lebanon for two months last year that severely weakened Hezbollah, followed by a ground invasion.

That war, the most recent of several conflicts involving Hezbollah over the past four decades, killed more than 4,000 people in Lebanon, including hundreds of civilians, and caused an estimated **\$11 billion worth of destruction**, according to the World Bank.

In Israel, 127 people died, including 80 soldiers.