# Lebanon complains to UN over Israeli airspace violations

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BEIRUT: Lebanon has filed an urgent complaint with the UN Security Council over Israel's violations of its airspace. It said the flyovers "violated Lebanese sovereignty, endangered the safety of civil aviation and directly threatened the lives of civilian passengers, both Lebanese and foreigners."

The acting minister of foreign affairs in the caretaker government, Zeina Akar, said that the hostile planes launched missiles from Lebanese airspace in a flagrant violation and targeted sites in Syria from a low altitude.
Akar sent a complaint through Lebanon's representative to the UN, ambassador Amal Mudallali, calling on the UN to stop Israel using Lebanese airspace to carry out its attacks against Syrian territory.
Stefano Del Col, head of mission and force commander of the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL), said: "Overflights of Lebanese territory by Israeli fighter aircraft are violations of UN Res. 1701 and of Lebanon's sovereignty. I again call on the IDF to desist from such actions, which undermine UNIFIL efforts to contain tensions and build confidence among the local population."
Speaking to Lebanon's National News Agency, Del Col called on all parties to refrain from any action or response that would further escalate the situation.
Lebanese President Michel Aoun has asked UN Special Coordinator for Lebanon Joanna Wronecka "to take swift action to put an end to such Israeli violations and ensure that they are not repeated."
On Thursday night, the Lebanese Army Command recorded six Israeli air violations over Beirut and its suburbs as well as other areas.
The Israeli warplanes flew at low altitude over Beirut and its southern suburbs on their way to bombard Syrian territory, caused panic among the population, especially as it happened a few hours after Secretary-General of Hezbollah Hassan Nasrallah warned the US and Israel against attacking an Iranian ship loaded with diesel heading to Lebanon, saying that once it set sail, the ship would be considered to be part of Lebanese territory.

SPEEDREAD

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The Israeli violation of Lebanese airspace forced two commercial planes bound for Beirut-Rafic Hariri International Airport to change their course. The director-general of civil aviation, Fadi Al-Hassan, said: "The aviation movement at Beirut airport did not stop, but the control towers in Syria and Cyprus requested two planes coming to Beirut airport from Abu Dhabi and Turkey to change their course due to the bombing, but both planes later landed normally in Beirut."

No official Lebanese position has been expressed yet about Hezbollah bringing an Iranian ship into Lebanese territorial waters to secure diesel for gas stations, hospitals and owners of private generators.

Paul Morcos, head of the human rights organization Justicia, said: "Importing fuel from Iran without obtaining a special exemption from the US Treasury may put Lebanon at risk of US sanctions. This would directly affect the movement of remittances, credits and shipping to and from Lebanon. International financial institutions and international correspondent banks could refrain from cooperating with Lebanon so as not to violate these sanctions."

"The US sanctions on Iran prevent any dealings with this country that would contribute to achieving revenues, especially in the oil industry and the trade of Iranian goods. US sanctions are imposed on individuals and entities alike," he said.

In addition to the severe diesel shortage, many gas stations in Lebanese regions stopped selling gasoline on Friday, as the fuel-importing companies are running out of stock and the Central Bank is yet to approve new credits for importers.

A 20-liter container of gasoline sells for 500,000 Lebanese pounds on the black market, while its official price is 45,000 Lebanese pounds.

Meanwhile, parliament held a plenary session on Friday to discuss a letter sent by Aoun to take action to confront the Central Bank's decision to lift fuel subsidies. Heated discussions took place between Aoun's team, who oppose lifting subsidies, and MPs who support lifting subsidies and liberalizing the market, "because any law using the mandatory reserve is a violation of the constitution and subject to appeal since it affects private property enshrined in the constitution." The session ended with a unanimous recommendation "to form a new government, speed up the distribution of ration cards and free the market from monopoly."

"No one can vote on a law to steal people's money, that is, people's deposits in the Central Bank," said Future bloc MP Hadi Hobeish.

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