

Country/entity	Lebanon
Region	Middle East and North Africa
Agreement name	Tripoli Memorandum
Date	8 Sep 2008
Agreement status	Multiparty signed/agreed
Interim arrangement	Yes

Agreement/conflict level Intrastate/local conflict

Lebanon's Political Crisis (2005 –)

The current political crisis in Lebanon is characterized by the conflation of internal and external agendas, transforming Lebanon in a proxy battle ground between other countries in the region such as Iran and Saudi Arabia, while Syria-related security concerns continue to spill over into the country.

The assassination of Lebanon's President Rafiq Hariri on the 14 February 2005, in which the Syrian government was implicated, sparked public outrage in Lebanon and fuelled protests that would eventually lead to the withdrawal of Syrian peacekeeping forces in Lebanon. This gave birth to the two oppositional groups March 14 Alliance and March 8 Alliance. Elections in May and June that year would usher in a new government, wherein March 8 Alliance, led by the Free Patriotic Movement, with support from Hezbollah, Amal and the Progressive Socialist Party would win 45 per cent of the seats. A year later, in July 2006, Hezbollah sparked a 34-day conflict with Israel following a rocket attack and the capture of three Israeli soldiers. Although both sides declared victory following the implementation of Resolution 1701, Hezbollah is widely considered to have been the relative victor. With its popularity boosted, and militarily emboldened, the parliamentary opposition announced the desire to form a unity government. Sceptical to the increased power that would grant the opposition, the Saudi-backed Lebanese government refused. In response the head of Hezbollah, Sayyed Nasrallah declared a deadlock in December 2006 to last until new parliamentary elections in 2009. Nasrallah also expressed an unwillingness to escalate the situation. Nonetheless, following a string of government crack-downs on Hezbollah, fighting broke out in May 2008 wherein Hezbollah militants took control of West Beirut. Fighting was eventually resolved with the Doha Declaration in 2008.

Uprisings against the Assad regime in Syria in 2011 further deepened the division between the two factions. In 2012, the two camps signed the Baabda Declaration, agreeing to the principle of neutrality towards Syria. However, in 2013 Hezbollah violated the agreement by giving the Syrian government military support. In 2016, Michel Aoun was appointed as president, breaking a two-year deadlock, and in May 2018 the first parliamentary elections were held in nine years. It took nine months to form the government, however, a renewed political deadlock ensued in November 2019 after the resignation of prime minister Hariri following unprecedented mass anti-government protests. Political turmoil continues to define Lebanon's internal politics with earlier mass protests breaking out in 2009, 2011 and 2015.

Close

Lebanon's Political Crisis (2005 –)

Stage Pre-negotiation/process

Conflict nature Inter-group

Peace process Lebanon peace process

Parties Arab Democratic Party (Jabal Mohsen); Sunni Militias (Bab al-Tabanneh)

Third parties	-
Description	Six-point agreement resolving the local spill-over of violence related to the Cypress Spring (2005) and the armed excursion of Hezbollah in May 2008 towards the Siniara Government. Pre-negotiation agreement provides for reaching an agreement between local figures; holding a state-sponsored meeting between the players of the city; call on the army command to set a timeframe for IDP return; provision of temporary shelter for IDPs or rent allowances; speed up assessment of damages; call on the Prime minister to support financially.

Agreement document	LB_080908_Tripoli Memorandum.pdf (opens in new tab) Download PDF
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Local agreement properties

Process type	Isolated example
Rationale	-> Link to national level; external support mechanism; no culture of signing This is a pre-negotiation agreement that is apparently not supported by any formally-established mechanism. No element supports the case of a culture of signing agreements, as this is the first initiative to put an end to the conflict in Tripoli.
Is there a documented link to a national peace process?	Yes
Link to national process: articulated rationale	The agreement clearly articulates a link to the national level: Page 1, Page 1, ... 1 – Reach an agreement among all leaders and figures regarding the definitive preservation of peace, security and stability, and abstain from having recourse to violence and weapons, regardless of the circumstances. Page 1, ... 2.– Hold a state-sponsored meeting among all the city's players. Page 1, 6 – Call on the prime minister to provide all necessary compensations.
Name of Locale	Tripoli
Nature of Locale	City
GPS Lat/Long (DD)	34.440182, 35.848476
Participant type	Local armed group Domestic religious organisation/leader or other elder
Mediator, facilitator or similar	No mention of mediator or similar

Local issues

Ritual/prayer and process (including use of scripture)	No specific mention.
Grievance List	[Summary] return of IDPs, provision of their shelter and security, and provision of material reparations.
Cattle rustling/ banditry	No specific mention.
Social cover	No specific mention.
