

**Congress of the United States**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

June 26, 2026

The Honorable Marco Rubio  
Secretary  
U.S Department of State  
2201 C St NW  
Washington, DC 20520

Dear Secretary Rubio:

We write with concern regarding the Israeli military's engagement in Lebanon and to express alarm that the ceasefire the Trump administration helped negotiate is deteriorating into the occupation of southern Lebanon. As you implement the new memorandum of understanding with Iran, we encourage you to engage with all legitimate actors in the region to swiftly bring the wars in Iran and Lebanon to an end, support the disarmament of Hezbollah, and work to empower the Lebanese government.

While it was welcome news to see a temporary cessation of hostilities in Lebanon announced on April 16, 2026, both Israeli forces and Hezbollah have continued military operations, in violation of the ceasefire.<sup>1</sup> We strongly condemn violence against civilians in all forms and support efforts by both the Israeli and Lebanese governments to ensure the safety and security of their people. Every government has a right and a responsibility to protect its citizens, and Israel has a right to defend itself. However, this does not justify unrestrained Israeli military operations, especially those that violate the current ceasefire, destroy civilian infrastructure, and lead to the death of hundreds of civilians. All sides must fully abide by the ceasefire agreement.

We are troubled by the Israeli military's practice of mass demolitions of civilian infrastructure in southern Lebanon and targeting practices that kill Lebanese civilians. After the Israeli military invaded southern Lebanon and began an occupation of the territory, Israeli Defense Minister Israel Katz announced plans to raze all homes in southern border villages, "following the Rafah and Beit Hanoun model in Gaza," a reference to the Israeli military's systematic destruction of homes and civilian infrastructure in Gaza.<sup>2</sup> Since then, reporting and satellite imagery have confirmed widespread demolitions of civilian homes, buildings, and religious sites in southern

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<sup>1</sup> Granville, Samantha. "Israeli Attacks Kill Dozens within Days in Lebanon despite Ceasefire." *The BBC*, 4 May 2026, [www.bbc.com/news/articles/cy523z7x0g5o](http://www.bbc.com/news/articles/cy523z7x0g5o).

Lieber, Dov. "Israel to Raze All Homes in Lebanese Border Villages." *The Wall Street Journal*, 31 Apr. 2026, [www.wsj.com/livecoverage/iran-war-news-updates/card/O8iqjACYkHd8WcTmvEHZ](http://www.wsj.com/livecoverage/iran-war-news-updates/card/O8iqjACYkHd8WcTmvEHZ).

Lebanon, including the use of bulldozers and controlled demolitions.<sup>[3][4]</sup> The Israeli military has also demolished bridges, roads, water pipelines, and fuel stations in southern Lebanon.<sup>5</sup>

More than 1 million people, 20 percent of the country's population, have been forced to flee from their homes in the south to other regions of the country.<sup>6</sup> Destroying civilian homes will only lengthen and intensify the refugee crisis in Lebanon that began at the start of the Israel-Hezbollah war. This will only cause further destabilization to Lebanon and the region.

International law also protects civilian infrastructure from military attack when it is not being used for military purposes. Israel justifies its operations by saying they are dismantling homes used by Hezbollah in military operations. However, when the ceasefire was announced, Defense Minister Katz stated that the area occupied by the Israeli military had been "cleared of terrorists and weapons." Article 53 of the Fourth Geneva Convention states that an occupying power is prohibited from destroying private property "except where such destruction is rendered absolutely necessary by military operations."<sup>7</sup> Considering the area is now occupied by Israel, we do not believe that civilian homes, "cleared of terrorists and weapons" pose a threat that renders their destruction "absolutely necessary."

We are particularly concerned about the use of U.S. origin weapons and equipment in these attacks. The use of U.S. origin weapons in the systematic destruction of civilian infrastructure is a violation of U.S. military assistance transfer agreements with the Israeli government. Section 4 of the Arms Export Control Act states that U.S. origin arms and equipment may be sold or transferred to foreign countries only for specific purposes, which are limited to internal security, legitimate self-defense, and participation in collective measures requested by the United Nations or comparable organizations.<sup>8</sup> If the President or Congress determines that a recipient country has used U.S. origin arms "for a purpose not authorized," the sale and delivery of further arms is prohibited, unless the President waives this prohibition.<sup>9</sup> The targeted, mass destruction of civilian homes and infrastructure does not constitute Israeli self-defense. If U.S.-origin arms are confirmed to be used in these unauthorized activities, we ask the Trump administration to

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<sup>3</sup> Granados, Samuel, et al. "How Israel Is Using the Same Tactics in Lebanon That It Did in Gaza." *The New York Times*, 3 May 2026, [www.nytimes.com/interactive/2026/05/03/world/middleeast/israel-lebanon-hezbollah-gaza-destruction.html](http://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2026/05/03/world/middleeast/israel-lebanon-hezbollah-gaza-destruction.html).

<sup>4</sup> Bassem Mroue. "Melkite Catholic Bishops Express Concern over Israeli Demolition." *AP News*, 4 May 2026, [apnews.com/article/lebanon-israel-hezbollah-catholics-9dec5593f7cdda56fbefd2fde2d3397a](https://apnews.com/article/lebanon-israel-hezbollah-catholics-9dec5593f7cdda56fbefd2fde2d3397a).

<sup>5</sup> "Lebanon: Flash Update #10 - Escalation of Hostilities in Lebanon." United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA), 21 Mar. 2026.

<sup>6</sup> "Lebanon: Flash Update #23 - Escalation of Hostilities in Lebanon." United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA), 6 May 2026.

<sup>7</sup> *Geneva Convention (IV) Relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War*. Article 53. 12 Aug. 1949. (entered into force 21 Oct. 1950)

<sup>8</sup> United States, Congress. Public Law 90-629. *United States Statutes at Large*, vol. 90, 1976, pp.729.


<sup>9</sup> United States, Congress. Public Law 90-629. *United States Statutes at Large*, vol. 90, 1976, pp.729.

enforce existing law and stop arms transfers being used in these operations until these violations cease.

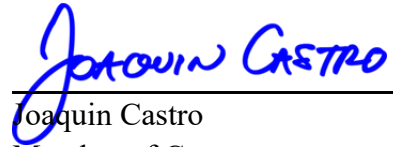
The Trump administration should take all possible steps to bring a swift end to the war and continue good-faith negotiations between the Lebanese and Israeli governments. We urge the administration to work to empower the Lebanese government and to fund the Lebanese Armed Forces to pursue Hezbollah's full demilitarization and disarmament.

Thank you for your attention to this urgent matter.

Sincerely,



Becca Balint  
Member of Congress



Joaquin Castro  
Member of Congress



Sharice L. Davids  
Member of Congress



Dave Min  
Member of Congress



Maxine Waters  
Member of Congress



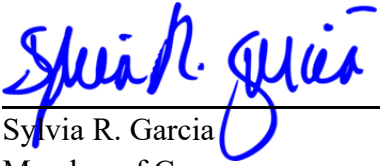
Melanie Stansbury  
Member of Congress



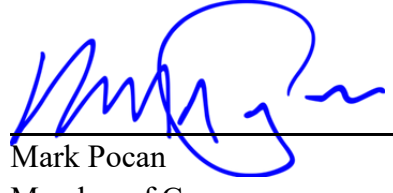
Mike Thompson  
Member of Congress



Nancy Pelosi  
Member of Congress



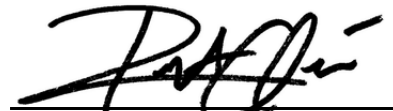
Sylvia R. Garcia  
Member of Congress



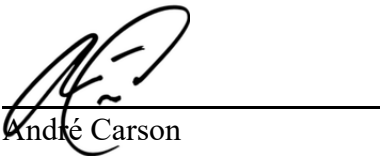
Mark Pocan  
Member of Congress



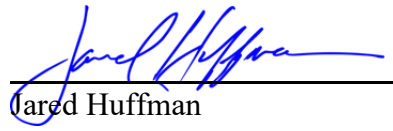
Betty McCollum  
Member of Congress



Robert Garcia  
Member of Congress



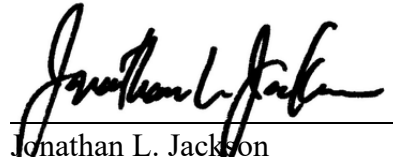
André Carson  
Member of Congress



Jared Huffman  
Member of Congress



Debbie Dingell  
Member of Congress



Jonathan L. Jackson  
Member of Congress



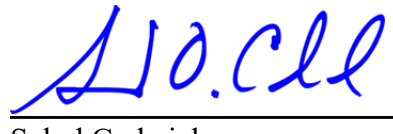
Bonnie Watson Coleman  
Member of Congress



LaMonica McIver  
Member of Congress



Chris Deluzio  
Member of Congress



Salud Carbajal  
Member of Congress



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Lateefah Simon  
Member of Congress



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Henry C. "Hank" Johnson, Jr.  
Member of Congress



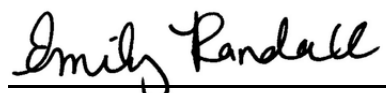
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Ro Khanna  
Member of Congress



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Jim Tokuda  
Member of Congress



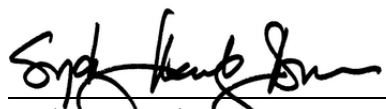
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Emily Randall  
Member of Congress



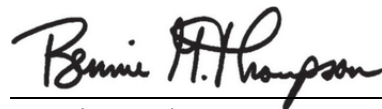
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Suzanne Bonamici  
Member of Congress



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Sydney Kamlager Dove  
Member of Congress




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Bennie G. Thompson  
Member of Congress



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Paul D. Tonko  
Member of Congress



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MARK TAKANO  
Member of Congress



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Veronica Escobar  
Member of Congress



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Pramila Jayapal  
Member of Congress



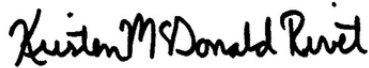
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Steve Cohen  
Member of Congress



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Danny K. Davis  
Member of Congress



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Kristen McDonald Rivet  
Member of Congress



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Mark DeSaulnier  
Member of Congress



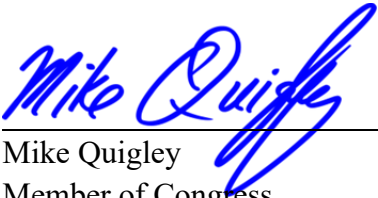
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Andrea Salinas  
Member of Congress



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Deborah K. Ross  
Member of Congress



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Mike Quigley  
Member of Congress



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Zoe Lofgren  
Member of Congress



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James P. McGovern  
Member of Congress



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Gilbert Ray Cisneros, Jr.  
Member of Congress



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Stephen F. Lynch  
Member of Congress



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Robert C. "Bobby" Scott  
Member of Congress



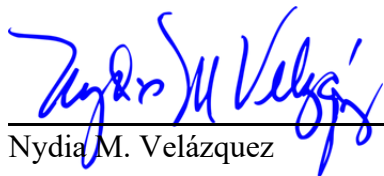
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Robin L. Kelly  
Member of Congress



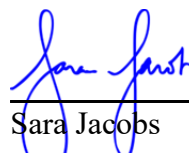
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Lloyd Doggett  
Member of Congress



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Nydia M. Velázquez  
Member of Congress



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Sara Jacobs  
Member of Congress



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Derek T. Tran  
Member of Congress



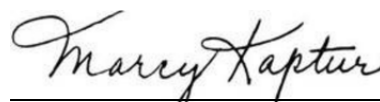
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Val Hoyle  
Member of Congress



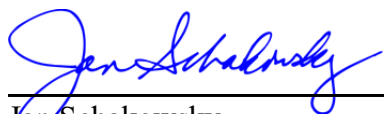
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Emanuel Cleaver, II  
Member of Congress



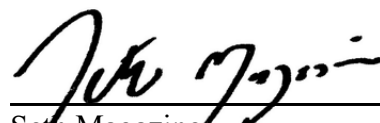
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Marcy Kaptur  
Member of Congress



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Jan Schakowsky  
Member of Congress



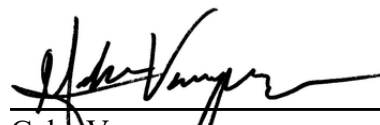
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Sean Magaziner  
Member of Congress



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Adelita S. Grijalva  
Member of Congress



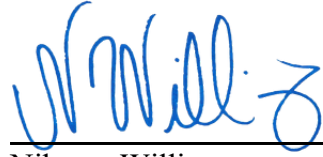
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Gabe Vasquez  
Member of Congress



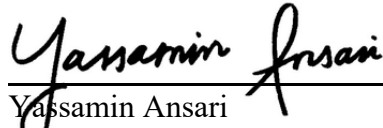
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Chellie Pingree  
Member of Congress



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Nikema Williams  
Member of Congress



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Yassamin Ansari  
Member of Congress



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Nanette Diaz Barragán  
Member of Congress



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Bill Foster  
Member of Congress



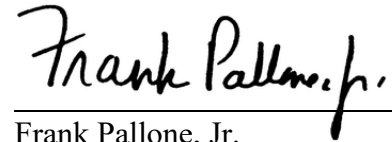
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Doris Matsui  
Member of Congress



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Seth Moulton  
Member of Congress



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Frank Pallone, Jr.  
Member of Congress



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Jahana Hayes  
Member of Congress



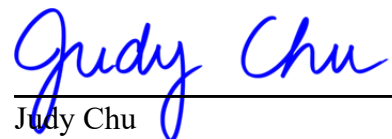
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Madeleine Dean  
Member of Congress



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John Garamendi  
Member of Congress



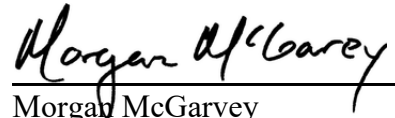
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Judy Chu  
Member of Congress



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Gabe Amo  
Member of Congress



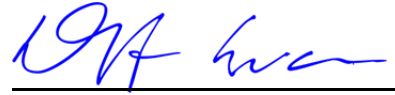
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Morgan McGarvey  
Member of Congress



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Teresa Leger Fernández  
Member of Congress



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Dwight Evans  
Member of Congress



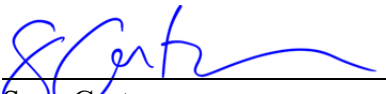
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Rosa L. DeLauro  
Member of Congress



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Jesús G. "Chuy" García  
Member of Congress



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Sean Casten  
Member of Congress



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Patrick Ryan  
Member of Congress