

# UK stands with UAE after fatal Houthi attack: Foreign secretary

Sat, 2022-01-29 00:18

LONDON: British Foreign Secretary Liz Truss said on Friday that the UK stands “with our Emirati friends” following a deadly attack by Yemen’s Houthi militia last week.

Speaking during a phone call with her UAE counterpart, Sheikh Abdullah bin Zayed, Truss strongly condemned the attack that killed three people and wounded seven others.

The Iran-backed Houthis launched a number of ballistic missiles and explosive-laden drones toward Abu Dhabi on Jan. 17 targeting fuel facilities of Abu Dhabi National Oil Company (ADNOC) and the airport. The militia renewed its attack on the capital on Monday and launched two ballistic missiles that were intercepted by the UAE with US support.

We stand with our Emirati friends after the deadly Houthi attacks on Abu Dhabi

Today I spoke to [@ABZayed](#) & agreed:

Houthi attacks must stop & we need a diplomatic solution

We continue to work closely on regional stability

Strengthening security & economic ties [pic.twitter.com/413T55pi0V](https://pic.twitter.com/413T55pi0V)

– Liz Truss (@trussliz) [January 28, 2022](#)

Truss said she and Sheikh Abdullah agreed that Houthi attacks must stop, a diplomatic solution was needed, and to continue to work closely on regional stability.

They “also stressed that these terrorist attacks undermine efforts to achieve security and stability in the region,” Emirates news agency WAM reported. Truss offered her condolences to the UAE for the victims of the attack and wished the injured a speedy recovery.

The two sides also discussed the solid strategic and historical relations between them and their joint efforts to consolidate security and stability in the region, WAM said.



Main category:

[Middle-East](#)

Tags:

[United Kingdom](#)

[UAE](#)

[Liz Truss](#)

[Sheikh Abdullah bin Zayed Al-Nahyan](#)

[Houthi](#)

[Abu Dhabi](#)

[Britain](#)

[houthi attack](#)

UAE leading model of global human solidarity: Vatican secretary of stateUS  
envoy to Yemen holds talks in London to revive peace efforts

---

## [Lebanon highlights drug seizures as PM 'smooths rough edges' of response to Kuwaiti initiative](#)

Fri, 2022-01-28 22:45

BEIRUT: Interior Minister Bassam Mawlawi pledged that the Lebanese state "will spare no effort in thwarting all smuggling operations and preventing harm to our Arab brothers."

He also announced on Thursday evening that the Anti-Narcotics Office of the Judicial Police, in cooperation with the Anti-Narcotics Division of the Customs, had seized about 12 tons of drugs hidden in boxes of powdered juice bound initially for Sudan.

Two days earlier, the minister revealed that authorities had seized a large quantity of captagon hidden in a tea shipment being sent by sea to an African country and then on to the Gulf.

The seizures come as Lebanon strives to show that it takes the smuggling of drugs to Gulf nations seriously, and highlight the effectiveness of its security and intelligence measures to combat the illicit trade.

## **BACKGROUND**

**Kuwait's foreign minister said recently that he has given Lebanese authorities a list of suggested measures to be taken to ease a diplomatic rift with Gulf countries.**

As part of efforts to repair strained relations between Lebanon and Gulf states, Kuwaiti Foreign Minister Ahmed Nasser Al-Mohammed Al-Sabah presented a new initiative during talks in Lebanon last week. It includes 10 items that "represent Arab, Gulf and international conditions for rebuilding confidence with Lebanon," he said during his visit.

Lebanese Foreign Minister Abdullah Bou Habib will deliver an official response to the Kuwaiti initiative on Saturday.

Prime Minister Najib Mikati is trying to smooth the rough edges of the response, according to a source close to the PM, which will include a call for dialogue on the issue of Hezbollah's weapons on the grounds that Shebaa Farms and Kafr Shuba are still occupied by the Israelis.

The source also said that Mikati reiterates Lebanon's continuing adherence to the Taif Agreement that ended the civil war in the country, international resolutions and efforts to ensure the best possible relations with the region and the world.

The Kuwaiti initiative has been extensively discussed among members of the ruling Lebanese authority and it is understood the response has undergone several revisions.

Leaked information suggests that the initiative includes "harsh conditions, some of which are impossible to implement, such as Security Council Resolution 1559, which calls for the disbanding and disarming of all Lebanese militias."

It also is said to call for Lebanon to adhere to political, economic and financial reforms, rehabilitate state institutions, adopt neutrality, respect the sovereignty of Arab and Gulf countries, halt any political, media or military interference in these countries, respect the decisions of the Arab League, and commit to international resolutions.

Other conditions include disarming all militias and extending government control over all Lebanese territory; serious measures to control Lebanese border crossings and prevent drug smuggling, including the adoption of a clear and decisive security policy that prevents the targeting of Gulf countries by drug-smuggling operations; measures to prevent interference by Hezbollah in the Yemen war; and taking firm steps to prevent any meetings or gatherings that might affect the internal affairs of Gulf states.

Gebran Bassil, the head of the Free Patriotic Movement, said that the Kuwaiti initiative includes conditions that would require time to be implemented, and some that are contentious to the Lebanese.

“Discussing the issue of arms is dangerous,” Bassil, whose bloc constitutes President Michel Aoun’s team in the parliament, told Russia Today.

“There is Israeli aggression and Palestinian invasion happening on Lebanese territories, and external pressure on Lebanon leads to an internal implosion as the conflict becomes a conflict between those who support Hezbollah’s weapons and those who are against them.”

Nabih Berri, the parliament’s speaker, said his position on Hezbollah’s weapons has not changed.

“Some Lebanese lands are still occupied by Israel, which gives these weapons a reason to exist and gives Hezbollah and Lebanon the right to resist the occupation,” he said.

Although Hezbollah has not responded directly to the Kuwaiti initiative, the party announced that Secretary-General Hassan Nasrallah will deliver a speech on Monday. It is not known whether he will be supportive of the initiative or renew his criticism of Gulf states.

Lebanon’s Al-Markazia news agency quoted a source close to the party as saying: “Nasrallah will focus on the reasons and motives that dictate Hezbollah’s adherence to the resistance as long as there is an inch of Lebanese territory occupied.”

In his Friday sermon, Sheikh Ahmed Qabalan, a Shiite cleric affiliated with Hezbollah and the Amal movement, addressed “brothers in the Gulf Cooperation Council” and said: “The enemy is Israel, not the Arabs, and the danger lies in Tel Aviv, not in Beirut’s southern suburb.

“The solution does not start with (UN Security Council resolutions). The weapons of the resistance are a guarantee for the Arabs and not against them.

“Today, the resistance’s weapons are a guarantee for Lebanon and the greatest national need to prevent any civil war, sectarian strife or an Israeli or

takfiri invasion.”



Main category:

[Middle-East](#)

Tags:

[Lebanon](#)

Lebanon's Bahaa Rafik Al-Hariri says he will continue his father's journey  
Jordan troops kill 27 drug smugglers in Syrian border shootout

---

## [Should the Beirut port blast site be turned into a place of remembrance?](#)

Author:

Rawaa Talass

ID:

1643395233268315600

Fri, 2022-01-28 21:40

DUBAI: For Sultan El-Halabi, Aug. 4, 2020, began like any other day in Beirut. He was driving with his mother from their hometown of Chouf to the Lebanese capital, where they checked into a sea-facing hotel to rest.

But shortly after 6 p.m., El-Halabi's mother said she felt a strange rumbling sensation. El-Halabi crossed the room to the balcony to investigate the cause when all of a sudden, the entire window frame flew off, collapsing right in front of him. They were both lucky to escape uninjured.

"No one could have expected that to happen," El-Halabi, a 23-year-old architecture graduate, told Arab News from his base in Dubai, more than a year on from the Beirut port blast – a disaster that killed over 200 people and left some 300,000 homeless.



The scars from the blast remain visible on the city skyline. (AFP)

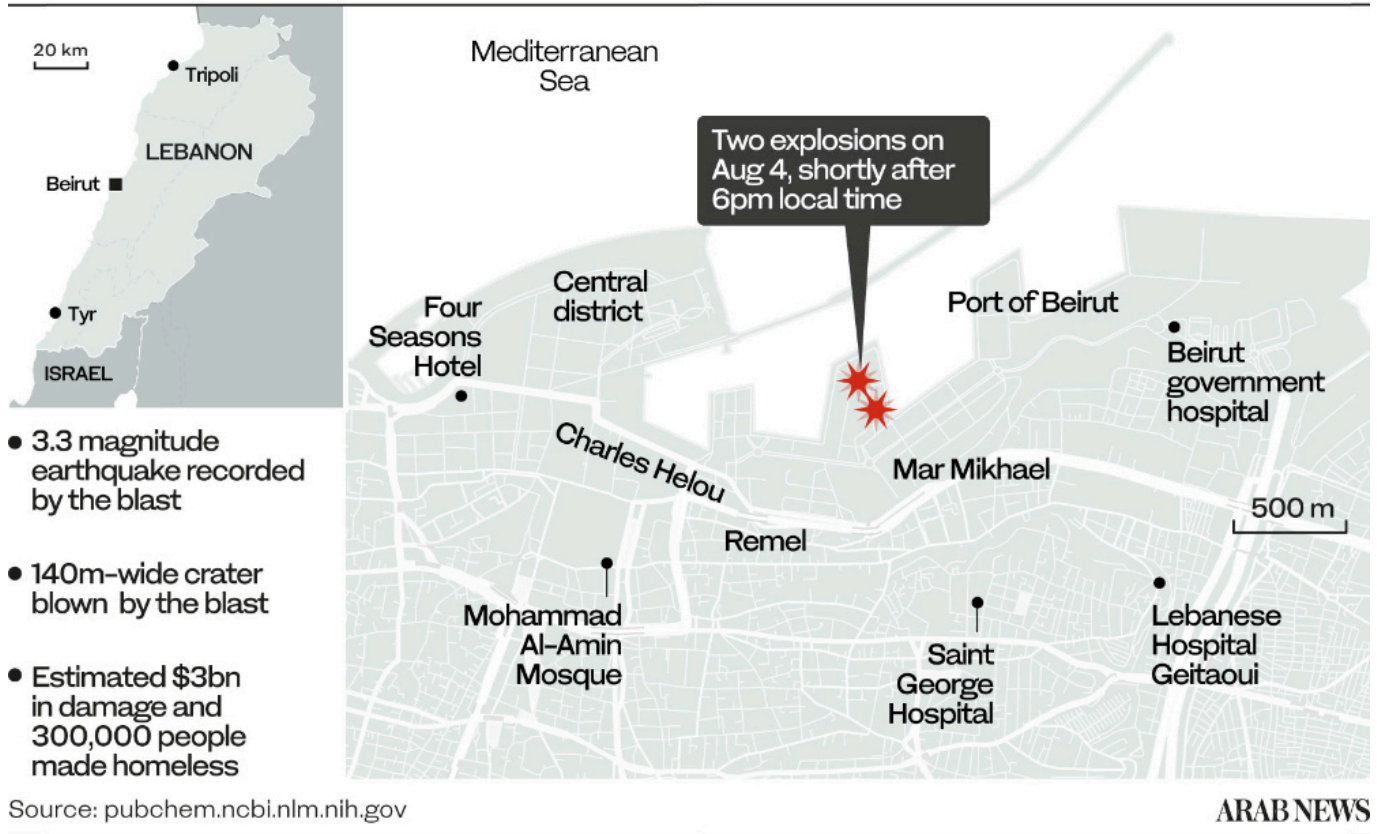
"I remember the view of the city afterward. They were warning people at the hotel to stay indoors because acid or chemicals could be in the air. The sky started changing color. It was more reddish. It was like a war zone. Everything, in just one second, was completely gone."

More than a year later, the scars remain visible on the city skyline. What is less visible are mental scars the blast has left on those who survived and who lost homes, businesses and loved ones.

"In Lebanon now, you should just live your day as if it's your last," El-Halabi said. "Always stay connected with your loved ones because you never know what could happen."

# THE BEIRUT PORT EXPLOSIONS

The Aug. 4, 2020 blast was apparently triggered by a warehouse fire



The tragedy motivated El-Halabi to base his senior graduation project at the American University in Dubai on restoring the devastated port, transforming it into an accessible, multi-functional and job-creating site that can be “given back to the people.”

His project, named “Repurpose 607,” envisages replacing the five damaged warehouse plots with a memorial museum, a sound-healing therapy space, an amphitheater and an underground parking area.



“Everything, in just one second, was completely gone,” said Sultan El-Halabi, referring to the port tragedy. (Supplied)

The site would also feature a library, offices and a cafe, while a raised,

circular footpath would offer visitors an overview of the port.

Flooded with natural light, the sound-healing therapy building would offer meditation and cognitive behavioral sessions to help those suffering with post-traumatic stress disorder as a result of the blast.

“For many people, until this day, if they hear a slight bang or any weird noise, they would always refer to the explosion or take cover,” El-Halabi said. Sound therapy could help many traumatized Beirut residents find calm and closure.

The proposed memorial museum would include a timeline of Beirut’s history up until the day of the blast and the names of its victims engraved on a large triangulated stone.



The tragedy motivated Sultan El-Halabi to base his senior graduation project on restoring the devastated port. (Supplied)

El-Halabi likens this tribute to how Americans honored the dead in New York following the 9/11 terrorist attacks.

“They did not rebuild where the Twin Towers were located,” El-Halabi said. “They dedicated that plot of land to the people and they transformed it into a beautiful memorial place to make sure that people’s memories would live on forever. It kind of inspired me to do something similar, but for Lebanon.”

The proposed site would have pedestrian paths as well as greenery and seating areas to offer space for quiet reflection away from the city traffic. A basement area would also be built to include a gallery for Lebanese artists to showcase their work.



The proposed site would have pedestrian paths as well as greenery and seating areas to offer space for quiet reflection. (Supplied)

Aesthetically geometric and bold, it is a place designed to benefit the people, to help them “to overcome the trauma and for them to see the beauty in the site rather than always fearing it,” El-Halabi said.

In his design, only one crucial element of the site remains untouched and preserved – the massive grain silos, which experts claim shielded the city from further damage. “It symbolizes strength and empowerment,” El-Halabi said. “It’s proof to the world that we could overcome any obstacle that we face.”

The young architect acknowledges it could take time for traumatized residents of the Lebanese capital to feel emotionally ready to visit a renovated site. “Of course it could be controversial,” El-Halabi said.



Aesthetically geometric and bold, it is a place designed to benefit the people. (Supplied)

“Many people have different opinions and you can’t change them so easily. Everyone has their own freedom to view things the way they’re supposed to. But, I am able to at least enlighten them with the advantages behind this proposal.”

As a student embracing cutting-edge digital technology, El-Halabi admired the ideas of pioneering architects like Antoni Gaudí and Frank Gehry, and especially Santiago Calatrava, who designed the falcon wing-shaped UAE pavilion at Expo 2020 Dubai.



The idea has been called “clever and thoughtful.” (Supplied)

Having lived almost all of his life in Dubai, El-Halabi says he has also been heavily influenced by his ever-evolving urban surroundings – considered one of the world’s most dramatic and experimental cityscapes.

“It all started with dunes,” he said, reflecting on Dubai’s astronomical growth over recent decades. “They were able to convert the UAE into a heavenly place. It inspires me a lot. It shows that, in such a short time, nothing is impossible.”

He also subscribes to the notion that architecture is more than its stylistic elements, and should ultimately work to enhance people’s lives.



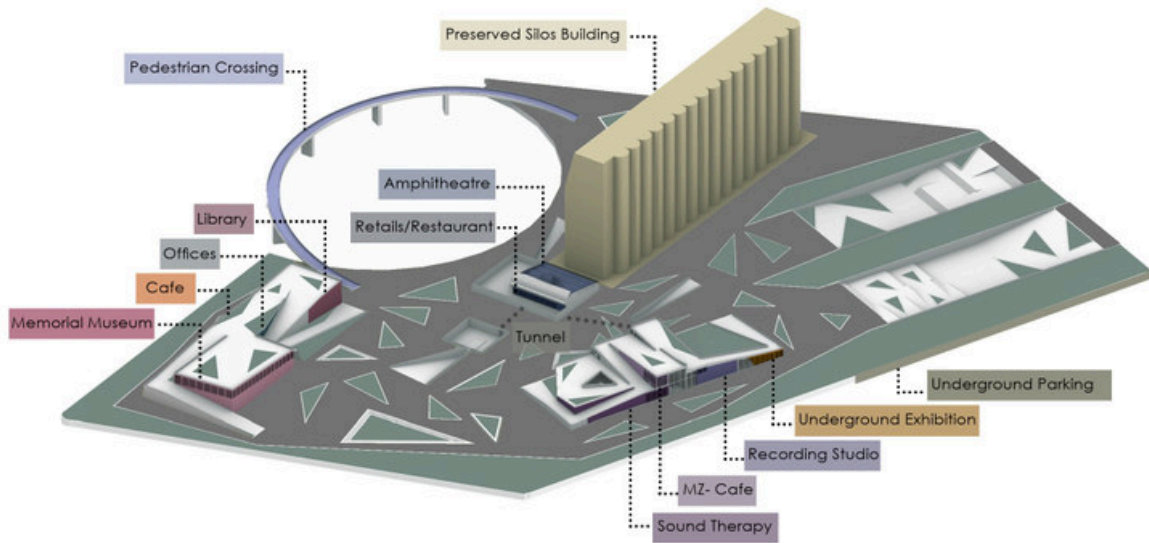
Sultan El-Halabi likens this tribute to how Americans honored the 9/11 terrorist attacks victims. (Supplied)

“It’s about finding the missing satisfaction of what people need and trying to provide it to them,” he said. “Architecture is more than just designing or

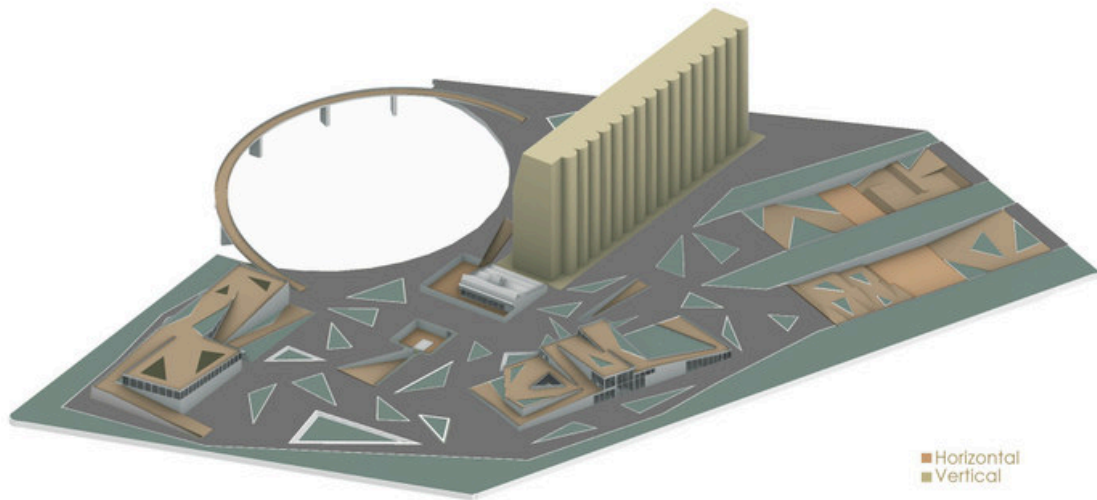
placing a building. You need to take into consideration the people and provide facilities for them. It also needs to fit in perfectly with its surroundings.”

In October last year, as part of Dubai Design Week, “Repurpose 607” was among 60 submissions that made it to the MENA Grad Show, where graduates from across the region present their “design meets purpose” projects that address social, health and environmental issues.

## Zoning Diagram



## Circulation Diagram

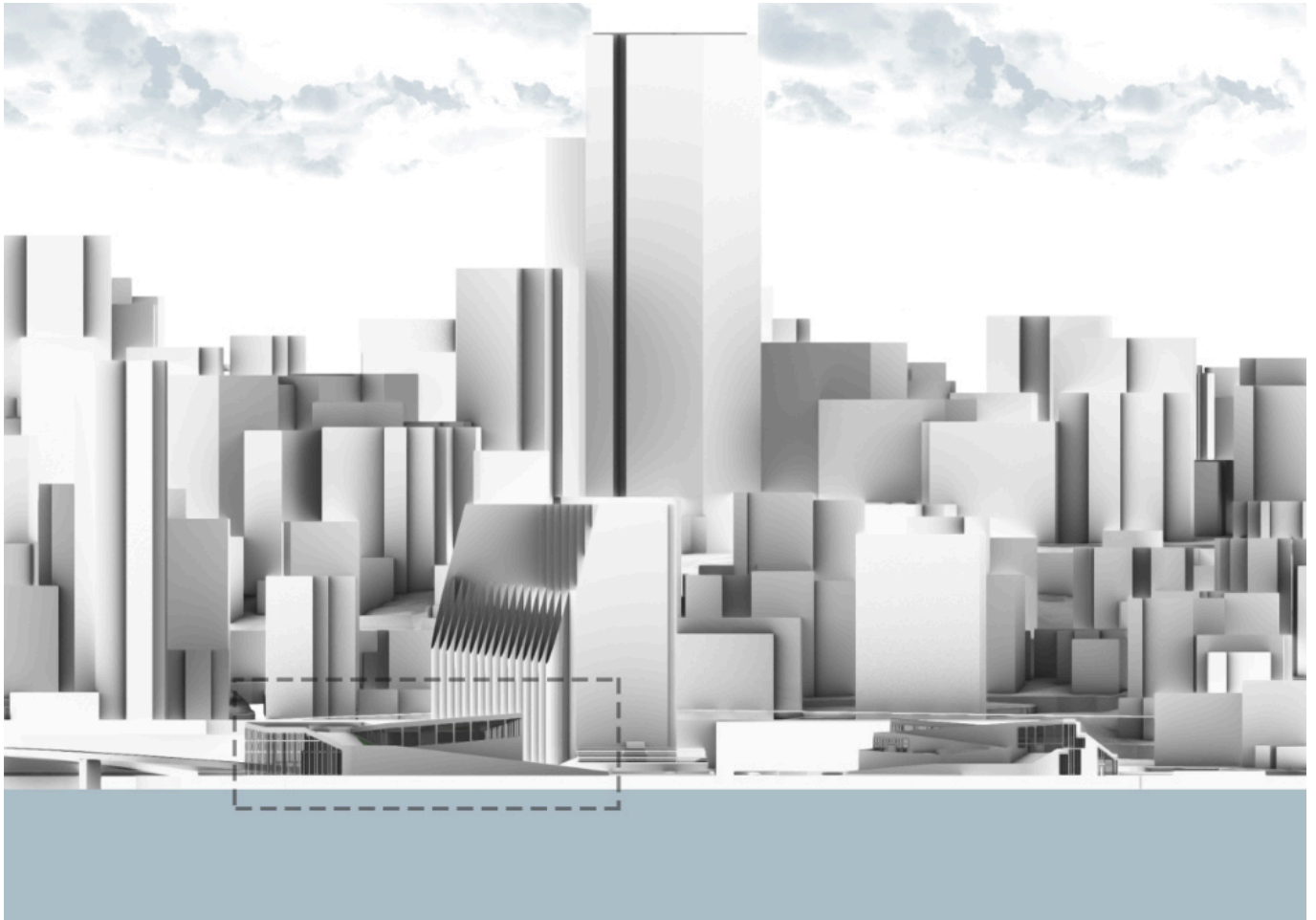


“It’s an architectural solution that goes well beyond architecture,” said

Carlo Rizzo. (Supplied)

Carlo Rizzo, the show's 2021 edition editor, praised El-Halabi's project, describing it as one of the "top entries."

"Repurpose 607 struck me first of all for its empathy," Rizzo told Arab News. "It's an architectural solution that goes well beyond architecture. It looks at the built environment as a platform for building resilience in our communities and takes mental health and wellbeing as a starting point."



"Repurpose 607" was among 60 submissions that made it to the MENA Grad Show. (Supplied)

"To remember the victims and transform the site into a place of healing is not just a clever and thoughtful idea, but an urgent solution addressing a very real need."

El-Halabi, who currently works for a Dubai-based architectural firm, still hopes to see his Beirut port project brought to life some day.

"I've been to Lebanon two times since the explosion," he said. "Every time I pass by the port, I always picture how it would look in real life, trying to see my project being built there. It could have potential."

**Twitter:** [@artprojectdx](https://twitter.com/artprojectdx)



Main category:

[Middle-East](#)

Tags:

[Editor's Choice](#)

[Lebanon](#)

[Beirut blast](#)

At least 135 killed, 5,000 injured in massive explosions devastating Beirut  
Six killed in Beirut clashes as tensions soar over port blast investigation

---

## [Lebanon's Bahaa Rafik Al-Hariri says he will continue his father's journey](#)

Fri, 2022-01-28 20:43

BEIRUT: Lebanon's Bahaa Al-Hariri said on Friday that he would continue the journey of his father, the late Prime Minister Rafik Al-Hariri, and would "enter the battle to take back" the country.

Bahaa's younger brother, Saad, a three times prime minister, announced earlier this week that he was not running in a forthcoming parliamentary election and was stepping back from his role in political life, calling on his political party to do the same.

Bahaa, 55, who has not held public office before and largely kept away from politics, said in a recorded speech sent to news outlets, [including Sawt](#)

[Beirut](#), that he “will fight the battle to restore the country and restore the sovereignty of the country from its occupiers.”

He added that “any misinformation or intimidation” alluding to a power vacuum among Lebanon’s Sunni Muslims “serves only the enemies of the country.”

Saad cited Iran’s influence as one of the reasons he saw little hope of positive change for Lebanon, an influence it wields through Shiite group Hezbollah.

Bahaa has been an open, fierce critic of his brother’s policy toward the Iran-backed group.

“The son of the martyr Rafik Hariri will not leave Lebanon, I am with you and very soon I will be among you,” Bahaa said in his speech.

**Full address, as reported by Sawt Beirut:**

“My Lebanese brothers and sisters...

Greetings from the heart...

The absence was prolonged, but you were always present in my heart and mind. I will not talk about the seriousness of the stage because you know its dangerousness and the accuracy of the upcoming stage.

First of all, it must be emphasized that neither our religion, nor our morals, nor our upbringing, we, the sons of Martyr Prime Minister Rafik Hariri, allow us to abandon our responsibility and we put all our capabilities for the sake of Lebanon’s renaissance, Lebanon the message, Lebanon the symbol, Lebanon the homeland.

The family of the martyr Rafik Hariri, the small as his big family, did not, does not, and will not disintegrate. In partnership and solidarity, we will fight the battle to restore the homeland and restore the sovereignty of the homeland from its occupiers.

I will continue the path of Martyr Prime Minister Rafik Hariri.

We are continuing what we learned from the parents of the late Prime Minister Rafik Hariri.

We learned that:

We are the people of moderation, not extremism;

We are the people of reconstruction, not collapse;

We are people of citizenship, not discrimination;

We are the people of sovereignty, not dependence;

We are the people of the Arab depth;

The son of the martyr Rafik Hariri will not leave Lebanon, we are with you and very soon we will show you.

Long live free and independent Lebanon.



Main category:

[Middle-East](#)

Tags:

[Lebanon](#)

[Bahaa Hariri](#)

[Saad Hariri](#)

[Rafik Hariri](#)

Lebanon's finance minister says replacing central bank governor is not 'wise'  
Lebanon in power deal with Jordan

---

## [Iran nuclear talks pause as diplomats confer with capitals](#)

Author:

Associated Press

ID:

1643390121958003600

Fri, 2022-01-28 16:57

VIENNA: Talks to salvage the tattered 2015 nuclear deal with Iran have paused while diplomats return to capitals for political consultations, European officials said Friday.

“January has been the most intensive period of these talks to date,” British, German and French negotiators said in a joint statement. “Everyone knows we are reaching the final stage, which requires political decisions.”

Russia’s representative at the talks, Mikhail Ulyanov, said the meeting was expected to resume next week.

The United States pulled out of the Vienna accord in 2018 under then-President Donald Trump and reimpose heavy sanctions on Iran. Tehran has responded by increasing the purity and amounts of uranium it enriches and stockpiles, in breach of the accord.

US President Joe Biden has signaled that he wants to rejoin the deal, which is still supported by Russia, the three European powers and China.



Main category:

[Middle-East](#)

Tags:

[Iran](#)

[Iran nuclear talks](#)

[vienna](#)

[Vienna talks](#)

Qatari official’s Iran visit gives hope for talks breakthroughIran nuclear talks approaching dangerous impasse – UK’s Truss