

Lynn Pascoe Links Rocket Firing to Cabinet Deadlock

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U.N. Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs Lynn Pascoe said "the situation in Lebanon remains complex" over some incidents in the south and the ongoing cabinet crisis.

"There had been a general stabilization, and there were days when one could feel optimistic. However, the difficulties in forming a government remained," Pascoe said during a press conference in New York on Monday.

He said cabinet formation was a matter for the Lebanese parties to resolve, but the U.N. encourages them "to conclude the political process as soon as possible."

There had been a lot of concern over the incident sparked between peacekeepers and locals following UNIFIL's attempt to investigate the alleged Hizbullah arms depot blast in Khirbet Selm, Pascoe said.

Asked about the rocket firing from south Lebanon and the Israeli retaliation last Friday, Pascoe said: "The United Nations mentions regularly the Israeli violations, particularly air violations."

He also linked the rocket firing to the failure of the parliamentary majority to form a new government.

Turning to the Middle East peace process, Pascoe said there was a possibility to hold a Quartet meeting next week, adding that the U.N. chief's special representative, Robert Serry, was working with all the parties concerned on a broad range of issues, with particular emphasis on access to the Gaza Strip.

"We all understand the huge number of problems and difficulties, and we are all trying to do something," he said in response to a question on that issue, adding that the key element was how to make life better for the people of Gaza.

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