

No Israeli War on Lebanon Before the Next US Elections

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*There is no doubt that, since **Ben Gurion**, the Zionist [ideology](#) adheres to the principle of superior strength, harassing and seizing opportunities to surprise the enemy, exploiting the opponent's weaknesses and assessing the enemy's position before striking. But there are many indications that Israel cannot conduct a war on Lebanon, at least not this summer, and likely not until after the white smoke reveals the identity of the resident at the White House for the next four years.*

A tempest in a teapot ensued in Lebanon when Israel announced its third offshore bidding round for oil and natural gas exploration of "Block 72", previously known as "Alon D", located along the border with Lebanon in "Block 9" disputed water. **President Michel Aoun** said the Israeli decision is "a very dangerous matter" and that Lebanon "will not allow the violation of internationally-recognised territorial waters". Lebanese MP **Qassem Hashem** said the decision resembles "a declaration of war".

However, the Israeli announcement does not constitute a breach of the regional water borders that Lebanon claims. The Lebanese condemnation is a reminder to Israel that Lebanon is on alert and shall not allow any encroachment of its maritime borders. Throughout the last decade, the US sent several official envoys to Beirut to push Lebanon towards an indirect dialogue with Israel to draw mutually recognised borders, to no avail.

The geopolitical animosity between Lebanon and Israel had frozen the exploration of "Block 72" for 6 years. The two offshore companies, "Noble Energy" of the US and Israel's Delek Energy, who had won concessions for oil and gas exploration signed in 2009, found their licence ended in 2016 without having been able to conduct any exploration. The news of the Israeli **Energy Minister [Yuval Steinitz](#)** reopening the tender caused a superficial media sensation for several reasons.

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