

The Holy Synod of the Church of Greece offers support to Beirut after massive explosion



The Holy Synod of the Greek Orthodox Church of Greece and Archbishop Ieronymos of Athens and All Greece sent a letter to Patriarch John X of Antioch, offering their full support following Tuesday's deadly explosion in Beirut.

The Holy Synod said that it is putting the Church of Greece's humanitarian charity Apostoli and its resources at the disposal of the Damascus-based Archdiocese of Antioch, which has jurisdiction over the Greek Orthodox community of Lebanon.

Archbishop Ieronymos also expressed his "profound pain and mental anguish."

According to sources, a Greek citizen died in the explosion that rocked Lebanon's capital. Five other Greeks were also injured, two of them seriously.

The Greek embassy in Beirut is in constant contact with Lebanese authorities and the Greek community in the country and providing all possible assistance, as well as being constantly updated on the developments.

Greece also sent a Special Disaster Unit (EMAK) rescue team to Lebanon as an immediate relief response, the General Secretariat for Civil Protection announced on Wednesday. The decision came after Lebanon lodged a request through the EU Civil Protection Mechanism.

The Fire Brigade's EMak unit includes 12 members of the 1st EMak with a sniffer dog, two vehicles and equipment. The team is accompanied by Deputy Foreign Minister Kostas Fragogiannis.

The Greek General Secretariat for Civil Protection is in constant contact with Lebanese authorities and the European Civil Protection Mechanism to dispatch further assistance and support if needed.

- **What happened:** A massive explosion ripped through central Beirut, near the city's port. It sent up a huge mushroom cloud-shaped shockwave, flipped cars and damaged distant buildings. It was felt as far as Cyprus.
- **The victims:** At least 135 people were killed, 5,000 more were wounded and more than 300,000 people are homeless, according to state media. That death toll is expected to rise as hundreds remain missing.
- **The possible source:** Officials are blaming highly explosive materials stored in a warehouse for six years.

Lebanon's cabinet also declared a two-week state of emergency in the capital city.

An investigation is under way to find the exact trigger for the explosion. Lebanon's Supreme Defence Council said those responsible would face the "maximum punishment" possible.

[Source](#)