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## US Assistant Secretary of State: Qatar is Key Regional Partner, Plays Vital Role in Stability in the Middle East

Published on June 20, 2024

Document Date: Mon, Aug 25 2025 08:24:42 pm

Category: ,English,International - ,Snippets

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Doha, June 20 (QNA) – United States Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern Affairs, Barbara Leaf, affirmed the State of Qatar’s indispensable role in vital efforts to release prisoners, highlighting Doha as a key regional partner contributing to stability in the Middle East.

In an interview with Al Sharq newspaper published Thursday, Leaf emphasized diplomacy as the best approach to address regional issues, acknowledging that the current conflict significantly complicates efforts in the region.

Leaf underscored Washington’s commitment to ending the conflict and achieving sustainable security, coordinating closely with key partners to advance negotiations toward a ceasefire agreement, in addition to discussing scenarios and perspectives related to post-war Gaza.

She highlighted Qatar's pivotal role as a vital mediation channel, where Qatari mediators tirelessly working towards a prisoner release agreement.

She emphasized the immense importance of Qatari mediation for the United States, noting Qatar's status as a highly trusted partner.

Leaf noted a ceasefire in Gaza would represent a breakthrough towards resolving the Israel-Lebanon border tensions, expressing concern over the volatile situation along the Blue Line in Lebanon. She emphasized diplomacy as the sole path to a solution.

US Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern Affairs, Barbara Leaf, noted the State of Qatar's active engagement in intensive humanitarian efforts alongside US Special Envoy for Humanitarian Affairs David Satterfield in the Middle East, including facilitating humanitarian aid delivery, enabling the safe departure of foreign nationals from conflict zones, and easing restrictions for safe exits from areas of violence.

She added that Doha is engaged in political talks with Hamas leaders and Egypt to achieve humanitarian truces, in line with US President Joe Biden's internationally supported proposal for a ceasefire.