

**Defence Forces Press Statement - Overseas Incident in Lebanon, 14 December 2022**

It is with deep regret that Óglaigh na hÉireann can confirm the death of one of our peacekeepers in a serious incident in Lebanon last night.

On 14 December 2022 at approx. 2115hrs (Irish time), a serious incident took place involving members of 121<sup>st</sup> Infantry Battalion, UNIFIL. A convoy of two (2) Armoured Utility Vehicles (AUVs) carrying eight (8) personnel travelling to Beirut came under small arms fire. Four (4) personnel were taken to Raee Hospital, near Sidon as a result of the incident.

One soldier was pronounced dead on arrival at the hospital and another has undergone surgery and is in a serious condition. The other two soldiers are being treated for minor injuries. A medical officer from the 121<sup>st</sup> Infantry Battalion is currently with the soldiers in Raee Hospital.

The remaining four (4) personnel from the convoy were not injured and are safe and accounted for.

The names of personnel are not being released by the Defence Forces at this time, but the families of those involved have been informed.

The Chief of Staff of Óglaigh na hÉireann, Lieutenant General Seán Clancy stated, “*we in Óglaigh na hÉireann are deeply shocked and saddened by the news of this tragic event and the loss of one of our peacekeepers. Our thoughts are with his family, his friends and his fellow peacekeepers from the 121<sup>st</sup> Infantry Battalion. Our thoughts are also with those who were injured last night and their families and friends. We have one of our medical officers currently at Raee Hospital and we will ensure that our personnel get the best possible care. Our focus now is to ensure the safety and continued support for all our personnel deployed in Lebanon.*”

A full investigation will commence into this incident.

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The 121<sup>st</sup> Infantry Battalion, comprising of 333 Irish soldiers, deployed in November 2022 to South Lebanon as part of UNIFIL (United Nation Interim Force in Lebanon). The 121<sup>st</sup> Infantry Battalion are part of a multinational battalion, comprising of Irish, Maltese, Polish and Hungarian personnel, collectively referred to as IRISHPOLBATT. IRISHPOLBATT support UNIFIL's mandates in accordance with United Nations Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1701 (2006) and UNSCR 2539 (2020).

**ENDS**



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