

**Causes of the Explosions:** The explosions were triggered by the ignition of approximately 2,750 tons of ammonium nitrate, a highly explosive material, which had been stored unsafely at the port for nearly six years.

**Local Response and Government Accountability:** The Beirut explosions sparked widespread anger and protests among the Lebanese population, who held the government accountable for the negligence and mismanagement that led to the disaster. The ammonium nitrate had been confiscated from a ship and stored in a warehouse, despite repeated warnings from port officials about the potential dangers it posed. The shockwave shattered windows, collapsed buildings, and caused extensive damage to infrastructure, including hospitals, schools, and residential areas. The explosions exacerbated the existing economic crisis and political instability in Lebanon, further deepening the country's challenges. The impact of the explosions was catastrophic, resulting in the loss of at least 218 lives, injuring over 6,000 people, and displacing an estimated 300,000 residents. NGOs and local organizations have played a crucial role in providing immediate relief and assisting affected communities in rebuilding their lives. The tragedy exposed the vulnerabilities and shortcomings of the Lebanese government, highlighting the urgent need for accountability, transparency, and reform.

**International Response:** The international community responded swiftly to the tragedy, offering condolences, humanitarian aid, and assistance to Lebanon. Numerous countries, including France, the United States, and several Arab nations, sent medical teams, search and rescue personnel, and supplies to help with the immediate response efforts. However, the public's frustration with the government's response and perceived corruption led to further unrest and demands for political reform. The international community pledged financial aid and support for the reconstruction efforts, but the process has been slow due to bureaucratic hurdles and political obstacles.

**Conclusion:** The Beirut explosions of August 2020 will forever be etched in the memory of the Lebanese people and the world.

**Rebuilding and Recovery:** The road to recovery for Beirut has been long and arduous.