

# *Israeli strikes targeting leaders of Hamas on Lebanon's soil breach of international law*

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A picture taken from northern Israel shows smoke is billowing from across the border in south

## Lebanon, on January 3, 2024. (Photo by AFP)

Geneva, January 11 (RHC)-- A top UN human rights official has warned that Israeli strikes targeting leaders of the Palestinian Hamas resistance group on Lebanon's soil are a breach of international law. In remarks on Wednesday, Ben Saul, United Nations special rapporteur on human rights and counter-terrorism, stressed that such cross-border strikes on Lebanon by the Israeli military would set a dangerous precedent for other global conflicts.

"By escalating the conflict to Lebanon, Israel is clearly in violation of international law, breaching Lebanon's sovereignty, and violating the prohibition on the use of force under the UN charter," he said in an interview with Qatar-based Al Jazeera television network.

The Israeli regime waged the war on Gaza on October 7 after Hamas carried out the surprise Operation Al-Aqsa Storm against the occupying entity in response to the Israeli regime's atrocities against Palestinians.

Since the start of the U.S.-backed offensive, the Israeli regime has killed at least 23,210 Palestinians, mostly women and children, and injured more than 59,167 others. Thousands more are also missing and presumed dead under the rubble.

The Israeli military has also been carrying out attacks against the Lebanese territory since then, prompting retaliatory strikes from the Lebanese Hezbollah resistance movement in support of the oppressed Palestinians in the Palestinian territory.

Israeli strikes have so far killed several Hezbollah fighters. Furthermore, it has also begun targeting Hamas commanders and leaders on Lebanese soil, including senior Hamas leader Saleh al-Arouri on January 2.

Saul on Wednesday also said Israel was not justified in taking its fight with Hamas into Lebanon's borders. "Hamas' original attack on Israel on October 7 came from Gaza, not from Lebanon. And Israel hasn't presented any evidence that Hamas was attacking Israel from Lebanon itself," he said.

"By escalating the conflict to Lebanon, Israel is clearly in violation of international law, breaching Lebanon's sovereignty, and violating the prohibition on the use of force under the UN charter," the top UN human rights official further said, adding: "This should be of concern to the United Nations Security Council and all states should counsel Israel not to escalate this conflict."

Hezbollah has vowed to keep up its retaliatory operations as long as the Tel Aviv regime continues its onslaught on Gaza.

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