Israel launches deepened incursions into Lebanon despite truce

Lebanese army members stand near rubble at a damaged site after the ceasefire between Israel

and Lebanon, in the Lebanese village of Khiam, on December 23, 2024. (Photo by Reuters)

Beirut, December 27 (RHC)-- Israeli forces have launched a deepened incursion into some areas of southern Lebanon in violation of the November 27 ceasefire agreement, kidnapping a Lebanese man.

"The Israeli enemy continues to violate the ceasefire agreement," the Lebanese army said in a statement, adding that the regime's forces on Thursday "penetrated several points in the areas of Qantara, Adshit al-Qusayr, and Wadi al-Hujayr" in the south.

Multiple videos circulating online showed Israeli tanks and troops advancing in Wadi al-Hujair, with gunfire being heard in some of the footage.

Israeli troops also shot and kidnapped a Lebanese citizen in Wadi al-Hujayr. Hussam Fawaz was later handed over to the UNIFIL before being transferred by a Lebanese army ambulance to receive treatment for a gunshot wound he sustained in the head by Israeli forces.

According to the army's statement, the Lebanese army reinforced its deployment in the affected areas, following up with the United Nations peacekeeping force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) and the committee supervising the ceasefire agreement regarding the deepened incursion.

Earlier in the day, the UNIFIL voiced concern over the continued destruction by Israeli forces of residential areas, farmland and infrastructure in south Lebanon in violation of UN Resolution 1701, calling for a timely Israeli withdrawal from south Lebanon under the truce deal.

"UNIFIL continues to urge the timely withdrawal" of the Israeli forces and "the deployment of the Lebanese armed forces in southern Lebanon, alongside the full implementation of Resolution 1701 as a comprehensive path toward peace," the statement said.

That came a day after Israel launched the first airstrike on Lebanon's eastern Beqaa Valley since the start of the ceasefire last month.

At least 300 Israeli violations have been reported since the ceasefire agreement took effect on November 27 to end nearly 70 days of Israel's offensive on the country.

A committee made up of France, the United States, Lebanon, Israel and United Nations peacekeepers is tasked with monitoring the ceasefire and ensuring violations are identified and dealt with.

Beirut has urged the parties -- particularly the US and France -- to press Israel to speed up its withdrawal from the country's south under the terms of the deal.

The truce demanded an immediate halt to Israel's aggression on Lebanese soil and gave the regime's forces 60 days to withdraw from south Lebanon.

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