

## Top Lebanese cleric criticizes U.S. vice president for hostility toward Iran

By [Global Research](#)

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Friday, October 12, 2007 BEIRUT, Lebanon

Lebanon's top Shiite cleric criticized U.S. Vice President Dick Cheney on Friday, saying he backs a military strike against Iran that would "bring destruction to the region."

Grand Ayatollah Mohammed Hussein Fadlallah made his comments during Friday prayers in Beirut's southern suburb of Haret Hreik. His statements came as many Lebanese celebrated the first day of Eid al-Fitr, which marks the end of the Muslim holy month of Ramadan.

"We see that America's Vice President Dick Cheney favors a major aerial, naval and missile strike against Iran, specifically against all its military and civilian infrastructure in addition to the oil, telecommunication and transportation sectors by March at the latest," Fadlallah said in comments distributed by his office. The cleric did not provide specific evidence for his claim.

"This man (Cheney) ... has toured the region to convince Arab countries, mainly Gulf states, to convince them that Iran is considered a dangerous enemy that should be boycotted and fought," Fadlallah said, referring to a visit by Cheney to the region several months ago.

Fadlallah, the top religious authority for Lebanon's 1.2 million Shiites, warned that any such attack will not succeed.

Some Arabs fear that the United States or Israel, or both, may strike predominantly Shiite Iran over fears that the country is using its nuclear program as cover for weapons development. Iran denies the claim and says the program is for civilian purposes.

U.S. President George W. Bush has refused to take the military option off the table, and many view Cheney as one of the more hawkish officials toward Iran in the White House.

The vice president warned Iran sharply in May from an aircraft carrier in the Persian Gulf that the U.S. will not allow Iran to develop nuclear weapons or dominate the Middle East.

Fadlallah said that "we believe that the American plan will not achieve much success in its expected aggression but it will bring destruction to the region that houses American military bases and oil wealth."

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