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## US SUPPORTS IRAQI TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY

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Washington has reiterated its support for Iraqs territorial sovereignty amid a spat between Turkey and Iraq before an operation on Mosul to liberate it from jihadists. As we have repeatedly made clear, the United States supports Iraqi unity and sovereignty, the U.S. State Department said Oct. 11.

To that end, we believe all international forces in Iraq should be there with the approval of and in coordination with the government of Iraq, under the umbrella of the coalition, it said.

It is imperative for all parties to coordinate closely over the coming days and weeks to ensure unity of effort in defeating Daesh and to provide for the lasting security of the Iraqi people, it added, using an Arabic acronym for the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL).

The presence of Turkish troops in Iraq has resulted in diplomatic tension between Iraq and Turkey, with the Iraqi parliament sending a diplomatic note to Turkeys ambassador on Oct. 4 that declared the troops presence there to be illegal, after which Turkey summoned Iraqs ambassador in Ankara the following day.

Iraqi Prime Minister Haider Al-Abadi called on Turkey to withdraw troops deployed near the northern city of Mosul and said they would not play a role in the operation to retake it from ISIL.

U.S. State Department spokesman John Kirby said during a daily press briefing on Oct. 11 that the operation would be led by Iraq and that it was a matter for Baghdad which forces should be deployed on its sovereign territory.

The Turkish forces that are deployed in Iraq are not there as part of the international coalition and the situation in Bashiqa is a matter for the governments of Iraq and Turkey to resolve, he said.

Pentagon spokesperson Jeff Davis said he urged the Turkish and Iraqi governments to solve the issue among each other.

Certainly, we are aware of the Turkish presence in northern Iraq, in Bashiqa. This is a bilateral matter between government of Iraq and government of Turkey to determine what role they [Turkey] may have. And we would just encourage all parties to focus on the common enemy of them which is ISIL, Davis said.

Iraqi PM hits back in war of words with Turkish president

Al-Abadi hit back at Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan on Oct. 11 following the latter's harsh criticism, needling the Turkish leader for resorting to FaceTime during the failed July 15 coup attempt.

To @RT\_Erdogan: we are not your enemy and we will liberate our land through the determination of our men and not by video calls, al-Abadi's official Twitter account said Oct. 11 in response to Erdoğan's words.

Erdoğan, during a speech in Istanbul, addressed al-Abadi earlier in the day, saying the Iraqi leader should know his place and adding that he was not on my level.

Erdoğan made an appeal via the video call application FaceTime to private broadcaster CNN Türk on the night of July 15, calling on citizens to resist an attempted coup to overthrow the government. The call was successful, as many rallied to take to the streets, resist against military vehicles and thwart the coup.

Al-Abadi's spokesman, Saad al-Hadithi, told AFP that Erdoğan, with his latest remarks, was pouring oil on the fire, adding that Turkey's responses had made an issue of law and security into a problem of a personal nature.

It seems that Turkey is not serious about solving the problem with Iraq, al-Hadithi said.

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Kaynak/Source: