
IN A SIGN OF RECONCILIATION SHIITE CLERIC SADR MEETS WITH IRAQ'S PM ABADI

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BAGHDAD, Iraq [] Prime Minister Haider al-Abadi met with prominent Shiite leader Muqtada al-Sadr in Baghdad on Monday to discuss the war against ISIS, the countrys security and political situation and most importantly, to mend ties after almost a year of tensions between Sadrists and the government and public protests.

At a joint press conference Aabdi said that he hoped for political understanding between the [Iraqi] parties. Abadis Dawa Party and his government came under attack from Sadr who sent angry protestors into parliament and Green Zone in April.

Sadr for his part, told reporters that he had a fruitful meeting with the prime minister where he had pledged his support for the army, completion of the governments reform plans and promotion of moderate voices in the country.

At the press conference Sadr criticized former PM Nouri al-Malikis heavy-handed military response against his group across the country and told Abadi that his government should be different and avoid such actions, referring to his recent anti-government demonstrations.

Abadi and Malikis Dawa party offices have come under attack by Sadr supporters in different cities in the south of Iraq, including in the city of Najaf.

Mondays meeting between Sadr and Abadi is seen by observers as against a possible Maliki comeback, who said in a Wall Street Journal interview recently that he didnt seek office again, but that Iraqis needed change, a hint at removing Abadi after the ISIS operation.

The two leaders met in the heavily fortified Green Zone which was stormed by thousands of demonstrators in late April following a speech by Sadr who called for an end of government corruption and waste of public funds.

Other Iraqi leaders, such as Ammar al-Hakim, head of the Supreme Islamic Council of Iraq have urged national unity among Shiites, Kurds and Sunnis and preparation for the post-ISIS era.

Al-Hakim has since met with the Iraqi political parties, including Sunni politicians, and has been to Iran and Jordan, two influential regional countries to lend their support to his reconciliation process.

Sadr said he would support al-Hakims initiative, but warned that he will not settle with those who have Iraqi blood on their hands.

Kaynak/Source: