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## **PM ABADI SAYS IRAQ'S OIL IS FOR IRAQIS, IN REACTION TO TRUMP**

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Reuters, 24 Jan 2017

Iraq's oil is the property of Iraqis, Prime Minister Haider al-Abadi said on Tuesday, in reaction to U.S. President Donald Trump who argued that the United States should have taken possession of the nation's crude reserves.

In a speech to CIA officials on Saturday, Trump suggested the United States should have taken Iraq's oil in reimbursement for the 2003 invasion that put an end to Saddam Hussein's rule.

Trump also suggested that taking Iraq's oil would have prevented Islamic State from rising up, by removing a source of the group's funding, according to a Huffington Post report of the encounter.

"It wasn't clear what he meant," Abadi told a news conference when asked about Trump's comments. "Did he mean in 2003 or to prevent the terrorists from seizing Iraq's oil?"

"Iraq's oil is constitutionally the property of the Iraqis," he said.

The new U.S. president has also sent messages offering to increase the level of assistance to Iraq, Abadi said, without giving details on the nature of the assistance.

"I've got assurances from President Trump that the assistance to Iraqi will continue and that it will also increase," Abadi told a news conference in Baghdad.

Trump has made the fight against Islamic State, the hardline group that declared a self-styled "caliphate" over parts of Syria and Iraq in 2014, a priority for his administration.

A U.S.-led coalition is already providing critical support to an offensive by Iraqi forces to take back Mosul, the largest city under control of Islamic State. The United States is also providing financial support to Iraq.

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Kaynak/Source: