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**U.S., IRAQ'S S-400 DEAL DISPUTE TO BE RESOLVED WITH DIPLOMACY: AMBASSADOR**

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08.03.2018

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Iraqi News (07.03.2018)

by Mohamed Mostafa

Baghdad (IraqiNews.com) Iraq can resolve the differences with the United States over the purchase of Russian anti-aircraft defense systems through diplomatic means, the Iraqi ambassador to Moscow said.

Speaking to Russian agency Sputnik, Haider Mansour Hadi said if there were any objections from the U.S. side to Iraqs purchase of S-400 , they could be resolved through diplomacy, reiterating that Baghdad maintains good relations with Washington.

He said the decision to go ahead with the purchase is based on Iraqs right to exercise its sovereignty and to protect the country from threats. He, however, said Baghdad has not yet decided on the deal.

He said Baghadays consideration of the purchase does not mean it was replacing the U.S. by Russia as the source of its weaponization, noting that the majority of Iraqs Arsenal dates back to the Soviet Union era, adding that past contracts between Baghdad and Moscow, which are still into force, are worth USD4 billion.

Last month, the U.S. State Department warned Iraq and other countries approaching Moscow for defense systems that such moves would violate the Countering Americas Adversaries Through Sanctions Act (CAATSA), which involves an arms deals embargo.

S-400 entered into service with the Russian armed forces in 2007. The system is capable of hitting targets at heights up to 30 kilometers within a range of 400 kilometers. It is designed for supersonic targets and chemical attack air defense.

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Kaynak/Source: