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## IRAQ REJECTS NOTION OF FORCIBLY REPATRIATING REFUGEES

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BAGHDAD

The Iraqi government on Wednesday renewed its rejection of forcibly repatriating refugees currently residing abroad, saying it was coordinating with refugee-hosting countries based on the principle of voluntary repatriation.

The Iraqi Ministry of Migration and Displacement is coordinating with several [refugee-hosting] countries through the UN with a view to encouraging the voluntary repatriation of Iraqis back to their homeland, Migration Minister Jassem al-Jaff said on the occasion of World Refugee Day.

Iraq, he said, is taking humanitarian and social factors into consideration and completely rejects the notion of compulsory repatriation.

Al-Jaff went on to point out that Iraq -- despite its lack of resources -- continues to host hundreds of thousands of foreign refugees fleeing persecution and conflict in their home countries.

He did not say how many Iraqis had their asylum requests turned down by the EU, but according to the EUs statistical bureau, roughly 127,000 Iraqis applied for asylum in Europe in 2016.

After the Daesh terrorist group overran much of northern and western Iraq in mid-2014, thousands of Iraqis fled the country seeking safety abroad, with many applying for asylum in the states of the EU.

<https://www.aa.com.tr/en/middle-east/iraq-rejects-notion-of-forcibly-repatriating-refugees/1180246>

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