
IRAQI TURKMEN VOICE SUPPORT FOR DEMOS IN BASRA, KIRKUK

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BAGHDAD

The Iraqi Turkmen Front (ITF) on Friday called on the government to improve public services and provide more job opportunities, especially in Iraqs Basra and Kirkuk provinces.

In the southern Basra province, tension has steadily mounted since Sunday, when a demonstrator was killed by security forces while taking part in a protest against rampant unemployment and chronic power outages.

In a Friday statement, the ITF said: We support peaceful protests to demand adequate electricity and more job opportunities for university graduates.

It went on to urge Baghdad to look into legitimate demands articulated by protesters during recent demonstrations in both Basra and Kirkuk.

The ITF stressed the importance of both provinces, describing Basra and Kirkuk as mainstays of Iraq's economy and centers of oil production.

Roughly 80 percent of Iraqs overall crude oil exports originate from oilfields in Basra.

For years, Basra residents have complained that foreign nationals, rather than locals, were being employed by the local energy sector.

They also complain of frequent power outages amid summer temperatures that can reach as high as 50 degrees Celsius.

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