
TURKEY, IRAQ TO DISCUSS OPENING OF NEW BORDER CROSSING

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Turkish and Iraqi delegations will meet in a few weeks to discuss the opening of a new border crossing, Turkish ambassador to Iraq said on Monday.

A field visit is also expected following the meeting, Fatih Yildiz told Anadolu Agency on the sidelines of the 10th Ambassadors Conference in capital Ankara.

The planned Ovakoy Border Gate will directly link Turkey to Baghdad via a 570-kilometer (354-mile) highway.

Yildiz said the planned border terminal would also trigger an economic revival in the northern Iraqi city of Mosul.

Last week, Qazim al-Akabi, the head of Iraqs committee for border crossings, said the two sides had agreed to dispatch technical experts to the border region sometime next month to conduct a feasibility study.

About Iraqi Prime Minister Haider al-Abadi's upcoming visit to Turkey on Tuesday, Yildiz said counterterrorism and the reconstruction of Iraq would be on the agenda.

Now that Daesh is over, they should be inclined to fight against the PKK, Yildiz said.

The Iraqis know how to fight against terrorism. This is a fight for which power can be used when necessary.

Water, electricity and petroleum management in Iraq are also expected to be discussed.

Highlighting water as a significant area of bilateral relations, Yildiz said Turkey is ready to assist Iraq in water management and agricultural irrigation.

Our understanding here is that water should become an area based on a cooperation, not separating the two sides, he said.

On relations with the Kurdish Regional Government (KRG), Yildiz said Turkey is not prone to cooperate with it in case KRG contemplates secession from Iraq.

KRG can find Turkey close to cooperation, when it acts as part of a united and integrated Iraq, the ambassador said.

<https://www.aa.com.tr/en/middle-east/turkey-iraq-to-discuss-opening-of-new-border-crossing/1230212>

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