
IRAQ TO GRADUALLY TRANSFER LOCAL SECURITY FROM ARMY HOLD TO POLICE

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Baghdad- Hamza Mustafa

Iraqi authorities are considering the gradual transition of security affairs in the country from the army-dominated Iraqi Security Forces to the police, in a move advocating for the argument that the once war-torn country is back on track to stabilizing.

The defense and security committee at the parliament said it had arrived at an agreement with the National Army Chief of Staff Othman al-Ghanmi for the transfer of security operations in central and southern provinces from the army's hold to police apparatuses.

The agreement, however, excludes western provinces which are still undergoing clearing ops and efforts to remove war debris and rubble.

A security official told Asharq Al-Awsat that the meeting with the Security and Defense Committee discussed, among other things, the rumored existence of US bases in the country or the presence of foreign forces. The meeting also tackled the transferring of security regulation in a number of provinces to the ministry of interior and local police station.

Baghdad will be included in the second phase the transfer plan and there is a third phase related to some western and northwestern provinces, the security official added.

Member of the parliamentary defense and security committee Nayef Al Shimmeri confirmed that the body has met with Ghanmi who in turn voiced the army's preparedness to hand over security control to local police stations in seven central and southern provinces.

Shimmeri explained that it was imperative that three security agencies- local police, federal police and the army-- be active in every Iraqi province.

The Iraqi army has fought against ISIS on behalf of the world, and the coming fight against the terror group will be unorthodox and heavily rely on intelligence, not conventional warfare, Shimmeri said as Iraq has seen the near-complete elimination of ISIS physical space in the country.

The Iraqi official also stressed a strong desire for positive engagement between local police services and the public.

Shimmeri went on to reaffirm a need for strong support from the government and legislative bodies to be given to intelligence agencies in Iraq, calling for a substantial upgrade in available equipment.

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