
IRAQ SAYS NO ACTIVITY OF FOREIGN FORCES ON ITS SOIL WITHOUT PERMISSION

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Baghdad - Hamza Mustafa

Iraqi Prime Minister Adel Abdul Mahdi announced on Tuesday that foreign troops in his country must operate under the supervision and control of the government in line with its dissociation policy.

In a statement issued by his media office, the PM said foreign troops and local militias operating in Iraq are forbidden from confronting each other and must operate under the supervision and control of the Iraqi armed forces.

In reference to the Popular Mobilization Forces (PMF), the prime minister said armed groups within the framework of the Iraqi armed forces are prevented from operating, storing weapons and equipment and building factories without the knowledge and control of the Iraqi armed forces.

Abdul Mahdis decision is considered the first of its kind for allowing the government control Iraqi soil. It came amid tension between Iran and the United States, particularly that Iraq has close relations with both countries.

The US has more than 5,000 troops in Iraq, while Iran backs the PMF.

Last week, Washington blamed Iran for attacks on two tankers in the Arabian Gulf as Tehran denied the accusations.

The US-Iranian tension had ramifications in Iraq with three Katyusha rockets hitting Taji Military Base, north of Baghdad, where US forces are stationed.

The attack was the second on a military base in four days.

On Monday night, the US announced it would send 1,000 extra troops to the Middle East to counter Iranian threats.

In his decision on Tuesday, Mahdi said that after the great liberation and victory against ISIS, the Iraqi State needs to gain back its power in addition to full control on its territories in order to achieve stability and regain sovereignty.

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