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## **IRAQ'S HASHD AL-SHA'ABI DOWNS SPY DRONE, WARNS FOREIGN AIRCRAFT**

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Tasnim News Agency (23 August 2019)

According to a statement by the popular movement, the unmanned aerial vehicle (UAV) was shot down by the air defenses of the 12th Brigade of Hashd al-Shaabi while the reconnaissance aircraft was flying over the outskirts of the capital on Thursday evening, , the Arabic-language al-Soumariah television network reported.

The development came after the group warned Wednesday that foreign aircraft flying over the country would be treated as hostile.

We have informed the Joint Operations Command that we will regard any foreign aircraft flying over our headquarters without the knowledge of the Iraqi government as hostile, and will deal with it accordingly, the statement said.

It was issued by second-in-command of the PMU, Abu Mahdi al-Mohandes, who also blamed the US and Israel for recent explosions at the groups bases in the Arab country.

We have evidence that shows the US has brought four Israeli drones into Iraq, he said, adding, the Americans are using the drones to target the PMU and Iraqi bases, rather than targeting the Daesh terrorist group.

Mohandes also vowed that from now on we will target any drone flying over our bases.

On Tuesday, a number of powerful blasts rocked a position held by the PMU, next to strategic Balad airbase, which hosts US forces and contractors and is located about 80 kilometers (50 miles) north of Baghdad.

Hashd al-Shaabi commanders also confirmed that the intended target of the blasts was the groups position near the Balad base.

On August 13, Fadhil Abu Ragheef, a security expert close to Iraqi intelligence services, told Russia's RT Arabic news network there was information that the Israeli military was planning to launch airstrikes against the arms depots of Hashd al-Shaabi forces.

<https://www.tasnimnews.com/en/news/2019/08/23/2081084/iraq-s-hashd-al-sha-abi-downs-spy-drone-warns-foreign-aircraft>

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