
FRANCE, IRAQ DIPLOMATS HOLD TALKS ON ISIL PRISONERS IN SYRIA

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18.10.2019

Al Jazeera (17 October 2019)

Iraq's top diplomat has said Baghdad will take back its citizens suspected of fighting with the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL or ISIS) in Syria, while urging home countries of other detainees to also take the "needed measures".

Mohammed Ali al-Hakim's comments on Thursday followed talks with his French counterpart, Jean-Yves le Drian, who was in Baghdad to discuss the fate of thousands of suspected ISIL members held in makeshift prisons in northeast Syria following a Turkish offensive in the region.

"We discussed the situation in Syria and Iraq is taking all measures to prevent foreign fighters from crossing through the border into Iraq," al-Hakim told a news conference.

"The number of the foreign fighters in Syria is very high, and they are from up to 72 countries. These countries should take necessary measures toward their citizens," he said, a move that signals Baghdad will not accept those who came from around the world to Iraq and Syria to join the armed group.

Iraq will repatriate its own citizens and put them on trial, he added.

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