
US DEFENSE SECRETARY ASKS IRAQI PM TO HELP PREVENT IRANIAN-LINKED ATTACKS ON US TROOPS

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17.12.2019

CNN (17 December 2019)

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US Secretary of Defense Mark Esper has asked Iraq to help prevent attacks on US personnel that both countries have attributed to groups backed by Iran. Esper spoke with Prime Minister Adil Abdul-Mahdi on Sunday, asking for the Iraqi leader's assistance in preventing the attacks .

"On the call, Secretary Esper reiterated United States support for a secure and sovereign Iraq and the people of Iraq. He also called on our Iraqi partners to continue to assist in preventing attacks on US and coalition personnel and facilities in the country," Pentagon spokesperson Cmdr. Sean Robertson told CNN in a statement. The call comes as US officials have grown increasingly concerned about a series of rocket attacks on military installations in Iraq where US and coalition personnel are stationed.

There are some 5,000 US troops in Iraq, in addition to personnel from several other members of the anti-ISIS military coalition, part of a mission aimed at bolstering Iraq's security forces as they battle the remnants of the terrorist group.

To read the rest of the article, please click <https://edition.cnn.com/2019/12/16/politics/mark-esper-iraq-iran-attacks/index.html>

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