

Trump issues warning to Iran, sends U.S. Marines to Baghdad embassy



Washington, December 31 (RHC)-- U.S. President Donald Trump said that the American embassy in Baghdad has been secured by U.S. and Iraqi troops, and threatened to hold Iran “fully responsible” for any damages or loss of life at any U.S. facility.

“This is not a Warning, it is a Threat,” Trump declared in a tweet on Tuesday afternoon, adding that Iran will “pay a very BIG PRICE!” for the embassy siege earlier in the day.

A task force of U.S. Marines was rushed to the embassy in Baghdad on Tuesday, after protesters and fighters of the Shia militia Kataib Hezbollah stormed the perimeter, chanting “Death to America.”

Attack helicopters circled the compound, dropping flares in attempts to scatter the protesters, who had reportedly breached the front gate. Iraqi security forces were initially said to have let the militants through, but Trump’s tweet said that the government in Baghdad rapidly responded to his request for assistance.

The embassy siege appeared to be Kataib Hezbollah’s response to the series of U.S. airstrikes over the weekend, targeting their positions in Iraq and Syria. The Iranian-backed militia has been fighting against

Islamic State (IS, formerly ISIS) terrorists, but the Pentagon blamed it for last week's attack on a U.S. coalition base near Kirkuk, in which one contractor/mercenary died.

The Iraqi government had condemned the airstrikes as a violation of their sovereignty. Iran rejected all accusations that it was responsible for the embassy siege, calling it "surprising audacity" to blame Tehran for protests over the "savage killing" of at least 25 Iraqis.

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