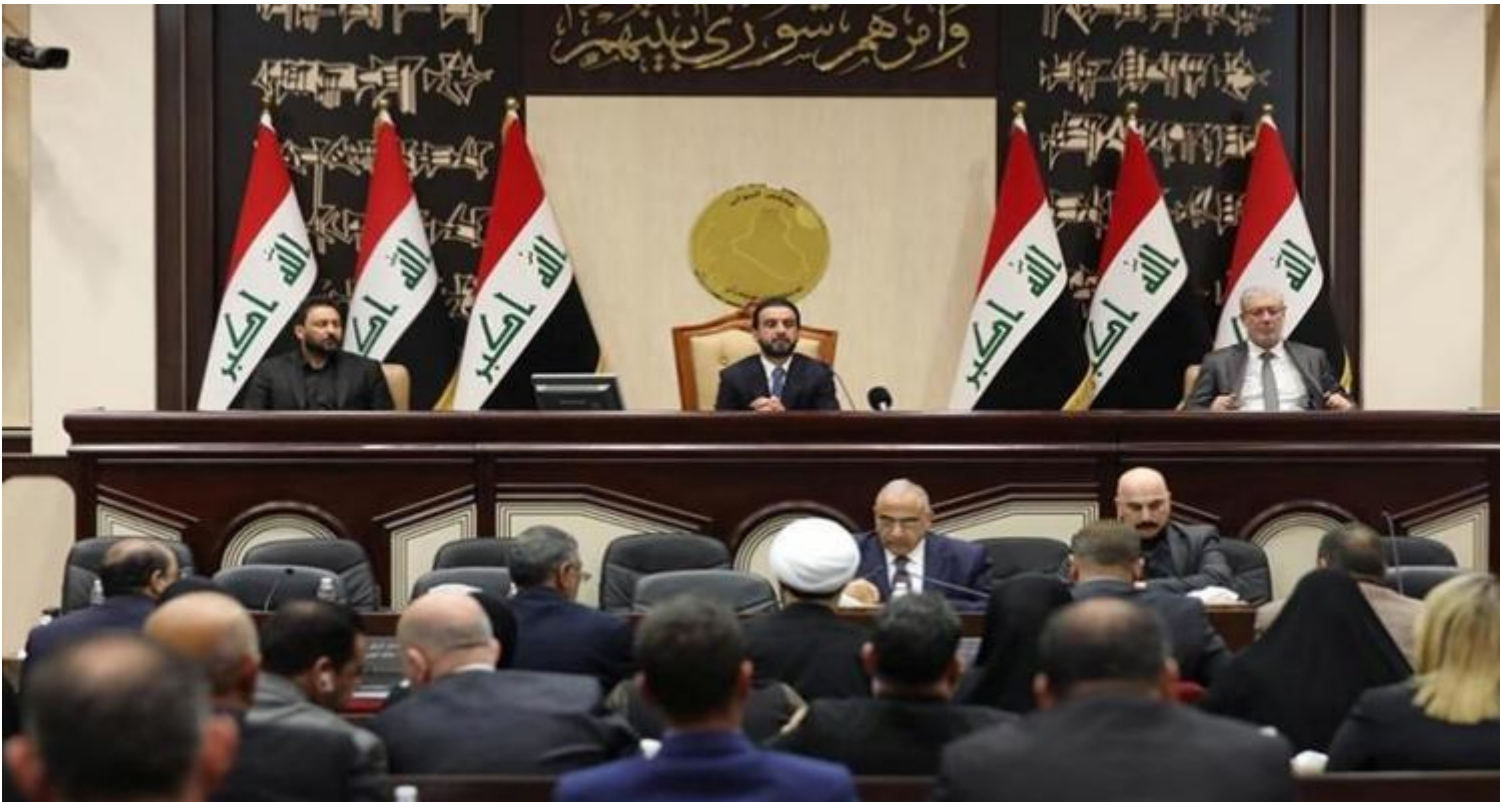


Iraqi parliament passes resolution calling for removal of foreign troops



Baghdad, January 5 (RHC)-- Iraq's parliament has voted to have foreign troops removed from the country, heeding a call from its caretaker prime minister. The move comes after the U.S. assassination of a top Iranian general and a commander of Iraqi militia forces.

The resolution, which was passed anonymously, instructs the government to cancel a request for military assistance from the U.S.-led coalition, which was issued in response to the rise of Islamic State (IS, formerly ISIS). With IS supposedly defeated, Iraq will not need foreign troops to fight the jihadists and can close its airspace to coalition aircraft.

The Iraqi government must work to end the presence of any foreign troops on Iraqi soil and prohibit them from using its land, airspace or water for any reason.

According to Press TV, some Western military presence may remain for training purposes. The resolution says Iraqi military leadership has to report the number of foreign instructors that are necessary for Iraqi national security.

At the same time, the Iraqi Foreign Ministry said that Baghdad had turned to the UN Security Council with complaints about US violations of its sovereignty.

Speaking at an emergency parliament session on Sunday, Iraq's caretaker Prime Minister Adil Abdul Mahdi said the American side notified the Iraqi military about the planned airstrike minutes before it was carried out. He stressed that his government denied Washington permission to continue with the operation. Despite the internal and external difficulties that we might face, it remains best for Iraq on principle and practically.

Qassem Soleimani, the commander of Iran's Quds Force, and Abu Mahdi al-Muhandis, the deputy commander of Iraq's Popular Mobilization Force, were killed by a drone strike as their convoy was leaving Baghdad International Airport on Friday morning.

The interim prime minister said after the incident it was clear that it was in the interest of both the US and Iraq to end the presence of foreign forces on Iraqi soil.

Influential Iraqi cleric Muqtada al-Sadr stated in a letter that Iraq should go further and shut down the US embassy.

Washington claims the assassination of Soleimani was an act of self-defense justified by his planning of attacks on American citizens. Tehran called it international terrorism and vowed to avenge the popular military officer.

In the wake of the attack, the U.S. advised all American civilians to leave Iraq. U.S.-led coalition troops in Iraq have also suspended all training operations and hunkered down at fortified bases, bracing for retaliatory strikes.

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