Iranian foreign minister says Tehran informed Baghdad prior to missile attack

Tehran, January 8 (RHC)-- Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif says Iran informed the Iraqi government of its retaliatory attack on U.S. bases, reaffirming Tehran's respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Arab country.

This measure was carried out with the information passed to the Iraqi government and armed forces as confirmed by the Baghdad government, Zarif said Wednesday.

"We attach high significance to Iraq's territorial integrity and sovereignty, and we believe security should be [provided] based on mutual respect and [safeguarding] territorial integrity of all regional countries by all," he added.

The remarks came hours after Iran responded to the U.S. assassination of prominent anti-terror Iranian commander Lieutenant General Qassem Soleimani and his companions, including Iraqi commander Abu Mahdi al-Muhandis, with a barrage of missiles that hit two U.S. bases in Iraq.

Foreign Minister Zarif says Iran's retaliatory missile attack on American bases in Iraq was an act of "legitimate self-defense" against "legitimate targets" in response to U.S. terrorist act.

In the early hours of Wednesday, Iran launched dozens of missiles at two bases housing U.S. troops in Iraq's western Anbar Province and Kurdistan regional capital, Erbil, in revenge for the assassination of General Soleimani.

The spokesman for Iraqi Prime Minister Adel Abdul-Mahdi said the premier had received word from Iran that its response to the U.S. assassination of its top general was either imminent or underway.

Elsewhere in his remarks, Zarif said Iran's missile attack was a military revenge for the top commander, stressing, however, that there is no retaliation proportionate to the assassination of General Soleimani other than the expulsion of U.S. forces from the region.

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