

*Iraq says U.S. airstrikes push  
Baghdad to expel American  
troops*

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### **The U.S. has over 2,000 troops stationed in Iraq**

Baghdad, February 9 (RHC)-- Iraq says repeated U.S. strikes in the country are pushing the Baghdad government to end the presence of American troops, calling them a cause of instability.

Yahya Rasool, military spokesperson for Iraqi Prime Minister Shia' al-Sudani, said in a statement Thursday that the so-called U.S. coalition "has become a factor for instability and threatens to entangle Iraq in the cycle of conflict." "This path pushes the Iraqi government more than ever before to end the

coalition's mission which has become a factor of instability for Iraq.”

The United States has 2,500 troops in Iraq with the express purpose of advising and assisting local forces to prevent a resurgence of Daesh. However, they have repeatedly targeted anti-terror groups integrated into the official Iraqi armed forces.

On Wednesday, the U.S. military targeted a vehicle with a drone, killing three people, including a senior commander of Iraq's Kata'ib Hezbollah resistance group. The group identified the commander as Abu Baqir al-Saadi.

Since the Israeli war on Gaza began in October, anti-terror groups in Iraq and Syria which see themselves as part of a regional "axis of resistance" have been involved in almost daily tit-for-tat attacks with U.S. forces stationed in the region.

The U.S. aggression has agitated the Iraqi government which is pushing Washington to discuss a timeline for the withdrawal of its troops in the Arab country.

On Tuesday, Iraqi Foreign Minister Fuad Hussein, in a phone conversation with US Secretary of State Antony Blinken, called for the resumption of the talks halted since three American soldiers were killed in a drone attack in Jordan.

Last week, Prime Minister Sudani's office said the presence of the U.S. troops in the region "has become a reason for threatening security and stability in Iraq and a justification for involving Iraq in regional and international conflicts."

The angry announcement came after at least 16 Iraqis were killed in U.S. airstrikes ordered by President Joe Biden following the deadly drone attack on the American base in Jordan.

Rasool warned then that the actions taken by Washington would have “disastrous consequences for the security and stability of Iraq and the region.”

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