

Washington threatens Iran over attacks on military bases in Iraq



Washington, December 15 (RHC)-- U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo has threatened Iran with "decisive" action over a series of attacks on American military bases in Iraq. In a statement released in Washington, Pompeo claimed that Iran was providing "lethal aid and support to third parties in Iraq and throughout the region."

"We must... use this opportunity to remind Iran's leaders that any attacks by them, or their proxies of any identity, that harm Americans, our allies or our interests will be answered with a decisive U.S. response," he said.

Pompeo's remarks came in the wake of a report by The Wall Street Journal which said Saudi Arabia is quietly seeking to mend ties with Iran amid economic concerns and doubts about Washington's backing for Riyadh.

The fresh U.S. threat against Iran can be viewed as a signal of support for Saudi Arabia to prevent a thaw in the kingdom's relations with the Islamic Republic. Possible friendly ties between Riyadh and Tehran will put America's interests in danger as it can no longer milk Saudi Arabia to protect it against an alleged threat from Iran.

"Riyadh's newfound interest in better relations with regional rivals comes as Saudi officials question how much backing it has from the US and other allies," the WSJ report said. The U.S., backed by the UK, invaded Iraq in 2003 under the pretext that the former regime of Saddam Hussein possessed weapons of mass destruction. No such weapons, however, were ever found in the country.

The invasion plunged Iraq into chaos and led to the rise of terrorist groups. The U.S. and a coalition of its allies further launched a military campaign against purported Daesh targets in Iraq in 2014, but their operations in many instances have led to civilian deaths.

Now, the U.S. is weighing deploying up to 7,000 additional troops to the Middle East in the face of what it calls a renewed Iranian threat.

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