

U.S. regains control of embassy in Baghdad



Baghdad, January 1 (RHC)-- Iraqi security forces have regained control of the area around the U.S. Embassy in Baghdad after the compound was rocked by a second day of mass protests on Wednesday. Earlier in the day, security personnel fired tear gas and rubber bullets at hundreds of protesters -- some of whom were seen trying to climb the building's walls.

Witnesses said the protesters were hurling rocks and trying to set fire to walls and security booths at the embassy's main entrance. It was the second day of mass demonstrations outside the building in Baghdad's heavily fortified Green Zone, in response to U.S. airstrikes on an Iranian-backed militia group on Sunday.

But by Wednesday evening, the protesters had cleared away from the embassy compound's entrance. "We have issued the order for everyone to withdraw, because America should have received our message," said a spokesman for the main protest group, Kataib Hezbollah, which had been targeted by the US airstrikes.

The protests broke out after the U.S. carried out airstrikes on five facilities in Iraq and Syria, which it said were linked to the Iranian-backed group, killing dozens of people.

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