

# *Iraqi lawmaker says continued U.S. military presence amounts to occupation*

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Baghdad, April 20 (RHC)-- An Iraqi legislator has denounced the continued presence of U.S. troops in Iraq as a “form of occupation,” calling on the Baghdad government to inform the parliament about the number of the American forces and their function.

“The deployment of any foreign forces must be approved by the government given the fact that Iraq is a sovereign country. The failure of the United States to comply with the parliamentary resolution concerning the withdrawal of its troops from the Iraqi territory is a form of occupation of Iraqi territories,” Thamer al-Zaiban, a member of the Fatah (Conquest) Alliance, told Arabic-language al-Maalomah news agency in an exclusive interview on Sunday.

Iraqi lawmakers unanimously approved a bill on January 5th, demanding the withdrawal of all foreign military forces led by the United States from the country following the assassination of Lieutenant General Qassem Soleimani, the commander of the Quds Force of Iran's Islamic Revolution Guards Corps, along with Abu Mahdi al-Muhandis, the deputy head of Iraq's Hashd al-Sha'abi, and their companions in a US airstrike authorized by President Donald Trump near Baghdad International Airport two days earlier.

The lawmakers, in line with their national and regulatory responsibilities, signed the four-point draft. Later on January 9, Adel Abdul-Mahdi, the caretaker Iraqi prime minister, called on the United States to dispatch a delegation to Baghdad tasked with formulating a mechanism for the withdrawal of its troops.

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