

# *Pentagon Says U.S. Special Operations Troops Begin Work in Iraq*

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Washington, June 25 (RHC)-- The Pentagon says the first groups of up to 300 U.S. special operations troops have begun their mission in Baghdad to assist Iraqis to fight militants from the so-called Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL).

Pentagon spokesman John Kirby told reporters on Tuesday that 40 troops have arrived in Baghdad and another 50 will be deployed in the next few days. The troops are drawn from U.S. Special Operations Forces (SOF), but U.S. officials are calling them military advisers.

Kirby said that the first two teams drawn from the U.S. embassy in Iraq along with an additional 90 troops, who arrived on Tuesday, will set up a joint operations center in Baghdad. According to Kirby, the troops will only assess the state of the Iraqi army and will not stage any attacks against the militants.

Kirby said that the U.S. is flying between 30 to 35 ISR (Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance) flights per day around Iraq.

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