

# *Iraqi foreign minister calls for withdrawal of foreign troops from his country*

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Baghdad, January 10 (RHC)-- Iraqi Foreign Minister Mohammad Ali al-Hakim has stressed the need for U.S. and other foreign troops to leave Iraq as a backlash grows over the recent American assassination of a top Iranian general in Baghdad.

The top Iraqi diplomat made the appeal during a joint press briefing with his Turkish counterpart Mevlut Cavusoglu in Baghdad on Thursday. Hakim and Cavusoglu strongly condemned the U.S. assassination of Iran's General Qassem Soleimani and senior Iraqi commander of the Popular Mobilization Units Abu Mahdi al-Muhandis, both key figures in the fight against Daesh and other Takfiri terrorists in the Middle East.

"Iraq insists on maintaining its sovereignty and territorial integrity and the complete withdrawal of foreign forces," the top Iraqi diplomat said. He added that talks with his Turkish counterpart focused on the need to respect Iraq's sovereignty from all sides.

"Iraq condemns the attacks on Iraqi land, which harms the sovereignty of our country as well the security of Iraqi people. They are against the international law," the Iraqi minister said. Hakim added: ""We have

discussed with the minister that Iraq wants all foreign forces are removed out of the country through dialogue. We also discussed with the minister on cooperation areas. We have agreed to alleviate the Iran-US tension in the region."

The two sides also discussed bilateral relations at all levels, including cooperation on fighting terrorism, al-Hakim said. The Turkish foreign minister, for his part, said Ankara does not want Iraq to become a battleground for foreign forces.

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