

## Sarkozy, Iraqi VP to meet in Paris

*by UPI*

PARIS -- Iraqi Vice President Adel Abd Mahdi and French President Nicolas Sarkozy prepared Wednesday for bilateral discussions in Paris, officials said.

The talks on the international situation are part of a four-day visit by the Iraqi official during which he was scheduled to meet with French political and economic leaders, the Kuwait News Agency KUNA reported.

Mahdi's visit comes after an unannounced call paid by Sarkozy on Baghdad in February, when the French leader stopped in Iraq ahead of his tour to the Gulf states of Oman, Bahrain and Kuwait.

Economic relations between France and Iraq have been upgraded as a result of a Feb. 27 meeting of the France-Iraqi Joint Commission attended by French Finance Minister Christine Lagarde and Iraqi Oil Minister Hussain Shahrstani, KUNA said. The officials signed trade agreements on training and investment.

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