

Turkey eyes Iraq raid for Kurdish rebels

by UPI

ANKARA - The chief of the Turkish Army said Thursday that his country's military needs to cross into Iraq to crack down on Turkish Kurds there.

"If you ask me whether a cross-border operation is needed, yes it is needed. It would be useful," Chief of the General Staff General Yasar Buyukanit said at a news conference, Alalam TV reported.

"But there is a second dimension to that. It requires a political decision," he said, adding that the military had not yet asked the government for parliamentary approval for a cross-border mission, Alalam reported.

"If the armed forces are given this mission, they are strong enough to carry out such operations," he said.

Buyukanit said Turkish Kurds, who have long fought for self-governance in southern Turkey, are seeking refuge in northern Iraq. On Wednesday, Turkey called on Iraq to take measures against the rebels.

The United States has opposed a Turkish invasion in the Kurdish region of Iraq, one of few relatively peaceful regions in the country.

Turkey eyes Iraq raid for Kurdish rebels by UPI