

Iraq pledges Turkey help with Kurd attacks

by UPI

ISTANBUL, Turkey -- Iraqi Foreign Minister Hoshyar Zebari pledged Tuesday in Baghdad to assist Turkey rein in separatist Iraqi Kurds targeting Turkish troops. At a news conference after meeting with his Turkish counterpart, Ali Babacan, Zebari offered few details of what Iraq would do with the group known as the PKK, a New York Times correspondent reported. "We have a common position to fight terrorism wherever it is, we will not allow any party or any group, including the PKK, to poison our bilateral relations," Zebari said. Sunday, Iraqi Kurds crossed the border and ambushed a Turkish military patrol, killing 12 soldiers, prompting concerns Turkey would send troops into Iraq. Monday, the PKK posted an offer of a cease-fire on the Internet, which Babacan flatly rejected on Tuesday, a correspondent for China's Xinhua news agency reported. "This issue of cease-fire is an issue between two countries and two armies and not with a terror organization," he said. In Washington, U.S. State Department spokesman Sean McCormack said the Bush administration was advocating diplomacy, The Washington Post reported. "We want to see an outcome where you have the Turks and the Iraqis working together, and we will do what we can to resolve the issue without a Turkish cross-border incursion," he said.

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