



Iraq's Kurds suspend participation in government

Publisher [Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty](#)

Publication Date 11 July 2014

Cite as Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, *Iraq's Kurds suspend participation in government*, 11 July 2014, available at: <http://www.refworld.org/docid/53ce30e6b.html> [accessed 5 August 2014]

Disclaimer This is not a UNHCR publication. UNHCR is not responsible for, nor does it necessarily endorse, its content. Any views expressed are solely those of the author or publisher and do not necessarily reflect those of UNHCR, the United Nations or its Member States.

July 11, 2014

By RFE/RL

Iraq's Kurdish politicians are suspending all of their participation in government in protest against Prime Minister Nuri al-Maliki's accusation that the Kurds were harboring Sunni militants fighting his government.

Foreign Minister Hoshiyar Zebari, who is a Kurd, said on July 11 that the Kurds will no longer take part in the day-to-day work of the government.

However, Zebari said Kurdish lawmakers will continue to attend the parliament, which is seeking to form a new government after April 30 elections.

Zebari also told Reuters that Iraq risked falling apart if a new inclusive government is not formed soon to deal with the challenge of the Sunni insurgency.

Militants from the Islamic State, previously known as the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL), along with allied Sunni militants have seized large swathes of territory in northern and western Iraq since early June and have declared an Islamic caliphate.

Maliki, a Shi'ite, on July 9 said the Kurdish autonomous region was allowing ISIL to base itself in the regional capital, Irbil.

In response, the Kurdish presidency said Maliki was "hysterical" and not fit to run the country.

Tensions between the federal government and the Kurds escalated after Kurdish Peshmerga forces – the autonomous region's official security forces – moved into disputed areas of northern Iraq that were vacated by government troops that had failed to stop the ISIL onslaught in early June.

Kurdish President Masud Barzani has said Kurdish autonomy in those areas – including the highly disputed city of Kirkuk – is now here to stay.

Iraq's Oil Ministry on July 11 accused Kurdish Peshmerga fighters of seizing oil wells at two key northern fields near Kirkuk.

An Oil Ministry official said the oil fields have a combined daily output capacity of some 400,000 barrels per day.

The Kurdish regional government confirmed its forces had taken over the oil fields of Bai Hassan and the Mahmoud area, and said they would use some of the production for domestic purposes.

An Oil Ministry spokesman denounced the move as a "violation of the constitution" and warned that it poses "a threat to national unity."

Meanwhile, Iraq's top Shi'ite cleric, Ayatollah Ali Sistani, urged troops and militias fighting the militants to respect the rights of all Iraqis, regardless of sect or politics.

Sistani's call came after a recent escalation in apparent sectarian killings.

Earlier this week, the corpses of 53 men, blindfolded and handcuffed, were found south of Baghdad.

With reporting by Reuters and AFP

[Link to original story on RFE/RL website](#)

Copyright notice: Copyright (c) 2007-2009. RFE/RL, Inc. Reprinted with the permission of Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, 1201 Connecticut Ave., N.W. Washington DC 20036

Search Refworld

by keyword

and / or country

All countries



Clear

Search

[Advanced Search](#) | [Search Tips](#)

Countries

- [Iraq](#)

Topics

- [Kurd](#)