

Press Releases: Remarks at the Office of Iraqi Prime Minister Haider al-Abadi

Remarks
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Secretary of State

Prime Minister's Office
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SECRETARY TILLERSON: Well, thank you very much, Mr. Prime Minister, for receiving me in Baghdad. It is truly a pleasure to be here to have this opportunity to visit with a very important partner in the fight to defeat ISIS, to defeat Daesh. And we congratulate Iraq under your leadership for the tremendous progress and victories – the liberation of Mosul last July, taking one of Daesh's stated caliphate capitals away from it, the recent liberations of Hawija and Tal Afar. These are all very important victories, and we applaud the efforts on the part on the Iraqi forces to defeat Daesh. As you point out, there is still more that has to be done to ensure that Daesh is defeated once and for all and is eliminated from all of Iraq.

We are concerned and a bit saddened by the recent differences that have emerged between the Kurdistan Regional Government and the Iraqi central government. We are – we have friends both in Baghdad, and we have friends in Erbil, and we encourage both parties to enter into discussion and dialogue. I think if both parties commit themselves to a unified Iraq, to a – to the Iraqi constitution, I think all differences can be addressed and the rights of all can be respected and Iraq will have a very secure and a prosperous future.

We had an opportunity to share in an important event in Saudi Arabia, the creation of the Coordination Council. We think this is an important milestone in restoring relationships between Iraq and the Gulf, the GCC countries, and Saudi Arabia that's going to lead to very important economic development in Iraq as well – all for the good of the people of Iraq – and strengthening the security and stability of the region.

We look forward too to furthering U.S. economic activity with Iraq, and we look forward to a future of a secure and stable Iraq with a great partnership

between Iraq and the U.S. for many years to come. Thank you again.

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