



Iraqi Kurdish Leader Promises to Help Release Iranian Agents Captured in Iraq

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TEHRAN -- The leader of the Iraqi Kurdistan Masoud Barrezani on Sunday promised Islamic Republic's Ambassador to Iraq Hassan Kazemi Qomi not to spare any efforts in releasing the Iranian diplomats kidnapped by the US troops in the northern Iraqi city of Erbil.

Elsewhere, the Iranian envoy also conferred with Nichervan Barrezani, a senior official in the Iraqi Kurdistan, about the same issue.

During the said meetings, the Kurd officials pledged that they would make their utmost efforts to help set Iranian diplomats free.

The two sides also agreed to change the status of the two Iranian liaison offices in Erbil and Soleymanieh from consulate to consulate general.

Kazemi Qomi and Barrezani also discussed boosting of economic cooperation between Iran and Iraqi Kurdistan and agreed to turn Haj Omran-Bashmagh into an international trade border so that the two sides can redirect their economic exchanges to the third countries.

At around 3 a.m. January 11, US troops disarmed the guards outside the Iranian consulate in the northern Iraqi city of Erbil, broke into the building and confiscated computers and documents there while military helicopters were hovering overhead.

Despite Americans' allegations, the liaison office had diplomatic immunity and functioned as a consulate general issuing travel documents and carrying out other consular tasks. An Iranian flag flying over the building was hauled down during the raid.

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