



## Iraqi Kurd PM Seeks Direct Contact With Turkey

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Iraqi Kurds expect to hold direct talks with the Turkish government and Ankara should not hesitate to contact Arbil to solve the issues in the region, prime minister of Iraqi Kurdish administration said on Monday.

"We, as the regional government, have a constitutional statute. Therefore Turkey should not hesitate to establish direct talks with us... I personally see no reason that prevents (Turkey) to invite us or to hold direct talks," Nechirvan Barzani told in an interview with broadcaster CNNTurk.

Turkey and Kurdish administration had started to hold contacts after a period of stalemate due to Iraqi Kurds unwillingness to help Ankara in its fight against PKK. Turkey had signaled it could raise the level of talks, which are currently run by envoys.

The PKK, listed as a terrorist organization by Turkey as well as the most of the international community, including the United States and the European Union, uses northern Iraq as a base to stage attacks on targets inside neighboring Turkey.

Barzani said the Kurdish administration has no responsibility in PKK's acts. "PKK did not emerge on the Kurdish regions of Iraq but on the Turkish soil. However we believe that this issue should be solved politically... We do not believe it can be solved through military means," he added.

Barzani said the issues in the region should be solved through dialogue, adding Turkey should not hesitate to contact the regional government.

Turkey had started to hold talks with the northern Iraq administration after the Kurdish officials took a series of measures to tackle the PKK activities in the region. Turkey had welcomed those measures and the change in the rhetoric of the Kurdish officials against PKK.

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