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Iran Deploys Tanks, Artillery to Iraqi Kurdish Border, Kurdish Officials Say

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Talk of Iraq, Iran, and Turkey responded to Kurdistan's secession vote with military action seems to be growing more serious. Kurdish officials now say that Iran has deployed a dozen tanks and accompanying artillery to their border with Iraqi Kurdistan.



Iranian tanks near the Kurdish border

Kurdish officials say the tanks can be seen from their side of the border, dubbing the deployment a “dangerous escalation.” The Iranian government presented it as part of a joint military drill with Iraq.

92% of Kurdish voters were in favor of seceding from Iraq, and Kurdish officials say there is no going back after the vote. The effort is opposed by the rest of the region, however, and Iran and Turkey, who both have Kurdish minorities of their own, are particularly averse to a precedent for a Kurdish right to self determination.

The Kurdish Peshmerga is a substantial militia faction, bolstered by being armed by the US for the ISIS war. Still, it's not clear how capable they would be in defending Iraqi Kurdistan if it comes to an invasion by all their neighbors.