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Iraqi Kurdistan to Freeze Referendum, Offer Talks to Baghdad

10/24/2017

Faced with mounting territory losses and the threat of a war against basically the entire region, Iraq's Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG) has proposed that the results of last month's referendum on independence be "frozen," and they are seeking talks with the Iraqi central government.

The Kurds voted over 92% in favor of declaring independence, but Iraqi officials declared the vote illegal, and the Iraqi military has been dispatched to expel the Kurdish government from territory it took during the ISIS War. Incursions into KRG territory also appear to be under consideration.



The Kurdish leadership had long expected independence efforts to begin immediately following the ISIS War, and seemed well aware this could be a messy exit. They appear to have underestimated just how aggressively Iraq has gone after them, however, and how few allies they really have.

The US has offered at most a tentative rebuke to Iraq for the military offensive, while insisting they oppose Kurdish independence. The only nation to formally endorse Kurdistan's independence bid is Israel, and that's just fueled more regional opposition to them.

