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European Languages

زبانهای اروپایی

December 14, 2017

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16.12.2017

Key Iraqi Shi'ite Militia Chief Wants Fighters Placed Under National Army

With an eye toward running for parliament in the May 12 election, [Badr Brigade leader Hadi al-Amiri is calling on his fighters to withdraw](#) from all cities they control, and to place themselves under the direct control of the Iraqi military.

Iraqi Prime Minister Hayder Abadi has sought to separate militias from political parties, and prevent militia leaders from running in elections. If Amiri indeed manages to separate himself from the Badr Brigade in this



way, it would give Abadi's edict a lot more credibility.

After all, since the 2003 US occupation, top Iraqi politicians have often also been militia figures, and Abadi himself is a figure in the Dawa Party, which historically commands the loyalty of multiple Shi'ite militias. It was not expected the division of the militia and the political party could easily be done.

But the Badr Brigade is one of the biggest militias out there, and Amiri is one of the most influential militia leaders in Iraq, in addition to having political influence. If he's ultimately willing to try to see his forces placed under military rule, that may provide a road-map for other militias to do the same.