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US Gives Turkey Go Ahead To Continue Deadly Air Strikes in Iraq

By Margaret Griffis

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At least **four Iraqis were killed and 14 more were wounded** across the country. One of the attacks was directed at an important Sunni leader in Anbar province. Meanwhile, Turkey claims to have killed approximately 100 Kurdish rebels in the north. Despite Kurdish demands for Washington to step in and stop the Turkish campaign, the U.S. has given tacit approval for continuing the operations.

The **Turkish** military is [claiming](#) extensive air and artillery strikes have left almost 100 Kurdish rebels dead in northern Iraq, while another 80 have been wounded. A spokesman for the **Kurdistan Workers Party** (P.K.K.) [denied](#) the claim and admitted just three deaths among the rebels. Local authorities further [confirmed](#) that another seven fatalities were members of a family fleeing the Turkish operations.

Due to the remoteness of the area, independent confirmation of any casualty figures is nearly impossible, and both the Turkish authorities and P.K.K. are regularly accused of exaggerating the numbers. For decades, the P.K.K. has been engaged in a guerilla war against Turkey that has left tens of thousands dead. Recent attempts at creating a peace dialogue have [failed](#), and since May the P.K.K. has taken a mostly [threatening stance](#) towards Turkey. However, deadly cross-border attacks do occur yearly in the warmer months when it is easier to cross the mountains into Turkey. They generally cease in the winter months.

Meanwhile, the **Kurdistan** parliament [criticized](#) the **U.S. government** for ignoring the threat to Iraqi sovereignty. The Iraqi military appears to be unable or unwilling to [deal forcefully](#) with any

incursions from neighboring countries, and the Kurds feel it is the U.S.'s responsibility to protect Iraq. However, U.S. State Department spokesperson **Victoria Nuland** separately [said](#) that Turkey has the right to protect itself from the rebels and only cautioned Ankara to keep close ties with Baghdad during operations.

Police in **Hay al-Jubour** [accused](#) the **U.S. military** of conducting a raid without notifying authorities. When the troops did not find the accused man they wanted, the suspect's two brothers were detained instead.