
Jihadists kidnap head of Turkish diplomatic mission, 24 staff members in Iraq's Mosul

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Jihadists seized the Turkish consulate in the Iraqi city of Mosul on Wednesday and kidnapped the head of the diplomatic mission and 24 staff members, a police colonel said. "ISIL members managed to kidnap the Turkish consul and 24 of his guards and assistants," the officer said, referring to powerful jihadist group the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant.

The colonel said he had spoken with one of the kidnappers, who said those held "are safe with us," and will be moved to a "safer place".

The kidnappings came a day after the Mosul consulate said ISIL fighters had seized 28 Turkish truck drivers.

In a spectacular blow to the Shiite-led government, jihadists spearheaded by ISIL on Tuesday seized Mosul, its surrounding region of Nineveh and areas of Kirkuk and Salaheddin province.

The takeover of Mosul prompted the United States to voice deep concern about the "extremely serious" situation and warn that ISIL poses "a threat to the entire region".

ISIL is the most powerful militant group in Iraq, and a major force in the rebellion against Syrian President Bashar al-Assad.

Turkish forces have targeted ISIL in Syria, and warned it against attacking a shrine in the northern province of Aleppo that is under Turkish jurisdiction.

[Al Qaeda militants seize Turkish consulate in Iraq's Mosul - media](#)

Militants have seized the Turkish consulate in the northern Iraqi city of Mosul and efforts are under way to ensure the safety of diplomatic staff, Reuters reports quoting two Turkish government sources. Sunni insurgents from an al-

Qaeda splinter group, the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL), seized Mosul on Tuesday in a show of strength against Iraq's Shi'ite-led government.

"Certain militant groups in Mosul have been directly contacted to ensure the safety of diplomatic staff," a Turkish government source said, adding there was no immediate information on the status of the diplomats.

Prime Minister Tayyip Erdogan held an emergency meeting with the Undersecretary of Turkey's National Intelligence Agency (MIT) and Deputy Prime Minister Besir Atalay to discuss the developments, Turkish media reported.

The seizure of the consulate comes a day after 28 Turkish truck drivers were abducted by ISIL militants while delivering diesel to a power plant in Mosul.

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