

13,000 US Troops to be Deployed to Iraq: Officials

By [Press TV](#)

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Iraqi officials say that the United States is due to send 13,000 soldiers to Iraq, despite its claims of complete military withdrawal from the country.

The vice president of the local council of Iraq's Saladin Province made the announcement on Thursday, adding that the troops, along with their vehicles, would be stationed at the Speicher airfield in the city of Tikrit, located 140 kilometers (87 miles) northwest of the capital, Baghdad.

Washington has already sent 1,600 troops to Iraq, most recently on September 10, when an additional 475 soldiers were deployed to the country. The US claims most of them serve as advisers to Iraqi and Kurdish forces or provide security for the US embassy and the international airport in the Iraqi capital.

Washington has also been conducting airstrikes against the positions of the Takfiri ISIL militants in Iraq.

The Iraqi official, meanwhile, confirmed that there are dozens of military advisors on the ground in the province.

The deployment comes as US President Barack Obama said earlier this month that he would not pursue another ground war in Iraq after US troops' pullout from the country in 2011.

"As your commander in chief, I will not commit you and the rest of our armed forces to fighting another ground war in Iraq," said Obama in a speech to troops at US Central Command headquarters in Florida on September 17.

Senior religious and political figures in Iraq, including Grand Ayatollah Ali al-Sistani, have in recent days called on the Baghdad government not to rely on foreign powers in the battle against the ISIL.

Political experts believe that the real objective of the so-called international coalition recently formed by Washington to fight ISIL is to expand the US military presence in the region.

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