

US DEPARTMENT OF STATE

Press Statement  
Sean McCormack  
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Iraq/Turkey: Release of Turkish Soldiers

The United States welcomes the release of eight Turkish soldiers who were captured by the terrorist Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK) on October 21. The eight Turkish soldiers were handed over to Iraqi officials, who then delivered them to United States military personnel for transfer to Turkish authorities. We applaud the efforts of the Government of Iraq to secure the release of the hostages. We urge continued, deepened, and immediate cooperation between Iraq and Turkey in combating the PKK, which is a common enemy of Turkey, Iraq and the United States. Secretary Rice met in Istanbul with her Turkish and Iraqi counterparts yesterday to discuss ways to increase counterterrorism cooperation. We reiterate our condemnation of the PKK as a terrorist organization, and call upon the PKK to cease its terrorist actions and unconditionally lay down its arms.

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