

Shiite official warns U.S. on SOFA

Published: May 06, 2008

BAGHDAD, May 6 (UPI) -- An adviser to the Shiite Supreme Islamic Iraqi Council said any U.S. violations of Iraqi sovereignty in the pending status of forces agreement are unacceptable.

Mohsen Hakim, son of party founder Abdul Aziz al-Hakim, said the pending agreement between the U.S. and Iraqi governments needs to be a consensus, transparent measure that respects Iraqi sovereignty and independence.

Hakim said in an interview with the Iranian Fars News Agency Tuesday the Iraqi government objects to draft proposals that grant immunity from Iraqi law to U.S. diplomats, contractors and service personnel.

The Shiite lawmaker said the proposal amounts to agreeing to surrender Iraqi autonomy to the United States.

Hakim added the Iraqi government has yet to agree on provisions that would allow U.S. military forces to cross the Iraqi border without first consulting with Baghdad.

Finally, he said U.S. forces will not be permitted to establish large-scale military bases as in other countries under similar status of forces agreements because it undermines Iraqi independence.