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Trump Thanks Russia for Role in Operation to Kill Islamic State Leader Baghdadi

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AP

U.S. President Donald Trump on Sunday thanked countries including Russia for their roles in an overnight raid led by U.S. military forces in Syria that killed Islamic State leader Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi.

“I want to thank the nations of Russia, Turkey, Syria and Iraq and I also want to thank the Syrian Kurds for certain support they were able to give us,” Trump said in a televised address to the nation from the White House.

Russia’s Defense Ministry said it had no reliable information on the operation.

"The Russian Ministry of Defense does not have reliable information on the U.S. servicemen conducting in the Turkish-controlled part of the de-escalation zone of Idlib an operation on yet another 'elimination' of the former IS leader Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi," Major-General Igor

Konashenkov was quoted by the state-run RIA Novosti news agency as saying.

The U.S. president said Baghdadi killed himself and three of his children by detonating an explosives-laden vest when he fled U.S. forces into a dead-end tunnel during the attack, which took place in the Idlib region in northwest Syria.

He added that Russia had been "great" during the operation.

"We told the Russians we're coming in because we had to go over them ... but they were very cooperative, they really were good," Trump said. "And we did say that it would be a mission that they'd like because ... they hate ISIS as much as we do."

Reuters contributed reporting to this article.

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