

RELEASE IN FULL

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**From:** Abedin, Huma <AbedinH@state.gov>  
**Sent:** Thursday, December 29, 2011 11:43 AM  
**To:** H  
**Subject:** Fw: Turkish official says Iraq air strike killed civilians (Reuters)

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**From:** OpsNewsTicker  
**Sent:** Thursday, December 29, 2011 11:22 AM  
**To:** NEWS-Mahogany; NEWS-NEA; NEWS-EUR; NEWS-PM  
**Cc:** SES-O  
**Subject:** Turkish official says Iraq air strike killed civilians (Reuters)

ANKARA (Reuters) - Turkey's ruling party spokesman said on Thursday initial reports into a Turkish air strike in northern Iraq overnight showed the 35 people killed were smugglers whom the military mistook for armed militants.

AK Party spokesman Huseyin Celik called the incident "saddening" and said reports from local government officials showed most of those killed were cigarette smugglers under the age of 30.

"It has been determined from initial reports that these people were smugglers, not terrorists," Celik told a news conference on live television.

"If mistakes were made, if there were flaws and if there were shortcomings in the incident that took place, by no means will these be covered up."

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