Ban appoints new Iraq special envoy

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UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon has appointed former Bulgarian Foreign Minister Nickolay Mladenov as his new special envoy to Iraq.

The UN chief made the appointment on Friday, Reuters reported.

Mladenov succeeds former German diplomat Martin Kobler, who was named UN special envoy to the Democratic Republic of Congo in June.

Mladenov, 41, was Bulgaria's foreign minister from 2010 to 2013.

The appointment was announced the day after the United Nations said more than 1,000 people were killed in Iraq in July making it the country's deadliest month in five years.

Iraq is witnessing its worst bloodshed since 2008 and civilians are a prime target in the violence.

Ban said in a statement on July 29 that he was alarmed by the increased violence in Iraq that was "aimed at ripping apart the country's social fabric," adding that the country was "at another crossroads."

"Its political leaders have a clear responsibility to bring the country back from the brink, and to leave no space to those who seek to exploit the political stalemate through violence and terror," he said.

In an interview with Press TV on July 24, an international human rights lawyer said that foreign powers are attempting to fabricate and benefit from Shia-Sunni discord in Iraq and elsewhere, seeking to see the Muslim world weakened in the wake of such rifts.

"Who benefits is of course the key issue. It's really not the people of Iraq, it's not the Sunnis, it's not the Shia[s]. It is external powers that want to exploit and create division. Those are the parties that benefit," said Canada-based attorney Edward Corrigan.

"It's certainly not the people in the region [that benefit from sectarian conflicts]; it's not Iran; it's not Iraq; it's not the people of Syria, which are now witnessing the destruction of their state and where there has been attempts to provoke similar sectarian conflict in Lebanon," he added.

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