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AN UPDATE ON EFFORTS TO DEVELOP AND SUPPORT THE IRAQI SECURITY FORCES

COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
ONE HUNDRED TENTH CONGRESS
SECOND SESSION

HEARING HELD
JULY 9, 2008

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AN UPDATE ON EFFORTS TO DEVELOP AND SUPPORT THE IRAQI SECURITY FORCES

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES,
Washington, DC, Wednesday, July 9, 2008.

The committee met, pursuant to call, at 10:06 a.m., in room 2118, Rayburn House Office Building, Hon. Ike Skelton (chairman of the committee) presiding.

OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. IKE SKELTON, A REPRESENTATIVE FROM MISSOURI, CHAIRMAN, COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES

The CHAIRMAN. The committee will come to order.

We meet today to receive an update on the status of efforts to develop and support Iraqi security forces (ISF). Our witness today is Lieutenant General James Dubik, who less than a week ago left his post as the commander of the Multi-National Security Transition Command–Iraq (MNSTC–I). We welcome you and thank you for your service. I understand you are going to be retiring in the near future.

We also have with us, as I understand it, to answer any questions you might have, Christopher Straub, the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for the Middle East.

So welcome to you, and thank you, General Dubik, for agreeing to appear with us today. We appreciate your service as the commander in charge of training the Iraqis, as well as your some–37 years in the United States Army. We appreciate it. I understand that your wife, Sharon Basso is with us today, and daughters Karen and Katie. Am I correct? Where are they? Stand up so we can look at you.

[Applause.]

The CHAIRMAN. I know you are proud of your husband and your daddy. Thank you for being with us. It is a rare treat to have family with a witness.

Recent events in Iraq, in particular the operations in Basra and Sadr City, have shown how far the Iraqi security forces have come in such a short time. But these operations also pointed out some problems that need to be addressed if any strategy that allows our forces to leave in the near future is to depend on effective, nonsectarian Iraqi security forces.

The Iraqi security forces were able to move over a division in a short period of time. Combat operations in Basra relied almost entirely on Iraqis for ground forces with very few coalition troops in combat, as I understand it. But the operations also highlighted

weaknesses in planning, logistics, fire support, and command and control.

In our last hearing with our friend General Dubik back in January of this year, I mentioned the meeting I had with the Iraqi Minister of Defense, Mr. Qadir. Then, he expressed his personal belief that Iraq might be able to take responsibility for their own internal security as early as the first quarter of 2009 and would probably be able to handle their external security by 2018.

I hope, General Dubik, you can help us understand if that aggressive 2009 goal can be met and hopefully you can provide us with your best assessments of the strengths on one hand and the weaknesses on the other of the Iraqi security forces.

We have been working on building the Iraqi security forces now for five years. We have spent billions of dollars. The redeployment of American troops out of Iraq is dependent on the Iraqis being able to provide for their own security, and that redeployment is tied to our own national security. We need not go into all of that, which we have done a good number of times in this hearing room.

We need a real and clear sense of where we are, general, in this effort, and how long it will take for the Iraqi security forces to be able to operate without us, and what the strategy is for getting us there. So thank you for this.

Mr. Straub, we have been told you have no opening statement, but you are here to answer questions. We appreciate very much your doing so.

I now turn to my friend, Mr. Hunter. Please.

STATEMENT OF HON. DUNCAN HUNTER, A REPRESENTATIVE FROM CALIFORNIA, RANKING MEMBER, COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES

Mr. HUNTER. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, thank you for holding this very important hearing because this goes to the heart of the American operation in Iraq, and that of course is the development and deployment of a reliable Iraqi military force.

General Dubik, let me join the chairman in congratulating you on 37 years of outstanding service to our country, and wish you the best of health and much happiness. And to your family that is with you today, congratulations on having such a hero for a father and for a husband.

We are going to talk about today the coalition efforts to stand up the Iraqi forces. That is very critical. It is especially critical at this time because we are entering into formal agreements that detail roles, missions, and footprints for the future military presence in Iraq. Clearly, to determine the appropriate missions and force levels for U.S. troops, negotiators have to make certain assumptions about the ability of the Iraqi forces to shoulder more and more of the security burden over time.

I know that both of our witnesses surely agree that the long-term solution to providing stability in Iraq has to rest with the Iraqis themselves, and that of course is in turn dependent on the capability and the reliability of the security forces. They have to be able and willing to, in General Dubik's words from testimony earlier this year, defend themselves, their citizens, and their new-found freedom.

General, in your opinion, one thing I would like to know during this hearing is how close we are to realizing that situation, where the roughly 140 trained and equipped combat battalions, how well they perform in battle.

Of course, in the unique situation with Iraq, it makes this somewhat different from an American training operation where we train forces, as we have in many other parts of the world. You have a real test laboratory here called a battlefield.

So I know one thing that we are interested in is the performance of the Iraqis in the battlefield, in the battle space, their capabilities, their inadequacies, where those exist, and how we meet the gaps and move quickly to close them.

As I understand it, we now have 139 line battalions, and you have 4 special operations battalions. So we have 143 Iraq battalions extant today. So if you could talk about that.

In particular, I am concerned, as I have always been, about the ability of Iraqi battalions to saddle up, if you will, and move out and deploy in an area of operation (AO) that is different from the one where they are regularly stationed, perform a mission, and perform it largely independent of American support, and then move back to the area of operations to which they have been assigned.

I know you have some examples of that, because of the Basra operation and of course the Sadr City operation. So the ability of the Iraqi forces to move out, accomplish a mission in a professional manner I think is of a lot of concern to us.

On the hardware side, it seems to me that as U.S. forces draw down, for example the five surge brigades that are almost done redeploying out of Iraq, there is going to be a significant amount of major U.S. military equipment that will need to be shipped out of Iraq.

It also seems to me that we may want some of this equipment to remain in Iraq, depending on various considerations, but not limited to Iraqi requirements, U.S. requirements, the condition of the equipment, and costs associated with transport and refurbishment.

I think, General, it is important for the American people and for the effectiveness of the Iraqi military, to ensure that this equipment accountability is done with extreme professionalism, that we don't end up getting rid of a lot of great U.S. military equipment for five cents on the dollar.

One thing that I haven't been able to pin down, and I hope you could get this for us, is how we arrive, if we leave equipment with Iraqi forces, at a price tag, if you move that through the foreign military supply system, for foreign military sales (FMS). I am reminded of, for example, when the Marines unhorsed their equipped Humvees, they had at one point 1,800 of them parked at Taqqadum as they moved up to the heavier-armored Humvees.

So I know that while we have some old equipment and some heavily used equipment in Iraq, we also have a lot of equipment that hasn't been used a lot. How much of that is moved to the Iraqi military, and how much of it is brought back to the United States is I think an important question for us.

I think the worst scenario is for us to find out that we have a bunch of National Guard battalions, for example, that left their

equipment in Iraq, or parts of their equipment in Iraq, and find out a year from now that we have massive inadequacies or massive gaps in their equipage because of what they left over there, and then find later that we gave away a lot of that equipment or transferred it for next to nothing.

So having a clear and professional roadmap on how we handle the equipment piece of this Iraqi drawdown is I think a really critical aspect of any program for the next four or five months. I would like your thoughts on that. How do we do that? And how do we maintain a decent inventory of what we have and what we need? Because a big piece of this is going to be coming out of this operation with an American military that is ready for other contingencies.

The last thing we want to be doing is slapping our foreheads a year from now or two years from now saying, doggone it, we have these important enablers and we left them in Iraq, and we are not sure where they are. So if you could give us your thoughts on that that would be I think very important.

I think also one thing that I wanted to know, and I think a number of other members had questions about it, is how we fix this thing with the payment for the Iraqi forces. As we have all learned early on, a lot of the Iraqi military leave their units to go home because we don't have a pay system that enables them to stay put. Whether or not we are going to be able to change that cultural situation is unclear to me, and whether we have fixed that at all is also somewhat unclear.

So if you could talk about that a little bit, and go over the basic pathway that an Iraqi unit or an Iraqi soldier takes now. As the chairman mentioned, we have been in this business for a long time now, longer than it took us to win World War II. So we ought to have a pretty good system in place to take that guy from a recruit status.

And also the Sons of Iraq, who I understand are now being brought into the Iraqi army, how those people are taken from a recruit status through a training cycle, ultimately to a deployed unit, and how that unit is then integrated into the overall battlefield operation, if you could give us an idea on that, that would be excellent.

So again thank you for being with us today. We appreciate your great service to the country, and we hope that we have the advantage of your wisdom for many years to come. Thank you.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Mr. Straub, we have been told that you have a brief opening statement, and that primarily you are here to answer questions. If that is correct, you may proceed with your opening statement.

STATEMENT OF CHRISTOPHER C. STRAUB, DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF DEFENSE FOR MIDDLE EASTERN AFFAIRS, OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

Mr. STRAUB. Yes, sir. That is correct.

I just want to join with the words of the chairman and the ranking member welcoming General Dubik, and saying what an honor it is to be at the same table with such a great trainer and inno-

vator and developer of forces as General Dubik has been in his career. And also to join the committee in saluting Sharon Basso and their daughters Karen and Kate, representing military families throughout the country who have sacrificed so much for our country.

With that, sir, I am ready for your questions.

The CHAIRMAN. General Dubik, let's proceed now with your testimony. Your statement has been filed for the record and will be admitted in its entirety in the record. You can summarize it as you see fit.

STATEMENT OF LT. GEN. JAMES M. DUBIK, USA, FORMER COMMANDING GENERAL, MULTI-NATIONAL SECURITY TRANSITION COMMAND–IRAQ

General DUBIK. Thank you, Mr. Chairman and Ranking Member Hunter and members of the committee. Thanks to each of you for this opportunity to have a conversation upon the completion of my tour in Iraq.

I would like also to thank the committee for your continued support for the men and women in uniform for the trips that many of you have made into the Iraq theater of operations and for the difficult work you have done on our behalf here. Without your support, this last year could not and certainly would not have been as successful as it was.

The Iraqis are growing confident in their security forces. Operations in Basra, Sadr City, Mosul, Amarah, and other places have been initiated and primarily sustained by Iraqis. Certainly, the Basra operation was off to a rough start, but equally certain is this, that the Basra operation was tactically and strategically successful in the end in that each of the other operations in Mosul, Sadr City, and Amarah have been progressively better. Each one has helped develop the confidence and competence of the military and police, and each one cements in their minds the kinds of capabilities that they know they have to develop, and they are committed to their success.

Since June of 2007, which was the high point of violence in Iraq, the Iraqi security forces have been increased in both size and capability. The total security force grew some 58,000 in the defense forces and 64,000 in the interior forces. Of course, numbers and quantity are insufficient.

Important quality indicators are also up. Gains in the percentage of leaders in the units, the percentage of soldiers who are present for duty, the numbers of air missions and naval patrols per week, and the overall operational readiness ratings are all trending in a positive direction.

In the last 12 months, the Iraqis have built 11 brigade headquarters and 35 battalions. In another important indicator, the confidence the Iraqi citizens themselves have in their own security forces, has improved every month since November of 2007.

Challenges remain, however. The Iraqi security forces are still reliant on our enablers. Their training is basic. Their leader shortages still exist, and distribution of leaders is uneven. There are still pockets of sectarianism. And last, the problems of rapid

growth that any nation would face are evident in the Iraqi security forces.

To help ensure that we hold onto the successes that our soldiers, Marines, airmen, and sailors with Iraqi partners, who are fighting and dying at two to three times the rate of coalition forces, to hold onto those successes and achieve the quality improvements and professionalization that we all want, continued coalition advisory and training teams, along with partnership units, is necessary, as is Iraqi security force funding.

From my standpoint, we should not underestimate the difficulty of the task remaining. The successes of the past year-plus are significant and are dramatic, but can be reversed, and they can be stymied. The enemies of the new Iraq are still very active, as recent reports have seen. They are still capable, though in diminishing frequency, of conducting violent attacks against the innocent. They still seek to destabilize and de-legitimize the government of Iraq. They want to reverse the gains of the last 15 months.

They have not given up, nor does anyone expect them to. They recognize that they have lost the initiative, but they still seek to regain it. Our assistance may change in organization and size, to be sure, but some form of partnership and assistance consistent with our two nations' strategic objectives, in my opinion, is still necessary.

Key to the development of the Iraqi security ministry's capacity has been their budget execution. The Iraqis' two security ministries have executed approximately $1.5 billion to $2 billion more each year from 2005 to the present. In 2008 will be the third year in a row that they will have executed more money in their ministries of defense and interior than that in the Iraqi security force fund. We expect that to be the case also in 2009.

The minister of interior has improved his execution rate since 2007, spending 89 percent of his budget. In 2008, he is continuing along that improved spending trajectory. The ministry of defense, however, only spent 75 percent of its 2007 allocation and continues to have difficulty in executing his budget. Both ministries have requested and will receive supplemental funding. The minister of defense requested $1.8 billion more. The minister of interior asked for $2.5 billion more. The MNSTC–I advisers will continue to do their best in helping the Iraqis spend their money for their defense.

Aggressive use of foreign military sales programs is helping to equip the Iraq security forces. Delivery of FMS-purchased equipment with Iraqi money remains satisfactory. I thank you for your support, and your colleagues, and thanks also to the Secretary of Defense's special task force on foreign military sales. One year ago, the total delivered in this category was only $115 million worth of equipment. Today, the total is over $1.4 billion. This accelerated delivery has made important positive contributions to the Iraqi security forces' capability.

Two problems remain in foreign military sales, however. The first is processing time—too long here and too long in Baghdad. And second is the lag time between the Iraqi final decision to purchase equipment and the delivery. For example, as of today, the Iraqis have received, as I said, over $1.4 billion worth of equip-

ment, but they have ordered $2.7 billion. From their perspective, this gap is unsatisfactory.

I would like to thank you again, Mr. Chairman and Ranking Member Hunter and the committee, on behalf of all the men and women of the Multi-National Transition Command—Iraq, for your support this past year. We have asked a great deal of the men and women and their families, and they have made enormous sacrifices.

Our elected officials and fellow citizens have done a tremendous job in supporting our soldiers and Marines and airmen and civilians and sailors and their loved ones. We all appreciate that. We all acknowledge that. And the knowledge that our country appreciates its warriors' sacrifices and those of its families bolsters all of our determination.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

[The prepared statement of General Dubik can be found in the Appendix on page 45.]

The CHAIRMAN. General, thank you very much.

I have two quick questions, one for the secretary and one for you, then I will ask my colleague from California if he has questions.

Mr. Straub, recent Department of Defense reports have said that the eventual size of the Iraqi security forces will be between 600,000 and 646,000 members. My simple question is, then, is that a U.S. plan or an Iraqi plan?

General DUBIK. Sir, that number came from a conjunction of studies.

The CHAIRMAN. Wait. Does Mr. Straub know the answer?

Mr. STRAUB. Sir, I would have to defer to General Dubik for the expert answer on that.

The CHAIRMAN. Okay. General.

General DUBIK. Sir, that number came from a conjunction of studies done by the ministry of defense, joint headquarters, and the ministry of interior, as well as a Center for Army Analysis study and a commander's study. All four were done last summer and all four have similar assumptions, and all cohered about the number 600,000 to 650,000 as the right number for Iraqi army, air force and navy, police, national police, and border police.

The CHAIRMAN. General, a very basic question. We have been, you have been, our country has been working on the Iraqi security forces now for several years. We have literally spent billions of dollars in that effort. In your opinion, when will the Iraqis be able to handle their own security so our troops will no longer have to do it?

General DUBIK. Sir, I think there are several parts to that answer. They are handling much of their security today. Nine of the 18 provinces are under provincial Iraqi control. Coalition forces occasionally conduct operations in those provinces, as we did in Basra, under certain circumstances, but by and large security is handled in those provinces by the Iraqi police and the Iraqi army. More provinces will go under provincial Iraqi control in the future. So that movement toward their responsibility will continue.

Second, as we have seen in the series of operations from around Easter to now in Basra, Mosul, Sadr City, and Amarah, each of those operations were primarily conducted by Iraqi security forces, again national police, police and army, with our assistance in some

command and control, intelligence, some logistics, and in fires and aviation support.

That said, the aviation support in Basra by the two C–130s of the Iraqi forces, and the four MI–17s, was very significant, as was the Iraqis' CH–2000 intelligence surveillance and reconnaissance aircraft flying several hundred hours. So each operation I think has depicted their growing strength on the maneuver side, and identified the areas on the enablers that we all know that they still need some more development in.

The CHAIRMAN. General, assume there is a great big calendar right there beside you, and you had to put an X on the month which would be in answer to the question that I put to you. Where would you put that X?

General DUBIK. I would not put an X on a calendar, Mr. Chairman. There are some aspects of the development plan which we are sure of, but others are still reliant on decisions not yet made in terms of Iraqi investments. For example, aircraft purchases that they know they have to make, those decisions have not been made. Until they are made, I don't know——

The CHAIRMAN. I don't want to split hairs with you. Let's just look at the ground forces. What would your answer be? Where would you put that X as to ground forces?

General DUBIK. The ground forces will mostly be done by the middle of next year. Their divisions, brigades, and battalions are on a very good timetable there.

The CHAIRMAN. That would be June or July of next year?

General DUBIK. Yes, sir. It depends on slippage of some dates. It would be June or it could be July.

The CHAIRMAN. I am asking you to put the X up there. Where would you put it today?

General DUBIK. Well, again, I can't put an X.

The CHAIRMAN. In your best judgment?

General DUBIK. It is going to be the middle of next year sometime. It could be as early as April or could be as late as August.

The CHAIRMAN. Mr. Hunter.

Mr. HUNTER. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Again, thank you for having this very important hearing.

General, as we turn over equipment or transfer equipment to the Iraqi military, let me understand the process. Help me to understand it. Is there some equipment on the battlefield that we have already turned over to them that we have basically given to them, like trucks, vehicles, maybe artillery pieces, small arms?

General DUBIK. Yes, sir. The only piece of transferred equipment to date are up-armored Humvees. We have transferred a little over 1,000, and the intent is to transfer about 8,500 by the end of next year. This equipment was first requested by us in theater, and sent to the Department of the Army and the Secretary of Defense's office for approval. That process took about five months. We began last March in transferring up-armored Humvees to the Iraqi security forces.

We have paid for the refurbishment of that equipment, and they paid for all of the maintenance of that equipment. They also pay for the long-term sustainment of that equipment, for the radios, for the weapons inside the Humvees.

Mr. HUNTER. Let me get this straight. You say we paid for the equipment. We paid for the refurbishment of the equipment. You say, they paid for the maintenance.

General DUBIK. Yes, sir.

Mr. HUNTER. Does that mean we gave it to them, and they have to maintain what we gave them for free?

General DUBIK. That is right.

Mr. HUNTER. But there was no price-tag on that equipment?

General DUBIK. The price-tag for the equipment for the Iraqis was none. We paid for that through the Iraqi security force fund, the fund that you appropriate for our use for the Iraqi security forces. We used that fund to accelerate the fielding of that equipment.

The Iraqis have purchased with their own money about 1,500 Humvees, and they are arriving at a certain rate. The refurbishment program allowed us to accelerate that rate, and that is part of the reason you see that they have been growing in confidence and in deployment throughout their country.

Mr. HUNTER. Now, the Humvees we gave them, were those new up-armored Humvees?

General DUBIK. No, sir. These were the old versions of Humvees that were replaced by mine resistant ambush protected vehicles (MRAPs). As the MRAPs come into theater, these older versions—114s, 1114s, and 1115s—then get refurbished and cascaded into the Iraqi security forces.

Mr. HUNTER. But the 114s, that is without necessarily the frag doors, are the latest generation of Humvees. They are not MRAPs, but MRAPs are not Humvees.

General DUBIK. Right. The latest generation of Humvees are 1151s.

Mr. HUNTER. Yes, but we gave them around 1,000 114s?

General DUBIK. So far.

Mr. HUNTER. Are we coordinating with our own requirements with the National Guard, for example, with 114s? Because if you talk to the Guard here, a lot of them shed their vehicles when they went over to Iraq and didn't get them back. Presumably, we are going to have to re-equip them back here. Who made the decision to give the 114s away at no cost to the Iraqis?

General DUBIK. Sir, that decision comes into the Pentagon. The Army looked at all their requirements and made the final determination that this would be a satisfactory transfer. So in terms of the thought process that went back here through the Department of the Army and Secretary of Defense's office, you will have to call another witness for that.

Mr. HUNTER. Okay. So you just know that they made that transfer.

General DUBIK. Yes, sir.

Mr. HUNTER. With respect to other equipment, would it be wise for us if you have a slowdown in the sale of equipment, you said there is $1.4 billion that has been received, but $2.7 billion that has been ordered. Especially if we are giving away things like the Humvees we gave away, it took us five months to decide to give them to them, it looks like you have a pretty slow bureaucracy in terms of moving equipment to the Iraqis. If we are going to be sell-

ing equipment to them, do we have a force or a team at the SecDef level that is ensuring that this thing takes place fairly quickly?

General DUBIK. Yes, sir. In fact, the Secretary of Defense had put together a special task force for FMS to Iraq. There have been several pretty significant successes. One is the acceleration of delivery. Again, at this time last year, we were at $100 million worth of equipment delivered, which was nothing. In a matter of 9 months, it is now at $1.4 billion. That is a huge success.

Second, the standard for FMS processing in the United States around the world is generally about 120 days. For Iraq, the average is about 90 days, so that is again 30 days faster than anyone else, and oftentimes it is as low as 30 days or 35 days, so that is also important. That said, as I commented in my opening remarks, 90 days is still too slow. When you add in Baghdad's 60 days to make a decision, you are up to 5 months again processing decisions. So that is something that the task force has in its sights and continues to work on, and one that I certainly would like to bring down another 30 days.

Mr. HUNTER. Okay. Who is paying for the personnel costs for the Iraqis—personnel in their security services? Is there any part of that that we are paying for?

General DUBIK. No, sir. They pay 100 percent of their salaries. They pay now since December 100 percent of their life support. They are paying most of their maintenance, and they are growing in their maintenance costs. The Humvees, for example, they purchased $85 million worth of spare parts for the first group of Humvees, and that will be a sustaining cost that they will incur. So more and more, they are paying their bills.

In 2006, as I said in my statement, they started to spend more money in the ministry of defense and ministry of interior than we had access to in Iraqi security force funds. Their trend of spending is about $1.5 billion to $2 billion more every year on their security forces, which for still-developing ministries is a pretty hefty leap every year.

Mr. HUNTER. Okay. Mr. Chairman, I will have some more questions. I will wait. We have a lot of folks here. I will wait until the end of the hearing here, but I think we ought to focus on the transfer of equipment and the payment for equipment that is going to be turned over to Iraqi forces, and the accountability of that equipment.

Because at the other end of this thing, you are going to have Guard units and some active units here in the states that have shed their equipment in Iraq, that we are going to be re-equipping with a pretty good price tag. So I think making sure that we account for everything and that we are paid for the good equipment that is transferred over is I think an important responsibility for this committee.

Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN. I thank the gentleman from California.

The gentleman from Mississippi, Mr. Taylor.

Mr. TAYLOR. Mr. Chairman, I am going to yield my time to Iraqi veteran, Mr. Murphy.

The CHAIRMAN. The gentleman from Pennsylvania, Mr. Murphy.

Mr. MURPHY. Thanks, Mr. Chairman.

And thank you general and Mr. Straub for being here today.

General, when I was in Iraq with the 82nd Airborne in 2003, I helped train 600 of the Iraqi forces. I am concerned that now five years later after I was there, the Iraqi security forcers are still not coming off the sidelines and standing up for their country. I think in your testimony that we all read, you rightly point out the difficulty of growing and training an army for a country, let alone a nation that is as troubled as Iraq.

Sir, the Government Accountability Office (GAO) report that came out last September that stated that the Iraqi battalions rated as capable of operating independently of U.S. forces had actually decreased from 10 to 6 battalions. So in the Iraqi army, attrition levels are so high that only 81 percent of authorized personnel are actually on duty at a given time. So I am concerned that our growing and training of the Iraqi forces is a mile wide, but only an inch deep.

So when you look at the number that keeps increasing on the amount trained, but the increased operational capability does not seem as though it is coming along on an equal number. So I think the Department of Defense (DOD) has focused on the total number of Iraqi forces trained, when our focus should really be on the readiness and capability of those forces.

So my question for you, sir, has the number of Iraqi army battalions capable of independent operation increased since September of 2007 when the last GAO report came out? And if not, if you could elaborate why, I would appreciate that.

General DUBIK. Well, first off, if I could, the focus is not just on numbers. It is very much on quality indicators. We began in September, for example, with a unit-set fielding system where the Iraqi soldiers come out of the training base, then go to a common training center, one of several around the country, receive at that time their leaders and their equipment, and go through another six weeks or more of training as a unit. Then, they are sent into the battle space with embedded teams and partnership units, as one of several examples of clear emphasis on quality.

Second, I would say that the percentage of leaders in the Iraqi army units are now in the high 60 percent, close to 70 percent, both noncommissioned (NCOs) and officers. One year ago, those numbers were well below 50 percent. So the percentage of leaders is growing. That percentage, though, even at 66 percent, will empirically not allow a unit to reach readiness level one. But it has not in any way stopped their organizations from fighting, from standing in the fight.

Mr. MURPHY. I will be very respectful, sir, and I understand, and I know the backbone of our Army, sir, is our NCO corps. I got that, and I understand, and that is great, that the NCOs and the leaders, the mid-level leaders in the Iraqi army is increasing at 50 percent to 60 percent. But still, when you look at the operational forces, it went from 10 battalions to 6 battalions. That is obviously a concern.

General DUBIK. First off, I don't know the date of that report, because there are right now 12 Iraqi battalions that are in the Operational Readiness Assessment (ORA) level one, which is independent operations, but there are 90 in ORA level two, which is a

significant increase just since last January. The ORA ratings, if I might suggest, are not really the best indicators to use on fighting power. Many of our own organizations are at readiness level two in fighting. Well, we fought an entire war, World War II, where a good number of organizations were less than the highest rating, with less than full complements of leaders.

So my observation would be that in the beginning of the Baghdad security operation, where the Iraqis had a tough time getting nine battalions together, compared to an organization that moved one division under its own power, one brigade from Al Anbar to Basra, another national police brigade from Basra to the south, moved them into combat and conducted combat operations, and then within another month shifted a national police brigade and another brigade from Al Anbar up to Mosul, while it was sustaining operations throughout the rest of the country, then made another shift to Sadr City and another shift to Amarah, is an example of Iraqi security forces who are growingly capable of executing operations, even at ORA levels two and three.

True, with our enabler requirements, no doubt about that, but that had been part of the strategy to develop the maneuver forces first, and then once we got close to the end of maneuver forces, to begin developing enablers. We have done that. By the end of this year, they will be substantially independent in their logistics operations.

By the end of this summer, they will have air-to-ground capability with machine guns and rockets. By the beginning of next year, they will have air-to-ground capability with some kind of precision weapon not yet determined. So they are growing in their capability of the enablers, which is one of the things that we have to do so that we can get more into the fully independent category.

Mr. MURPHY. Well, I appreciate the question. My time is up. That report was in September 2007, so it is less than a year ago.

General DUBIK. A long time ago in Iraq, congressman.

Mr. MURPHY. So is five years ago. I am glad I am on this side of the ocean.

Thank you, sir.

Thanks, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. The gentleman from New York, Mr. McHugh, please.

Mr. MCHUGH. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

General, first of all thank you for your service, certainly in your most recent posting, but in a career of dedicated service to this Nation, to the men and women that wear the uniform of this Nation. We all deeply appreciate that, and wish you and yours the very best in the future, in whatever path you may choose to follow.

I have a hard time—I am still not sure which was your daughter and which is your wife. [Laughter.]

It is a beautiful family.

General DUBIK. On her behalf, I thank you.

Mr. MCHUGH. You have a beautiful family, and I wish you all the best.

With respect to the Iraqi forces, we look back on the history of that nation, and it has always been one of sectarian strife. Certainly the government that was headed by Saddam Hussein was a

sectarian minority, ruling over a majority. The last thing I think any of us want to see is just a switching from one sideline to the other as to a divided nation.

Key among the challenges it would seem to me at least is putting together an effective ISF across the board—the police, the army, et cetera—is to try to bring together some sectarian cooperation. How would you assess that effort as it stands right now among these forces?

General DUBIK. Sir, I will use the national police, if I could, as an example because that had been last summer the subject of quite a bit of description in their sectarian behavior. The minister of interior, and the minister of defense as well, but I will use the national police as the primary example, has been very attentive to eliminating the sectarian behavior of the national police.

He chased out all of its senior leadership, both division commanders, 9 of the 9 brigade commanders, and 17 of 28 battalion commanders. When he replaced them, he put either a Sunni or Shia in charge. Where there was a Sunni commander, there was a Shia executive officer. The split is roughly 70 percent Shia and 30 percent Sunni. He has also done a very good job in recruiting Sunnis specifically for the rank-and-file of the national police so that they are representative of the nation itself.

The minister of defense, in a joint headquarters, similarly with the division commanders and below, is attentive to their loyalty to the government and their proficiency. There is certainly the case that there are pockets of sectarian behavior in both police and military, but it is not lost on either of the ministers their requirement to produce a national force. It will take some more time to flush that out of the system because of the horrific sectarian violence that did occur in late 2005 and 2006 and early 2007.

Mr. MCHUGH. The Anbar awakening led to a movement that has, certainly in the Sunni areas, been particularly important toward turning the tide. And yet it has at the same time created a parallel structure, if you will, be it militias at the hardcore end or locally based security forces. How would you judge the path ahead as to integrating those forces in a routine way or disbanding them, or whichever path we take? What kind of insight can you give us on that process?

General DUBIK. Sure. I would like to start first by recognizing how important that awakening and the Sons of Iraq movement that fell from the awakening, have been to the improved security situation. They have contributed significantly to the downturn in violence, to the discovery of more and more caches of equipment, arms, and explosives, and in that way have been a very important force in moving forward in the past 15 months.

Right now, there are about 100,000 Sons of Iraq. So far, about 14,000 have been assimilated into the security forces, mostly police, in a system that is somewhat bureaucratic, but I think a necessary bureaucracy because each of these Sons of Iraq are vetted through the Iraqi security system and then hired officially as policemen by the minister of interior. So once these 14,000 are hired, they are no different from any other policeman in Iraq, hired on central orders and working there.

There still are tens of thousands that need to transition. Most want not to be in the security forces, but just to have jobs in the local area. Our census that we take as they come in indicates that somewhere between 20 percent and 30 percent want to go into the army or the police. Most want just jobs in the area once the security situation is better.

So the first step in that regard, the government has allocated about $196 million to start assuming the payment of these Sons of Iraq while they are security contracts and have initiated two nonsecurity programs to make the assimilation occur once the security situation permits.

The first is an Iraqi civil service corps, very similar to the Civilian Conservation Corps that we had in our Depression period, where they are attempting to bring these Sons of Iraq into conservation kinds of jobs, cleanup jobs, fixing jobs, reconstruction kinds of jobs which are very prevalent. So as soon as the situation is good enough that they are not needed for security, we are going to figure out how to bring them in. The minister of interior is very much involved in coming to that kind of plan.

The second is a plan for education and vocational training that will bring Sons of Iraq in, give them education and vocational training, and send them to a job. Until the job sector is more fully developed, that program will be a little slower than the first program. But my expectation is that in the coming months, those programs will start taking on greater importance, and we will see some of the Sons of Iraq transition not into the security forces, but into these other kinds of jobs.

The CHAIRMAN. I thank the gentleman.

Mr. Reyes.

Mr. REYES. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

General Dubik, welcome to you and your family, and thank you for your service.

In January, the Iraqi minister of defense suggested that it was his personal belief that the Iraqi security forces would be able to take responsibility for internal security as early as the first quarter of 2009. My question is similar to the chairman's question that he asked you earlier. But what I would like to know is, given that today *The Washington Post* reported that Iraq's national security advisor had indicated yesterday that his government would not sign an agreement governing the future role of U.S. troops in Iraq unless it includes a timetable for their withdrawal.

There are a number of issues that I think I have heard you comment on here today. But I would like to know, in your view, what would it take to make this possibility a reality, number one. And number two, how does this feeling on the part of the Iraqi government influence or drive our own withdrawal timelines? And I guess in your opinion, is this realistic, given the short conversation you and I had about just one aspect of it, which is the air support aspect of it? So could you comment to the committee on that?

General DUBIK. Yes, sir. With respect to the first quarter of 2009, the minister of defense in another forum talked about a period beginning somewhere in the first quarter of 2009 ending in 2012 as the period in which he thought he could take on full responsibility for the counterinsurgency fight.

I think that is an accurate period because of the time necessary to develop an air force, the time necessary to finish the development of the navy, for border security, and to make other purchases of equipment that he knows he has to make. By the time that is bought, delivered and used, that period is a good period.

In terms of accelerating, one of the main accelerants and why we are in a position now that we are in, one of the reasons is the judicious use of the Iraqi security force funds that you appropriate for our use. This is a huge accelerant, and we were able to use in the last 14 months this money to bring online brigades, battalions, divisions, and in some small cases other capabilities, faster than the Iraqis would have by themselves.

They would have ultimately formed this, but maybe not for another year. So using the Iraqi security force funds partially, again from Representative Hunter's question, accelerating the development of refurbished Humvees, these kinds of capabilities we can bring on faster. I just want to say how much I appreciate the money that you appropriate for that use.

Mr. REYES. And given the, not so much the current situation or the current challenges that are there now, but the potential for deterioration as it involves influence by the Iranians or others in the region, how realistic is it in terms of a withdrawal by our troops that they would be able to stand up and take care of their own country?

General DUBIK. The last conversation I had with the minister of defense was very clear in this assessment and his understanding that there are still capability deficiencies in his force, most notably in aviation, in direct fires capability, and in sustainment, and secondarily in intelligence fusion and command and control.

He has, with a joint force, plans to fill those deficiencies, but in every one of those areas, those are not going to be fixed in any short term. So what is said at the policy level, of course, that is beyond my ability to comment on, but in terms of his assessment of actual capabilities, that was our conversation.

Mr. REYES. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. I thank the gentleman.

Mr. Bartlett, the gentleman from Maryland.

Mr. BARTLETT. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

Remembering all those years I sat in the front row with great questions I never had a chance to ask, I yield my time to Mr. Conaway.

Mr. CONAWAY. Well, thank you, Mr. Bartlett. I appreciate that. You put a high bar that I have great questions.

Gentlemen, thank you for coming today. On a going-forward basis, General Dubik, and this transition period that we are going to be in between now and when the Iraqis take full control of their country as they should, what do you see as the pitfalls or the greatest risks to the contingent success of moving the Iraqi security forces to the point where they are in full control of the country?

General DUBIK. Sir, from my perspective, there are several. First, on both sides, coalition forces and Iraq, declaring full success too early is itself a risk. There has been huge progress. There has been significant improvement in every possible way you can measure it, but full success is not yet at hand.

Second, the enemy is of course a thinking enemy, a very cunning enemy that has not given up, that we don't know what they are thinking. We do know that they remain capable. They do want to derail the improvement in the security situation and derail the progress in the political front as well in Iraq. What they are going to do and what they might do and the reaction that they might get is still an unknown.

From the purely capability standpoint of the Iraqi security forces, time necessary to finish building the combat enablers that I refer to, the fires and aviation, and logistics and command and control and intelligence. These capabilities take time. It was hard enough to build the divisions, the brigades, and the battalions, but then putting all those together with the other enablers will require some additional training and some additional time.

The last related, as I indicated earlier, the decision-making process within the ministry of defense does not keep pace all the time with the capability development timeline that his joint staff has laid out for the ministry. So the slowness in decision-making is also a risk that may not be significant, but could be and this bears watching all the time.

Mr. CONAWAY. With respect to the resources needed to train those enablers, if you would speak to us about what, if anything, should be our role in building that capacity. And also, we have heard recently where Iraq has begun to negotiate contracts with the major oil companies—ExxonMobil, BP, Shell, Chevron. Who will provide the security necessary for those companies to operate the way that they should?

General DUBIK. Well, sir, on the first part of your questions on resources needed for training, right now the Iraqis pay for the life support for all the training that goes on in their training base.

Mr. CONAWAY. The fighting force is fine. I am talking about the logistics, aviation, intelligence—what role should we have going forward with those guys?

General DUBIK. Our role has been in the logistics area to assist them in laying out a correct plan. Right now, 8 of the 13 logistics commands are already built. The other five will be built by the end of the year. The national depot system started online three months ago and will be finished coming online by the middle of next summer. On motor transport regiments, 9 of the 13 are already formed and the other 6 will be formed. Half of the general transport regiment is formed. The other half will be formed this summer.

So our role here is to now partner with their logistics units like we have partnered with their combat units to help them develop the systems and the organizations and the habits that will make that infrastructure come alive with the right processes and managerial techniques.

On the aviation side, the commitment is a little different in that they are starting building their air force really from scratch. It is pilot training. It is English language training. It is infrastructure requirements. It is the coaching that we provide and the assistance and training we provide for the Iraqi air force in putting together what is a very complex and a long-term plan for the building of the Iraqi air force. In each of the other areas, there are similar kinds of advisory roles.

On the security for the pipeline, sir, that is yet to be determined. The facility protection service, the oil protection service part of it, has just been given to the ministry of interior, so he will have part of that responsibility. The minister of defense has the 12th infrastructure division, which is also responsible for partial protection of the pipeline. How this new arrangement will be is still very much unknown at this point.

Mr. CONAWAY. Thanks, Mr. Chairman.

Thanks, Mr. Bartlett, I appreciate that.

The CHAIRMAN. Dr. Snyder.

Dr. SNYDER. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Thank you, general, for your service, and for your family.

I don't think anyone has asked you yet about the letter that you sent on February 12 to the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Global Security Affairs, Mr. Benkert, with some suggestions. I assume that was kind of a winding-down letter, here is what I have learned, here is what I think you ought to do. Do you have a copy of your letter there in front of you?

General DUBIK. I do.

[The information referred to can be found in the Appendix on page 59.]

Dr. SNYDER. I would like you to kind of run through that. First of all, have you received either an informal or a formal response back to your letter yet?

General DUBIK. Informal, yes, sir. But if I could, in February, I didn't feel like it was very much winding down. This was just part of my job.

Dr. SNYDER. Part of your job, if somebody comes to visit and you were responding.

I would like to run through these. First, in the second paragraph, you talk about, you say the first of these Iraqi army units requires the delivery of substantial foreign military sales supplied equipment in the first week of July, 2008. We are now past the first week of July, 2008. Did that occur?

General DUBIK. I am trying to find it.

Dr. SNYDER. It is the second paragraph.

General DUBIK. Yes, quite a bit has been delivered, not all, but quite a bit has been delivered.

Dr. SNYDER. And then you go through a list of specific suggestions. I would like to skip the first one and go to one that applies to Congress. You offer the following recommendations to speed action along the critical path of getting equipment, reduce congressional notification time requirements. You say, "Preparing for and obtaining congressional approval is the most time-consuming component along the critical path; I ask you to consider options to reduce these days to an absolute minimum," and you go on.

Would you talk about that more? Are there things that we should be doing at this end to help with that process?

General DUBIK. Well, I attached, Mr. Congressman, to the letter a diagram that I think you probably received that my staff put together.

Dr. SNYDER. Is this the diagram here? I think it is.

[The information referred to can be found in the Appendix on page 62.]

General DUBIK. Yes, sir. We put it together from our standpoint. Again, I am in Iraq, not here, but from our standpoint this is the sequence of events and number of days. So I just asked Secretary Benkert to look at the congressional notification and see if there were some areas that together working with the committees could be scrunched down. I didn't know which ones specifically because I am not an expert in this, but I suggested to him as the expert to at least do some detailed analysis and see where there might be some time efficiencies gained.

Dr. SNYDER. To your knowledge, has that analysis been done? Has anyone come back to you and said, "We now have this worked out"? It is now 63 days instead of 74 days, and we are moving in the right direction. Or is that still a work in progress?

General DUBIK. No one has come back to me with that kind of specific answer, but if I could turn to Mr. Straub.

Mr. STRAUB. I can't tell you specific days of reduction. However, I can tell you that Secretary Benkert takes this on as one of his most important missions and is constantly driving his team to do this both here and in visiting Iraq, to try to get these numbers down.

Having said that, sir, the Department doesn't have a legislative recommendation at this time for changing the law on how foreign military sales are approved.

Dr. SNYDER. We all play a role in these things. It is an appropriate role. On the other hand, when we see—and certainly the general had no malicious intent by including the congressional notification process in here. When you see our notification process cited as one of the problems, we want to get it resolved. It is to the advantage of everyone.

So I would hope that you would get back to us in a timely fashion if there are things we need to do. There may be some statutory issues. There may be some courtesy issues, some procedural issues. But if we are part of the problem, we would want to know about it. So I hope that you would get back to us on that, Mr. Straub.

Mr. STRAUB. Okay. Happy to.

[The information referred to can be found in the Appendix on page 65.]

Dr. SNYDER. Is there anything else on that list, general, in the letter that you have there that you would like to comment on in terms of any additional information you have since this letter was sent in terms of either better or worse than what you have cited?

General DUBIK. Sir, I only would cite the next bullet that begins "conducts simultaneous actions." Our recommendation had been to determine in the set of activities which could be done simultaneously, rather than sequentially. We did on the chart again identify several of those to suggest, rather than moving from one office and then the next and then the next, maybe we could work more collaboratively. We have begun to do some of that, but I still think that there is lots more work to be done in that regard.

Dr. SNYDER. Right. Thank you.

I guess my final question is, when you retire, are you going to teach philosophy? I notice that is what your background was in.

Thank you for your service.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

Before I call on Mr. Jones, Mr. Straub let me ask you, what is the Department of Defense doing to ensure that the transition teams in the ministries of defense and the interior are fully staffed, and not only fully staffed, but staffed with the right people?

Mr. STRAUB. Sir, it is a very high priority. In our personnel system, we are doing everything we can to get those teams out there and to have them be the right people. I recognize that we still have some work to do to get to 100 percent in a number of those areas, particularly so on the police training team side, but we understand how important it is. That was particularly demonstrated in the Basra operation, how important those teams are with Iraqi troops. So we mean to have them there.

The CHAIRMAN. My understanding is that in many instances, some colonels are being sent over there to do the work that civilian types could do. Are you familiar with that?

Mr. STRAUB. No, sir, I am not.

The CHAIRMAN. Okay.

Mr. Jones.

Mr. JONES. Mr. Chairman, thank you very much.

General, thank you, as everyone else has, for your leadership and all the good that you have done for this country, as well as all of our men and women in uniform. I have Camp Lejeune Marine Base in my district, which I have the privilege to represent.

My question really will go back to Mr. Straub. Mr. Secretary, I was listening very intently to the testimony by General Dubik. My question is, do you agree? I think we all are pleased to hear the positive, and obviously not everything is positive, but most of it has been very positive. Progress is being made.

I look at the situation in Afghanistan, and because we have had our Marines from Camp Lejeune extended another 30 days, and I have great respect for Secretary Gates, and Gates said in this committee and the press that when they go, they will be coming back in the time deadline, and then it is being extended for 30 days. It is probably going to be two months.

My concern as a member of this committee, and more importantly as an American citizen, is I believe the Iraqis are doing the best they can do. I think progress is being made. But Mr. Secretary, my question to you is if three years from now, and nobody knows what three years brings, but if three years from now a general and an assistant secretary is sitting before those who are in Congress, and I might not be here at that time, and we are hearing about the same thing—we are almost there, but we are not quite there.

My concern is in this period of time, what are we doing to our military? Everything I am reading in the paper, and I will let you answer in a moment, but this is from Admiral Mullen, the Taliban and their supporters have without question grown more effective and more aggressive in recent weeks as the casualty figures clearly demonstrate. We are getting into a situation that I realize that when a statement has been made for five years by the White House and everyone else, when the Iraqis stand up, we will stand down.

Where are we in that statement? I am very concerned about the Army. I am very concerned about the Marine Corps. They are

stressed beyond imagination, and this has nothing, General, to do with the success that you and others have achieved.

General DUBIK. When General Petraeus testified most recently, he did acknowledge the fact that one of the facts bearing on his decision in terms of force adjustments is the status of the Army and Marine Corps primarily. We do all think about that. These are our professional colleagues. These are our families. So all of us are aware of the stress that has been on the force for the past years.

That being the case, to answer your specific question, we have nearly completed the reduction of the first five brigades. Given the security situation, the expectation is that we will be able to further reduce the force structure in Iraq. These reductions will have a positive effect on both the Army and the Marine Corps, and the families that support their members.

The success that we have had, though, is a success that we don't want to preemptively return to the enemy. So the issue for us, as always, is what is the minimum required to do the job that we have been given. We think that in Iraq anyway, that requirement will need a continued some set of advisers, some set of trainers, and some set of partner units. That will diminish and has been diminishing over time, no doubt about it, but to provide training and assistance and advice until the force is fully self-sufficient or until the two governments feel it is satisfactory enough, is something that we should remain committed to.

Mr. STRAUB. Sir, could I just add to what General Dubik said, trying to give it more from what we see from the Pentagon perspective as far as where are we on this continuum of the Iraqi security forces so that we are not having similar testimony in two years, three years, four years.

I think this year of 2008 has been a very significant year because it is a year in which the Iraqis themselves deployed their forces on their own initiative and took big risks to do it and have had success in a series of operations. That success has given them confidence in those forces. We are hearing that confidence in their statements about their sovereignty and their concern for their sovereignty. We are seeing it in the greater political support that they are giving their prime minister.

Is this reversible? Sure it is, for the reasons that General Dubik gave. But there is a confidence in these forces now that they can do things. With that confidence comes an impatience to do more. That is a healthy thing. So I think we are fairly well down that continuum in Iraq. Of course, as you know, Iraq is a country with great resources. Afghanistan, conversely, and Afghanistan is not in my area of responsibility, but Afghanistan lacks resources by comparison, so it could be a more enduring challenge than Iraq.

Mr. JONES. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. SPRATT [presiding]. Mrs. Tauscher.

Ms. TAUSCHER. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

General Dubik, good to see you again. I think we visited last when I was in Iraq in August.

Mr. Straub, good to see you, too.

I have been concerned for quite a long time about the police training. Certainly, any successful counterinsurgency strategy would include a regular constabulary. As we all know, this is a

mission set that normally falls under the State Department, but they have for many reasons—lack of resources and frankly the security environment in Iraq not meeting their minimum standards—this has been a mission that the Pentagon and our military has been executing since we invaded Iraq in 2003.

Clearly, the Jones report, the independent commission that came out last year, had a scathing indictment on the ministry of interior, basically saying that it was riddled, that it was a sectarian fight, that if you went up the elevator over the five- or six-story building you had to be careful if you were a Sunni or a Shia what floor you got off on.

I am not sure that that has improved a lot, but it doesn't bode well for the kind of cohesion and training that we would expect for a constabulary force which is part of the overall security blanket that we need. We need, obviously, military. We need border security. We need customs people. But we need people that are going to adjudicate normal little things that happen in communities. Since the Iraqi government fell, clearly all the prisons were emptied. Local law enforcement disappeared, so that is a big part of the security problem.

I have introduced a bill that would free our troops to go back to their normal duties as warfighters and put the State Department back in charge of building a constabulary force. I have already told you two of the problems. One is resources, and two is the security in Iraq doesn't meet the minimum standards of the State Department and they don't want to send people in to do that job. I have met with General Paxton. I have met with Assistant Secretary David Johnson about coming up with a transition plan.

I would just like to have your ideas, both you General Dubik and Mr. Straub, on whether you think that that is something that we could accomplish in the mid-term or short-term. And where do you actually place the emphasis on police training? And is there good news about the department of interior? I know that we have academies like the Kabbalah Academy, which I think has some good news, too. So if you could just chat a little bit about that and give us an assessment of whether you think the State Department can take this mission anytime soon, I would appreciate it.

General DUBIK. Yes, ma'am. The first part of the question on the status of the ministry of interior, the description of the Jones Commission in the last summer of the ministry of interior building was accurate. It would be completely inaccurate today. I personally have had several conferences held in the ministry of interior building. We have had press conferences there. We have had multi-national force conferences with General Petraeus presiding.

The air of the ministry is simply different one year later. The numbers of armed guards and all that stuff that he described are gone. The upgrades of the building at Iraqi expense are significant. The physical appearance is much different than it was a year ago. The physical appearance is reflective of a significant change in the minister of interior. In 2007 to the present, I think he relieved 33 brigadier generals and 8 major generals, and 130-some colonels and lieutenant colonels or equivalents.

He has been on a clean sweep that he understands is going to have to go on for a good while longer, but he is on a very important

sweep of the ministry of interior on their proficiency and behavior. He has adopted his own strategic planning seminar. He has adopted his own semiannual and quarterly business reviews of his sectors. He is decentralizing many of his decisions.

Ms. TAUSCHER. General, I understand that there is now a major change. I take your word for it, but I am running out of time. You didn't get to my specific question. Can the State Department take his mission over?

General DUBIK. Yes, ma'am. On the other part in terms of the State Department assuming responsibility, I think this is desirable, but for several other reasons besides those you stated, I think we are not quite there yet. Personally, I would like to see the State Department assign to MNSTC–I now 7, 8, 9, 12 officers that act as deputies within the ministry of interior and police forces so they start building the capacity so as we get closer to the security situation and budget situation, and it is no longer counterinsurgency policing, but community policing, they can assume responsibility and they have an experience base to do that. We would welcome those assignments. I have sent a letter to the State Department asking for that about nine months ago.

Ms. TAUSCHER. About nine months ago? Could we have a copy of that letter please?

General DUBIK. I can get them to you. Yes.

[The information referred to can be found in the Appendix on page 57.]

Ms. TAUSCHER. Thank you very much.

Mr. SPRATT. Mr. Kline.

Mr. KLINE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Thank you, gentlemen, for being here.

Congratulations, General, on a terrific career and a great job in your assignment in Iraq. It is nice to have your family here. You may not yet be celebrating the end of a long career, but I suspect that they are. I would assure you that there is life after retirement. I might not recommend politics, but there is life after military retirement.

I think you are to be commended, as all of our forces, our young men and women have done a great job. The security situation in Iraq is clearly improved. You said that in your testimony and we have heard it in every report. Mr. Conaway talked about the move toward bringing in private companies to develop oil resources in a way that we would not have considered a year or two ago. Remarkable successes, and we are all thrilled to see the drawdown in the number of American forces.

I think you reassured us in your testimony that your expectation is that we would continue to see U.S. forces draw down. Perhaps you couldn't put an X on the calendar that the chairman was asking for, but I believe I heard you say it was your expectation that we would continue to draw down. We are seeing the Iraqi forces taking responsibility for their own security in province after province, about nine so far, and more to come—all terrific stuff.

I want to pick up where Mrs. Tauscher was, on the differences between the Iraqi army forces, the ministry of defense forces, and the ministry of interior forces. As she pointed out, General Jones in his testimony and in his report was I would say harshly critical

of the ministry of interior and the state of the police forces. There was some confusion over national police forces, local police forces, constabulary, and so forth.

So could you pick up on that a little bit? We know that the quality of some of the Iraqi army forces, their counterterrorism forces for example, are just superb. I am sure that some of the army forces are. But there has been an unevenness.

So either in the ministry of defense or ministry of interior, could you comment on that unevenness, but particularly in the police forces and how they are developing in their ability, with the corruption and some of the problems that you have addressed already, the quality of the building, but in their abilities.

General DUBIK. I will separate and talk first about the Iraqi police, which are local police, and then the national police. On the local police side, the better security situation has improved policing. One of the difficulties during the heavy violence period, with the proficiency of local police, had been the intimidation of their families. Local police live in the local area. When whatever type of insurgent was operating, when they could hold hostage policemen's families, policemen didn't perform, as you would expect. You saw what they had done.

As military forces swept through and eliminated that intimidation, the police forces then were much more capable of performing. Minister Bilani had fired quite a few policemen who didn't perform, and replaced them with minimally trained policemen, with 80 hours, which is not much, but now has gone back and begun a program of aggressive retraining of local police so that all local policemen will get the full 400 hours of training that we all know they want.

One of the professional arguments that we had with the Jones Commission was how to balance getting a satisfactory policeman out on the street once the security situation was better, versus waiting to get a fully formed policeman. We had a difference of opinion with that commission.

They thought that we should delay fielding policemen until they were all completely fully trained. Our understanding was that we couldn't wait that long because we had the war to win, so we would put out a minimum-trained policeman and then come back and retrain. Those are both legitimate perspectives. In general, the Iraqi police are performing much better across the country now that levels of violence are down, and we are able to go back and begin the re-training period.

On the national police, the minister of interior took the Jones Commission report to heart and did his own study, his own after-action review, so to speak, and analysis, and accelerated reformation of the national police, starting with the change-out of the leadership, finishing then with the first phase of their re-training.

They are now in the second phase of their re-training, using the Italian Carabinieri to conduct the leadership training for each battalion in the national police. That has been hugely successful. We have four done. The minister of interior would like to double that now, rather than do one every eight weeks. He would like to do two every eight weeks. The Italian Carabinieri are analyzing whether

or not they can support that and under what conditions. We think that that will work out over the next few months.

So the proficiency of the national police has also grown. They have moved to Basra and were welcomed by the citizens of Basra in their operations. They moved then to Mosul, which is a much different ethnic composition of the citizenry in Mosul, and were well-accepted in Mosul. Now, they are in Amarah and well-accepted in Amarah. So we have seen just a growth in proficiency and acceptability of the national police and regular police.

Mr. KLINE. Thank you, general.

I am sorry, Mr. Chairman. I went past my time.

Thank you very much, general.

Mr. SPRATT. Mrs. Davis.

Mrs. DAVIS OF CALIFORNIA. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

General Dubik, it is good to see you. It was a year ago that we were there. It really is hard to describe the different level of positive comments that you have. I really appreciate that.

I wondered, in continuing with some of the discussion already, one of the issues that we know repeatedly over the last number of years is asking the question, what will turn the situation around? I think a lot of the responses were that when the Iraqi people begin to have confidence in their government. How do you assess the level of legitimacy for the Iraqi security forces on the part of the Iraqi people? Do you have a position from which you can actually assess that? What would you like to tell us about that?

General DUBIK. Thank you, ma'am. I do have lots of positive to say, and I am glad that I also have been given the opportunity to talk about the areas that still need development. The confidence in Iraqi security forces has grown every month, both military and police, since November.

There are a series of polls done by a variety of organizations inside Iraq that indicate confidence of citizens in their security forces. There are questions like: Do you believe the army in your area is sectarian? Do you have confidence in the police of your area? Do you believe that the army or the police or national police are corrupt?

It is questions like that. In each case, I believe all six questions—three about the army, three about the police—are in the above 50 percent positive category and have grown every month again since November. Certainly, we would like them to get up in the 60's and 70's and 80's, but we are very happy with the direction they are going, and the relatively uniform across-the-board growing confidence.

Mrs. DAVIS OF CALIFORNIA. So no matter what community? I think there have certainly been concerns about whether you call it ethnic cleansing, but that that is an issue.

General DUBIK. Yes. There are still [INAUDIBLE]. Yes, ma'am. There are still [INAUDIBLE] where policemen or army guys are involved with sectarian behavior. Those are arrested and pulled off the street when they are investigated, but in general in a positive direction.

Mrs. DAVIS OF CALIFORNIA. May I just clarify for a moment. You mentioned in looking at the internal security versus external security, the ability of the Iraqis to take on a foreign force. The defense

minister when he was here I think was referring to quite a number of years beyond 2012. When you said 2009 to 2012, is that internal security that he was talking about?

General DUBIK. Yes, ma'am.

Mrs. DAVIS OF CALIFORNIA. You also referenced the air force and obviously the navy in terms of external security supports and enablers. What would you assess to be kind of a ballpark figure in terms of the external security issue?

General DUBIK. The minister of defense said 2018, and that is the vision that he has.

Mrs. DAVIS OF CALIFORNIA. In 2018?

General DUBIK. In 2018, but that is his vision. There are so many decisions yet not made that would have to be made to buy the right aircraft, to buy the right air defense systems, to improve the navy, to purchase additional equipment for the army, that I wouldn't even begin to guess whether 2018 is correct. These are major purchases that will have to be decided upon in the period between now and 2015 to start getting some of this equipment. None of those decisions have been made. So I think his vision is still yet an aspiration more than anything else.

Mrs. DAVIS OF CALIFORNIA. Thank you. I appreciate that.

Just when we think in terms of the enemy today, how would you assess Iraq's knowledge of the elements that they are fighting today? What kind of a handle do they have on that?

General DUBIK. I think they have a very good understanding of the enemies that they face, whether those are the residual al Qaeda operators, other insurgents associated with al Qaeda, but internal to Iraq, criminal militias or organized crime.

Mrs. DAVIS OF CALIFORNIA. Where would they put the Iranian militia in that?

General DUBIK. I would say that they are influencers in the criminal militias. I think they very much understand who is doing what to whom inside their country.

Mrs. DAVIS OF CALIFORNIA. And the influence of the Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRTs), I must quickly ask you that.

General DUBIK. The PRTs, again thanks for your support and continuing interest, are all fully manned now and are out and having a tremendous positive impact in each of the provinces. We continue now to be in the replacement mode, which is a good mode to be in. Now, we are not searching to fill or searching to replace as people's tours end up.

Mrs. DAVIS OF CALIFORNIA. Thank you.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. SPRATT. Dr. Gingrey.

Dr. GINGREY. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

General Dubik, I want to thank you and your family for your distinguished career and your service to our country—the ultimate definition of "jointness"—and we appreciate all that you have done. It has to be a good feeling to be in the position that you have been in in the past year. You are probably the fourth person in charge of the transition of the security forces in Iraq, and the cumulative effort of all of you is to be commended. I especially want to commend you for your service over the last year in that regard.

I want to ask you about this issue concerning a date certain for withdrawing our forces. Apparently, Prime Minister Maliki or maybe the minister of defense of Iraq made a statement recently regarding the status of forces agreement (SOFA), which is an ongoing negotiation, and that it would include a timeline for withdrawal of our troops.

Some of my colleagues on this committee, some of the Democratic majority, have raised that question today. Some of the talking heads on CNN have raised that question as well and implied that, aha, we were right all along to have a date certain and to vote on this a number of times over the last couple of years. Fortunately, we rejected that vote.

Would you agree with me that it is different for the government of Iraq to ask us to have a date certain to leave, a big difference in that, and the Members of Congress to demand that our Commander in Chief and our combatant commanders withdraw our troops at a date certain and put funding at risk in regard to that?

I want you to answer that question if you can, because I know that I have heard, and I am sure you would agree, and Mr. Straub would agree, that the President has said on a number of occasions, and the Secretary of Defense has said on a number of occasions, that we will stay until the job is done, but if the government of Iraq wants us to leave, we will leave. If they want us to leave tomorrow, we will leave tomorrow. I would like for you to comment on that, if you would.

General DUBIK. Well, sir, if I could just use a few seconds to say thank you for acknowledging my family. My family is a joint family. My wife is a retired senior intelligence officer in the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA). My older daughter had been in the Army as an intelligence officer herself. My younger daughter, Katie, at the other end of the spectrum, was a Peace Corps volunteer in Thailand. So we cover the whole spectrum, I think, of peace operations.

On the policy side, sir, you know I cannot comment on that. The ongoing negotiations are just that—negotiations. I don't know for sure what is in the mind of Dr. Rubahi or the prime minister in talking about timetables, how precise or how rough those are.

I will say, though, my professional military advice remains as it has been, that precise, firm, fixed timetables are less helpful than periodic assessments and condition-based reviews. Part of the conditions are certainly security, but also the capability of Iraqi security forces. In those, we have shared aspirations with Iraqis and the coalition forces. We do want more self-reliance on the Iraqi security forces. We do want to get to a position where our presence is unnecessary. We both have a desire to fully depart.

So my personal, again professional military advice, is to let those aspirations play out and let the conditions speak for themselves and let things go as fast or as quickly as the conditions will allow, and let the two sovereign governments decide on what policies we want to pursue.

Dr. GINGREY. General, I thank you for that. My time is about to expire.

I wanted to ask Mr. Straub a different question in the remaining few seconds. The ranking member, Mr. Hunter, at the outset, was

asking the question about turning over equipment to the Iraqi government. We were talking about up-armored Humvees. I did a little quick math, and if we gave them 8,500 up-armored Humvees at $100,000 apiece, that is $850 million worth of equipment.

Mr. Straub, do you think that the Secretary of Defense or the combatant commanders should be making that decision of giving away money that the Congress has appropriated to buy this equipment? Shouldn't that come back to the Congress? If the chairman would allow you to respond to that, shouldn't we have some input into how that equipment is transferred and what we get in the way of reimbursement for that equipment?

Mr. STRAUB. Sir, I am just going to have to get the committee the facts on that decision. I am not sure of the numbers that you quoted for the costs to the United States. But I can assure you that I am not aware of any plan, and I don't think there is any, to provide any equipment that is in Iraq now to the Iraqis that our services want to have returned, addressing Mr. Hunter's point about shorting someone in the U.S. forces for the benefit of the Iraqi forces.

I am going to just have to get you the additional facts on the Humvee transfer—8,500, that is the total number, but only about 1,000 have been transferred thus far.

[The information referred to can be found in the Appendix on page 65.]

Mr. SPRATT. Mr. Sestak.

Mr. SESTAK. General, could I follow up on the question about a date certain, from my colleague from Georgia? Would you comment upon how well we are prepared to defend our 28,000 troops in South Korea?

General DUBIK. Sir, I haven't been to South Korea in——

Mr. SESTAK. All right. Could you comment upon how well we are doing in Afghanistan against al Qaeda, now that General Hayden says they have a safe haven in nearby Pakistan?

General DUBIK. Sir, I have been focusing on Iraq.

Mr. SESTAK. Would it be fair to say that your comments on a date certain only had to do with Iraq, and that others may see the date certain as helping us address national security issues elsewhere in the world? So that while your input is helpful for us on a date certain with regard to Iraq, and specifically what you were responsible for—training and mentoring Iraq's forces—that a larger view of a date certain on America's national security might come out with a different answer?

General DUBIK. Absolutely.

Mr. SESTAK. Thank you.

I wanted to ask you, you commented how well your troops, the Iraqi troops, which you have done a wonderful job mentoring and training, have done, and without a question there is improvement. What was the impact upon Basra by Iran in helping to decrease the violence there once it erupted? Because obviously that had an impact and you had to make an assessment upon it.

General DUBIK. It was one fact bearing on the problem. With all military operations, diplomacy occurs simultaneously with combat operations.

Mr. SESTAK. Did you consider it inconsequential or consequential?

General DUBIK. It was consequential, but only one of many factors.

Mr. SESTAK. How can we better, Mr. Secretary, address this issue if Iran has a positive influence, since it helped decrease violence? How can we better go about bringing them in to helping us do more of that throughout the country?

Mr. STRAUB. Sir, they of course preceded their possibly positive influence in Basra with a negative influence by probably being the source of the weaponry, munitions, and training of the dissident militias.

Mr. SESTAK. Those, if I might interrupt, are very similar to how the Soviet Union provided North Vietnam with arms against us in the Vietnam War. I am not interested in the past. All I am interested in is the positive influence and how to bring that about more in Iraq.

Mr. STRAUB. There is no question that as neighbors, as countries with a great deal in common in terms of religion and heritage, that Iran and Iraq could have a very positive relationship with each other. In fact, that relationship——

Mr. SESTAK. Should we be doing more vis-a-vis diplomatically with Iran to bring that about?

Mr. STRAUB. Sir, I think that is mainly a function for the Iraqi government, to demand positive behavior from Iran and to minimize the negative behavior. I believe the Iraqi government has taken that up with the Iranians.

Mr. SESTAK. General, of the 600,000 to 650,000 troops that I gather, if I remember correctly, the interior department, the ministry of defense, and our own Army's assessment, was that the number needed for both internal and external threats?

General DUBIK. No, sir. That was required for counterinsurgency forces at levels of violence that we saw in mid–2007. Like all security assessments, there has to be an ongoing assessment, given the levels of threat as they go up and down. If and when the insurgency ends, there will have to be another assessment of whether or not that number is adequate for external security.

Mr. SESTAK. And the tools needed.

General DUBIK. And the tools needed, sir.

Mr. SESTAK. The last question I had is—well, I had two, but I don't think I will have time—we had a witness here about a year ago who said that it is not so much an issue of the training of the Iraqis, it was more an issue, he said, of their loyalty and willingness to fight. Set aside the willingness to fight, you spoke on that a bit. How about their loyalty, when all is said and done?

Another witness from the intelligence said when asked where would you place your individuals, where would you embed our trainers, he said it is an art, not a skill, because we don't know really about their loyalties ultimately. How do you assess that comment?

General DUBIK. Well, as the government has gotten stronger, that itself is an incentive to be loyal to that government. I think we have seen a huge shift in the last 15 or 16 months in the strength of the Iraqi government, in their legitimacy as seen from

the eyes of their citizens. That itself, again, is a positive contribution to the security forces.

They have a government to be loyal to. This government has taken on of their own volition, with their own forces, criminal militias on the Shi'ite side, to al Qaeda and Sunni insurgents on the other side. The Maliki government has been very forceful with all opposition to legitimate government. That has had a positive effect on gelling the security force itself.

While loyalty is not something you can measure with litmus paper, it is certainly the case that forces from one part of the country, whether national police forces or army forces, have been willing to and have fought in every other part of the country regardless of sectarian makeup of the country.

The CHAIRMAN [presiding]. I thank the gentleman very much.

Mr. Franks.

Mr. FRANKS. Well, thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Thank you both for being here.

General Dubik, I never want to miss an opportunity to thank loyal soldiers of freedom like yourself. I believe in so many ways not only have you had to defeat terrorism on many fronts, but you have had to carry the Congress on your back as you went.

Sometimes you have been undermined at home, and for any part that any us played in that, I would apologize on behalf of all of us, because I think you have been such an example of someone that loves what is behind them, more than that hate what is front of them, and that you have done this on the basis of trying to make a better world.

So I don't want to put any words in your mouth here, because I know there are two kinds of people that predict the future: those who don't know and who don't know they don't know. So I think that what I would like to ask you is, are we making serious progress in Iraq? It is a fundamental question.

The CHAIRMAN. Would the gentleman pause for a moment?

I would ask the two ladies that are sitting in the staff section to move out of the staff section. No signs are permitted to be displayed. Would you please do that before Mr. Franks resumes his questioning? You are sitting in the staff seats. Thank you.

[AUDIENCE OFF MIKE]

The CHAIRMAN. You may sit in the non-staff seats.

Mr. Franks, proceed.

Mr. FRANKS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

General, I know it is a subjective question. I know it is pretty broad. But do you think in terms of winning peace in Iraq that we are gaining? Are we gaining in suppressing the insurgents and trying to bring about stability in that region?

General DUBIK. Yes, sir. I think we have made significant progress on the security front in the past 15 months. It is empirically verifiable, and it is a feeling that you get when you travel around, a feeling from fellow Iraqis. That said, it is reversible, as I said in my opening statement. There is nothing guaranteed. We are not on any kind of automatic pilot. It is no time to declare full victory.

Mr. FRANKS. Right. You know, the road to success is always under construction, isn't it, but sometimes it is passable. I guess

the next question I would ask you is: Do you, again understanding that you are not prescient in terms of seeing the future, see a time when Iraq will be able to be a stable democratic government that will be able to defend themselves at least nominally against terrorism? At some point in the future, do you see that time coming?

General DUBIK. I see that as entirely possible. Yes, sir.

Mr. FRANKS. Do you have concerns related to the weapons that Iran is giving to insurgents in Iraq? What impact is that having on the war? What is your perspective there as far as the explosive-formed penetrators and things like that that Iran is bringing in, or at least putting in the hands of insurgents in Iraq?

General DUBIK. Those weapons have been very destructive, and have caused a significant number of casualties in coalition forces, as well as Iraqi security forces, as well as innocent civilians that have been in the area of their attacks. Sometimes, those trained in those weapons are used specifically to target civilians.

Mr. FRANKS. General, I know that all of us struggle with the situation in Iraq. We struggle with any kind of circumstance where war takes place. But I believe, at least some of us believe, that the dynamic in Iraq was really between two different directions. If Iraq had fallen to terrorists, if America had withdrawn precipitously and left it to its own ways, I am afraid that terrorism and the ideology that supports it could have been supercharged in the region, and they could have gained a great base of operation from which to launch terrorist attacks across the world, and that perhaps could have brought nuclear jihad to this country and to the world.

It looks as if we may be going in a different direction, where Iraq may become a free nation and help turn the Middle East into a more hopeful region and turn the entire direction of humanity in a more hopeful direction. For your part in that, sir, I want to salute you with all my heart and thank you for your good work.

I yield back, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Mr. Loebsack is next, please.

Mr. LOEBSACK. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Thank you, general and Mr. Straub, for being here today. Thank you for your service.

Early on, general, you said that there are pockets of sectarianism in both the military and the police. I know you have been speaking to that issue a lot this morning. I am sorry to have to repeat some of that, but I think it is really important that we do so. Can you elaborate initially on what you mean by "pockets" of sectarianism?

General DUBIK. I mean, sir, that we still run into some leaders who are acting more in the sectarian way than in a completely professional way, that when that occurs and we find out about it, investigations occur and that person is either removed or retired or replaced, and in some cases arrested.

Mr. LOEBSACK. Is that principally in the military, or is it in the police, or is it in both?

General DUBIK. It is in both. In previous times, during my tour in Iraq, it had been primarily police, but that is also reducing very significantly. Often, what we called sectarian behavior was merely behavior resulting from intimidation, as I talked to Representative Kline.

In those areas where the insurgent influence was very strong and the Iraqi security force or coalition presence was not strong, they intimidated police to behave in a way that matched the insurgent behavior. Now that the security situation is better, that kind of behavior has reduced significantly, but there are still some places in Iraq that that is occurring.

Mr. LOEBSACK. Who controls the military and who controls the police? Is it Shi'ites who control both those organizations?

General DUBIK. No. It is the government that controls the police and the army. The police force is made up of local residents, and they are either mixed or not mixed depending on the community from which they are recruited. The military is different, as is the national police. These are recruited from a broad base of the nation and reflective of the sectarian mix of the nation.

Mr. LOEBSACK. But in Baghdad, is it not the case that there has been an ethnic cleansing of sorts that has happened over time in Baghdad? Therefore, is it not the case that in particular parts of Baghdad perhaps Shi'ite control the police and in other parts, perhaps Sunni? Is that fair to say?

General DUBIK. I don't think that is fair to say. I think it is fair to say that communities in Baghdad have shifted in their sectarian, as you describe, and the police reflect the current community that is there. Some communities are mixed and some communities are not. The police in those communities are recruited to reflect that mix.

Mr. LOEBSACK. Can I shift for a second over to Anbar Province because as you are very aware, throughout Iraqi history, at least recent history, it has been a tribal society in many ways. Depending on who the colonial power was, sometimes the tribes had more power than at other times.

Certainly with the awakening and the Sons of Iraq movement, clearly those folks have served our interests. Many of them obviously were initially aligned with al Qaeda, then they turned against al Qaeda, and we all know that story and how that happened.

There are some who are concerned that as the Iraqis assume more control, which is a good thing because we can leave sooner rather than later as that happens, that tribal loyalties might begin to reassert themselves again. Do you have a concern about that? And how do you see that going? Not necessarily that you have a crystal ball, but there is a concern, is there not, that some of those tribal loyalties may reassert themselves?

General DUBIK. Yes, sir. When the awakening began and the Sons of Iraq program began, it was rightful to be concerned about this turn. But since then, there has been an awful lot of tribal engagement by the government of Iraq through the governor of Al Anbar and other provinces, I might add, in helping link the tribes to the legitimate government, both at provincial level and national level.

How that will turn out in the future, you don't know, but there is a clear recognition from my perspective both at the provincial and the national level, the tribal engagements and tying the tribes to the legitimate government is something that the Maliki government sees as necessary and important.

Mr. LOEBSACK. Okay. Thank you very much, general.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

Mr. Shuster.

Mr. SHUSTER. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Thank you, General, for your service. I wish you well in the future. I also want to thank your wife and your daughter and your entire family for their support and sacrifice. I think sometimes Americans don't realize just how much support and sacrifice is required of the family to enable you to do your job. So we thank you, the entire family, for your service to the country.

A third question I was going to ask, I will follow up on what my colleague from Iowa was talking about in Al Anbar Province. I read a story, I think it was in *The Washington Post* on Sunday or Saturday, I don't remember when, how very effective the police commander in Al Anbar is, who has been fired by the governors of Al Anbar, but he has actually been appointed by the national government. Can you talk about that? In that situation, where do we come in advising? It seems to me it is very effective, by all reports, with an effective police commander out there.

General DUBIK. Well, if I could paint the—this is the provincial director of police for Al Anbar, who was appointed by the minister of interior, which is the correct methodology. The local governor produces three candidates and the minister of interior selects from among those candidates. There is a tug-and-pull between the governor and the central government.

This is I think a very good example of how the process in Iraq is moving into a political argument. A year ago, this wouldn't be a political argument. Guns would have been drawn and we would have figured it out by the numbers of bodies who was going to be in charge.

But this is a very good example of the government of Iraq trying to figure out how to act centralized and decentralized. Powers given to the governor and powers given to the central government, sharing of powers and the checks and balances that we are all familiar with because of the long history in the United States are still very much fledging in Iraq. This is an example of trying to figure that out. I believe that they ultimately will come to the right accommodation, that whatever final decision is made will be made in the spirit of compromise between the province and the government.

Mr. SHUSTER. That is good to hear. In my several trips to both Afghanistan and Iraq, the one thing in training that our folks would talk about, in Iraq particularly, was the lack of an NCO corps. Can you report on how is that going? I know it is a pillar of any military to have a strong NCO corps. So can you talk about that?

General DUBIK. Yes, sir. There was not a strong NCO corps in Iraq during the Saddam period, and a little bit before. There was before that, from the British influence, but that went out of use for quite a few years. The NCO corps has grown in the last couple of years, but mostly in the last year significantly, mostly at the junior ranks.

The Iraqis have understood that they need an NCO corps. They developed an NCO education system, starting with corporals to sergeants to platoon sergeants to first sergeants. All that instruction

is in place. All that has begun. They take the top 10 percent of their graduates from basic training and put them into corporal's course. That number has grown in every five-week cycle of the corporal's course. They are almost at 70 percent fill in the aggregate.

Mr. SHUSTER. At 70 percent?

General DUBIK. Almost, about 68 or 69 percent in the aggregate for their NCO corps, but the distribution of those NCOs lies mostly at the lower end, not the higher end, so there are more junior-grade NCOs than senior-grade, and that distribution will not be fixed for another good number of years, probably 10 years.

Mr. SHUSTER. And a final question, as I see I have very limited time. We walked about the Shi'ites and the Sunnis, but didn't mention the Kurds. How are they fitting and integrating into the overall military police force?

General DUBIK. Well, there are two sets of discussions going on now with the Kurds, first in the army is how to bring on two of the Kurdish regional government divisions into the Iraqi security forces. That will not occur until they are fully integrated into the government of Iraq under the Iraqi minister of defense's control. So that discussion is going on.

With the ministerial forces, some of the special police in the Kurdistan regional government will be incorporated into the Iraqi national police. The discussion is now how many, what frequency, and under what conditions. Mostly the conditions will have to do with language proficiency. So the discussions are ongoing. I thought that we might have had a decision on those already. We have not.

Mr. SHUSTER. Thank you very much.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Mr. Shuster.

Ms. Shea-Porter.

Ms. SHEA-PORTER. Thank you.

I would like to thank you for your many years of service. It has made a difference for this country and we certainly appreciate it. As a former military spouse, I thank your family as well. When one is in, they are all in. We know that, so thank you.

The question I have to ask is really sort of a potpourri of questions here. I was in Taji this spring, and I walked in the marketplace. I have to tell you that we were told that was probably the most dangerous thing we were going to do. There were extraordinary steps that they had to take in order for us to be there.

While I was very grateful to our military that took such good care of us there, you know, I wonder how this is playing into the reports that we are hearing that things are calmer, things are better? If it were, how come we had to go to so many extraordinary procedures just to walk down a very short little marketplace?

General DUBIK. Well, mostly it is who you are, ma'am. Those extraordinary protective measures are not taken for everyone.

Ms. SHEA-PORTER. Not everybody is there. That is the whole point. I didn't see anybody except us.

General DUBIK. All I can say is we don't want anything to happen to you while you are visiting.

Ms. SHEA-PORTER. It just didn't feel like——

General DUBIK. It is hard. I have to admit to you, I have the same kind of experience. When I walk down the street, I don't walk

alone. At the same time, the minister of interior does drive around alone with a very small group. More and more of the policemen are unarmed on the street.

The traffic police direct traffic without weapons in many parts of the country. Though still not dominant, it is growingly the case that people come to work in their uniforms. It is also the case that more and more markets are open. As you drive down a street now where there had been last year 5 markets, now there are 300.

Ms. SHEA-PORTER. I certainly want it to go well. Like I said, I am grateful for it. But the other thing is that I was concerned that we had Ugandans guarding the gates. I wondered why we don't have Iraqis guarding the gates.

General DUBIK. Iraqis do guard some gates where we conduct meetings, where we have our ministries. They do guard some forward operating base (FOB) gates.

Ms. SHEA-PORTER. Are you comfortable with contractors from Uganda guarding the gates? Or do you think we should be at the point where we actually have the Iraqis, who should be interested in protecting us, guarding the gates?

General DUBIK. I guess I am a little hesitant. Who guards what gates is very much a mixed affair. Some are contractors, some are Iraqis, and some are U.S. soldiers or Marines. I have driven through any number of locations that were solely guarded by Iraqis and any number that were mixed with Iraqis and contractors, or coalition force and contractors.

Ms. SHEA-PORTER. Okay. The other question I had, I just wanted to read to you, and I know you already saw it in *The Washington Post,* but this does concern me. Last summer, half of the Iraqi parliament asked us to leave. President Bush said in May 2007, said if they were to say leave, we would leave. And then obviously we have them saying they want us to go, but we are not ready to leave.

I am quoting from the *Post* right now that U.S. officials said the remarks were aimed at local and regional audiences and do not reflect fundamental disagreements with the Bush Administration. Do we have a problem with what Iraq leaders are saying to regional audiences and what they are saying to us? Is there a difference there?

General DUBIK. I will let Mr. Straub answer that.

Mr. STRAUB. If I could take that, I think it is more of a national policy question.

Ms. SHEA-PORTER. Sure.

Mr. STRAUB. We are in a negotiation, so a number of things are being said. We think that our concern about conditions for withdrawal, because for us it has always been a matter of conditions, rather than timetables, and the key condition there, of course, is the condition General Dubik has been working on, which is the readiness of the Iraqi forces and the size of the Iraqi forces.

So I think the Iraqis, with these comments in the last couple of days about a timetable, are looking at a time that their forces will be ready. I don't think there is such a spread between us. We are very much focused on conditions. We are in a negotiation here, and so a wide variety of positions will be said.

If I could say one more thing about the ability for the Iraqis to tell us to leave. We are under the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) resolution under which the Iraqis can voluntarily end the resolution at any time, and with that resolution end the basis of our presence.

Ms. SHEA-PORTER. Okay. Thank you both.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

Before I call on Mr. Wilson, Mr. Straub let me ask you, recently Prime Minister Maliki made the Iraqi special forces answerable directly to him, rather than to a minister, where they previously were made answerable to. Now, how do we ensure that these special forces are not used to target or harass political opponents?

Mr. STRAUB. Sir, let me quickly respond to you, and then General Dubik may have some additional points, because I know he has looked at this issue in close detail. First of all, as you know, sir, we have embedded advisers with Iraqi special forces. In fact, they have been with Iraqi special forces longer than with any other organization. They go back to 2003.

Second, I would say that there are some intervening organizations between the prime minister's office and the special forces units themselves. I will ask if General Dubik has any more comment on the possible misuse of the ISOF.

General DUBIK. Yes, sir. The Iraqi special operations forces brigade is subordinate to two other headquarters that intervene between the prime minister and the special forces. The first is the Counterterrorist Bureau, which is a ministry-like entity. The Counterterrorist Bureau chief sits at the National Security Council meeting every week, the equivalent to other ministries, and over time may become a ministry. Subordinate to the Counterterrorist Bureau is a Counterterrorist Command, and that is the command of the Iraqi special operations brigade and soon-to-be-formed commando brigades.

As targets get passed to the special operations forces brigade, they go first to the bureau and then to a special committee of interministerial composition, and then passed from there to the Counterterrorist Command and special forces. So it is not a direct shot, prime minister to the special operations forces, but through a chain of command.

The CHAIRMAN. And we have advisers in each unit. Is that correct?

General DUBIK. Yes, sir. That is correct.

The CHAIRMAN. Mr. Wilson.

Mr. WILSON. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

General Dubik, Mr. Secretary, thank you very much for being here.

General, I want to join with everyone in thanking you for your 13 months of extraordinary service in Baghdad. It has truly made a difference. It has been terrific today to find out about your wife and daughters. What a family involvement this has been. I also want to commend you. Behind you, I recognize a number of your staff people who I visited in Baghdad in the nine visits that I have had there. We have extraordinary young people serving our country. I say this as a Member of Congress. I say this as a 31-year veteran of the Army Guard and Reserve.

I also have another perspective. One of my sons was a doctor serving in the Navy under your command this year, and I just had faith in what you were doing and General Petraeus. You have certainly lived up as a parent to what we want for the young people serving our country. In fact, he actually followed an older brother who served for a year in Iraq with the field artillery. So our family truly has seen the extraordinary success that has occurred.

As I visit in Iraq, I get to visit with the junior officers and enlisted personnel from my home state. Every time, I am so impressed to see young people understand that the best way to protect American families at home is to defeat the terrorists overseas.

As we are looking at these issues, I have been particularly pleased, and I just can't hear enough, about the progress being made with the national police. I painfully remember being here and having the hearings where the only solution for the national police was their dissolution, start over again. But in fact, there has been a re-bluing effort, an effort to reform the police. Phase one is completed. Phase two has completed. We are not into phase three. Can you tell us again about the different phases and where we are?

General DUBIK. Yes, sir. Thank you very much for your complimentary comments on the soldiers and airmen and sailors and Marines and civilians serving in Iraq. On their behalf, thank you.

The national police reform did have four phases. Actually, all four are going on at the same time. The first phase was assessment of leadership and removal of leaders that were not proficient. As I commented before, the minister changed both of the division commanders, 9 of the brigade commanders, 17 of his battalion commanders. Subsequent to the initial removal, he has removed one more brigade commander and several more battalion commanders. So this is a constant reassessment of leadership.

Second is to provide collective training for every brigade. We had completed the initial sets of brigades in the fall, and now we are bringing them back for continuous training. So while we completed phase two, so to speak, by doing it once, the minister and the commanding general of the national police are unsatisfied with just doing it once, and they want to keep refreshing that training.

Third is professional training in leadership by the Italian Carabinieri. We began this about seven months ago. We are on the fourth cycle. This has been very, very beneficial. The Carabinieri, by their very presence, have inspired the national police to become what they see the Carabinieri are. In addition to that, the skills and leadership training the Carabinieri have provided have now started to see their impact. The first battalion trained by the Carabinieri went into Basra and performed very, very well. We are going to try to expand that program.

The last phase is regionalization, which again has begun, where the minister of interior and the commanding general of the national police desire to set the conditions for transition to rule of law, where when we get to the point that the military is no longer needed inside for security of Iraq, that local police, backed up by national police regionally stationed, will provide the security for an Iraq no longer in an insurgency. That process has begun by selecting the regions, and beginning to form a third national police divi-

sion so that the three major regions can be identified, and slowly moving battalions in each province.

Mr. WILSON. Well, it is a great success story.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

The gentleman from Connecticut, Mr. Courtney.

Mr. COURTNEY. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Thank you, general, and your family, for your sacrifice and commitment to our country.

General, in your testimony, you concluded pretty much with a comment that our assistance may change in organization and size over the coming months or years, but some form of partnership and assistance consistent with strategic objectives is still necessary.

The *Los Angeles Times* on July 2, just a few days ago, reported a fairly solidly sourced story that spy satellites of our country are being trained on the Iraqi army to follow their movements and their training facilities. Again, this was a front page story with lots of backup and confirmation from folks who have seen some of the slides from the satellites.

This obviously raises a pretty large question about the nature of the relationship between a country that basically created the Iraqi army, as embedded as we have heard over and over again this morning, but still feels the need to use some of our most sophisticated spy technology to find out what they are doing. I was wondering if you could comment on that?

General DUBIK. I cannot comment on that. I didn't see the article and I don't know of the program. I don't know if Mr. Straub can.

Mr. STRAUB. I have not seen it and couldn't comment on it if I had.

Mr. COURTNEY. Well, again, this is not some sort of non-mainstream news organization that is reporting on this. Perhaps you can follow up with our committee to get some sort of response to that. Certainly, I think the American people who are paying $12 billion a month for operations there would like to know why we feel the need to use some of our most valuable technology. There are clearly other things that we should be probably tracking in that region, but certainly the movements of our ally shouldn't be one of them.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I would yield back.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you so much.

I have one question, but I will call on my friend from California first. Mr. Duncan.

Mr. HUNTER. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I think this has been a very fulsome hearing, gentlemen. Thank you for your testimony.

Your overall take on the field-grade officer corps. One to 10, where do you think they are at right now?

General DUBIK. The U.S. field-grade officer corps?

Mr. HUNTER. No, the Iraqi officer corps.

General DUBIK. I think that in the spread of officers, they are very proficient at the junior ranks. They are thin in the field-grade ranks, and they are overly heavy in the senior ranks.

Mr. HUNTER. Do you think that we have a good system, or that there has been a good system in terms of noticing meritorious service and moving the talented folks to the fore?

General DUBIK. I think in general, yes, sir, but like every system, I am sure that there are some deserving officers not being promoted. But in general, the move from lower ranks to more senior ranks will be a positive one.

Mr. HUNTER. Basra operation, if you gave it a 1 to 10, what would you give it? Where would you put the Iraqi forces in that operation?

General DUBIK. I think they did very well in the execution phase. I think they learned a lot about the need to do better planning and preparation. Then when you saw Mosul, Sadr City, and Amarah, that the planning and preparation was pretty impressive in each of those cases and they learned a lot from Basra.

Mr. HUNTER. The battalions, the 139 line battalions, you have obviously 4 special operations battalions that get a lot of work. But of the 139 line battalions, do you think there is a pretty good spread of responsibility in terms of operational assignments that test the capability of the battalions? Are they mixing them and moving them to a fairly large degree?

General DUBIK. Not all of them are moving, sir, but quite a few are moving from Al Anbar throughout the country, and moving from the 2d and 3d divisions, switching their operational areas from the 8th and 10th divisions in the center, down to the south and a little bit north. So they are moving quite a few of their forces around.

Mr. HUNTER. If you were going to describe this operation at this point, would you say that we are succeeding in Iraq?

General DUBIK. I would say we are succeeding in Iraq right now, that we have seized the initiative from the insurgents, but that success is not cemented in any guaranteed way just yet.

Mr. HUNTER. Okay.

Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. I think we have had an excellent hearing today.

General, thank you. Thanks for your endurance.

General DUBIK. Thank you, sir.

The CHAIRMAN. General, before I ask you the final question, let me again thank you for your service for some 37 years. You certainly end on a high note, and we thank again your two daughters and your wife for being with us today.

You earlier said that you had asked the State Department for help in training the Iraqi police, and they were not forthcoming. Have you asked the State Department or any other agencies for any other help and (a) been turned down; or (b) been helped?

General DUBIK. No, sir, not specifically. The assignment that I requested from the Department of State was not directly in training of the police, but looking to the day when training of the police would no longer be a Department of Defense function, but a State function. I wanted to present an opportunity to begin training of State Department officials in understanding the situation in Iraq. That was the offer. They have not rejected it yet, but they haven't identified the——

The CHAIRMAN. How long ago was that, General?

General DUBIK. This was about six months, maybe seven months ago. But I will get the letter, sir, to you.

[The information referred to can be found in the Appendix on page 57.]

The CHAIRMAN. That would be helpful. We have been very concerned on this committee about the interagency cooperation. If they did not want to do it, I think the best they could do would be to write you a letter and say not now or something to that effect.

Listen, thank you very much, general. Mr. Straub, we thank you for being with us, too.

The meeting is adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 12:23 p.m., the committee was adjourned.]

A P P E N D I X

JULY 9, 2008

PREPARED STATEMENTS SUBMITTED FOR THE RECORD

JULY 9, 2008

FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY
UNTIL RELEASED BY THE
HOUSE ARMED SERVICES COMMITTEE

STATEMENT OF

LTG JAMES M. DUBIK, US ARMY

FORMER COMMANDING GENERAL

MULTI-NATIONAL SECURITY TRANSITION COMMAND-IRAQ

BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES

ON STATUS OF THE IRAQI SECURITY FORCES

JULY 9, 2008

FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY
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HOUSE ARMED SERVICES COMMITTEE

(STATEMENT)

Chairman Skelton, Ranking Member Hunter, Members of the Committee, I'd like to thank each of you for the opportunity to provide an update on the Iraqi Security Forces upon completion of my tour in Iraq.

I'd also like to thank the committee for your continued support of the men and women in uniform, for the trips many of you have made into the Iraq Theater of Operations, and for the difficult work you have done on our behalf. To see their Representatives with them in theater means a lot to our Soldiers and our Civilians. Everyone assisting the Iraqis in building their security forces and securing their freedom appreciates your support. Without it, this last year would not and could not have been the success it was.

The Iraqis are growingly confident in their security forces. Operations in Basrah, Sadr City, Mosul, and Amarah have been Iraqi initiated and Iraqi sustained. Certainly the Basrah operation was not ideally planned, resourced, or initially executed—and the Iraqis did need Coalition support. Equally certain, however, is this: the Basrah operation was tactically and strategically successful in the end and each one of these operations has been progressively better, each one helps in developing confidence and competence in the military and police forces, and each

one cements in their minds the kind of capabilities they must develop for themselves. They are committed to their own success.

While the Iraqis are achieving success, challenges remain. As I often said to my command in Baghdad, "progress doesn't result in no problems, it results in new problems." To summarize the main point of my testimony today as it was last January: success is mixed. The Iraqi Security Forces have increased significantly in both quantity and quality in the past 14 months, but that progress is, of course, not universal.

Nested within Ambassador Crocker's and General Petraeus' Joint Campaign Plan, MNSTC-I's contribution to achieving local security has been in helping the Ministries of Defense and Interior produce aggressive growth of their Security Forces. We—MNSTC-I and our Iraqi partners—have defined "aggressive growth" as accelerating their counterinsurgency force: that is, both accelerating sufficient numbers of sufficiently trained divisions, brigades, and battalions in the Army, aircraft in the Air Force, and Special Operations units on the military side, and sufficient numbers of sufficiently trained Iraqi Police, National Police, and Border Police on the police side. "Aggressive growth" also included beginning the development of enablers. For the defense forces, these enables include: Intelligence, Command and Control, Aviation and Combat

Service Support. For the interior forces the Iraqis began to develop their Facilities, Logistics, Leadership, Internal Affairs and Forensics.

The Iraqis have taken advantage of the security situation created by the offensive operations that they and the coalition forces began last spring and continue today.

Since June of 2007, the high point of violence in Iraq, the Iraqi Security Forces increased their size and capability. The total Iraqi Security Force grew from 444K in June 2007 to 566K in May of 2008, some 58,000 in the defense forces and 64,000 in the interior forces. Growth is not just numbers, however; important quality indicators are also up. Gains in the percentages of leaders in units, present for duty strength, air missions, naval patrols, and Operational Readiness ratings—all are trending in the positive direction. Allow me to put the growth of the Iraqi Security Force into perspective. The United States Army has grown 5 brigades from June of 2004-March 2008 or 45 months. The Sergeant Major of the Army said "*We're growing units right now faster than we can build barracks and headquarters and motor pools.*" In the last 12 months the Iraqis have built eleven brigade headquarters, and 35 battalions ... and they have the same problems as the SMA described—not only in infrastructure, but also in training, equipping and growing leaders.

And, the confidence that the Iraqi citizens have in their own security forces has improved every month since November of 2007. When the National Police left Mosul, for example, the citizens of that city held a rally to show their gratitude.

As I said, however, challenges remain. The Iraqi maneuver forces are still reliant on coalition enablers. The training proficiency is basic. Leader shortages exist, and the distribution of leaders is uneven. Leader development and professionalization is budding, but still lagging. Although major reconciliation efforts are on-going, there are still pockets of sectarianism that will take time to reduce further. Last, the problems that accompany rapid growth, that any nation, including the United States, would face, are evident in Iraq.

To help ensure that we hold onto the successes that our Soldiers, Marines, Airmen, and Sailors—with their Iraqi partners—have fought to achieve, and continue quality improvements and professionalization of the Iraqi Security Forces, continued Coalition Military and Police Training Teams along with coalition force partnership units are necessary, as is continued Iraqi Security Force Funding.

The next major security objective in the Joint Campaign Plan is "sustainable security." MNSTC-I's contribution will have these elements: completing the counterinsurgency forces, accelerating the growth of the military and police enablers—as I mentioned earlier have already begun, and continuing the professionalization and quality improvements of the Iraqi Security Forces. The foundations for this shift are already laid.

Key to the development of the Iraqi security ministries' capacity is budget execution. The Iraqis' two security ministries have executed about $1.5-2 billion more each year since 2005. 2008 will be the third year in a row they will have executed more money in their Ministries of Defense and Interior than that of the Iraqi Security Force Fund. And we expect that to be the case in 2009. However, with all of the success with the increase in spending, the security ministries continue to under-execute their annual budgets. The Ministry of Interior improved its execution rate in 2007 by spending 89% and 2008 is continuing along that improved spending trajectory; the Ministry of Defense, however, only spent 75% of his 2007 allocation and continues to have difficulty executing his budget. Both ministries have requested supplemental funding from the government, and MNSTC-I's advisors will do their best to help the Ministries execute these monies well.

Aggressive use of the Foreign Military Sales program is helping to equip the Iraqi Security Forces. Delivery of FMS purchased equipment remains satisfactory. Thank you for your support, and thanks too to the Secretary of Defense's Special Task Force on FMS. One year ago, FMS had delivered only about $115 worth of equipment. Today, that total is over $1.4B. This accelerated delivery has made an important, positive contribution to the Iraqi Security Force capability. Two problems remain, however. The first problem is processing times. Though the OSD Task Force has reduced the processing time in the US by about 30 days, the average time to transform a Letter of Request to a Letter of Offer and Acceptance is still 92 days. In Baghdad, the average time it takes to staff and accept a Letter of Offer and Acceptance in the Ministry of Defense is 66 days. Some cases get turned quickly, in a matter of days; however, many cases take 3-8 months—sometimes even more—before they are processed. We simply need to reduce the complexity of laws and regulations associated with FMS. The second problem is the lag time between the final Iraqi decision to purchase equipment via Foreign Military Sales and the delivery of that equipment. For example, as of today, the Iraqis have received over $1.4B in equipment, but have ordered $2.7B. From their perspective this gap is unsatisfactory. These two issues are part of the reasons the Iraqis seek to pursue more via direct contracting with other countries. Again I thank the OSD special

Task Force for continuing their focused efforts in these two important areas.

As I stated before, Iraq is growing an army while at war, while taking casualties, while taking losses, and while developing their own organizational processes in the security ministries. So we should not underestimate the difficulty of the task remaining. The successes of the past year plus can be reversed; progress can be stymied. The enemies of freedom and of a new Iraq are still very active. They are still capable, though in diminishing frequency, of conducting violent attacks on the innocent. They still seek to destabilize and de-legitimize the Government of Iraq. They want to reverse the gains of the past fifteen months. They have not given up, nor do I expect them to. They recognize that they have lost the initiative, but they still seek to regain it. Our assistance may change in organization and size over the coming months or years, but some form of partnership and assistance, consistent with strategic objectives is still necessary. The Iraqis know this; we should remember it too.

I'd like to thank you again, Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member Hunter and the committee on behalf of all of the men and women of Multi-National Transition Command - Iraq, for your support this past year. We have asked a great deal of these men and women and of their families,

and they have made enormous sacrifices. Our elected officials and fellow citizens do a tremendous job supporting our Soldiers, Sailors, Marines, Airmen and Civilians and their loved ones; we are all appreciative for that. The knowledge that their country appreciates its Warriors' sacrifices and those of their families bolsters our determination.

In my speech upon departing command of the 1st US Corps at Fort Lewis, I observed that the Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen, and Marines fighting in Iraq were 3-to-6 years old at the end of the Gulf War. I said then that our job was to finish this war in such a way that our National interests were protected and that we prevented the next generation of American children from completing what we had not. We are enroute to finishing this job; we are in a better position this year than last. Every American should take great pride in the men and women serving our Nation around the world. Their incredible courage and commitment to excellence are demonstrated daily. In less than two months time, I will be retired. Of my 37+ years of service to this Nation there was no greater honor than to serve beside them in this defining struggle of our generation. Thank you very much.

DOCUMENTS SUBMITTED FOR THE RECORD

JULY 9, 2008

HEADQUARTERS, CIVILIAN POLICE ASSISTANCE TRAINING TEAM
PHOENIX BASE, BAGHDAD, IRAQ
APO AE 09348

REPLY TO
ATTENTION OF:

CPATT-CG 17 Sep 2007

TO DEPUTY CHIEF OF MISSION, U.S. EMBASSY, BAGHDAD, IRAQ

THRU COMMANDING GENERAL, MULTI-NATIONAL SECURITY TRANSITION COMMAND, IRAQ

MEMORANDUM FOR DEPUTY CHIEF OF MISSION, U. S. EMBASSY BAGHDAD

SUBJECT: CPATT / MOI-TT Transition Plan

1. In line with the CPATT goal of assisting the Iraqi Ministry of Interior (MOI) to perform the institutional functions necessary to support and operate Iraq's internal security mission, CPATT is currently conducting a top-to-bottom staffing review. Fundamental to this review is a serious look at the road ahead and the transition process to a traditional INL sponsored assistance relationship. I feel it is important to build momentum towards an interagency approach toward the MOI mission.. Through mutual planning discussions and eventual agreements, we can establish important personnel commitments to the transition process. Moreover, I feel we can maximize the current military expertise on the ground, build important working level relationships within the MOI, develop leaders who can sustain this effort in the future, and establish an important inter-agency cooperative precedent. It is important to begin to "build the bench" of expertise capable of assuming responsibility for the MOI capacity development mission when conditions warrant.

2. There are seven key senior positions within the transition team that are critical to the ultimate transfer of responsibility from coalition forces to U.S. State Department or other agency at a future date. These positions encompass those areas of responsibility that will eventually necessitate expanded USG, non-military presence. To help achieve a successful transition process, I would like to request expansion of the U.S. State Department officer commitment to CPATT. The key officer positions I recommend are:

Director for Transition. Potential Fill: Political Officer / SFS /FS-01. This officer is responsible for overall transition coordination between all stakeholders, building USG relationships within the MOI, Deputy Director supervision, and contract oversight, and building the transition plan and structure for an INL led police security assistance organization.

Deputy Director for Special Staff. Potential Fill: Political Officer or RSO / FS-01/02. This portfolio includes Internal Affairs, Inspector General, Police Training, and Strategic Planning.

Deputy Director for Operations. Potential fill: Management or IRM Officer / FS-01/02. This portfolio includes FOB Shield logistics, safety, MOI national IT systems, MOI operations center, and MOI watch officers.

Deputy Director for Finance. Potential Fill: B&F Officer / FS-01/02. The portfolio contains MOI budget, finance issues, Foreign Military Sales, strategic planning, and contracting.

Deputy Director for Security Forces. Potential Fill: RSO / FS-01/02. Responsible for training and fielding National Police and Iraqi Police Forces for all regions, statistics, and other internal security issues.

Deputy Director for Logistics. Potential Fill: Management Officer / FS-01/02. Responsible for human resources, weapons cards, and logistics planning, procurements of weapons, ammunition, vehicles, parts, property books, and MOI administration.

Deputy Director of Support Forces. Potential Fill Consular Officer / FS-01/02. Responsible for tribal affairs, communications, border issues, civil defense, embassies, and customs. To this could be added passports, biometrics, visa issues, and travel / nationality.

3. My ultimate goal is for the Ministry of Interior to function independently or with little assistance. This will take a significant amount of time, but is fundamental to the long term prospects for an Iraq that has a representative government and that abides by the rule of law. In the near term, CPATT needs to begin evolving into an Office of Security Cooperation-like organization in order to sustain and build upon the gains already made. To the degree we can increase Department of State participation now, I believe we can ensure effective transition, and hasten the day when transition can occur. I see us gradually increasing Department of State and other Department membership, while reducing military composition over time as the best way to accomplish this aim. I sincerely appreciate any assistance and synergy we can build in achieving our mutual goal of an independent and strong Iraq that is ruled by law.

MICHAEL D. JONES
MAJOR GENERAL, US ARMY
Commanding

CC: LTG Dubik

MULTI-NATIONAL SECURITY TRANSITION COMMAND-IRAQ
BAGHDAD, IRAQ
APO AE 09348

12 February 2008

The Honorable Joseph A. Benkert
(Acting) Assistant Secretary of Defense for Global Security Affairs

Dear Secretary Benkert,

I want to thank both you and Vice Admiral Wieringa for taking the time to lead the recent Foreign Military Sales (FMS) Program Management Review (PMR) in Amman, Jordan. Feedback I received from George Smith and others, including the Iraqi Delegation, was positive. We look forward to participating in subsequent meetings in the near-future.

While I understand that progress was made on several key issues, our priority remains providing the equipment necessary to support the timely generation of Iraqi forces to meet the strategic interests of Iraq and the United States The first of these Iraqi Army units requires the delivery of substantial FMS-supplied equipment in the first week of July, 2008. I ask your support with the timely development of Letters of Acceptance (LOAs) for the nine force generation Letters of Request (LORs) signed by Iraq's Minister of Defense on 30 December 2007.

I understand conferees discussed a number of ways to speed LOA preparation and move through implementation, production, and delivery. Using assumptions crafted during the conference, the attached diagram illustrates the current FMS process critical path relative to force generation timelines. It is clear that by working within current processes, we cannot deliver equipment in time to meet Iraqi requirements and support our interests. I offer the following recommendations to speed action along the critical path:

- Avoid delays caused by technology transfer requirements. Create one LOA to aggregate all LOR Night Vision Device (AN/PVS-7D) requirements. Use this same approach if there are other items for which similar technology concerns exist.

- Reduce Congressional notification time requirements. Preparing for and obtaining Congressional approval is the most time

consuming component along the critical path. I ask you consider options to reduce these 74 days to the absolute minimum. These options include: (1) set conditions for Department of State approval within 7 days, (2) seek either policy or statutory change to reduce Iraq-specific time notification requirement from 30 to the 15 days afforded our closet allies, and (3) ask the Administration and Congress for fast-track notification approval with the goal of no more that 7 days.

- Conduct simultaneous actions including (1) preparation of draft LOAs to afford the Iraqi MoD staff sufficient time to analyze information in order to speed the approval of offered LOAs; (2) translate draft and offered LOAs into Arabic during preparation in the US; and (3) after DoS approval, conduct preliminary contract work to expedite development of ID/IQ, sole source, or other contracts. Sole source contracts, in particular, offer ways for the Iraqi MoD to achieve pure fleeting through acquisition. We stand ready to execute Justifications and Approvals (J&A) as necessary for sole source contracts.

- Consider Army Material Command's plan to establish a lead Life Cycle Management Command (LCMC) to assume overall coordination for the development and execution of the nine force generation LORs. This approach has potential to focus unity of effort and streamline future LOA execution through amendment of existing contracts.

- Accelerate movement of equipment into Iraq. We believe the use of chartered vessels rather than the standard liner service can offer nearly a three week savings on materiel delivery.

- Focus contracting efforts on pacing items first. Once the offered LOAs are approved by the Iraqi Minister of Defense, recommend prioritizing contracting efforts on the identified pacing items discussed during last week's conference first followed by the remaining less critical items. I do not want to reprioritize existing deliveries as this will only cause confusion within the Iraqi MoD. We will work with the MoD to prioritize fielding of existing deliveries to force generation units in order to reduce long-lead time item production and delivery risk.

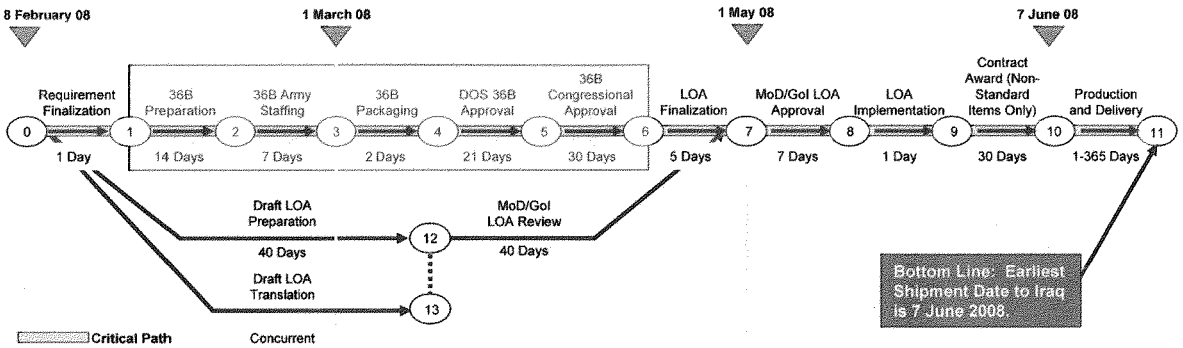
- Consider the feasibility of applying FMS alternatives to future Iraqi equipping requirements including the Rapid Acquisition Authority (RAA), the Rapid Fielding Initiative (RFI), and Direct Contract Sales. We may want to consider discussing these alternatives with the Iraqis during the June 2008 PMR in Baghdad.

Again, thank you for your dedicated efforts and those of your staff in meeting the Iraqi MoD equipment and force generation requirements. The above recommendations are intended to improve the responsiveness of the FMS process to the strategic requirements of both Iraq and the United States. I understand that certain production timelines may fall outside of the required delivery dates specified by Iraq's force generation requirements. We will work ways to mitigate the risks associated with this challenge. However, with our combined efforts, I believe we can and will tailor the FMS process for responsive support. I know you share this same view. We stand ready to assist your efforts as needed and I look forward to the June PMR in Baghdad.

James M. Dubik
Lieutenant General, USA
Commanding

cc: Commander, Defense Security Cooperation Agency
Commander, U.S. Army Security Assistance Command

Force Generation FMS PERT Diagram



Activity	Description	Duration	Responsible
0-1	Requirement Finalization	1 Day	USASAC/MNSTCI
0-14	Draft LOA Preparation	40 Days	USASAC/LCMC
0-15	Draft LOA Translation	Concurrent	MNSTCI SAO
1-2	36B Preparation	14 Days	USASAC
2-3	36B Army Staffing	7 Days	DASADEC
3-4	36B Packaging	2 Days	DSCA
4-5	DoS 36B Approval	21 Days	PM-RSAT
5-6	36B Congressional Approval	30 Days	DSCA
6-7	LOA Finalization	5 Days	USASAC
7-8	MoD/GoI LOA Approval	7 Days	MoD/MNSTCI
8-9	LOA Implementation	1 Day	DCSA/USASAC
9-10	Contract Award	30 Days	LCMC Acquisition Centers
10-11	Production and Delivery	1-365 Days	USASAC/LCMC

Mitigation Strategies

- ISFF-funded light MTOE Unit Set Fielding
- Prioritize incoming FMS equipment to force generation units (do not re-prioritize deliveries)
- Speed execution along critical path
- Combinations

Do not slip programmed force generation

WITNESS RESPONSES TO QUESTIONS ASKED DURING THE HEARING

JULY 9, 2008

RESPONSE TO QUESTION SUBMITTED BY DR. SNYDER

Mr. STRAUB. The Department of Defense has taken reduction of Foreign Military Sales (FMS) case processing times as a priority item, and the FMS Task Force, headed by Assistant Secretary of Defense Benkert, has significantly reduced those times. As of September 16, 2008, our rolling five-month average for processing time of FMS cases from Letter of Offer and Acceptance (LOA) presentation to LOA signature has dropped to 54 days.

The Congress has been extremely helpful in reducing the time required to process FMS cases. Committees have waived the standard 20 day informal notification for all 18 notifications and have processed each formal notification within the 30 day requirement. Congressional flexibility regarding these priority FMS cases has been a key factor in reducing FMS case processing times and providing needed defense articles to the Iraqi Security Forces. These notifications are done in parallel with other procurement actions, resulting in a streamlined process.

Our avenues to further improve the FMS process at present focus more on processes internal to the Government of Iraq and the interaction between DoD elements and the Iraqi Ministry of Defense. Nonetheless, there are two things Congress can do to further help. As stated in a November 14, 2007 letter from Deputy Secretary of Defense England and Deputy Secretary of State Negroponte, Congress might review the current notification thresholds in the Arms Export Control Act, which have not been updated since 1981 and have not kept pace with the increased costs of military equipment. Secondly, Congress might consider establishment of a Coalition Support Account, which would allow the U.S. military to more rapidly support the deployment and integration of Coalition partners when a rapid response is required. [See page 18.]

RESPONSE TO QUESTION SUBMITTED BY DR. GINGREY

Mr. STRAUB. Neither the Department of Defense, the Services, nor the Combatant Commands are giving away money appropriated by Congress, nor are they giving away new equipment or equipment needed by U.S. forces to the Iraqi military. U.S. forces are in the process of refurbishing and transferring 8,500 HMMWVs that have been used extensively in Iraq. The vehicles would be costly to return to CONUS and no longer meet U.S. operational requirements. The Army and National Guard will replace the 8,500 HMMWVs with newer M-1151 HMMWVs that meet current U.S. operational requirements.

The Department of the Army received the proceeds from the purchase of the HMMWVs. The cost of the new HMMWVs will be offset by avoiding the significant post-deployment costs to reset the older vehicles. The decision made by the Army to meet the Combatant Commander's request to sell the HMMWVs to Multi-National Security Transition Command-Iraq (MNSTC-I) was based on a business analysis of returning the vehicles to CONUS for overhaul ($1.5 billion) versus the cost of procuring new tactical vehicles ($1.8 billion), a difference of approximately $35K per vehicle.

The $11K per vehicle purchase price is transferred to the Department of the Army for its use. A detailed analysis was conducted by OSD Comptroller and OSD AT&L to determine the fair market depreciated value based on the age and condition of the vehicles. Most of the vehicles were five to seven years old and used heavily in a war zone. The decision for making this transaction went through an extensive review process involving the Army, USCENTCOM, Joint Staff, and OSD to ensure the proper legal authorities were exercised. The purchase was in the best interest of the U.S. Army and best supported the mission to develop the capabilities of the Iraqi Security Forces.

The HMMWVs have had a positive effect on Iraqi Army operations and have contributed to their improved performance throughout Iraq. [See page 27.]

QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY MEMBERS POST HEARING

JULY 9, 2008

QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY MS. SANCHEZ

Ms. SANCHEZ. I am looking at the State Department's "Iraq Weekly Status Update" from June 25, 2008. According to this report, as of April 25, 2008, there were a total of 478,524 trained Iraqi Security forces. If you look back at the 9010 Report from December 2007, it stated that there were a total of 439,678 trained forces. This is an increase of 38,846 in trained forces, over the four months between December 2007 and April 2008. I understand that the end objective is to create a self-sufficient Iraqi Security Force that will be able to provide and maintain security in the region. Lt General Dubik and Deputy Assistant Secretary Straub, can you tell us: a. How many more forces need to be trained for the Iraqi Security Forces to be fully capable of maintaining security in the region? b. How much additional U.S. support will be required to achieve this goal? c. And what is the proposed timeline for the Iraqi Security Force to be self-sufficient and no longer need to rely on the Coalition?

Mr. STRAUB. Between Coalition and Iraqi training efforts, a sufficient number of Iraqi soldiers, police, and other security forces must be produced to meet the force levels determined by the Government of Iraq as necessary to maintain security. U.S. and Iraqi studies have recommended an end-state trained force of between 601,000 and 646,000 by 2010. The current force level is approximately 590,000. A U.S. role in training the units still forming and in developing the ISF ability to conduct its own training remains important. As the ISF become more proficient at training Iraqi soldiers and units, the Coalition requirement for training them will decrease.

In answering sections (b) and (c), it may be better to look at unit training levels and percentage of assigned versus authorized personnel rather than cumulative total trained for insights on ISF effectiveness. Those measures reflect how many ISF have actually been trained and remain with their units. By those measures, U.S. support continues to be essential to building a fully self-sustaining ISF capable of independent counterinsurgency operations. The monetary component of U.S. support to training and equipping ISF is the Iraqi Security Forces Fund (ISFF). The FY09 request for ISFF is $2 billion. Subsequent requests, if any, will be significantly reduced.

There is no measurable timetable at present for the ISF to be entirely independent of Coalition training and operational support. During 2007-2008, the ISF made significant gains in operational readiness and have taken the lead in an increasing number of provinces and operations. The assessment that the ISF are fully self-sufficient will be based on conditions rather than on a timetable. This will occur when unit training levels, ministerial capacity, logistics, and other key enablers are fully developed and functional.

Ms. SANCHEZ. I am looking at the State Department's "Iraq Weekly Status Update" from June 25, 2008. According to this report, as of April 25, 2008, there were a total of 478,524 trained Iraqi Security forces. If you look back at the 9010 Report from December 2007, it stated that there were a total of 439,678 trained forces. This is an increase of 38,846 in trained forces, over the four months between December 2007 and April 2008. I understand that the end objective is to create a self-sufficient Iraqi Security Force that will be able to provide and maintain security in the region. Lt General Dubik and Deputy Assistant Secretary Straub, can you tell us: a. How many more forces need to be trained for the Iraqi Security Forces to be fully capable of maintaining security in the region? b. How much additional U.S. support will be required to achieve this goal? c. And what is the proposed timeline for the Iraqi Security Force to be self-sufficient and no longer need to rely on the Coalition?

General DUBIK. ISF assigned strength continues to grow, and is expected to reach just over 590,000 in September 2008. The original target strength for 2010 was 601,000 to 646,000. However, this estimate does not include additional growth based on the consolidation of other security force—e.g. Facilities Protection Services, Oil Police, and Dignitary Protection Services. The assimilation of these additional forces will occur from the end of this year until the Government of Iraq is satisfied with its command and control and support relationships for these additional forces. It is important to note that this is a force to provide security for Iraq . . . not the region, at large.

Regarding additional U.S. support, that is a very broad and open-ended question. MNSTC-I's role will be a) the generation of the remaining counterinsurgency force, b) development of key enablers and c) continued ministerial and institutional develop of key functional capabilities including force management and management systems, such as logistics. The timing table for Iraq reaching the end of the build of the counterinsurgency force is conditions-based. We believe it is feasible under current conditions to achieve the build for the initial projection of the counterinsurgency ground force by the end of 2009. This is the force we assess will, once enabled with logistics and other force management capability, allow the government of Iraq to sustain security within its borders.

Ms. SANCHEZ. One of the major challenges I foresee is our inability to keep track of how many trained forces are on duty in the Iraqi Security Force. Currently, the Department of Defense does not ensure that forces that are trained and equipped by the Coalition actually stay on duty. Without this information the Coalition is at risk of wasting its resources. It is imperative that we are accountable for our equipment, personnel and other resources. a. How important does the Department of Defense believe it is to ensure that Coalition trained and equipped forces actually stay on duty? b. Why wasn't there a system in place from the very beginning to track how many Coalition trained forces stayed on duty? c. How is the Department of Defense addressing this situation? d. Has the Department started to develop a system for tracking trained, on-duty personnel?

Mr. STRAUB. The Department believes that it is important for the Iraqi Security Forces (ISF) to retain its trained personnel and account for its equipment. Accordingly, MNSTC-I and other DoD elements with a role in training the ISF emphasize personnel and equipment accountability as a priority. The Iraqi military personnel system must deal with a steady outflow of personnel due to combat deaths, illness, expiration of terms of service, absence without leave, and other factors. In the early days of forming the ISF, moreover, dangerous security conditions resulted in a high loss rate for trained personnel.

DoD has placed emphasis on tracking the capabilities of trained ISF units, as opposed to the retention of individual soldiers. While such retention is important, it is traditionally more a personnel administration than a training function and has not been tracked in equal detail. DoD has developed detailed measures of unit authorized and assigned strength, in addition to the total number of individual soldiers that have been trained. These readiness assessments, coupled with personnel accountability measures within the Iraqi Ministry of Defense, continue to mature and now provide greater fidelity on the number of trained ISF personnel still serving in active units as well as their collective mission readiness.

Ms. SANCHEZ. One of the major challenges I foresee is our inability to keep track of how many trained forces are on duty in the Iraqi Security Force. Currently, the Department of Defense does not ensure that forces that are trained and equipped by the Coalition actually stay on duty. Without this information the Coalition is at risk of wasting its resources. It is imperative that we are accountable for our equipment, personnel and other resources. a. How important does the Department of Defense believe it is to ensure that Coalition trained and equipped forces actually stay on duty? b. Why wasn't there a system in place from the very beginning to track how many Coalition trained forces stayed on duty? c. How is the Department of Defense addressing this situation? d. Has the Department started to develop a system for tracking trained, on-duty personnel?

General DUBIK. Regarding item a), neither MNSTC-I nor USCENTCOM can respond on behalf of the Department of Defense. Likewise, for item b), the current MNSTC-I/USCENTCOM staff cannot comment on decisions regarding the initial structure and functions of MoD and MoI systems since it would be conjecture. It is also important to note that these are Iraqi systems built to service perceived Iraqi challenges.

Recruiting is not an issue and the lack of a codified retention mechanism does not appear to measurably impact the month-to-month payroll data for MoD or MoI aggregate personnel manning or unit strengths. Both ministries share monthly personnel data and payroll data with the MNSTC-I advisory staff. These reports provide MNSTC-I visibility on updated strength of all MoD and MoI units as of the reporting date.

QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY DR. GINGREY

Dr. GINGREY. General, we studied the progress of the ISF in the Oversight and Investigations Subcommittee last year under the guidance of then Chairman Meehan and Ranking Member Akin. There were a number of challenges that seemed

to continually surface during our discussions that I'd like to follow-up on today. The first is that the Iraqi Police Service still reports that the force only has approximately 50% of the issued pistols, machine guns, and body armor on hand. At the time of the O&I investigation, the DOD Inspector General, General Claude Kicklighter, was leading an investigation regarding American supplied weapons for the ISF; the New York Times had published accounts that weapons provided for or intended for the ISF had been used in crimes in other countries (Turkey); and a report from the Special Inspector General for Iraq Reconstruction indicated that a very small percentage of small arms provided to the ISF had been registered with the DOD's Registry of the Small Arms Serialization Program. Can you address these points? Is there a chance that because of the lack of accounting for the weapons we provide that they are possibly being used against us right now in Iraq or elsewhere? Can we fully account for the ISF's receipt of U.S. funded equipment? How are we working to improve our knowledge of where the weapons we provide are, and how are we working to ensure they are not ending up in the hands of bad actors? A second point that kept coming up was that desertion rates were high, and a lot of times soldiers and police would not report for duty. This was due in part to the lack of a central banking system—soldiers would collect their pay and leave to take it home to their families—and many would never report back for duty. How are we mitigating circumstances such as this—are the Iraqis improving in this area?

General DUBIK. We invited the DOD Inspector General to Iraq in order to provide MNSTC-I with an external assessment of weapons control and accountability procedure in an effort to improve MNSTC-I processes and to provide better accountability. MNSTC-I has implemented remedial or corrective measures for all the DODIG findings. Our primary consideration in requesting this assessment was that, in the period prior to 2006, some accountability procedures appear to have been insufficient. For example, we recently discovered that serial numbers for a small number of Glock pistols recovered in Turkey are linked to shipment from the 2004-2005 timeframe. Transfer procedures from MNSTC-I to Iraqi Security Forces include a complete serial number inventory of all weapons. Current issue procedures for individual weapons in both the MOD and the MoI entail serial number inventories, signature, photographs and biometric data for each soldier or policeman receiving a weapon. To put this in context, these measures are far more rigorous than the accountability control procedure we have for our own soldiers, who sign for their weapons by serial number.

Desertion is not a significant factor in getting Iraqi troops into the security fight. The lack of an automated pay mechanism is still a challenge. The process does create periodic *authorized* absences—however, most soldiers who take their pay home return to duty. This is mitigated by increasing assigned strengths in five of 14 divisions to 120% of authorizations and nine of 14 to 135%. Likewise, it is important to remember that desertion is symptomatic of many, variable issues, not simply the lack of automated pay. As development of ministerial and institutional systems and processes continues, we will continue to focus on professionalization of the leadership in the ISF and enforcing professional standards of conduct.

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