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Enclosure 9 - MND (SE) Assessment

Protect the population, with priority to where ethno-sectarian violence undermines the security situation; implement appropriate population control measures, and establish a persistent presence in Iraqi neighbourhoods to improve security and address local grievances; rekindle hope among the people by making progress toward a secure environment, sustained increasingly by a more capable, credible ISF.

The critical component in achieving the MNC-I end state is a population that both feels secure and is secure; this is achieved by removing the influence of groups that violently oppose the legitimate government. The only source of enduring power for the insurgents is control of the population. As Thompson identified in the Malayan emergency whichever side, insurgents or legitimate government, gains the trust and support of the population will eventually be victorious. Therefore, the population must not only be protected and perceive that it is being protected, but it must also be convinced that supporting the government is the right thing, thereby isolating the insurgent. This is being addressed within all the MND (SE) provinces but particularly in Basra. Polling has consistently shown that the population, in all four provinces, do feel secure within their own neighbourhood. There is not the sectarian violence or intimidation in the South that is found elsewhere in Iraq. Outbreaks of violence are limited, their cause being more attributable to gangsterism and tribal fighting than to broader security concerns. Statistics show that the murder rate in Basra is actually lower than that in Washington DC. There has been no significant increase in violence since transition¹ in the 3 PIC'd provinces. Intra-Shia competition has focussed on the control of provincial resources and institutions. This has led to periodic clashes between the ISF and elements affiliated to JAM. But all have been short lived and have ended in locally agreed ceasefires, usually involving tribal mediation. There will likely be further outbreaks of violence in the future, especially in the run up to provincial elections, but in the long run intra-Shia violence will be self limiting, and the provinces will continue to remain relatively stable.

Facilitate reconciliation among key internal actors competing for power in Iraq; conduct engagement with potentially reconcilable factions and apply persuasive, cooperative and coercive means as leverage to support negotiations leading to local ceasefires or political compromises with the GoI; at local and provincial levels, promote dialogue across sectarian lines.

¹ Muthanna. There are no significant numbers of Sunnis in Muthanna. The province has a strong Governor who in conjunction with the local forces inflicted a heavy defeat on JAM in 2006. Whilst JAM has a foothold in some areas of the province, the response of the ISF to a number of JAM inspired uprisings during the post PIC period has been encouraging. Disturbances between ISF and JAM elements in July in Samawah were short lived, lasting only a few hours, and were ended by a locally agreed ceasefire. Although there has been increase in Islamification and evidence of enforcement of Sharia law the population feel secure.

Dhi Qar. There are some minority groupings but there is no evidence of ethno sectarian violence. The threat to a secure environment is an intra Shia power struggle and the singular threat coming from JAM which has a strong influence in some, but not all areas. In most parts of the province the organisation is being kept at bay. The Governor, Al-Ogheli, favours a policy of localised accommodation. However, clashes in May and June between ISF and JAM and An Nasiriyah and other urban areas demonstrated that there is an uneasy tension between the two sides. The head of the TSU, Abu Liqa, the de facto PDOP, has adopted a robust stance towards JAM and has arrested a number of key leaders in recent months. Although officials portrayed the clashes as a turning point in JAM's influence in the province – and 3 DBE/10 Div performed credibly – there remains a strong possibility that fighting could break out again.

Maysaan. There are assessed to be no Sunni or sizeable enclaves in Maysaan. The major threat to the stability of Maysaan is the influence of JAM which is considered to hold sway over large parts of the province. Although there have been spikes of violence there is a delicate balance of power in place which limits violence.

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Reconciliation in the South has a different flavour to other parts of Iraq. It is not concerned with bridging sectarian divides between Sunni and Shia but is about reconciliation between various factions within the Shia community. It is about competing local groups seeking political compromises to promote security to allow economic re-generation and prosperity. Although there are reconciliation initiatives across the three provinces at PIC, the main focus is on Basra. The MND (SE) R&E Plan crystallised with the arrival of General Mohan, as Commander of the Basra Operations Command (BOC) and the appointment of Major General Jalil as the Basra PDoP. These two key players and the Commander of 10 (IA) Div, General Habib, (collectively 'The Big Three'), are at the heart of the project and their relationship with the CG and staff of MND(SE), represents the core of MND(SE) R&E Plan. The rationale of this plan is to harness the power of the Shia identity (nationalism) and to turn it against malign 1.4a, 1.4b, 1.4d influence, the long term threat to stability and prosperity in Basra. The key issue is that of loyalty. This will have to be resolved by the Iraqis themselves. Basra PDoP, MG Jalil, put it succinctly: "It is not a question of equipment or training; it is a question of loyalty. And you [MNF] can't do anything about that." Indeed, the presence of MNF acts as a distorting influence and exacerbates the problem, placing before the Iraqis a choice as they perceive it either to be "collaborators" (support MNF) or to be "patriots" (reject MNF). This resonates not only through all elements of the ISF but also through the entire Shia community. Generals Mohan and Jalil wish to clarify the issue of loyalty and thereby turn Shia nationalism against malign 1.4a, 1.4b, 1.4d influence: making 1.4b, 1.4d the MNF the target of true Iraqi "patriots". MND(SE) supports this intent and has worked with Mohan to ensure that MNF operations within the city are set in the context of the negotiations and accommodations that he seeks to promote long term security. This does not prevent independent action; for instance Op Black Lightning was conducted in pursuit of MJAM who were continuing to attack the PJCC. MND (SE) maintains regular dialogue with Generals Mohan and Jalil to engender trust and cooperation. The key now is to identify and expose 1.4a, 1.4b, 1.4d influence as an enduring threat to the security of Basra and to have it recognised as the common enemy of the ISF, MNF and the people of Basra. This will allow us to drive a wedge between mainstream JAM, who can be reconciled, and rogue JAM who can then be isolated and defeated.

Defeat AQI and extremists; kill them, capture them, or drive them toward reconciliation; render ineffective their efforts to foment sectarian violence and derail progress toward political accommodation and economic development.

There is no AQ-I threat in S Iraq. Extremist violence in MND (SE), which is exclusively directed against CF, is conducted by Shia groupings, in part influenced by 1.4b, 1.4d. There is a palpable fear amongst the Shia of a Sunni/Ba'athist revival. But the Sunni population is small (less than 10% of the total). Accordingly, they avoid confrontation with the Shia. Equally, the Shia do not feel threatened. Within the Shia population there is a low level of sectarian sentiment and a general suspicion of outsiders. This combines to prevent AQ-I from gaining a foothold in the south. Where sectarian violence has occurred, the ISF has deployed to protect both Sunni and Shia religious sites, and outbreaks of wider internecine violence and extremist activity have been contained. The Shia extremist threat in MND (SE) stems principally from JAM. JAM is a 'franchise' and the grouping can be broadly split into three parts: nationalist, 'criminal', and 1.4a, 1.4b, 1.4d influenced JAM or 'Secret Cells'. Each requires a different strategy to counter them. Efforts to isolate nationalist JAM (those which remain loyal to the national OMS / JAM leadership) from those influenced by 1.4a, 1.4b, 1.4d continue in conjunction with wider reconciliation efforts. In parallel, MNF

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continues to disrupt wherever possible the irreconcilable elements, largely comprised of the extremist manifestation of [REDACTED] 1.4a, 1.4b, 1.4d

These different approaches continue to present challenges; there is a degree of fluidity between groupings, especially between nationalist and 'criminal' JAM. The disruption and destruction of [REDACTED] 1.4a, 1.4b, 1.4d sponsored groups relies on focused, actionable intelligence and a more complete understanding of their networks and associated vulnerabilities. Strike operations disrupt JAM, but the reality is that JAM, as a grass roots, nationalistic movement, has an almost inexhaustible supply of men and resources because it draws its legitimacy (and thus its appeal and power to influence the population) from its stated opposition to the "Occupation". This appeal needs to be neutralised. Ultimately, the lasting solution to improving security in MND (SE), particularly in Basra, will come from the Iraqis, not MNF. Politics and provincial elections will be pivotal. OMS, the political "wing" of the Sadrist Movement, could prosper in these elections if it manages to organise itself effectively. This would enable the Sadrist voice to be properly represented in mainstream politics and might neutralise some of the perceived grievances that fuel grass roots support for JAM. There is no clear evidence to suggest that JAM will morph into a Lebanese Hizbollah style organisation, beholden to [REDACTED] 1.4a, 1.4b, 1.4d whilst elements of JAM may pragmatically take assistance from [REDACTED] 1.4b in the short term to attack the MNF "Occupation", JAM's nationalist credentials militate against the movement's ideological submission to [REDACTED] 1.4a, 1.4b, 1.4d

Continue to develop ISF capacity through partnership, enhanced transition teams, and advisory/assistance units; we must work to make the ISF more professional by improving unit combat effectiveness, reducing sectarianism, and growing quality leaders – to include commissioned officers and NCOs.

IPS. Viewed holistically the IPS in Basrah is failing due to divided loyalties, the poor quality of its personnel and a lack of appropriate training. But there are some moderate success stories in specialist capabilities to balance this.² Basra PDOP MG Jalil has embarked on a programme of reforms to address IPS shortfalls; progress is modest to date but the intent is clear. Outside of Basrah the situation is more encouraging. In Dhi Qar and Muthanna, where tribal influences in Society are more deep-rooted, there is greater stability. Most notably in Dhi Qar, the BADR-dominated IPS/TSU has had considerable success in quelling JAM. Recent briefings suggest that the local populace is rejecting JAM and its associated criminality in favour of the legitimate representatives of the GOI – the IPS/TSU. The same holds true in Al Muthanna. This is an encouraging example of where Iraqi civil society is gaining traction and where the Iraqis are resolving the essential questions of divided loyalty.

DBE. The DBE is making steady progress. The focus over the next few months lies with development of Op SILVER RAVEN in conjunction with MNC-I, the civilianisation of the Basra Airport (good progress is being made to achieve ICAO standards) and the seaports initiative. There are a number of other strands running at the same time which include the efforts to improve the capability of LPOEs with the integration of biometrics (PISCES) and improvements to power supply and infrastructure. All are in line with the MNC-I work. Finally, construction of the new Region 4 HQ is almost complete. A purpose built HQ will be a turning point for the department.

² TSU, Forensics, DIA.

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IA. The IA is the ISF success story in MND (SE) and continues to show signs of improving. The creation of 5/10 (IA) Bde has expanded the capacity of the IA in MND (SE) and training has continued to increase its capability. This has been demonstrated by: the success of 10 Div Bns on Op FAQ; the ability to conduct combined ops with elements of the IPS; and in dealing with violent militias in AS SAMAWAH and AN NASIRIYAH without MNF assistance. Recent plans to protect oil infrastructure also demonstrates the ability to operate independent of MNF support. Further, the IA continues to develop their niche capabilities such as the considerable success of the EOD and IEDD teams. However there remain areas of risk. Firstly, there is a question mark about the IA's will to confront malign elements in Basra. This is being mitigated by rotating 1/10 (IA) Bde with another bde from within 10 (IA) Div. The significantly improved performance of the Shia troops of 10 (IA) Div Bns deployed to BDD operating in Sunni areas compared to operations conducted in their own (Shia) locale is of note. And, secondly, there is a risk to the operational capability of new formations (5/10 (IA) Bde and 14 (IA) Div) because logistics and infrastructure provision is not matching the pace at which personnel are being recruited. This risk is mitigated in part by transferring equipment from other bdes.

Assist efforts to build and improve GOI capacity, focusing on essential services, accountable local governance, and sustainable economic development; in careful coordination with this support, promote non-sectarian behaviour while contributing to efforts to remove GOI officials who adhere to sectarian agendas.

Polling in the four southern provinces indicates that the greatest concerns of most Iraqis centre on security, unemployment, electricity, fuel and the unwelcome presence of CF. There are no surprises but the majority believe that the country is going in the right direction; this is consistent with the national picture for areas that are consistently Shia. The GOI is perceived to be weak and ineffective and this fuels talk of federalism. The southern provincial councils do not have the factional differences which have paralysed the GOI and thus they feel empowered. We have also found that when they wish to move forward on an issue, they can do so quite quickly. However they are not fully supported due to a lack of meaningful legislation required to allow governmental, economic and societal improvements to develop. This is a source of discontent. The delay to the Hydrocarbon Law is the most conspicuous example. However, the key weakness is budget execution and it is this that will be the decisive factor in establishing the momentum to drive the governing capability forward. MND (SE) has played an active role in taking forward provincial governance and economic engagement and development in Basra. This has been through the establishment of the Southern Iraq Steering group (SISG), chaired by the UK Consul General. This body, which includes the US state Department, gives guidance and support to the various working groups (WGs) which support the provincial council. The PRT has played a central role in this work. Encouragingly, the 5 x WGs³ underpinned by Iraqi sector WGs from the Provincial Reconstruction Development Committee (PRDC) are asserting their will and taking responsibility.

Governance issues are singular to each of the four provinces. But, while differing circumstances shape how the provinces have approached the maintenance of essential services, promoting accountable local governance and encouraging

³ Strategic communications, infrastructure, governance, economic and rule of law

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sustainable economic development, there are some unifying factors. Firstly, all MND (SE) provinces have a strong streak of independence and a reluctance to be dictated to by Baghdad. Secondly, local solutions are emerging in response to local conditions. Thirdly, in marked contrast to the central belt of Iraq where sectarianism defines the struggle, Shia'ism has brought people together. Fourthly, and perhaps most importantly, is the competition for power and resources. Underpinning all of this is an emerging and strengthening sense of Iraqi nationalism leading ultimately to an anti-Iranian stance. This is a positive and optimistic sign.

Each of the provincial councils is fiercely independent and focussed on local issues; this self realisation often fuels the debate about federalism. Muthanna has long been the most benign of all Iraqi provinces outside the Kurdish areas and was the first Iraqi province to transition to PIC. Its isolation, small population, tribal outlook and early establishment of democratic institutions following the invasion have all helped to reduce militia activity and violence. The success of Muthanna can in large part be attributed to the popularity of the Governor – one of the few to have been re-elected – but is more often credited to the strength of the relationship between the Governor and his head of CID. Also, there is stabilising coherence between the role of the tribes in society and the influence of BADR/ISCI. Dhi Qar has been a more volatile province but even here the sporadic outbreaks of violence have been self limiting. The governor has been firm in establishing a working provincial council which has addressed governance issues. The work of the council has been hampered by the quality of its members. They have struggled with the technical demands of framing a budget and thus are not as efficient in generating the necessary revenue to drive the province forward.

In Maysaan whilst JAM dominates local politics and ^{1.4b} exerts considerable influence, there is a delicate balance of power which has by and large limited violence. The Governor himself is a Sadrist with links to JAM but he has political ambition and has distanced himself publicly from much of their activity. Thus he has mixed popularity. After PIC in Maysaan, which some considered as collaboration with MNF, he quickly sought to address some of the economic grievances of the province by bringing a deal from Iran for provision of electricity supply and cheap social housing. This brought a sharp response from the Gol who also provided funding to support the basic needs of the impoverished amongst the population. So, in Maysaan there has been a pragmatic accommodation which has allowed the basic needs of the province to be addressed.

Although the main headlines in the key province of Basra centre on the weakness of the security LOO and the putative removal of the Governor, the Provincial Council has continued to work steadily across the other LOOs. There has been considerable progress, much of this stimulated by the Basra Plan of 2006. The SISG and the PRT assess that Basra Provincial Council is one the most compliant of all the provincial councils in following direction issued by Baghdad. The PRT works closely with the Governor's Office, Provincial Council and technical directorates to define their roles and inter-relationships. They are now all collaborating on the production of a single handbook setting out the different roles and responsibilities of all of the units of the legislative and executive and how they interact. This will culminate in the next series of intensive governance workshops, to be held in October. In budgetary terms the main effort since May has been holding development seminars for the five southern provinces which focussed on coaching for budget execution. Basra has made

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significant progress⁴. The principal effort for the rest of 2007 will be to ensure that the 2008 investment budget is based on the best practice model supported by building capacity in the Project Implementation Unit of the Governor's Office over the longer-term. The PRT is also working with the council on the Operations and Maintenance budgets for 2007 and plans for 2008, focusing in particular on how the local security forces and judiciary are funded, the objective being to ensure that they have the funds they need to operate.

Finally, the continued operation of Basra airport is vital, both symbolically and practically, to the local economy. It is also an area where it can be shown that the central government is delivering for Basra: the DPM's office has moved from a position of indifference to one of strong interest. The principal challenge remains shifting the Ministry of Transport. The key deliverables for the rest of 2007 are: further Coalition air traffic control training so it can operate independent of CF; a master plan outlining a long-term vision for the airport and its economic development; central government approval for the airport's 2008 budget proposal, effective, stable management of the airport.

Protect the force through proactive, focused, continuous, and precise offensive operations specifically against indirect fire and IED networks; synchronise all available assets, to include air ground reconnaissance and surveillance systems, and properly integrate them to counter these threats.

90% of the violence in MND (SE) is directed against MNF. But FP is not an end in itself; risk must be taken if effect is to be delivered which supports the mission. Nonetheless, such is the fragility of domestic support for Coalition activity that force protection imposes a more than normal constraint on activity, to protect the Corps Strategic COG (maintenance of Coalition will). In addition, an aggressive force posture is a deterrent to attack and a re-assurance to the reconcilable population, as well as being crucial to internal morale. MND (SE) has taken a holistic approach to FP; it is achieved by a complex layered system of active and passive measures. Active FP aims to limit the freedom of action of the insurgent and ranges from Info Ops and Key Leader Engagement through to ISTAR and strike operations either with troops to detain and search or with precision munitions to destroy and disrupt. Passive FP simply aims to limit the effect of insurgent action. Passive protection measures start with the C-RAM system to provide Sense & Warn capability and Phalanx to intercept then cascade down to FP infrastructure and individual immediate action drills. The aim is to achieve protection through a layered, dynamic, system of systems which can react to an evolving threat by harnessing technology and modifying TTPs.

MND (SE) strike ops are currently focussed in support of disrupting MJAM and FP. Op BLACK VIPER is the enduring C-IDF activity which, through the tight fusion of J2/ISR and counter fire, seeks to understand the totality of the IDF system (incl supply, coord, control and execution). Concurrently, we seek to find, deter and disrupt the threat within boundaries utilising the full spectrum of coordinated strike and intelligence assets of both UK and coalition forces (i.e. UAV/PRED, AH 64, fast air and AS 90/M109 EXCALIBUR). Op BLACK VIPER will endure until the end of

⁴ Agreeing an updated Provincial Development Strategy 2008-2010 (soon to be published), at end June, having disbursed almost 50% of the 2006 allocation, At end June, having signed 116 contracts, so executing 50% of the 2007 budget (exceeding the 25% target, and the fourth best province in Iraq according to OPA statistics).

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the year. The process works well, though IDF teams in particular are well-drilled and often present only fleeting targets; therefore the ability to deliver timely and precise counter fire into Basra city without inflicting unacceptable collateral damage is challenging, even with EXCALIBUR. The deliberate response is to mount specific Strike Ops against targets involved in both IDF and smuggling activity as a result of information gathered from J2/ISR assets.

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