

USF-I COMMANDER'S WEEKLY ASSESSMENT

Mr. Secretary, Chairman, Jim:

Charge d' Affairs Stu Jones and I met with GOI officials throughout the week to discuss a number of issues facing the new government. There was movement on formation of the National Council for Higher Policies after Prime Minister Maliki and Dr. Allawi met on Friday to discuss the draft legislation. After all parties sign the agreement, the legislation will be sent to President Talabani, then to the Council of Representatives (COR). Dr. Allawi informed us that he has devoted considerable thought to the initial priorities of the council once it is finalized and that he is eager to get started. We also discussed recent developments regarding security ministry posts. The parties continue to work through the challenges of finding candidates that are independent, competent, and mutually acceptable. Finally, the COR passed a law Sunday establishing three vice president positions. Tariq al-Hashimi (Iraqiyya) and Adel Abdul Mahdi (Islamic Supreme Council of Iraq) will fill two of the positions; the third vice president has yet to be named.

We are currently assessing the impact of Muqtada al-Sadr's return from Iran and his subsequent statement to his followers. We remain hopeful that his return is an indication of his desire for legitimate participation in the political process; however, we are concerned by his remarks on Saturday in which he urged resistance against U.S. Forces.

While the overall number of security incidents and casualties remained below 12-week averages, the number of attacks against U.S. Forces (including those using explosively formed penetrators) increased for the second consecutive week. Two of these attacks utilized improvised rocket assisted munitions (IRAMs), a signature weapon of Kataib Hezbollah (KH), an 1.4b supported Shia extremist group. On Sunday, KH claimed responsibility for these attacks. I have engaged directly with Prime Minister Maliki on this issue, who assured me he fully supports an increase in partnered counterterrorism operations targeting KH and other Shia extremist groups. The GOI is deeply concerned about the perception of Iraq's security environment as they attempt to demonstrate to Arab leaders they can provide adequate security for the Arab League Summit in March. My assessment is that we have an opportunity to leverage the willingness of GOI and ISF officials to go after Shia extremists who will otherwise target U.S. Forces as we begin our reposturing.

Political

Stu Jones and I met with GOI leaders to discuss various issues, including progress on the National Council for Higher Policies (NCHP). During a meeting with Dr. Allawi, he informed us that he had considered various issues regarding the NCHP while he was abroad. He conveyed to us that his initial agenda items will include reconciliation and developing revenue sharing mechanisms.

In a meeting Friday, Dr. Allawi and Prime Minister Maliki agreed to move forward on draft NCHP legislation and discussed the way ahead on filling the security posts. We will continue to follow these developments closely. While we believe it is important to fill these positions as soon as possible, we support the Prime Minister's efforts to find independent, competent candidates to head these critical ministries.

We had a productive meeting with Deputy Prime Minister for Energy Husayn al-Shahristani, who previously served as Minister of Oil and continues in his role as the acting Minister of Electricity. Shahristani discussed his role overseeing the ministries of oil, electricity, and

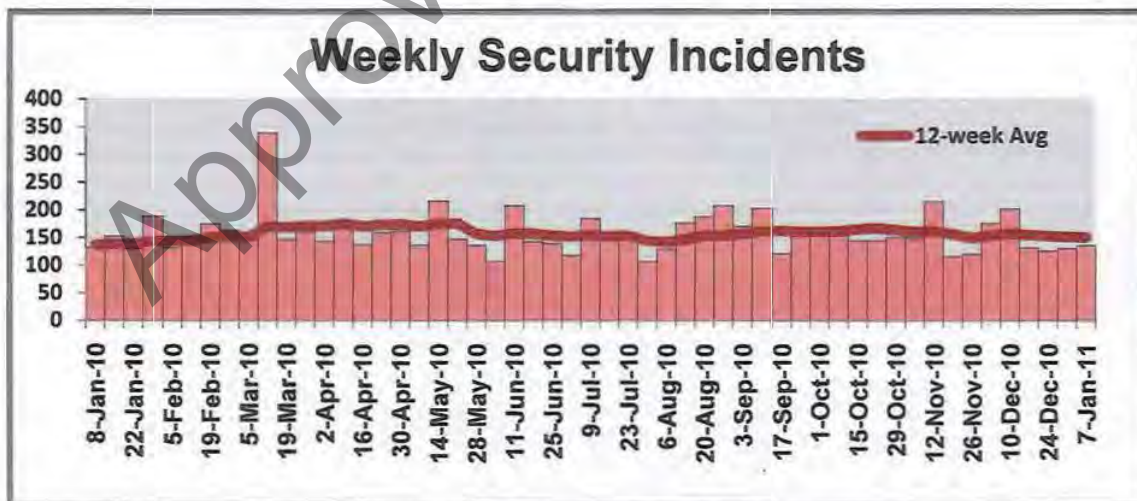
water and offered his preliminary plans for increasing power generation and tempering power consumption in an attempt to avoid the public discontent expressed during riots in the summer of 2010. We suggested a number of "quick wins" to meet this goal, including completion of maintenance on existing power plants. DPM Shahrstani was eager to address these issues and to implement quick-win initiatives.

Muqtada al-Sadr returned to Iraq last week after a voluntary four-year exile in Iran. His arrival drew mixed reactions. On Saturday, Sadr made a speech to his base in Najaf calling for support of the new government, for reconciliation between Sunni and Shia, and for support of Iraqi Christians. These are positive indications of his desire to play a legitimate role in the political process. Sadr went on to call for the removal of U.S. Forces from Iraq, encouraging his followers to allow the government time to adhere to the provisions of the security agreement. Although he advocated military, cultural, and religious resistance against U.S. Forces, we do not currently assess Sadr's return is connected to the recent increase in violence against U.S. Forces. Nonetheless, we remain vigilant in light of the fact that his remarks may embolden Shia extremists.

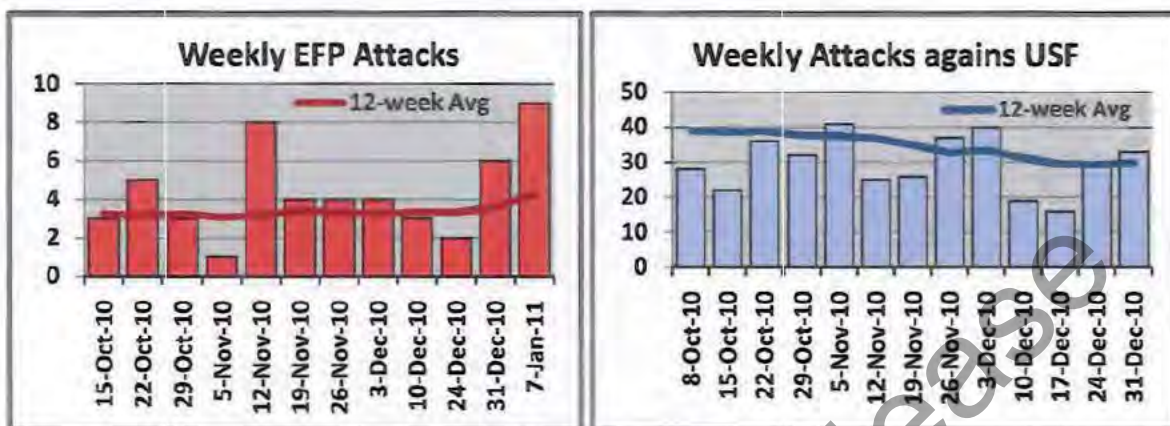
A number of regional leaders traveled to Baghdad last week to engage with GOI leadership. The Prime Minister of Jordan congratulated the new government and encouraged increased ties between the two nations. In addition, Secretary General Amr Moussa of the Arab League traveled from Egypt to discuss preparations for the upcoming Arab League Summit in March. During Sunday's COR session, Moussa confirmed the League's intent to hold the event in Baghdad, citing an improvement in the city's security environment. These visits are indications of regional acceptance of Iraq's new government and of increased opportunities for cooperation on security, economic, and cultural matters.

Security

The number of security incidents rose slightly to 134 but remained below the 12-week average of 150 for the fourth consecutive week. The number of casualties decreased to 134 (26 killed, 108 wounded), remaining below the 12-week average of 180 for the third week in a row. There were 14 U.S. service members wounded in action, seven of whom sustained injuries during attacks against the Victory Base Complex (VBC) and Contingency Operating Site (COS) Kalsu on 3 January (see below). All seven have returned to duty.



Although overall security incidents and casualties are below their 12-week averages, the recent increase in attacks targeting U.S. Forces continued. There was an increase in the use of explosively formed penetrators (EFPs) for the second consecutive week, with nine EFP attacks. We assess six of these attacks were conducted by Promised Day Brigade (PDB) and three by Asaib al-Haq (AAH).



On 3 January, Shia extremists conducted attacks against U.S. Forces at VBC, located near the Baghdad International Airport, and COS Kalsu, 50 miles south of Baghdad. 1.4b, 1.4d

1.4b, 1.4d claimed responsibility for these attacks on Sunday, calling them a new stage in their campaign against U.S. Forces. The rockets were modified with additional explosives to produce mass casualties, but failed to achieve their objectives. This failure was likely the result of a lack of technical proficiency, resulting in the expenditure of a considerable amount of resources with no gain.



240mm IRAM Launch Site

The attack on VBC consisted of nine 107mm and one 240mm rockets fired from a house located in proximity of the VBC perimeter. This is a departure from the usual tactic of launching from a mobile firing platform. Based on exploitation of the site, we assess this operation was deliberately planned over many months. The attack on COS Kalsu also originated from a fixed site and consisted of six 240mm and nine 333mm rockets, seven of which were launched but detonated near their point of origin. Each 333mm rocket was rigged with 600-700 pounds of explosives, rendering them ineffective due to excessive weight. We are currently assessing evidence recovered at both sites.

The 333mm rocket is produced only in 1.4b and is controlled by its Ministry of Defense. 1.4b involvement is further supported by forensic analysis. These factors indicate the tacit knowledge, if not direction, of senior 1.4b, 1.4d

1.4b, 1.4d partners. We assess these attacks represent an effort by Shia extremist groups to express opposition to U.S. Forces in Iraq through violence and to influence any decision regarding a continued U.S. military presence.



333mm IRAM (COS Kalsu)

Attacks conducted by AAH, PDB, and [REDACTED] indicate a shift in targeting focus to U.S. Forces. We intend to leverage the GOI's desire to create a secure environment for the upcoming Arab League Summit by encouraging them to actively pursue Shia extremists. The Prime Minister has expressed concern and is currently very supportive of increasing partnered counterterrorism operations in order to prevent further attacks.

Multiple targets of opportunity passed without signature AQI attacks last week, including Iraqi Army Day and Iraqi Police Day commemorations, Eastern Orthodox Christmas masses, and Muqtada al-Sadr's outdoor speech. These events highlight the ISF's ability to effectively surge during short duration, geographically-confined events. The ISF's next major security event will focus on protecting Shia pilgrims during Arba'een processions in late January.

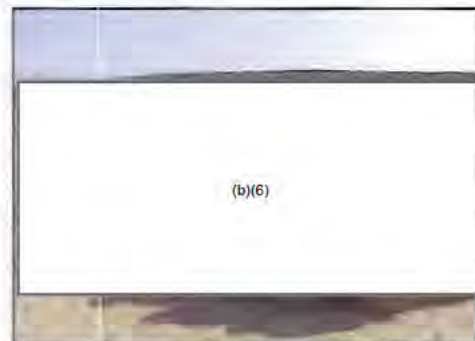
In concert with the Prime Minister's office, we conducted a high-level security meeting on 8 January to discuss the recent increase in attacks in Baghdad and throughout Iraq. The meeting included senior USF-I and ISF leaders, who agreed to coordinate security operations in order to increase the pressure on extremist groups conducting attacks against U.S. Forces as well as those groups that continue assassination attempts against ISF and GOI officials. There was also agreement that U.S. and Iraqi special operations forces would conduct aggressive, joint targeting of these groups, enabled by increased intelligence collaboration.

During this reporting period, U.S. and Iraqi counterterrorism forces conducted 49 partnered operations, resulting in the detention of over 90 individuals, including a [REDACTED] Commander responsible for the planning, logistics, and execution of IED attacks throughout Baghdad. Joint forces also apprehended a former Jaysh al-Mahdi (JAM) operative who is now linked to [REDACTED] against U.S. Forces. Additional operations resulted in the detention of a number of Sunni extremists, including an AQI foreign fighter facilitator, an AQI assassination cell member with possible ties to attacks against Christians, Jaysh Riyal al-Tariq al-Naqshabandi (JRTN) IED/IDF cell members, and an Ansar al-Sunna (AAS) Emir responsible for weapons smuggling in northern Iraq.

ISF Development

On 3 January, the Ministry of Interior (MOI) issued an administrative order approving the conversion of 1,172 contractors to meet long-term police shortfalls in the Ninawa Province. This brings the total number of new hires to 3,172. We are staying closely engaged with the MOI to ensure remaining hiring orders are issued so they can meet their goal of hiring 8,000 new recruits by April 2011.

As mentioned in previous reports, USF-I is working closely with the Iraqi Army (IA) to provide foundational collective training for four of its divisions. The training got off to a great start last week with the Iraqi leadership stepping up to the challenge and trainee morale high. Tadreeb al-Shamil ("collective training") will increase the capability of the IA units and enable them to continue this training methodology as they receive additional equipment after the departure of U.S. Forces. The increased capability of these four divisions will reduce the risk to U.S. Forces as we reposture our troops and equipment at the end of 2011.



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USF-I Weekly Assessment 3-9 January 2011



On 6 January, Iraq commemorated the 90-year anniversary of the Iraqi Army at the Monument to the Unknown Soldier. Prime Minister Maliki gave a speech in which he expressed a desire to build an Army that is professional, strong, well trained, and a "protector of the people." Overall, the Iraqi Army Day celebration was a great success and displayed the Iraqi's great pride in their military forces.

Two days after Army Day, the Iraqi Police conducted a ceremony marking the 89th anniversary of the creation of the Iraqi Police. The

event took place at the Baghdad Police College and was attended by numerous GOI dignitaries and USF-I senior leaders.

We continue to work with the GOI on the F-16 foreign military sales case. We appreciate the support of OSD in providing an additional option for payment of an F-16 letter of offer and acceptance (LOA) that would allow the GOI to procure eight to ten aircraft for \$1B instead of the original LOA of 18 aircraft for \$1.46B. I have informed the Prime Minister of the new proposal, emphasizing that it would increase the overall cost of the program by approximately \$600M and delay first delivery by over one year, to June 2014. During our meeting this week, the Prime Minister again emphasized his commitment to purchasing the F-16s and continues to work through additional funding options.

Transition

NATO Training Mission-Iraq (NTM-I) conducted an internal transition this week when Lieutenant General Michael Barbero relinquished command to Lieutenant General Michael Ferriter. The commander of NTM-I also serves as the USF-I Deputy Commanding General for Advising and Training (DCG-A&T). NATO has been a tremendous partner in our joint efforts in Iraq to advise, train, assist, and equip the Iraqi Security Forces.

We published Operations Order (OPORD) 11-01 last week, the culmination of months of hard work by the USF-I staff. OPORD 11-01 will guide us as we complete transition of USF-I tasks to the U.S. Mission-Iraq (USM-I) and U.S. Central Command throughout the remainder of 2011. The order will also guide our reposturing as we close and transfer bases and redeploy personnel and equipment by the end of 2011. Over the coming weeks we will brief key stakeholders, conduct back briefs, and begin rehearsals, culminating in the full implementation of the order in early February. OPORD 11-01 will enable us to synchronize our efforts in meeting our objectives while maintaining strategic and operational flexibility.

I'm looking forward to visits this week with General Mattis and DASD Motsek. In addition, I plan to meet with members of the Christian community to address current security concerns.

Respectfully,

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