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USF-I Weekly Assessment 5-11 June 2011

USF-I COMMANDER'S WEEKLY ASSESSMENT

Mr. Secretary, Chairman, Jim:

The relationship between Prime Minister Maliki and Ayad Allawi has further deteriorated, preventing agreement on security ministry nominations and the National Council for Higher Policies. Allawi continues to publicly rebuke Maliki, blaming him for the lack of national partnership and repeatedly threatens to pull Iraqiyya into the opposition. KRG President Barzani expressed willingness to travel to Baghdad in a further attempt to find common ground; however, he is increasingly frustrated by the lack of comity between Maliki and Allawi.

Prime Minister Maliki's allotted time for government ministries to improve delivery of essential services ended 6 June. Although there were few notable improvements, Maliki asserted the initiative resulted in increased coordination between ministries and provided an opportunity for each to review its performance and create actionable plans for improvement. The passing deadline (and perceived lack of progress) dominated public discourse; however, demonstrations around the country were limited and nonviolent.

Security incidents, casualties, and attacks against U.S. Forces (USF) were down from the previous week. On 6 June, five improvised rocket-assisted munitions (IRAM) impacted on forward operating base (FOB) Loyalty in Baghdad. [REDACTED] 1.4b

[REDACTED] 1.4b claimed responsibility for the attack and vowed to continue targeting U.S. personnel. We have stepped up targeting efforts to enable focused counterterrorism (CT) operations that will bring those responsible for these attacks to justice.

The Prime Minister recently directed ISF operations targeting Shia extremist groups (SEG) in the South. We are assisting our ISF counterparts to plan joint Iraqi Army/Federal Police operations in Maysan Province that will disrupt SEG activity and stem the flow of lethal accelerants into Iraq. [REDACTED] 1.4b

Political

In a televised session on 6 June, Prime Minister Maliki spoke to the Council of Ministers (COM) to address his mandate for improved ministerial performance. In an effort to deflect criticism, the Prime Minister claimed the 100-day period was intended to give them the opportunity to assess respective strengths and weaknesses. He pointed out that the deadline encouraged increased understanding and coordination between ministries. He concluded by directing ministers to devise multi-year plans to address shortcomings and implement improvements. Two days later, the Prime Minister presided over a series of televised COM sessions in which ministers discussed the status of improvements (or lack thereof) by their respective ministries. Although it was likely a political move on Maliki's part, the televised event was a remarkably transparent move by the GOI.

The impasse between Prime Minister Maliki and Ayad Allawi continues to hinder completion of government formation. Various leaders have told the Ambassador and me that resolution is unlikely unless Maliki and Allawi settle their differences. Allawi's frequent public criticism of Maliki and overt political maneuvering continue to undermine progress. Although he is growing frustrated by the stalled progress on implementation of

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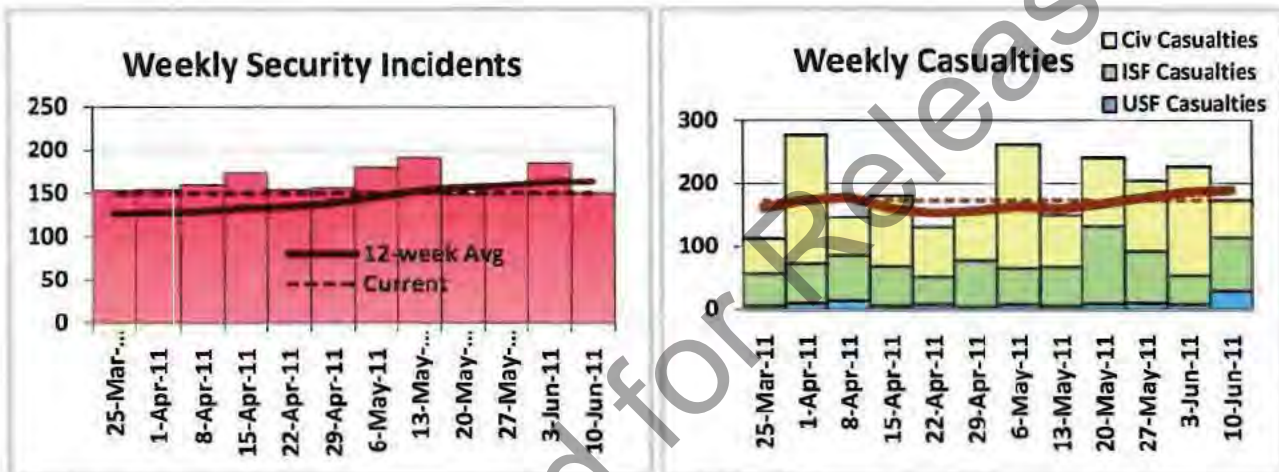
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previous agreements, President Barzani indicated he may travel to Baghdad to facilitate another meeting between bloc leaders. On other matters, President Talabani informed us he plans to convene a meeting between key political leaders to discuss the future of Iraq's relationship with the U.S.

On Tuesday, Prime Minister Maliki appointed National Security Advisor Falih al-Fayad to serve as acting Minister of State for National Security Affairs (MSNSA), one of the three vacant national security posts. Fayad is a key advisor to the Prime Minister and will serve in both positions. Last week's appointment of former MOD Abdul Qadir as an assistant for national security matters and this week's appointment of Fayad may further aggravate those who accuse Maliki of consolidating power.

Security



During the reporting period there were 159 security incidents, a decrease from the previous week and slightly below the 12-week average of 165. The number of casualties was 176 (48 killed, 128 wounded), a decrease from last week and below the 12-week average of 189. Attacks targeting USF decreased from 49 to 33. Six U.S. service members were killed in action; 20 were wounded in action.

Five U.S. service members were killed and 17 wounded when 5 IRAMs impacted FOB Loyalty in Baghdad on 6 June. The attack also caused extensive physical damage to living quarters. Evidence recovered at the scene, including two unexploded IRAMs, was taken for forensic exploitation; however, initial indications are that the components used to manufacture these [1.4b]. We assess the attack was planned, resourced, and coordinated by [1.4b] and carried out by Asaib Ahl al-Haq (AAH) surrogate operatives. [1.4b] publicly acknowledged responsibility for the attack and vowed it will continue to target U.S. personnel.



Fragment of recovered IRAM with inscription in Arabic that translates to [1.4b]

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We have further intensified our efforts to go after the [1.4b] network and have numerous operatives in various stages of target development. We are also developing actionable intelligence on a number of AAH operatives suspected of colluding with [1.4b] and likely involved in the 6 June IRAM attack. Concurrently pursuing the AAH line of targeting may provide additional insight into the [1.4b] network, which is difficult to penetrate due to its strict communications protocols. [1.4b, 1.4d, 1.4c]

[1.4b, 1.4d, 1.4c]

After repeated engagements with GOI and ISF officials, we are seeing some movement by the ISF to conduct operations against the SEGs. GEN Ali Gheidan, commander of the Iraqi Ground Forces Command (IGFC), informed us that the Prime Minister recently authorized operations in the southern provinces. USF-I planners are currently assisting the IGFC to prepare for joint Iraqi Army/Federal Police operations in Maysan Province that will disrupt the flow of lethal aid into Iraq [1.4b]

We assess these operations will disrupt SEGs operations; however, there are still a number of challenges that must be addressed in order to sustain any gains in security. First, the increasing influence of Sadrist Trend members over some provincial councils has emboldened SEGs. Second, infiltration of the ISF has created a more permissive environment for SEG activity. Finally, extremists detained during CT operations are often released by members of the judicial system who are either corrupt or threatened by the SEGs with retribution.

As the ISF struggles to maintain control in the South, forces in the North have done relatively well. They have conducted successful operations against Sunni insurgent groups such as AQI and Jaysh Rijal Tariq al-Naqshabandi (JRTN). Recently, they provided security for over 500,000 Shia pilgrims visiting the al-Askari mosque in Samarra to commemorate the death of the 10th Imam. The al-Askari mosque is the third holiest Shia religious site and has been the target of multiple AQI attacks. This year's commemoration passed without incident.

AQI conducted an attack in Tikrit on 6 June, the third such attack within a week. A suicide vehicle-borne IED detonated near an entry control point, killing 7 members of the ISF and wounding 25. We assess AQI conducted the attack to further degrade security in Tikrit and to intimidate the local populace. We further assess AQI will increase its operational tempo in the coming weeks when the 40-day period of mourning Usama bin-Laden ends on 12 June.

Tension has been building in Anbar Province since members of the Iraqi Army killed an Anbari police officer during a recent security raid. The officer was targeted due to suspected ties to AQI. His death led to threats of retribution and sparked demonstrations, some of which became violent. The event is emblematic of the tension between central government and provincial governments in other parts of the country. Many of the local sheikhs want the GOI's Anbar Operations Center and IA troops removed from the province and replaced by provincial police. The Prime Minister traveled to Anbar to discuss the situation and offered concessions to appease tribal leaders and maintain stability in the province. Consequently, the IP will replace IA units in Ramadi and the IA will move to the outskirts of the city to assist when necessary. The

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situation in Sunni-dominated Anbar is a manifestation of tribal and political maneuvering for power and highlights the growing perception of some Sunnis that they are being marginalized by the Shia-led GOI.

U.S. and Iraqi CT forces conducted 41 operations during the reporting period, resulting in the detention of 45 extremists. Seven of these operations targeted Shia extremists, including a Promised Day Brigade operative who was involved in IED and IDF attacks against U.S. and Iraqi forces. Thirty-four CT operations targeted Sunni extremists, including numerous AQI operatives involved in attacks against ISF, USF, and GOI officials. Joint CT forces detained the AQI Wali of Northwest Iraq who also served as an extortion emir. His capture will have an impact on AQI's extortion and financing abilities and lead to targetable intelligence on the AQI extortion network. Also detained was a military emir of an AQI cell in Hawijah who will provide vital information on smuggling and financing activities in the Kirkuk area.

ISF Development

Iraqi Navy training continues to increase its ability to assume control of Iraq's territorial waters. On 9 June, 48 personnel completed basic swift boat training at Umm Qasr. Additional personnel completed the swift patrol boat "train the trainer" course that will improve the capability and capacity of the Iraqi Navy to train and sustain its own crews for operational employment, including patrol of Iraq's territorial waters and protection of its two key oil platforms.

On 1 June 2011, an Iraqi Air Force (IqAF) pilot conducted the first T-6 training mission by a first assignment instructor pilot (FAIP). This milestone represents a significant paradigm shift in IqAF flight training that follows the U.S. FAIP model, which allows recently winged pilots to train as instructors without waiting years to accumulate operational experience. This capability is essential for rapid airpower growth. There are currently 14 pilots in the T-6 instructor pilot training program at Tikrit, with an additional six scheduled to begin within weeks.

Transition

Provincial reconstruction teams (PRT) in Iraq continue to draw down as our Embassy partners transition to a more traditional diplomatic engagement posture. On 1 June, PRTs in Salah ad Din and Wasit Provinces closed on schedule. PRTs in Muthanna, Maysan, and Dhi Qar are scheduled to close by the end of the month and the remaining seven will draw down by September 2011.

This week Admiral Olson and Secretary of Transportation LaHood will visit Iraq.

Respectfully,



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