

~~SECRET // NOFORN // 20210731~~

USF-I Weekly Assessment 24-30 July 2011

USF-I COMMANDER'S WEEKLY ASSESSMENT

Mr. Secretary, Chairman, Jim:

This was a dynamic week in Iraqi politics. The third meeting of the political blocs, originally scheduled for Thursday, was postponed until 2 August due to the death of Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG) President Masoud Barzani's mother. Many senior leaders traveled to Irbil during the three-day mourning period to offer condolences.

Discussions continued throughout the week as political bloc leaders prepared for the upcoming meeting. The Ambassador and I met with numerous GOI officials to ensure they understood that the outcome of the meeting was an important factor in determining whether there will be U.S. Forces (USF) in Iraq beyond 2011. We emphasized that bloc leaders must reach consensus on the appointment of a Minister of Defense (MOD), even if that appointment is on an interim basis. Prime Minister Maliki announced Saturday that he intends to make a unilateral appointment if no agreement is reached at the meeting. There are reports that Iraqiyya will present a nomination at the meeting. We are continuing our dialogue with Iraqi leaders, encouraging them to communicate with each other prior to the meeting to increase the chances of a positive outcome.

The Prime Minister addressed the Council of Representatives (COR) on Saturday. He addressed the recent initiative to reduce the size of the cabinet and the need for national unity in requesting a new security agreement with the United States. He also informed them of his intention to purchase 36 F-16s to strengthen Iraq's air defense capabilities.

The security situation remains stable. The number of security incidents declined slightly; however, the number of casualties rose due to a number of effective attacks by AQI. Nearly one-third of the week's casualties were the result of a complex attack that took place in Tikrit on 28 July. We assess this may be the beginning of an AQI attack cycle that will coincide with the start of Ramadan on 1 August, and that there will be a slight increase in attacks during the 30-day religious observance, which is in line with historical trends. The ISF are planning to implement enhanced security measures, especially during events that draw large crowds.

We have seen some positive movement on the GOI's willingness to address the threat posed by [1.4b]. The Prime Minister's recent message to [1.4b] to cease support to these groups was reinforced by Iraq's National Security Advisor during a visit last week [1.4b] reportedly agreed to direct its proxy forces, [1.4b], Asaib Ahl al-Haq (AAH), and Promised Day Brigade (PDB), to publicly renounce violence. We remain skeptical that this message, if delivered, will be heeded by these groups; however, we are closely monitoring for possible developments on this issue.

~~SECRET // NOFORN // 20210731~~

SECRET // NOFORN // 20210731

USF-I Weekly Assessment 24-30 July 2011

Political

The third meeting of the political blocs was postponed due to the death of KRG President Barzani's mother and will now be held on 2 August. Although he will not be able to attend the meeting, we are hopeful that President Barzani will continue his efforts to facilitate compromise between Maliki and Allawi.

The Ambassador and I have engaged political leaders throughout the week. We underscored the importance of timely decisions on a number of critical issues, including appointment of an MOD and determining the GOI's unified position on a post-2011 USF presence. The leaders acknowledged that any decision to enter negotiations with the U.S. must be publicly supported by all blocs (with the exception of the Sadrists). We were also clear that any agreement must be approved by the COR in order to guarantee privileges and immunities for U.S. military personnel. Finally, we continue to encourage meaningful progress on the National Council for Higher Policies.

In a press conference following his address before the Parliament on Saturday, Prime Minister Maliki addressed ongoing efforts to reduce the number of ministries. He explained the mechanism behind the reductions, explaining that the initiative will require further action by the Parliament to enact recommendations of a committee that examined the proposals.

The Prime Minister also announced that a new security agreement with the United States will require agreement by all political blocs and should not be his decision alone, since the matter will eventually come before the Parliament for approval. He stated that he had provided the Parliament and political bloc leaders with a detailed report on the capabilities of Iraq's security forces to inform the discussion on the matter. He went on to say that the GOI intended to purchase 36 F-16s in order to strengthen Iraq's air defense capabilities.

The Prime Minister indicated Saturday that he intends to appoint the current Minister of Culture, Sadun al-Dulaymi, to be interim MOD if an agreement is not reached during the next meeting. The move elicited a negative response from Iraqiyya, who view it as another example of Maliki's attempt to consolidate power. They reportedly intend to offer additional nominations at the next meeting. We continue to engage with the bloc leaders, urging them to compromise on this critical issue so the GOI can move forward on other issues.

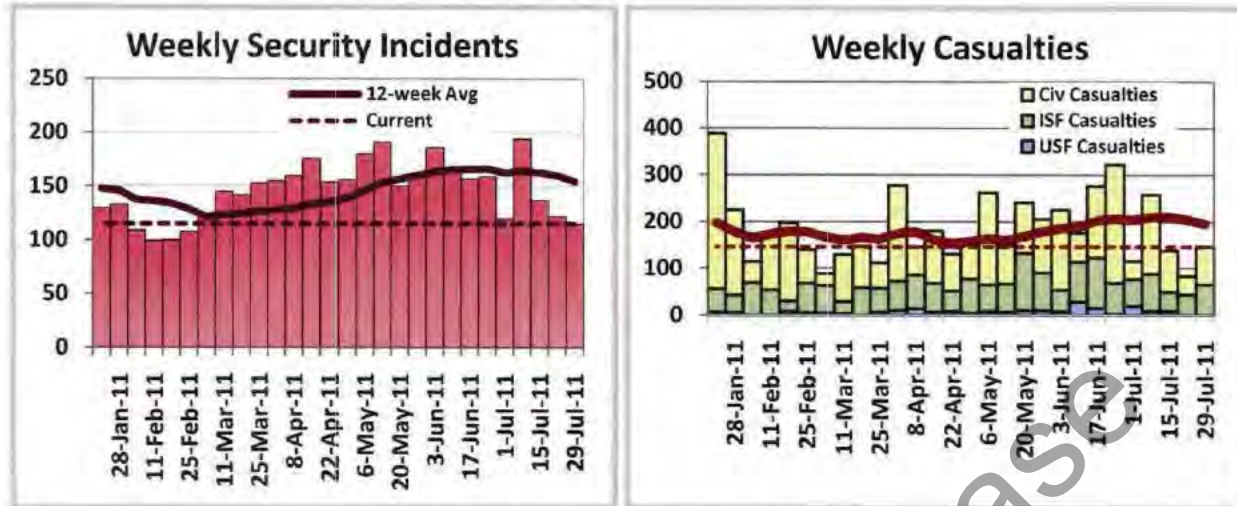
Security

During the reporting period, there were 115 security incidents, a slight decrease from the previous week and below the 12-week average of 154. The number of casualties was 146 (34 killed, 112 wounded), an increase in civilian casualties from last week but below the 12-week average of 195. The number of attacks against USF decreased from 29 to 25. There was one U.S. service member wounded in action.

SECRET // NOFORN // 20210731

SECRET // NOFORN // 20210731

USF-I Weekly Assessment 24-30 July 2011



We attribute the rise in civilian casualties to a number of effective AQI attacks. On Thursday, there was a complex attack in Tikrit targeting members of the ISF that resulted in 13 killed and 33 wounded. After a suicide operative detonated a personal-borne IED, a vehicle-borne IED (VBIED) exploded 30 minutes later targeting first responders. Earlier in the week, AQI conducted another VBIED attack near a hospital in Diyala, killing three and wounding 10. Finally, two civilians were killed and 19 injured when a cache located in the home of an AQI operative unintentionally detonated. These weapons were likely being prepared for use in an impending attack.

These attacks reinforce the fact that AQI remains a threat and will likely look for opportunities to conduct attacks during Ramadan, which begins early this week. Historically, there has only been a slight increase in attacks during the month of Ramadan; however, we assess AQI will view gatherings during the religious observance as attractive targets for attacks that support its desire to incite sectarian strife. The Baghdad Operations Command issued a directive increasing security measures at marketplaces and other locations where large groups of people will gather for key events. We continue to advise the ISF as they plan security operations and are prepared to provide assistance, if requested.

In meetings with Prime Minister Maliki, the Ambassador and I stressed that he must provide us with a demonstration of the GOI's intent to confront the threat of [1.4b]

[1.4b] As I mentioned in previous reports, Maliki assured me he had addressed the matter with [1.4b] clearly objecting to the actions of its proxy militant groups in Iraq. Directed by the Prime Minister, National Security Advisor Falih Fayyad traveled to [1.4b] last week to reinforce the message. Upon his return, he informed me that he had personally delivered the message to [1.4b] [1.4b] According to Fayyad, the [1.4b] agreed to instruct [1.4b], AAH, and PDB, to issue statements renouncing violence but requested that joint Iraq-US forces cease operations targeting these groups. Fayyad refused the request, stating he would only address the issue after [1.4b] activity had demonstrably decreased.

SECRET // NOFORN // 20210731

SECRET // NOFORN // 20210731

USF-I Weekly Assessment 24-30 July 2011

We continue to pressure [1.4b] networks and assess that our unilateral and partnered counterterrorism (CT) operations, coupled with enhanced force protection measures and show of force operations, continue to disrupt enemy operations and decision cycles at the tactical level. At the strategic level, we believe that our messaging to [1.4b] through Prime Minister Maliki has also had an impact, potentially leading to a strategic pause in [1.4b] activity while [1.4b] assesses the significance of our latest words and deeds.

Our unilateral and partnered CT operations resulted in the detention of numerous violent extremists. During unilateral operations, U.S. Special Operations Forces (SOF) detained two AAH operatives involved in recent indirect fire (IDF) attacks targeting USF. U.S. SOF also detained a [1.4b] operative involved in improvised rocket-assisted munitions (IRAM) attacks on two U.S. bases in June that resulted in the deaths of nine U.S. service members.

Working with our Iraqi partners, we detained an AAH leader responsible for multiple IDF attacks against Joint Base Balad (JBB), an explosively-formed penetrator (EFP) engineer associated with PDB, and an operative in the PDB stronghold of Shula. Partnered forces also detained a chemist associated with AQI who was involved in chemical weapons development by operatives based in Iraq [1.4b]. Finally, an AQI leader in Salah ad Din Province was killed during an operation after firing on our forces. His cell was responsible for multiple attacks against JBB as well as numerous IED attacks, several of which targeted senior ISF leadership and members of the judiciary.

The ISF operation in Maysan Province continues. As mentioned in last week's report, the purpose of the operation is to interdict the flow of lethal accelerants, uncover weapons caches, and disrupt [1.4b] networks. We assess the operation has been only moderately successful thus far; however, there has been notable progress in other areas. Unlike the previous operation in late June, ISF senior leaders, to include the commanders of the Iraqi Ground Forces Command and the Federal Police, were involved and on site during most of the operation. In addition, Iraqi forces have been more willing to partner with USF, increasing the effectiveness of operations. Initially, there was some concern expressed by Iraqi civilians; however, when they learned that the operation was targeting the influx of weapons into their communities, they were generally supportive.

ISF Development

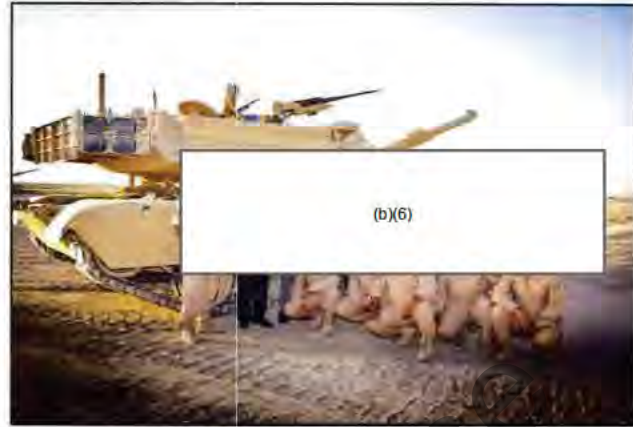
The USF-I Deputy Commanding General for Advising and Training (DCG-A&T), LTG Mike Ferriter, will accompany the Prime Minister's military advisor, Abd al-Qadir, on a trip to the United States 9-14 August. Qadir will meet with Air Force officials to discuss the potential purchase of 36 F-16s. Qadir intends to gather detailed information that will expedite preparation of a letter of offer and acceptance that will be signed by Prime Minister Maliki. In addition, the COR's Defense Security Committee approved the purchase of the aircraft on 30 July. The approval of the defense committee and the aforementioned statement by the Prime Minister clearly indicate the GOI's desire to purchase F-16s.

SECRET // NOFORN // 20210731

~~SECRET // NOFORN // 20210731~~

USF-I Weekly Assessment 24-30 July 2011

To address concerns regarding the transparency of the Foreign Military Sales (FMS) program, the DCG-A&T engaged a number of senior GOI officials to reassure them the program is well managed and closely scrutinized. The engagements included visits to the Besmaya Training Center with members of the Parliament's Security and Defense and Integrity committees. These visits were highly productive and



showcased the transparency of the FMS program as well as the quality of the military equipment and hardware the FMS program has provided to support the development of Iraqi Security Forces.

Transition

We have transferred 203 of the original 206 detainees to the GOI. Three U.S. special interest detainees remain in our custody. We have provided overwatch during the transfer and will remain at Camp Cropper through 31 July. USF-I detention operations personnel have devoted countless hours to ensuring Iraqi correctional officers are properly trained and ready to assume their duties.

USF-I and U.S. Embassy-Baghdad personnel recently conducted a Concept of Support rehearsal drill to determine how DOS and OSC-I transitions should proceed. Multiple factors were integrated into the rehearsal of concept drill, including the provision of routine sustainment commodities and services such as food, fuel, and medical support. Participants examined two upcoming site transitions, one to DOS and one OSC-I. As we continue our transition, we will replicate this forum to address other functions such as security and budgeting.

We look forward to visits from the Chairman and CENTCOM Commander this week. In addition, a delegation of four U.S. governors will visit and meet with constituents as part of the DOD state-level outreach program.

Respectfully,



~~SECRET // NOFORN // 20210731~~