

~~SECRET // NOFORN // 20210828~~

USF-I Weekly Assessment 21 - 27 August 2011

USF-I COMMANDER'S WEEKLY ASSESSMENT

Mr. Secretary, Chairman, Jim:

There were few political developments after the Council of Representatives (COR) adjourned for the remainder of Ramadan. It will likely reconvene on 6 September, the week after the Eid al-Fitr celebration. The COR will face a number of critical issues, including debate on the continued presence of U.S. Forces after 2011.

My deputy commanding generals and I met with acting Minister of Defense (MOD) Sadun al-Dulaymi to provide him with an assessment of the security situation in Iraq, current threats, and existing gaps and capabilities of the Iraqi Security Forces (ISF). The meeting provided a strong foundation for weekly follow-on engagements to discuss important security matters.

The number of security incidents was consistent with the previous week and remained slightly above the 12-week average. The number of casualties decreased substantially, and was well below average after the coordinated attacks on 15 August that produced over 250 casualties. Attacks against USF increased; most were conducted by the [1.4b]

[1.4b] arm of the Sadrist Movement, Promised Day Brigade (PDB). Two notable exceptions were the 26 August attack on Camp Taji consisting of 11 240mm rockets and the attempted attack on FOB Loyalty on 27 August that consisted of two improvised rocket-assisted munitions (IRAM). Our initial assessment is that the former attack was conducted by Asaib Ahl al-Haq (AAH) and the latter by [1.4b]

We further assess they indicate these groups are likely preparing to increase attacks after a low level of activity over the past month. We will continue to focus our efforts on disrupting [1.4b] networks and will take the actions necessary to protect our forces.

Political

It was a relatively quiet week in Iraqi politics; the COR recessed for the remainder of Ramadan and the Eid al-Fitr holiday and will reconvene on or about 6 September. We will continue to conduct engagements with GOI and ISF officials during this time, however, to facilitate continued resolution of government formation issues and negotiations on a post-2011 USF presence.

We continue to hear positive reflections on the appointment of acting Minister of Defense Sadun al-Dulaymi from GOI and ISF leaders. On 24 August, USF-I senior leaders met with Dulaymi to give him an overview of current and future security challenges facing Iraq. We provided him with an assessment of current threats, reviewed the current gaps and capabilities of the Iraqi security forces under the control of the Ministry of Defense, and discussed other topics such as the Combined Security Mechanism and ongoing efforts to relocate residents of Camp Ashraf. Dulaymi informed us that after negotiations between the Government of Iraq and the U.S., he would personally present the case for

~~SECRET // NOFORN // 20210828~~

~~SECRET // NOFORN // 20210828~~

USF-I Weekly Assessment 21 - 27 August 2011

a continued U.S. training presence to the COR. Overall, the session was highly productive and provided a solid foundation for continuing dialogue between USF-I and the Ministry of Defense.

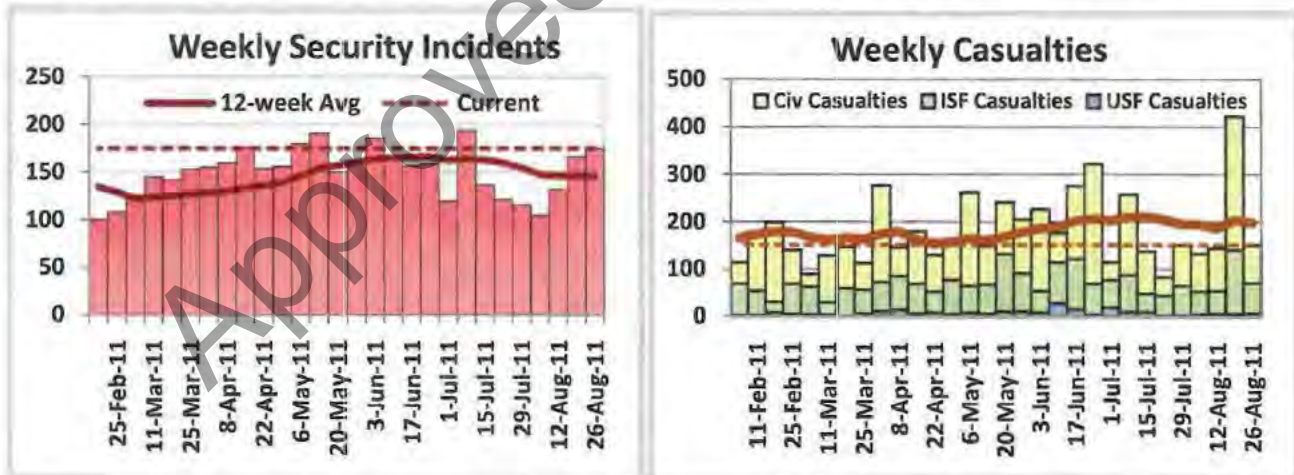
During our regular engagement with Prime Minister Maliki, he informed Ambassador Jeffrey and me that he was pleased with recent ISF operations targeting [REDACTED] 1.4b

[REDACTED] 1.4b in the South and planned to continue replacement of corrupt officials and rotation of ISF units in an effort to improve security. We also discussed the appointment of acting MOD Dulaymi and the role he will play in post-2011 negotiations and the follow-on deliberations in the Parliament.

Earlier in the week, the Ambassador and I met with President Talabani to discuss a range of issues. With regard to the situation in Diyala Province, he informed us he had instructed Peshmerga forces to comply with U.S. requests to cease provocative movements near the combined security area. He also discussed the next meeting of political bloc leaders, which will likely take place after Eid al-Fitr. Finally, the President expressed full support of Maliki's appointment of Dulaymi as acting MOD, stating that he had been the Kurds' choice early on.

Security

During the reporting period, there were 175 security incidents, slightly higher than the previous week (167) and above the 12-week average of 146. The number of casualties was 151 (29 killed, 122 wounded), a significant decrease from last week (420) and below the 12-week average of 198. The number of attacks against USF increased from 30 to 37, above the 12-week average of 33. Seven U.S. service members were wounded in action.



Although AQI has not conducted attacks on the scale of those of 15 August, it has executed a number of high profile attacks throughout the week in various parts of the country. Two of those attacks took place on 25 August. Ten members of the Iraqi Army and four civilians were wounded after a vehicle-borne IED (VBIED) exploded near an ISF patrol in downtown Baghdad. Hours later, a suicide bomber detonated his vehicle near a Shia mosque in Basrah, killing 4 civilians and injuring 34. We assess these attacks are part of AQI's publicly

~~SECRET // NOFORN // 20210828~~

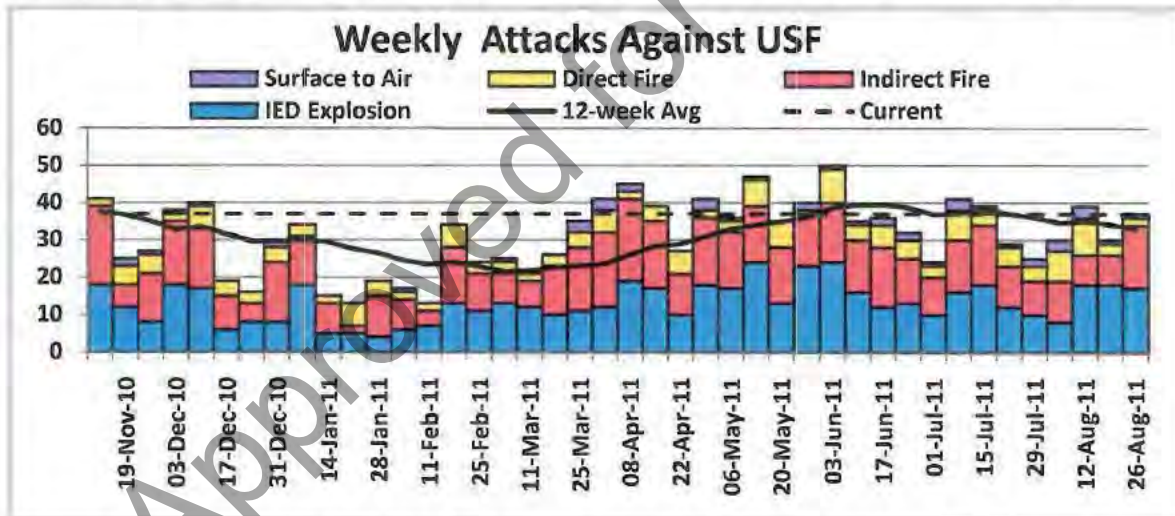
~~SECRET # NOFORN # 20210828~~

USF-I Weekly Assessment 21 - 27 August 2011

stated objective to conduct 100 countrywide attacks during the second half of Ramadan to avenge the death of Usama bin Laden.

The number of attacks targeting USF increased during the week (see below). Many of these attacks were conducted by [1.4b] groups, particularly PDB as part of its effort to shape political discussions on a post-2011 USF presence. The most remarkable attacks this week, however, can likely be attributed to AAH and [1.4b]. On 26 August, 11 240mm rockets impacted on Camp Taji, just northwest of Baghdad, resulting in five USF sustaining minor injuries and damage to two UAVs and a runway. Our initial assessment is that AAH conducted this attack. The following day, two IRAMs impacted off FOB Loyalty in Baghdad, causing no damage and no casualties. The attack was executed within 48 hours of the base's transfer to the GOI, similar to two IRAM attacks conducted by [1.4b] earlier this year.

The attacks on Taji and Loyalty likely signal a resumption of activity after a short-term tactical pause by AAH and [1.4b] that can be attributed to increased pressure on the networks, enhanced force protection measures, and potential direction from [1.4b] backers. While our efforts to disrupt attacks remain effective, we believe the enemy has used the time to refine its tactics and replenish its resources. We will continue to pursue key [1.4b] and AAH leaders and adjust our force protection measures accordingly.



U.S. and Iraqi Special Operations Forces conducted numerous counterterrorism operations targeting Sunni insurgents and [1.4b]. As a result, we detained multiple Sunni insurgent group operatives involved in VBIED, indirect fire (IDF) and IED attacks against ISF and USF. We also maintained pressure on [1.4b] networks, detaining a mid-level AAH cell leader who was directly involved in multiple IED and explosively-formed penetrator (EFP) attacks targeting USF and ISF in Baghdad, an AAH operative involved in IED and EFP attacks along one of our major supply routes in Babil Province, three AAH operatives in Basrah, and a leader of a PDB operational cell involved in IDF, IED, and rocket-propelled grenade attacks in Baghdad.

~~SECRET # NOFORN # 20210828~~

~~SECRET // NOFORN // 20210828~~

USF-I Weekly Assessment 21 - 27 August 2011

As discussed in previous reports, we continue to hold a number of security-based detainees in our theater internment facility (TIF) at Al Asad Air Base in Anbar Province. These detainees are held pursuant to Article 4 of the Security Agreement, which provides for the right of legitimate self defense. Only those who have engaged in hostile acts against USF, have demonstrated hostile intent, or are active members of designated hostile forces are detained. The ability to maintain custody of these detainees has played a considerable role in our ability to disrupt ^{1.4b} networks conducting attacks against our forces. International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) inspectors visited the Al Asad TIF 26-27 August to provide a neutral assessment of the treatment of detainees. The inspectors found that all detainees were being well cared for.

Following a tense period 10 days ago, the situation in Diyala Province has stabilized due to the efforts of our division commander in the North and the Deputy Commander for Operations. Peshmerga forces have pulled back some of their equipment and personnel, and joint patrols have successfully reduced tensions between Arab and Kurdish security forces. At a senior working group (SWG) meeting on 23 August, all acknowledged that trilateral patrols would continue only until a longer-term solution could be implemented. On 27 August, we convened a meeting of the high level committee (HLC), the first such gathering in over a year. The attendance of the acting Minister of Defense and a deputy minister of interior further reduced tensions and will likely deter future unilateral action by the Kurds. Although no final decisions were reached, the meeting successfully addressed some tough issues in an appropriate forum. The HLC directed the SWG to continue working through the issues and agreed to follow up with another meeting within the next few weeks.

The Turkish military continued cross border operations targeting Kurdish rebels in the Iraqi Kurdistan Region. Although the operations tapered by the end of the week, tensions flared after reports that seven civilians were killed on 21 August during an F-16 airstrike in Sulaymaniyah. Although the Turks have denied responsibility for the deaths, Kurdish citizens held demonstrations in various cities to protest Turkish military actions. Members of the Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG) have also expressed outrage, some calling for severing relations with the Turkish government. The Kurdish Parliament voted unanimously for a revision of diplomatic ties and the immediate expulsion of all Turkish intelligence agents from the region. The Ambassador and I discussed the matter with Iraqi President Talabani and urged continued diplomatic engagement to address the matter. Talabani informed us that the KRG is considering potential actions to curb the actions of the rebels.

ISF Development

On 22 August, NATO Training Mission Iraq (NTM-I) transferred control of Ar Rustamayah to the GOI, signifying the end of NATO's direct support to the Iraqi Military Academy and the Joint Staff College. Since assuming responsibility for Ar Rustamayah in 2006, over 400 NATO personnel have successfully trained 3,804 Iraqi military officers in classes on human rights and international law, military leadership, international relations, and security

~~SECRET // NOFORN // 20210828~~

SECRET // NOFORN // 20210828

USF-I Weekly Assessment 21 - 27 August 2011

cooperation. During a mission review, NATO assessed Ar Rustamayah institutions were fully capable, no longer requiring direct support from NATO forces. NTM-I will continue to support development of the Academy and the College through consultation and sponsored training events.

After returning from the U.S. with the completed F-16 letter of offer and acceptance (LOA), Abd al-Qadir and I discussed the importance of moving ahead in a timely manner. On 27 August, he presented the LOA to Prime Minister Maliki, who is eager to move forward. He indicated he will sign the LOA as soon as Minister of Finance Issawi returns from abroad the first week of September. The Ambassador and I engaged the Minister of Finance prior to his departure, who assured us that the GOI will provide funding in its annual budget for the first 18 F-16s. This will allow for the delivery of the first aircraft as early as March 2015.

Transition

USF-I senior logistics leaders participated in an ARCENT rehearsal of concept drill in Kuwait 22-24 August. The conference focused on logistics considerations and potential friction points for the responsible drawdown of USF-I, synchronizing logistics with operational maneuver. Planners discussed a detailed view of requirements and capacities and determined there were no insurmountable obstacles.

Our transition to OSC-I is ongoing; coordination of command and control, operations, force protection, personnel, and logistical sustainment remain key focus areas. We continue to develop existing security cooperation and security assistance capabilities through various working groups that support operations, planning, training, and sustainment functions in support of our transition. OSC-I continues to improve command and control capability in coordination with the USF-I and the U.S. Embassy. Over 90 percent of DOD personnel required to fill critical positions have been identified, with many already in place. As the transition continues, USF-I personnel will augment operations, planning, sustainment efforts as well as continued security cooperation and security assistance activities. Safety and force protection of personnel are paramount; vulnerability assessments are complete at enduring sites and force protection enhancements ongoing.

I appreciate CENTCOM's recent efforts to secure authorities to move equipment and personnel in and out of Kuwait and Jordan in support of our posture.

Respectfully,



SECRET // NOFORN // 20210828