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USF-I Weekly Assessment 9 - 15 October 2011

USF-I COMMANDER'S WEEKLY ASSESSMENT

Mr. Secretary, Chairman, Jim:

Ambassador Jeffrey and I continue to engage senior Government of Iraq (GOI) officials after political blocs agreed to request additional U.S. military trainers but refused to send the issue of privileges and immunities to the Council of Representatives (COR) for consideration. Prime Minister Maliki assured us he is interested in defense cooperation based on "government to government" agreements. We will continue to explore all mutually acceptable options. Many GOI leaders will be unavailable due to the six-week COR recess and the upcoming Hajj pilgrimage, making a final decision by the end of the year improbable. It is also unlikely there will be significant progress on unresolved government formation issues, including the appointment of permanent security ministers and the National Council for Higher Policies (NCHP).

In light of the GOI's decision, we are continuing to execute the program of record and will withdraw all troops and equipment from Iraq no later than 31 December. In addition to our reposturing efforts, we are making great progress in transition activities, ensuring the Office of Security Cooperation-Iraq (OSC-I) and U.S. Mission-Iraq (USM-I) will be postured for success.

The number of security incidents declined and remained below the 12-week average. The overall number of casualties, however, increased due to multiple high casualty-producing attacks by AQI. On 12 October, six coordinated attacks in Baghdad resulted in over 50 casualties. The following day, AQI detonated two IEDs in Sadr City, killing 17 and wounding 44. We assess these attacks demonstrate that AQI's Baghdad network has regained some of its capability despite 2010 leadership losses and that it will continue to conduct attacks in an effort to undermine public confidence in the GOI and ISF.

Attacks against USF increased slightly during the reporting period but remained below average. Two indirect fire (IDF) attacks in the South support our recent assessment that

1.4b

Asaib Ahl al-Haq (AAH) has resumed attacks on our forces. I discussed the matter with Prime Minister Maliki and conveyed that attacks against our forces would not be tolerated.

Detainees held at the Al Asad theater internment facility (TIF) will be transferred to GOI custody when the TIF closes on 24 November as part of our reposture. We are currently holding 50 detainees, one of whom is

(b)(6)

operative detained in 2007 for his involvement in the deaths of five U.S. Soldiers. Because we will no longer have an appropriate internment facility, the GOI will assume custody of all detainees in accordance with the 2008 Security Agreement. Therefore, we must have a policy decision soon on the disposition of special interest detainees like

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if we are to preclude his transfer on 24 November.

~~SECRET // NOFORN // 20211016~~

~~SECRET // NOFORN // 20211016~~

USF-I Weekly Assessment 9 - 15 October 2011

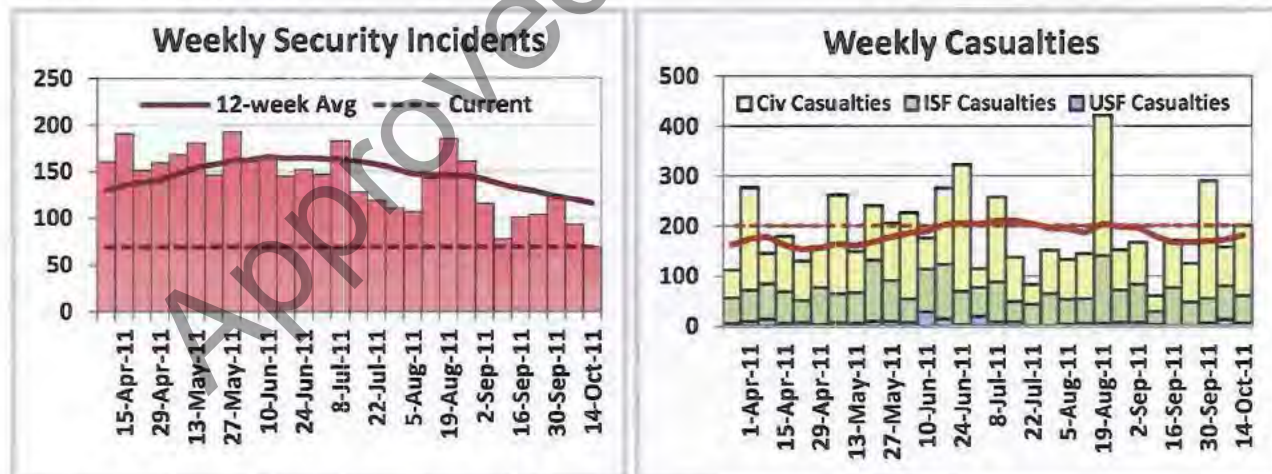
Political

Based on the recent GOI decision to request U.S. trainers but deny privileges and immunities, we are exploring options to provide additional trainers in a manner that will support U.S. and Iraqi interests. Due to time constraints, however, it is unlikely we will reach resolution on the matter by the end of the year. In the meantime, we remain focused on meeting our commitment to remove all forces and equipment by 31 December, stand up the OSC-I, and transition responsibilities to USM-I. Thus far, we are on track.

The stalemate between political blocs on unresolved government formation initiatives continues. The Prime Minister appears to be satisfied with the performance of acting-Minister of Defense Dulaymi and is unlikely to accept any Iraqiyya-nominated candidate based on his opinion that they would be unqualified to fill the position. Ayad Allawi made a recent public statement that he would refuse to head the NCHP, calling the current government a "nascent dictatorship." Allawi's decision on leading the NCHP notwithstanding, progress on establishing the Council remains stalled, with Maliki and his coalition continuing to call its constitutionality into question.

Security

During the reporting period, there were 96 security incidents, a decrease from the previous week (105) and below the 12-week average of 119. The number of casualties was 211 (50 killed, 161 wounded), higher than last week (157) and above the 12-week average of 182. The number of attacks against USF increased slightly, from 21 to 23, but remained below the 12-week average of 27. Five U.S. service members were wounded in action (non serious injuries).



More than half of the week's casualties were the result of AQI attacks. On 12 October, there were six coordinated attacks in downtown Baghdad, most of which targeted the ISF. Attackers utilized multiple vehicle-borne IEDs and a magnetic IED, killing 13 and wounding 38. We assess the attack was part of the group's overall strategy to undermine the GOI, intimidate the ISF, and create freedom of movement in Baghdad.

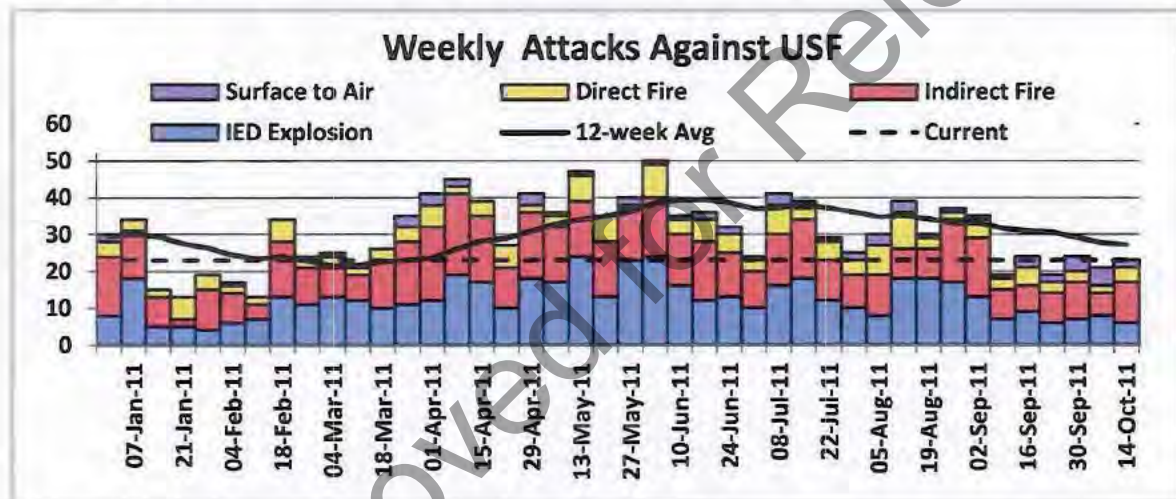
~~SECRET // NOFORN // 20211016~~

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USF-I Weekly Assessment 9 - 15 October 2011

Although the ability to conduct complex coordinated attacks indicates the network has rebuilt some capability following leadership losses in November 2010, we do not expect AQI to return to its strategy of focusing high profile attacks solely in Baghdad. We assess AQI will continue to conduct high profile attacks against provincial and local government targets throughout Iraq as well, in order to demonstrate its ability to operate in multiple provinces.

On 13 October, two IEDs exploded in Shia-dominated Sadr City, killing 17 and wounding 44. Based on the location of the attack, we assess it was intended primarily to inflame sectarian tensions. Throughout AQI's history, the group has remained committed to igniting sectarian strife in Iraq, presenting itself as the defender of the Sunni populace. Following the 12 September execution of 24 Shia pilgrims in Anbar Province, attacks against Shia targets have intensified. We do not expect the Shia to respond with sectarian violence or remobilize dormant militias, since they expect the ISF to enforce rule of law and will likely hold the ISF accountable for terrorist attacks.



The number of attacks against USF increased slightly this week (see above) but remained below average. Recent attacks in the South reinforce our assessment that AAH has lifted its operational freeze. On 10 October, COB Basrah received indirect fire for the third time in a five-day period. None of the attacks resulted in casualties. On 12 October, COS Garry Owen received indirect fire resulting in two USF wounded in action (not seriously). Like a number of attacks that occurred between June and August, this attack took place within days of the base's scheduled closure, indicating (b)(6)

1.4b are tracking our transition schedule in order to exploit vulnerabilities and maximize casualties. Fortunately, we had positioned our operational reserve at Garry Owen to increase force protection in light of the threat, minimizing casualties and damage. In addition, we are making adjustments to our base closure schedule as necessary to prevent 1.4b-planned attacks.

~~SECRET // NOFORN // 20211016~~

~~SECRET // NOFORN // 20211016~~

USF-I Weekly Assessment 9 - 15 October 2011

In addition to targeting our bases, we assess [1.4b] will focus their targeting along major convoy routes as we intensify our withdrawal. As I mentioned in previous reports, these groups accumulated weapons and surveilled USF movements during the operational freeze in anticipation of a resumption of attacks. In a meeting with the Prime Minister, I reiterated that [1.4b] attacks against USF would not be tolerated.

On 12 October, a partnered counterterrorism (CT) operation resulted in the death of a Jaysh Riyal al-Tariq al-Naqshabandi (JRTN) cell leader after he engaged the assault force with small arms fire. This individual operated near Kirkuk and was responsible for multiple attacks, including a recent IDF attack that resulted in USF casualties. In other CT operations, partnered forces detained the AQI Wali of Mosul and a Promised Day Brigade operative involved in sniper cell operations as well as recent IED and rocket-propelled grenade attacks on USF.

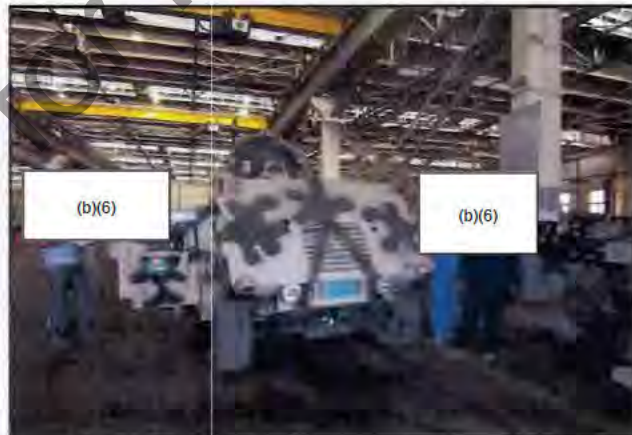
We held two successful Arab-Kurd Senior Working Group meetings last week ahead of the High Level Committee (HLC) meeting on 17 October. Attendees prepared a number of issues for consideration by the HLC, including the way ahead for the Combined Security Areas and the revised Guiding Principles.

Transition

As an enduring OSC-I site, Taji will play an important role in the development of Iraq's enduring capability to defend against external threats. The OSC-I mission at Taji is to assist the Iraqi Army and Army Aviation Command develop capabilities through the fielding of weapons systems and the development of national-level depot maintenance and supply capability. Taji will be the largest OSC-I site, with military personnel, security assistance team members, and contractors executing

68 foreign military sales (FMS) cases worth \$2.1 billion. Additionally, Taji will host the second of four long-range air surveillance radars, which will be a vital cog in the nascent Iraqi air defense network that will include F-16s and operations centers, with linkages to a potential \$2 billion FMS bundle of U.S. radars and surface-to-air missile systems. OSC-I assumed control of Taji on 1 October and is on track to be fully mission capable on 1 November.

The Embassy Support & Enduring Site Transition Board continues to serve as a constructive forum for USF-I, DOS, and OSC-I senior leaders to review detailed information that enables critical, real-time decision-making. Having senior decision makers examine milestones for each enduring site has resulted in exceptional cooperation and streamlined the stewardship of resources. Recently, DOS and USF-I J4 conducted a successful proof of



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principle by receiving a fuel shipment that was unescorted by security at the Irbil Diplomatic Support Center. Several similar actions are being tested elsewhere as part of the shift to an Embassy-led mission.

USF-I base transitions are on schedule; we are now operating at 20 locations. Over the last 14 days, we have transferred 11 sites, including three large bases: Warhorse, Marez, and Garry Owen. During the next 30 days, we project that an additional nine bases will be transferred to the GOI and one will be transferred to OSC-I. We will continue to partner with DOS, the GOI Receivership Secretariat, and the Ministry of Defense to transition the remaining bases.

We look forward to a visit from Deputy NSA McDonough and Admiral Winnefeld on 16 October.

Respectfully,



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