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**Commander's Conference
17 Feb 2007**

CG's Comments:

- Change of MNF-I Mission in wake of Al Askari Mosque bombing; it's all about security of the population, particularly in Baghdad
- This will take months, not days or weeks; avoid triumphal statements
- Change in situation required new focus (on security first as opposed to transition) and more resources (5 BCT's by mid-May)
- Must position among the population IOT protect them
- Must embrace and enable Iraqi Units
- Will not have unity of command w/ISF, but must have unity of effort
- Encourage short embeds; tell our story; don't sugar coat the situation; manage expectations
- Escalation of Force; do not modify the ROE; we are at war, our Soldiers must have simple and clear rules, they cannot feel constrained if they are operating within the ROE in an ethical manner
- Need more continuity in key positions, longer-transitions

Ambassador Khalizad:

- Building governmental capacity will take time
- Iraq is essentially a new nation ("An ancient land, but new nation")
- Constitution not yet a political compact
- Need oil law, modification of de Ba'athification, date for provincial elections
- People need confidence in their institutions, especially the ISF
- Powerful forces do not want Iraq to succeed
- Iraq is the defining challenge for the future of the region

Embassy Brief:

- Business is non-sectarian, businessmen will seek profit from whatever group can provide it
- Shift in focus from reconstruction to economic growth
- Use IZ resources, \$10 billion dollar budget surplus
- Job creation, not just make work
- CG: How do we track GOI spending? How does the Iraqi system work? PRTs need to understand the process.
- CoS: 142 new personnel incoming to augment PRTs (we need help from the EA to train them)
- GOI releasing 10% of capital spending and provincial budgets up front to prime the pump
- CG - we are going to have to work very hard to get Iraqis to spend their money
- LTG Odierno: Iraqis will not budget or contract for money than they have in their accounts: 10% is woefully insufficient

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CG: Add slide to BUA on spending by GOI and provinces, percentage of budget execution, by ministry

LTG Odierno: Cannot allow militias to take credit for USAID programs

CG: Coalition unit commanders must be aware of USAID operation in the neighborhood. If people work at MND-B they should live there as well.

MG (Ret) Rick Olson

- Vast majority of civilian surge is embodied in PRT augmentation
- Increase from 10 in 20 PRTs
- All PRTs to have joint policy guidance from Ambassador and CG, MNF-I
- Primary mission is to support COIN Operations
- PRT is responsible for implementation of economic and political effort; BCT provides movement and security
- Provincial Outreach Program will be key

CG: Need a good training program

Political – Sectarian Dynamics are key to resolution of the conflict

AQI/ Insurgents/ JAM are moving to outlying areas to wait out BSP.

LTG McChrystal: Need to war-game strategy and enemy options for this year (Red Team)

MG Fastabend: Defeat a network with a network – Fusion Centers across Iraq sharing information

LTG Odierno – need to do something with FPS; status quo can not stand (stand down, vet, and re-train?)

LTG Odierno – Iraqi leadership on the streets make all the difference

MG Mixon - MND-N has already augmented MiTTs; BCT own the MiTTs as of 1 Mar 2007

Fewer, but more effective, checkpoints

CG: Must replenish ranks of ISF - Do not build new units until existing ones are at full strength

MND-W has already enhanced its transition teams as well, and the BCT Cdrs own them.