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**CG Notes- SVTC with POTUS
2 March 2007**

Key Participants: POTUS, VPOTUS, SecState, SecDef, CJCS, DCI, NSA, Meghan O'Sullivan, GEN Petraeus, DCM, AMB Carney

Sequence: DCM gave a rundown of political engagement (12 minutes) followed by AMB Carney with a brief rundown of economic development (10 minutes). CG then went through security situation (25 minutes) and was followed by about ten minutes of questions and discussion with the President.

POTUS questions/discussion issues

1. SCIRI- we want them in the tent with us. I view SCIRI as an ally and so be sensitive to how we treat them. [CG gave an explanation for the border, hospital, and airport incidents.]
2. Budget execution- this is a great opportunity for PRTs to build federalism in the right way and help the provinces plan for and spend money. We need to bird dog Iraqi budget execution. If the Iraqis don't have a banking system, then imagine what the rest of the bureaucracy is like. Money is a driver for governance- use it.
3. Defining success in the BSP- we must get on the same page. Figure out what success means and be sure to keep the bar low (realistic). Sometime we will have to have an assessment of what is success.
4. Sectarian violence- if SV is one of the metrics for success, then we have to make it clear that most VBIED and suicide attacks are AQI and not sectarian. Find out who is returning among Iraqis (return of educated and elite would be a very positive sign.)
5. Maliki myth going around- PM is willing now to go after JAM because he wants to ensure he has control over that militia when he really needs the power. [CG steered POTUS toward the concept of going after the irreconcilables and reintegrating the reconcilables of all parties.]
6. Death penalty for treason? [CG said that the new military justice law has provisions for death penalty for treason (he believed).] Use that authority if necessary to clean up the ISF.
7. Maliki- we need to encourage him to be in charge and so we need to understand his mentality and the motives behind what is driving him. LTG Aboud may be a good way to influence, teach, and understand Maliki. [CG: Aboud is himself a bit of a novice with large ground operations. There is a dearth of people with strategic capabilities. We are placing a senior advisor with Dr. Rubaie to help him run better meetings and improve top level managerial capacity.]
8. I have great confidence that this plan will work.

Follow-on discussion with Meghan O'Sullivan

-CG- we could use the 607 authorities and help with the rule of law green zone.

-MOS- we need to get on with some long term security relationship talks with the Iraqis.

CG replied that such discussions will be very reassuring to the Iraqis.

-CG- I need people back there to be very explicit and open with force requests and tell everyone why they are denying forces if that is the case.

-MOS- POTUS did not mention any end date for the plus-up but certainly assumes it will go past August. He wants to hear from the CG his assessment, probably this summer.

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NSC SVTC, 2 March 2007

POTUS: We want SCIRI in the tent; cultivate the relationship as a potential ally. Be sensitive to this policy in our dealings.

AMB Carney: \$10B for provinces approved in the budget; 10% already released. National conference next week to help provincial officials figure out how the system works.

POTUS: Great opportunity for PRTs to assist Iraqis in the build part of our strategy.

GEN PETRAEUS: Fardh al Qanoon will take months to secure the population, not days or weeks. Early signs mildly encouraging as we begin to live in the neighborhoods. Second surge brigade arriving now. Discussion of progress in IZ gov't, Baghdad Operations Center, IZ reinforcements, U.S. footprint in Baghdad. Assessment by province. IZ FMS purchases, Article GoI authorities, upcoming press conference.

POTUS: Need to define what success means – keep the bar low early on. Cannot define success as a cessation of suicide attacks. Need to make it clear that foreigners are executing the majority of suicide attacks, so the situation is not just one of sectarian violence. Figure out who is returning among the Sunni population. Is PM Maliki using us to reduce JAM so he in the end can control it? Is there a death penalty for treason? Iraqis should use it to purge their army. What are Maliki's motives? Can LTG Aboud help him sell Fardh al Qanoon to the Iraqi people? Can he help educate the PM as to the complexity of strategic leadership?

GEN Petraeus: Death of strategic and operational competence among Iraqi leaders; they are focused on small, tactical matters. Helping to advise LTG Aboud and others to raise the level of the conversation.

POTUS: Great confidence that this plan will work.