



HEADQUARTERS
MULTI-NATIONAL FORCE – IRAQ
BAGHDAD, IRAQ
APO AE 09342-1400

11 November 2008

To the Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen, Marines, Coast Guardsmen, and Civilians of Multi-National Force-Iraq:

As the nations of our Coalition commemorate Veterans Day and Remembrance Day, I want to take this opportunity to thank you for your selfless service and unwavering dedication to this mission, the people of Iraq, and the cause of liberty throughout the world.

President Franklin Delano Roosevelt once said, “To some generations much is given; from other generations, much is demanded.” From the men and women of the Coalition in Iraq, as well as your families at home, an incredible amount has been asked. But you have risen – and you continue to rise – to every challenge placed before you. Many of you have served multiple deployments, spending months and years away from your families, friends, and the comforts of home. Day after day, you have overcome extreme heat, blinding sandstorms, and austere living conditions to accomplish the extraordinarily complex tasks of protecting the people of Iraq and bringing order to a society plagued by turmoil. Together with our Iraqi partners, you have boldly stood up against the forces of hate and intolerance, and you have created a sense of great hope in the Iraqi people for the future of their nation. While our mission is far from complete, you should be enormously proud of all that you have achieved.

Our fellow citizens pause today to recognize the gallant men and women throughout our nations’ history who have defended the freedoms we are so fortunate to enjoy. The members of Multi-National Force-Iraq have rightfully assumed their place among these timeless patriots, and you will be forever distinguished in the annals of military history for your bravery, ingenuity, and perseverance.

Your accomplishments have not come without cost. Many have made the ultimate sacrifice – and still more have had their lives forever changed by injuries – in support of the cause of freedom here. As we remember these brave men and women, let me assure you that their sacrifices have not been in vain. For it is through their unending devotion that Iraqis now have the right to choose their own destiny, and we honor these heroes every day by our continued commitment to security and stability both here in Iraq and for our countrymen at home.

Thank you once again for your service. It remains the greatest of privileges to soldier with you, and I am honored to be counted among the ranks of the finest, most adaptable, most tenacious force the world has ever known.

With pride and determination,

Raymond T. Odierno
General, United States Army
Commanding