

We've Heard This Before

The following statements from Administration officials show how we've been hearing the same story year after year. Where is the significant progress?

2003

- “President Bush has a clear vision for Iraq that has three components: an Iraq made more secure through the efforts of Iraqis, an Iraq with an economy based on sound economic principles and based on a coherent infrastructure, and an Iraq that is democratic and sovereign and at peace with its neighbors.” **Amb. Paul Bremer, Administrator of the Coalition Provisional Authority, HIRC Hearing, 9/25/03**
- “Orphanages being rebuilt by our soldiers, schools being repainted, doors being put on hospitals, generators being put on hospitals, factories being reopened, schoolyards being cleaned up so kids can play soccer, community centers being built. The list goes on and on. There are 8,000 of them and counting.” **Amb. Paul Bremer, Administrator of the Coalition Provisional Authority, HIRC Hearing, 9/25/03**
- “We have difficult work to do in Iraq. We're bringing order to parts of that country that remain dangerous....We're helping to rebuild Iraq, where the dictator built palaces for himself, instead of hospitals and schools. And we will stand with the new leaders of Iraq as they establish a government of, by, and for the Iraqi people.” **President Bush “Mission Accomplished” Address, 5/1/03**

2004

- “Since the end of major combat operations, we have made steady progress towards meeting our objectives. Essential services are being restored, and a political transformation is already underway in Iraq. Security in Iraq is steadily improving, and we are transitioning to a time when the face of security in Iraq is an Iraqi face, and Coalition forces are in the background.” **General Pace, Vice Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff HASC Hearing, 2/4/04**
- “It's not a civil war; it's not a popular uprising. Most of Iraq is relatively stable...The nation of Iraq is moving toward self-rule, and Iraqis and Americans will see evidence in the months to come.” **President Bush, Prime Time Press Conference, 4/13/04**
- “Overall the roller coaster that is Iraq is ascending, although there clearly are bumps on the tracks on a daily basis as the daily sensational attack seems to take place... efforts that have been put in are now starting to pay dividends, and I believe that they will do so over the coming year.” **General David Petraeus, Chief, Office of Security Transition-Iraq, HASC Hearing, 6/17/04**
- “What I think is also nearly certain is the more they step up, and they will be doing so more and more each month, the less and less we will have to do -- we will begin to, as they take over more responsibility, we will be able to let them be in the front lines and us be in a supporting position.” **Paul Wolfowitz, Deputy Secretary of Defense, HASC Hearing, 6/22/04**

- “The Iraqis are still negotiating with Sadr. He is losing influence, I think, every day, is a fair way to say it. And we think we can continue to let the Iraqis work that problem.” **General Myers, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, HASC Hearing, 5/7/04**
- “The current plan for the Iraqi police is that they will be fully trained and equipped by June of '05” **Lt. Gen. Walter L. Sharp, Director, Strategic Plans and Policy, Joint Chiefs of Staff, HASC Hearing, 6/16/04**
- “I am struck by the fact that in the face of repeated provocations, the unity of the different groups in this society has held together.” **Amb. Francis Ricciardone, Coordinator for Iraq Transition, Department of State, HASC Hearing, 6/16/04**
- “Iraq has substantial resources of its own, and it is contributing substantial resources. We are having to as well, and I never meant to imply we wouldn't. But, this is a country that has a lot to contribute to its own reconstruction, and it's doing so already.” **Paul Wolfowitz, Deputy Secretary of Defense, HASC Hearing, 6/22/04**

2005

- “For every scene of destruction in Iraq, there are more scenes of rebuilding and hope. For every life lost, there are countless more lives reclaimed. And for every terrorist working to stop freedom in Iraq, there are many more Iraqis and Americans working to defeat them. My fellow citizens: Not only can we win the war in Iraq, we are winning the war in Iraq.” **President Bush, Address to the Nation, 12/18/05**
- “At the request of Iraqi leaders, we accelerated the transition to Iraqi self-government. We set four major milestones... In spite of the violence, Iraqis have met every milestone, and this is changing the political landscape in Iraq.” **President Bush, Speech at the Woodrow Wilson Center, 12/14/05**
- “The people of Iraq are now seeing some of the tangible benefits of their new democracy. They see that as freedom advances, their lives are improving... They see their freedom increasingly being defended by their own soldiers and police instead of foreign forces. And they see that freedom is bringing opportunity and a better life.” **President Bush, Speech at the Woodrow Wilson Center, 12/14/05**
- “We will continue to shift from providing security and conducting operations against the enemy nationwide, to conducting more specialized operations targeted at the most dangerous terrorists. We will increasingly move out of Iraqi cities, reduce the number of bases from which we operate, and conduct fewer patrols and convoys.” **President Bush, Speech on Strategy for Victory in Iraq, U.S. Naval Academy, 11/30/05**

2006

- “As the transition continues to full Iraqi government control, we must stand firmly behind the Iraqis. They have a lot of work to do in the coming months to resolve their differences and reach compromises on issues that will determine their country's future.” **Amb. David Satterfield, Senior Advisor on Iraq to the Secretary of State, HASC Hearing, 11/15/06**

- “In discussions with our commanders and Iraqi leaders it is clear that they believe Iraqi forces can take more control faster, provided we invest more manpower and resources into the coalition military transition teams, speed the delivery of logistics and mobility enablers, and embrace an aggressive Iraqi-led effort to disarm illegal militias.” **Gen Abizaid, U.S. Army Commander, CENTCOM, HASC Hearing, 11/15/06**
- “It may not be popular with the public -- it doesn't matter in the sense that we have to continue the mission and do what we think is right. And that's exactly what we're doing... We're not running for office. We're doing what we think is right.” **Vice President Cheney, ABC News, 11/3/06**
- “This past year, U.S. and Coalition forces in Iraq focused on: training, building, and conducting operations with capable Iraqi security forces; providing the shield behind which political and economic progress can continue and legitimate government institutions can form and take root; and killing and capturing terrorists and neutralizing the insurgency.” **Gen Abizaid, U.S. Army Commander, CENTCOM, HASC Hearing, 3/15/06**
- “Patience will be required both in Iraq and the United States as attempts at political compromise take time and seem inconclusive. The role of U.S. and Coalition troops, and more prominently, Iraq’s security forces, will be to continue to provide the security that is essential for the political process to unfold and be successful.” **Gen Abizaid, U.S. Army Commander, CENTCOM, HASC Hearing, 3/15/06**
- “It is now up to the Iraqis to seize the opportunity and take more responsibility for their own security and their own affairs... The fact of the matter is that only the Iraqi people can build their nation. All that outsiders can do is help to set the conditions that will give them the opportunity to do so. That has been our goal over the past three years. But it cannot be an effort without end.” **Secretary Rumsfeld, HASC Hearing, 2/8/06**

2007

- “Process in this is as important, in some ways, as actual results. And one of the elements out of this summer's activity that does give me some cautious encouragement is that representatives, mainly from the parliament, from the Council of Representatives, of the five major political blocs showed an ability to come together and night after night and work their way through a lot of the major issues.” **Amb. Ryan Crocker, U.S. Ambassador to Iraq, Joint HASC/HCFA Hearing, 09/10/07**
- “A tremendous amount has happened in a fairly short time, which gives me, again, some encouragement that as security conditions stabilize in other parts of the country, you can see not the same process but, you know, roughly similar processes start to catch hold.” **Amb. Ryan Crocker, U.S. Ambassador to Iraq, Joint HASC/HCFA Hearing, 09/10/07**