

LIEUTENANT GENERAL WALTER L. SHARP  
Director, Strategic Plans and Policy  
The Joint Staff

House Armed Services Committee

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Mr. Chairman, Congressman Skelton, Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to address you on this important subject.

Before I begin, let me first thank you for your continued support of the men and women serving in our Armed Forces.

Today, Iraqi security personnel, the United States, and thirty-one Coalition partners are working together to secure, protect, and establish peace and justice for all Iraqi citizens so they may enjoy a future of their own choosing. Establishment of a safe and secure environment is the single most important element for improved Iraqi quality of life because it enables relief efforts, a free political process, economic prosperity, and social opportunity.

Multinational military personnel have made significant progress in recruiting, training and equipping Iraqi security forces. The Iraqi people have stepped forward -- more than 225,000 Iraqi citizens have taken positions in the various components of the Iraqi security forces. This includes 90,000 in the Iraqi Police Service, 18,000 in the Department of Border Enforcement, 37,500 in the Iraqi Civil Defense Corps, 9,750 in the Iraqi Armed Forces, and 74,000 in the Facilities Protection Service. Based on current training and equipping schedules, we anticipate that the Department of Border Enforcement, the Iraqi

Civil Defense Corps and the Facilities Protection Service will be fully trained and equipped by September 2004, the Iraqi Armed Forces by December 2004, and the Iraqi Police by June 2005. By the end of this month, over \$3B will have been committed for Iraqi Security Forces equipment, infrastructure and training.

By 30 June, the United States and its Coalition partners will transition control of Iraq to a fully sovereign Iraqi Interim Government. Our responsibilities will not end with the 30 June transition. Multinational forces will remain in Iraq at the invitation of the Iraqi people and with the authorization of the United Nations after the Iraqi Interim Government assumes its leadership responsibilities. These forces, and increasingly Iraqi forces, will continue to conduct offensive operations to defeat remaining anti-Iraqi forces and neutralize destabilizing influences in Iraq in order to create a secure environment in which the Iraqi people can build their own future. They will also continue current efforts to organize, train, equip, mentor, and certify credible and capable Iraqi security forces in order to continue the transition of responsibility for security from multinational forces to Iraqi forces.

Concurrently, Iraqi and multinational forces will continue to conduct stability operations to support the evolving Iraqi government, the restoration of essential services, and economic development.

Prime Minister Allawi's letter to the UN Security Council from the Interim Government of Iraq formed the basis for the UN authorizing the continued presence of the Multinational force in Iraq. According to

United Nations Security Council Resolution 1546, the Multinational force shall have the authority to take all necessary measures to contribute to the maintenance of security and stability in Iraq. UNSCR 1546 further requires that arrangements are put in place to establish a security partnership between the sovereign Government of Iraq and the Multinational force and to ensure coordination between the two. Prime Minister Allawi's letter, together with Secretary Powell's letter, both annexed to the UNSCR, serve as the foundation for establishing the coordinating mechanisms that will be essential to unity of command in Iraq.

The security structures described in the letters will serve as the fora for the Government of Iraq and Multinational force to reach agreement on the full range of fundamental security and policy issues, including policy on sensitive offensive operations, and will ensure full partnership between Iraqi security forces and Multinational force through close coordination and consultation.

All Multinational forces will work in close consultation and coordination with the Iraqi government at all levels.

I am confident that through this partnership, we--the Iraqis, the Coalition, and the U.S. Armed Forces, will succeed in establishing a safe and secure environment in Iraq. I will be happy to take your questions.