



# News Release

Nov. 13, 2009

## **USCIS Welcomes 157 New U.S. Citizens during Ceremony in Iraq** *Veterans Day Ceremony Honors all who Serve in the U.S. Armed Forces*

**CAMP VICTORY, Iraq** – U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) joined U.S. service men and women to celebrate Veterans Day by naturalizing 157 Soldiers and Marines from 60 different countries during a ceremony on Nov. 11, 2009, here in al Faw Palace.

Presiding during the ceremony was USCIS Rome Deputy District Director Lori Pietropaoli, who thanked the service men and women for their service in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

Pietropaoli highlighted the dedicated service of all the military, especially that of the new citizens, “On this Veterans Day, we honor our own heritage as a nation as we honor these 157 new citizens.”

Among the new citizens was a Soldier serving his third tour of duty in Iraq. During his first deployment to Iraq in 2003, he assisted with the liberation of the area that is now Camp Victory. Six years later, he celebrated as a citizen of the United States in that same area.

Lt. Gen. Charles Jacoby, commander of Multi-National Corps-Iraq, delivered the keynote address. Also attending the ceremony were Gen. Raymond Odierno, commander of Multi-National Forces-Iraq and U.S. Ambassador to Iraq, Christopher Hill.

One of the strengths of the partnership with the U.S. armed forces is the commitment of USCIS’ officers who bring immigration services to members of the military wherever they serve. Since October 2004, when USCIS hosted the first naturalization ceremony overseas since the Korean War, 3,052 Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen, and Marines have become U.S. citizens while deployed in Iraq.