

DoD News Briefing  
Saturday, April 8, 2000  
Secretary of Defense William S. Cohen

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(Media Availability with Secretary of Defense William S. Cohen at POW Committee Facility, Kuwait City, State Of Kuwait)

Secretary Cohen: I wanted to come by to visit the facility because of our commitment to be sure that Iraq fully complies with the Security Council resolutions. These photographs are poignant reminders of the pain that the families still feel and suffer from the loss of their loved ones and the dedication on the part of all concerned to have a full accounting of the POWs, something the United States feels very committed to. Just a short time ago I was in Vietnam and 25 years after the war in Vietnam, our number one priority in dealing with Vietnam is full accounting of our POWs and missing in action. So we understand the pain that families feel for their loved ones missing. And we are fully dedicated to making sure that Saddam fully complies with Security Council resolutions and makes sure that there is a return of POWs and a full accounting of all those missing in action. It is an outrage that he has not complied and we will continue to work with Kuwait, the tripartite commission and all concerned to make sure that Iraq does comply. And that is the reason I wanted to come by, to express the U.S. determination in this regard.

Q: Have you made any progress on the C4I program with Kuwait?

Secretary Cohen: We are very gratified about our C4I cooperation with Kuwait, and this will continue to progress in the future. We have absolutely complete satisfaction with how this is developing.

Q: Did something happen yesterday, did some progress happen in the past 24 hours with Kuwait, any milestones?

Secretary Cohen: No specific milestones. No, there are no specific milestones. It was a continuation of our policy of training together, having exercises of the kind that we saw yesterday, live fire exercises. Next week the Kuwaiti forces will be exercising with our Marines and that is again a show of strength and power and precision, maneuverability, all of which sends a strong message of deterrence.

Q: Yesterday you told us you might know more about the program, you said you might tell us, when we were in Udairi, you said you could tell us more today.

Secretary Cohen: I said I might tell you more today, but I guess I can't tell you more today other than I had a very good meeting with the amir and he indicated that he values the friendship that the United States and Kuwait enjoy. We hope to promote greater cooperation throughout the Gulf with multilateral training exercises in the future, but we are very, very satisfied with our level of support and cooperation here in Kuwait.