

**STATEMENT OF THE DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE
BEFORE THE SUB-COMMITTEE ON NATIONAL SECURITY,
HOMELAND DEFENSE AND FOREIGN OPERATIONS
UNITED STATES HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
October 12, 2011**

Chairman Chaffetz, Ranking Member Tierney, and distinguished committee members, we appreciate the opportunity to appear before you today to provide an update on the issues and challenges associated with the United States' transition from a military to civilian-led presence in Iraq.

Given Iraq's importance, situated strategically in the Middle East, it remains profoundly in the American national interest that Iraq emerge as a strategic partner to the United States; a sovereign, stable, self-reliant nation; and a positive force for moderation and stability in the region.

We intend to abide by our commitments in the 2008 U.S.-Iraq Security Agreement. Consistent with that agreement and with Presidential direction articulated on February 27, 2009, more than 100,000 U.S. forces have departed Iraq since January 2009 in a way that has been careful and responsible, and has allowed the Iraqis to build up their security forces and improve their capacity.

On August 2, the Iraqi political leadership indicated publicly that they are interested in an ongoing training relationship with the United States post-2011. On October 4, the Iraqi political leadership reaffirmed the need for U.S. training, but said there was "no need to grant immunity to trainers." We are talking to the Iraqis about what this means specifically in terms of our security cooperation under the Strategic Framework Agreement.

We believe that an enduring partnership with the Iraqi government and people is in America's interest, and a relationship with the Iraqi Security Forces (ISF) will be an important part of that partnership. We are currently in discussions with the Iraqi government about the nature and scope of that relationship. No final decisions have been made.

The Security Situation in Iraq

Over the last few months, it has been clear that Iraq still faces dangerous and determined enemies and that terrorist and militia attacks continue to pose a threat. Tragically, U.S. service members have suffered further casualties since we last appeared before you. It is important to emphasize that these enemies do not have the support of most Iraqis, these attacks have not sparked a return to widespread insurgency and communal civil war, and overall levels of violence have remained dramatically reduced from where they were in 2006 and 2007. This is even more remarkable considering the ISF has assumed primary responsibility for security and our force numbers have decreased from 144,000 in January 2009 to roughly 43,500 as of October 1, 2011.

Transition

Ensuring the ISF reach minimum essential capabilities (MEC) and establishing an Office of Security Cooperation-Iraq (OSC-I) are two key components of the transition. These programs are the foundation for our strategic partnership with Iraq.

The ISF modernization program is designed to provide the ISF with the MEC required to defend Iraq against internal threats, while creating foundational capabilities to defend against external threats. Although the ISF is currently functioning well as a counter-insurgency force and demonstrating the capability to maintain internal security, U.S. Forces-Iraq (USF-I) assesses that gaps, particularly in the capability to defend against external threats, will exist in December 2011. USF-I assesses that the broad categories of projected gaps are cross-ministerial intelligence sharing; combined arms capability; integrated air defense and air sovereignty enforcement; and sustainment and logistics. A smooth transition from funding the train and equip mission with the Iraqi Security Force Fund appropriation to Foreign Military Financing in FY 12 will be critical to support the ISF as Iraq works to close these gaps.

Following the completion of the withdrawal of U.S. forces from Iraq by December 31, 2011, the OSC-I will form the cornerstone of the U.S.-Iraqi strategic security partnership, and it will serve as the hub for any future security assistance and security cooperation activities. The OSC-I will be

under Chief of Mission authority and facilitate the transition from a military-led to a civilian-led mission by continuing to support ISF development and modernization. The OSC-I represents a critical component of the normalization of the U.S.-Iraq bilateral relationship.

Continuing to Set State Up for Success as DoD Draws Down

The Department of Defense (DoD) is committed to ensuring a smooth transition of DoD functions to the Department of State in support of the enduring U.S. Government diplomatic and security assistance missions in the region. We continue to provide oversight of the logistical functions associated with the orderly withdrawal of U.S. forces by the end of December 2011. With regard to logistical issues, we are in the execution phase of this transition and are on track, and in some cases, are ahead of schedule.

DoD recognizes the importance of the transition in Iraq and is committed to executing these tasks by the end of the year. Although the role that the Department of State will ultimately take on in Iraq is consistent with its work throughout the world, we continue to see that the scale and complexity of the transition presents a huge undertaking that requires close cooperation and synchronization. Both DoD and the State Department are committed to working together to achieve a successful transition.

As the Acting Under Secretary of Defense (Acquisition, Technology and Logistics) explained in our March 2, 2011 testimony, the Defense and State Departments established a Senior Executive Steering Group focused on coordinating and synchronizing the materiel and support aspects of the transition. That same group continues to lead the initiatives associated with this transition. It is co-chaired at the Deputy Assistant Secretary level and meets biweekly to review milestones and ensure regular progress is being made in the eight subordinate functional areas (supply chain, equipment, contracting, medical, facilities and construction, information technology, security, and aviation). This past Tuesday (October 11, 2011) marked the 28th meeting of this group. We have had constant, direct participation from the U.S. Embassy in Iraq and from USF-I as well as from other key players in Washington, D.C. The Executive Steering Group reports to both Ambassador Kennedy, the Under Secretary of State for Management, and to Acting Under Secretary of Defense Kendall on a regular basis in order to

ensure that we meet our milestones and address any issues that may impact the transition. DoD has embedded staff officers with the Department of State and they have served as a bridge between departments and have helped to facilitate timely coordination.

Additionally, we previously testified that DoD established a combined OSD and Joint Staff equipping board to address individual equipment items that the Department of State requested, which ranged from medical equipment to sense and warn rocket protection. We are happy to report that the board has completed the evaluation of the State Department's initial requirements and has now shifted its efforts to overseeing the transfer of items identified as excess, as a sale from stock, or to be loaned under the authority of the Economy Act. To date, we have identified more than 3,260 end items that are being transferred, sold, or loaned to the Department of State. These items are valued at more than \$224M and represent 100 percent fulfillment of the Department of State's request for equipment support.

We also continue to identify items that DoD will loan to the Department of State in order to meet expected requirements. In addition to the 60 "Caiman Plus" MRAPs (Mine Resistant Ambush Protected Vehicles) that were approved for loan at the time of our last testimony, DoD has since agreed to loan the State Department two Giraffe Radar (rocket warning) systems and a suite of biometric collection and identification systems (164 pieces of Biometric Identification System for Access (BISA), and Biometric Automated Tool Set (BATS) biometric collecting equipment).

The contractor population continues to decrease as the number of troops they support diminishes. From a contractor population of approximately 138,000 in the spring of 2009, DoD now has less than 53,000 contractors supporting operations. We have also made steady progress in executing the plan to retrograde and redistribute equipment.

Currently in Iraq, joint State Department and DoD teams are positioned in each of the remaining locations and are developing practical solutions to deal with the challenges of occupying these downsized sites. The transition of these sites is not a turn-key operation, and each location presents a unique challenge. For example, new perimeters are being established, containerized housing units are being moved to where they are

needed, utilities are being rerouted, and, where required, additional site preparation and force protection materiel is being installed. These actions are occurring at all the sites simultaneously, yet priority is being given to those sites that transition first or where operational conditions dictate. To enable secure communication at these sites, DoD has also restructured the classified computer network (SIPRNET) infrastructure in theater to accommodate the changing footprint.

Acting Under Secretary Kendall last visited Iraq in September and met with Ambassador Jeffrey and General Austin. He came away from this trip confident that the Defense-to-State transition and the drawdown are on track. The Department of Defense has provided to the Department of State equipment, supplies and contracting support to help it perform its diplomatic mission post December 31, 2011.

Since the Department of State does not have the capacity in theater to immediately handle the large scale support requirements, DoD is providing a number of specific functions on a reimbursable basis under the authority of the Economy Act:

- The LOGCAP IV Task Order was announced on August 1, 2011, to provide the State Department with basic life support and core logistics services. This contracting mechanism is scalable and can respond to changing conditions on the ground. The Army has developed a comprehensive transition plan to ensure that the conversion from LOGCAP III to LOGCAP IV will be seamless, with no impact on either DoD or State Department operations.
- Food distribution as well as fuel supply and disposition services will continue to be provided by the Defense Logistics Agency.
- The Army Sustainment Command recently modified the Field and Installation Readiness Support Team (FIRST) maintenance contract for those items of equipment not maintained under existing State Department contracts, LOGCAP IV, or the appropriate Program Executive Office, such as the sense-and-warn systems and MRAP vehicles.
- The Army Sustainment Command is also providing selected security contract support to the State Department under three Indefinite

Delivery Indefinite Quantity (IDIQ) Contracts in support of the Security Support Services - Iraq (SSS-I) requirements.

- DoD will also provide fixed site contract security, under Combatant Commander rules, for the independent sites operating in support of the OSC-I.
- Administrative contract support and oversight will continue to be provided by the Defense Contract Management Agency and Defense Contract Audit Agency.
- Two DoD IT Systems - the Synchronized Pre-deployment and Operational Tracker (SPOT) and the Total Operational Picture Support System (TOPSS) have been designated by the State Department as its preferred personnel management tool.

Again, the State Department will reimburse DoD for all these contracts and services provided.

Conclusion

Although there has been excellent progress in both drawing down U.S. forces in Iraq and providing support to the Department of State, challenges exist and more still needs to be done. We will continue to coordinate closely with the State Department to address these challenges and any other issues that might arise over the coming months as we continue to draw down forces responsibly, reallocate or redeploy equipment, and dispose of material appropriately.

We are now at the point where the strategic dividends of our sacrifice are within reach, as long we take the proper steps to consolidate them. A long-term strategic partnership with Iraq, based on mutual interests and mutual respect, presents many advantages for the United States. At a time of unprecedented change in the Middle East, we must stay focused on Iraq in order to advance our broader regional objectives of peace, prosperity, and security.