

**PRESS CONFERENCE:**

**Major General Abdul-Karim Khalaf, Spokesman, Iraqi Ministry of Interior  
Rear Admiral Patrick Driscoll, Spokesman, Multi-National Force – Iraq**

**DATE: July 13, 2008**

**TRANSCRIBED BY:**

**SOS INTERNATIONAL LTD.**

**PARTICIPANTS:**

**Major General Abdul-Karim Khalaf  
Rear Admiral Patrick Driscoll**

**REPORTERS 1-10**

**\*REP1 = REPORTER 1**

**\*INT = INTERPRETER**

**MAJ GEN** [Speaks in Arabic.]  
**ABDUL-KARIM:**

**INT:** ...security operations that our Iraqi security forces has done in Iraq in Baghdad, Basra, Amara. Also the future operations that's going...maybe it's going...Diyala is going to be our last...our final station or stop as far as operations. We'll start talking about Basra

operations. The Ministry of Interior and our other security forces.... Before March 23rd our assessment was that Basra takes priority for important reasons...pivotal reasons. First, it's considered the...one of the...actually the artery of Iraq. Also, it's considered as the capitol of Iraq as far as the economy. And it takes a very important position, coming after Baghdad, in fact. And of course, as far as the geographical importance of this or significance of this province, [it] has borders with three different countries: Iran, Kuwait, and Saudi Arabia. So many criminal activities has been done in Basra as far as killing to the instructors...the university instructors, scientists, and religious figures. Also...even simple citizens are.... And also confiscating a lot of revenue that belongs to the government and part of it controlling the ports by...from some of the gangs, criminal gangs. And it was...a decision was taken by the government to send security forces before March 23rd and to distribute the responsibilities and...to those security forces up there and start before 23rd of March in 2008. And that operation was called the Charge of the Knights. And the Ministry of Interior and Ministry of Defense and the prime minister and all the ministers...security ministers, they were all there. The commanders of the Ministry of Interior, Ministry of Defense, they were there. It was an Iraqi...100% Iraqi operation. The Amer-...the coalition forces did not interfere except for...apart from the support. When that

operation started, we were surprised to see that or to find out that there was a huge number of gangs and gangsters that was using a lot of support that was sometimes actually, in so many opportunities it exceeded the capabilities of our forces. A lot of weapons, like rockets, 120 milli...mortar rounds on different kinds of weapons, heavy and light weapons. And it was used like AK47s and RPGs and also SPG-9 that again...that used to destroy buildings. One of the buildings that belonged to the Ministry of Interior, they attacked...the terrorists attacked about 2-...about...or conducted about 200...more than 200 attacks against that building itself. About 150 to 200 groups of criminal groups attacked that building. And that building is a small building, by the way. And the attacks were concentrated on the infrastructure of those buildings. And a lot of buildings that belonged to the Ministry of Interior was attacked at the time. The atmosphere of that operation was very difficult. It was very hard because those gangs, they were...they continued doing their violence...indiscriminate violence and they tried to destroy. And they destroyed a lot of infrastructure of the city as far as bridges, light poles, generators...some of the generators, some of the water facilities, some of...also the universities and the departments in those universities. And it caused a lot of damage to those. And they stopped or idled life there for a few days, about five days. After those five days, the Iraqi security forces was able to be

very decisive and they attacked a place or a headquarters, it's called a baschi[ph]. This place is used by, you know, by...it's about 36 attacks was against the baschi[ph] place which is used to store the weapons that belongs to the Ministry of Interior. Thirty-six attacks. Each attack was about six hours long, every day, constantly. But they...the terrorists failed. And the Ministry of Interior and the Iraqi security forces was able to actually, at the end, to retain all or get back all the buildings that was occupied by all those gangs. And through those operations the Iraqi security forces was able to kill a lot of...hundreds of those criminals and arrest many of them and those outlaws. And after that, the Iraqi security forces was able to put...get control of all the areas, the whole Basra city. The first phase is...was to actually stop those attacks and to observe the momentum of the...their attacks and to be able to attack back in Basra, and to start the second phase where the prime minister asked to...which was to control the ports. And in fact, indeed, after seven days, at night, the Iraqi security forces was able to control all the ports. And the minister of interior announced to...or ordered to call to form this directorate up there, it's called the Directorate of Courts. And the Ministry of Interior asked to have all the people who worked there to be qualified people, to have at least a bachelor's degree. And we have a lot of qualified people working there. And we formed those...this directorate and it's working right

now to protect the ports. And also the river police is also...after those incidents or operations, the river police was formed and it was responsible about providing the, you know, the water passages and Shatt al-Arab and al-Qarna area. And we were able to protect...or consolidate our forces on the borders as well. And we closed the...our borders with our neighbor, Iran. And also from the border police and the 4th Brigade there, we cha-...made changes. We made...also we made changes to the 4th unit or 4th Brigade of the border...police borders there. And we sent about 16 commanders from the Ministry of Interior to...from...starting by director generals to deputy ministers. They were there to...they went to Basra. They were working to reorganize the Ministry of Interior's organizations in Basra until we reached...or those organizations reached to the level that can face all the challenges in Basra. And all the Ministry of Interior's organization stayed there more than 40 days to work with their representatives up there in Basra until we were able to allow the Ministry of Interior to say that they are capable of doing their roles and duties and provide... And the sectors that was assigned to the Ministry of Interior in addition to the things assigned by...I mean outside...inside and outside Basra. It's about 30 days after that, we were able to reach the areas north of Qarna, which is the borders with Maysan Province. And now Basra, I can say [is] completely under the Iraqi security forces'

control. And now Basra—if we look to the percentage of crime and the type of crime that's being committed, and it's the average...it's about average in the whole world. Now the Iraqi security forces are doing their job and duties freely. And the...also the Iraqi security forces are being professional as far as doing their jobs there. And there is improvement. And I can say Basra is a good model, a good example. And we...it's an area that's in the south of Iraq, as you know. And now...and afterwards we started with Ninawa Province and Mosul. And Ninawa Province or the area, the geographical or the people...the population of it, it's a different status, [it] has a different case. The ministry had provided or put a lot of security forces to go up there and with special forces to be a pivotal part of the Ninawa command...operation command. And it was one of the Ministry of Interior's responsibilities to go to the areas...remote areas. And one of the first things that the ministry had done is to ask the chief of police or the command of...in Salah ad Din Province and also in Kurdistan to try to control the borders with Ninawa Province because.... So the Ministry of Interior's done very important things to help and make sure that success is something that's going to happen in Ninawa. And also we got some brigades...battalions from Salah ad Din, send it to us in Jarra area, and they worked within the Turkish-Iraqi-Syrian triangle there. And we also worked with the special...we used a special...Ministry of

Interior's special forces, which is called SWAT team. And also the...to do important operations in Jazeera area. We targeted areas that was not reached before in Jazeera area. There used to be a headquarters; they used to call a [unintelligible], and also Dugavi[ph] and Sagar[ph] areas. Those are areas [on the] southern side of Aj area. And Iraqi security forces before weren't able to actually go there. We were able at the time to target those areas and arrest all the criminal networks up there. In 24...in 48 hours we were able to clear that area. [We] killed a lot of wanted outlaws and 60...56 important targets were arrested at the time. And we continued our operations. There were decision to advocate all the...evict all the areas...to enter all the areas...all the buildings... government buildings. And we faced a lot of few, simple challenges here and there, but it wasn't up to what we've imagined or expected. The Mosul operation has not ended yet. It's still undergoing. And we're...it's going to be another return for us up there. And it's going to have a...we're going to have a[n] assessment to what we've done so far. And we...there are visions to the Ministry of Interior and the other security ministries to.... And we are sure that...we're confident that we're going to succeed in Mosul. And we have achieved that success, but we also need to gain the confidence and the trust of the Iraqi people there. And the government's working on that. And we are going to line some of

the borders. And about some of the problems that we are...or the areas were suffering from problems. As you know, the article 140 as far as Kirkuk [unintelligible]. And these are issues is going to be resolved by the government and the government's recommendations. The Amara operation in Maysan. There was no big difficulties or challenges for the security forces. The Ministry of Interior was present with their forces up there. And we had a force there in the southern part of Maya[ph] area as a force or unit that was transferred from Baghdad by the national...commanded by the national police there. The part that was assigned to the Ministry of Interior with the help of the Ministry of Defense, we did not see any challenges that we can mention. The borders...or the police border...the border police, they were there and they were helping us as well. And we...and it's still in the first stages of the operation. We did not see any or face any challenges. And the ministry...the prime minister has announced that he's going to forgive about four days to...for people to come back and give them...it's like forgiveness for those. That was a...the statement was announced and it wasn't clear. The minister of...the Ministry of Interior received a lot of wanted that they actually surrendered. And they weren't involved in any killings or bloodshed. And so we received all of them. We organized the legal part of it. And it's about 116 has surrendered themselves. And about 46 here actually was kidnap-...was arrested

by our forces. And we actually confiscated a lot of weapons and seized a lot of [unintelligible], and so many vehicles and trucks were seized by our forces. The operation was very successful. The one challenge that our security forces faced: Maysan lacks a lot of infrastructure up there. And there is no...not even one decent hotel there in...for instance, in Maysan area. So infrastructure needs in Maysan needs a lot of support from the government as far as electricity, water. That's why the prime minister sent a ministerial committee to list down the priorities and they said that's going to be...it was water, unemployment problem, and also factories up there like Pepsi factory, the cake factory, the sugar factory. All those factories needs to be renovated or...and gives...that gives or creates job opportunities to the people. About 5,000 to go to the Iraqi security forces and 10,000 job opportunities, too, was civil services. And until the...of course that's going to help the security stability eventually. Operations in Sadr City, we talked a lot about it before as far...and people in the [unintelligible], our friends or colleagues in the [unintelligible], had talked about...a lot about it. And the statement that was released by the Baghdad Operations Center, I think it was enough. But I think we still have operations going on and, of course, our friends, our brothers in Baghdad Operations Center, is working on covering that. We have another operation coming up soon in Shola. Diyala maybe is going to be the

last station or the last stop for our security forces. Now all the efforts, all the efforts is put together towards a new operation, God willing, in Diyala. So our security force is going to go there and we'll probably do the same job that we've done in other operations. And I didn't want to take long of your time. Thank you very much for listening.

**RDML  
DRISCOLL:**

Thank you very much, sir. And we'll take some questions now. Your questions, please.

**REP1:**

[Asks question in Arabic.]

**INT:**

We know that Iran has done all the weapons and things and we've seen that on TV. And it was according to the local government to talk to the...[unintelligible] to ask the consulate, the Iranian consulate in Basra, to interfere directly. What's the Ministry of Interior's role against this consulate, Iranian consulate, and what's...what are we going to do? Why is this gap that happened in Basra by getting all those weapons into Bagh-...into Basra to control all those...illegally control all those ports? And we know Basra is a very important and vital province. Also, the Mosul Province, there are violations and the last one is...was a security attack against the governor. Thank you.

**MAJ GEN  
ABDUL-KARIM:**

[Speaks in Arabic.]

**INT:**

We always, you know, the weak people always try to blame it on others to justify their weakness. So this is a card that we're not willing to play. We won't allow to. So the Iraqi security forces and their effectiveness, that's what's playing the role in the stability of security. And we are not going to hesitate to provide...regardless if it was security or they were...we're not going to hesitate to punish those people and put them on trial, regardless if they were part of the security forces. So it's organizing the security or local security is part of our security forces and it has the...the security forces has the primary responsibility to provide security and protect the people. But as for blaming others, the intelligence departments in other...in all over the world, they actually work hard to protect people. And we can't blame other people for our weaknesses. Our success in Basra was something clear to everybody. And we...the old intel, foreign intel people that was in...or departments in Basra now, I can say they are not there anymore. And if they are there right now, they probably are hiding. And us, as Iraqis, and our security forces, we have to do our duties and not blame it on other people. If we start blaming it on other people, we will bring problems to Iraq that we really don't need.

**REP2:** [Asks question in Arabic.]

**INT:** You talked about...briefed about Basra, Amara, Baghdad, and Diyala. Is it going to be a military...is it confirmed that we're going to have military operations up there? When is going that...when is that going to happen and when...?

**MAJ GEN  
ABDUL-KARIM:** [Speaks in Arabic.]

**INT:** This is going to happen soon. Iraqi security forces is going to be sent up there. And it's just like we done in Basra, Amara. And Diyala is going to be.... Of course all the preparations we're putting in mind on the worst case or basis. And we're putting, you know, like, in mind that it's going to be a fight and it's going to be a tough fight also. That's what we put in our, you know, assessments and evaluations. And that's why when we, you know, our intel departments or people will go there and try to assess the situation and collect information and all that. And that's why all...we're all working in that direction and so we'll have a successful operation.

**REP3:** [Asks question in Arabic.]

**INT:** I have three questions. The last operation, talking about Diyala. Does that mean that there is no more indications that...terrorists indications in other provinces? And do you think that the security is

controlled in all other provinces? Also, the reconstruction operations in the areas that's been cleared from the terrorist groups, have we done any reconstruction process?

**MAJ GEN  
ABDUL-KARIM:** [Speaks in Arabic.]

**INT:** If we talk about, you know, statistics here, before 2007 we had, you know, expectations by...from the studies that was done between, you know, jointly between us and the coalition forces, what we've, you know, expected that our security forces are going to do after 2007. After all 2007...after the operations in Basra, we exceeded all the expectations. And we improved and we continued improving in...on extraordinary way. So after Basra, there was additional success. And about 75% additional success. The number of crimes and on attacks has dropped down by 85%. Twelve of our Iraqi provinces now, I mean all the pro-...the percentage of ...the average of the crime is an average thing. It's like something that's.... In other provinces it needs some help and work on it to drop down or lower the level of crime, except or apart from Diyala. All the operations that we done, the Knights...the Charge of the Knights and other operations, the numbers that we've mentioned, Iraqi security forces now, after requalifying them, they reached to the level that they can actually work on security operations

effectively. Although...with all that we...they issued...we issued an order that for each province will have a brigade. This brigade will work in that province but would not be under...would not report directly to the chief of police. But it would have...if we have any problems in that province, the chief of police will ask the Ministry of Interior to get this brigade to help him in providing security in that...for that province. Also, there's a lot of things the Ministry of Interior is going to do in addition to the support that we assigned or allocated to so many departments of the Ministry of Interior and different provinces.

**REP3:** [Asks question in Arabic.]

**INT:** What about the reconstruction process?

**MAJ GEN  
ABDUL-KARIM:** [Speaks in Arabic.]

**INT:** The minister of interior was very keen to work on the reconstruction process. And we, indeed, put the...or laid the right ground for ministry...other ministries and other government departments or institutions to actually work. And without security, other institutions or governmental institutions would not be able to work and conduct their work. And now all the things are in place for those ministries to actually go there. And there are no justifications

or reasons why they can't do their job. The atmosphere up there is pretty good in all provinces and they can work.

**REP4:** [Asks question in Arabic.]

**INT:** My question is to you and to Admiral Driscoll. It's regarding the previous announcement. There was always a previous announcement about, you know, operations and for Mosul or other provinces. Of course, you know, and two months for preparation time or preparation period. So this is will let those or let...give the chance for those, you know, terrorist groups to run away and go somewhere else and start there, you know, in another province. My other point is always...there's always, you know, preparations, you know, from, you know, as far [as] financing or providing weapons from other countries. In the Fardh al-Qanoon plan in 2007, they closed the borders. And that actually helped to prevent those, you know, as far as fina-...for those terrorist groups to get financed or helped or get aid or support from other countries. So is that going to be the same in Diyala? My question to Admiral Driscoll is this. The Multi-National Force has great technology and they can do, you know, recon, they can recon the borders and with the borders with other countries. And they can see if there is any violations or if there is any, you know, if there was.... And that would help the operations. And if that...is that going to be implemented in this

operation? As you know, Amara Province has open borders with other countries.

**MAJ GEN  
ABDUL-KARIM:**

[Speaks in Arabic.]

**INT:**

I have to comment on this one point and that needs to be explained here. The terrorists, they don't have or the terrorists do not have any big equipment or anything excep-...apart from a VBIED, you know, car bomb, or.... And I was an officer in the former army. And about 84 million rounds, mortar rounds, around the country. And if you...I mean apart from all the heavy weapon...heavy-duty weapon, all those, you know, mines, about 2...2,500...25 million mines that can be used as an IED that's available in this country. This person, this terrorist can take about 24 hours to run away. If you are going to run away, you can run away in a 24 hour, you know, thing. So any...even if any stupid person can see...if they see those forces are gathering—even if we don't announce it, they see these forces are gathering and being put in one place, even a clueless person will say this is going to be an operation or a security operation. So this is also, you know, the intel department and the security forces also can work hard and try to find or capture all those targets if they were inside the area... inside the country. But after...and capture them. After the improvement that we have in our

information database that we have in the Ministry of Interior, Ministry of Defense, and also the brothers in the national security also department, we are now capable of chasing all those terrorists or criminals.

**RDML  
DRISCOLL:**

If I can just answer one question.

**MAJ GEN  
ABDUL-KARIM:**

Yes. Sorry, sorry, sorry.

**RDML  
DRISCOLL:**

The issue he asked was about closing the traffic across the border for weapons and money coming across. As you know, Iran and Iraq have a large amount of trade that goes across that border which is a good thing. Both countries benefit from the economic development that brings. And certainly, the tourism trade that comes into Karbala and Najaf is a major economic stimulus to those areas. So if we took drastic measures to use technology and have to search everything that came across, that would have a large economic...negative economic impact on that border region. So we do leverage our technology to best search those buses and cars and, you know, wagons and all the things that come across the border at the checkpoints. And we're partnered with the border security guards to help them build their capability. But the border, as you know, is a long border and it's mountainous in many regions. And

it's difficult down south because of the marshes. It's a very good area for smuggling. And so even with the most technology you have, you have to have a lot of people and you still don't want to stop the process of people going back and forth. So it's a difficult problem.

**REP 4:** What if during the military operation, just only that? [Continues speaking in Arabic.]

**INT:** Only during the military operations, like...just like what we have done, you know, or in...we can use, like, technological efforts, you know, and close the borders, you know, during the operations only.

**RDML DRISCOLL:** Yes, sir. In fact, that did happen, but we weren't concerned about people bringing things in. We wanted to make sure we closed it so no one could get out and run away. And that was the objective and it was very successful. Shukran.

**REP5:** [Asks question in Arabic.]

**INT:** Major General Abdul-Karim....

**REP5:** [Laughs]

[A brief, off-microphone exchange ensued.]

**RDML  
DRISCOLL:**

Please.

**REP5:**

[Asks question in Arabic.]

**INT:**

Major General Abdul-Karim, there are accusations against the Peshmerga forces in Mosul City that they are harassing people in the area, in Mosul area. What...how do you comment on that? My other question is to Admiral Driscoll. Are you going to participate in operations in Diyala? Is the Multi-National Force going to participate in Diyala operations or campaigns?

**MAJ GEN  
ABDUL-KARIM:**

[Speaks in Arabic.]

**INT:**

Thank you very much for this question. In fact, frankly, we have heard this before. There are complaints that's been put in place. And those complaints has been passed or submitted to the minister and also to Amb-...to President Barazani. And we requested that these claims needs to be.... And President Barazani asked those claims can, you know, cannot be general, without actually providing names and detailed information. We need to...they requested that we need to have the...a right information and the name of that person who is submitting his claim so we know how to punish the people who's violating human rights and we can also tell

his supervisor and his references. And if it was under the Iraqi government or the central government, we can also.... In fact, now we are...after we are...in Ninawa, after assessing the security situation there, there is great cooperation with our brothers in Kurdistan. And they really are interested in the Mosul area and they want to help because they don't want to have any security attacks in Kurdistan itself because it's a very stable area and also it's now like a safe area for Iraqis to go up there and live there. So hopefully we'll....

**RDML  
DRISCOLL:**

And as the...we...the coalition forces have been conducting operations in Diyala and Mosul since the beginning of this year. And those operations have targeted the al-Qaida that have been in those areas and they've worked closely with Iraqi security forces during those operations. The new operation is going to be, in fact, an enhancement or an increase in emphasis in that area and we'll work closely with the Iraqi security forces during this effort.

**REP6:**

[Asks question in Arabic.]

**INT:**

I have two questions, in fact. To General, after the Fardh al-Qanoon plan in Basra, there was...we...there was the war or the fight has stopped and they announced on the satellite TV or agencies that rule of law has been established in Basra. But we were surprised a few

days ago on a statement that was released by the governor of Basra. There was actually groups or entities that actually asking to vote for people that are not Iraqis. And this is an Iranian side and they're asking to vote for the Al-I'tilaf Iraqi Coalition List, the Iraqi Coalition List. And they threatened if you don't vote for this list you're going to be kidnapped. So we [are] asking, actually, where is the government, what the government is doing about this? Is it...have we been able to completely get rid of the Mahdi Army or not? Thank you.

**MAJ GEN  
ABDUL-KARIM:**

[Speaks in Arabic.]

**INT:**

First, as far as the elections, your question. As a professional side here, we do not interfere in elections. It's going to be a free elections and democratic elections and people are going to be free. We are not going to tolerate any intimidation to the Iraqi people and we are going to.... There would not...there was no fight also between the Shi'a forces and the Shi'a people in Basra. The Iraqi security forces weren't Shi'a. There were only 10, for instance. Like in my group or my unit, it was only like 10 people that were Shi'a. Also, we weren't tar-...we weren't...it wasn't...we didn't aim to actually get rid of one party. We were actually targeting the people who are carrying the weapons and killing our people. Regardless of

where they come from. Regardless. So they have no immunity, they actually...if they are doing that. People are trying to create chaos and kill people and destroy the infrastructure of the government. But the people or the group that's actually doing their role as a political party, we did not object or oppose this for a second. On the contrary, as mentioned in the constitution, it's one of their rights. But the people who...or the groups who's carrying the weapons and trying to fight the government, that's not acceptable.

**REP7:** [Asks question in Arabic.]

**INT:** The operation that you have done in Shola City actually targeted a police station and we seen with our own eyes that policemen and their weapons has been confiscated. What's the fate or the destiny of those people, those arrested? And my other question is when the Ministry of Interior's police are going to be controlling the city...the security in the city instead of the MOD?

**MAJ GEN  
ABDUL-KARIM:** [Speaks in Arabic.]

**INT:** Our next goal is, as far as the police station in Shola, if any policemen is not doing their job properly, they fall under the Ministry of Interior's law. We formed about four courts. One in Baghdad, one in Basra, one in Kurdistan. And there is also

[unintelligible] courts. And there's a court...a judge that can actually.... And we also have the death penalty as well. According to the Article 20 in the Ministry of Interior's law, a person who's.... And it lists a lot of things why you can...and it's very strict rules where.... That's why you're seeing that our organization or the Ministry of Interior is very strict as far as implementing those rules and laws. And those courts has been established and judges has been hired. Also it's been ratified or passed by the cabinet or House of Representatives and also the president and the prime minister. And so the law is, in Ministry of Interior, is even more...it's even harder than the Law 111. And it's a law that controls and regulates the work of a security force that does pivotal work and a very important job in...security job in Iraq. And we have Abud Gumbar[ph] who does his...or exercises his work inside Baghdad. And he has the authorities from the prime minister.

**REP8:** [Asks question in Arabic.]

**INT:** Last week there was announced that the Jord-...the...King Abdullah, the Jordan King Abdullah, he came...he was supposed to come to Iraq and it was postponed.

**MAJ GEN  
ABDUL-KARIM:** [Speaks in Arabic.]

**INT:** This is something you can ask the minister of foreign affairs about.

**REP9:** [Asks question in Arabic.]

**INT:** There are statements from some of the politicians. They talk about the failure of the operations in Ninawa Province. Also, there are statement from Nouri al-Maliki a few days ago. He said that he left the command...he's not the com-...he left the command of the security forces. Now who is...?

**MAJ GEN  
ABDUL-KARIM:** I've never heard this statement before. This is a statement I have never heard before or announcement that I've never heard before. He is the commander in chief for the Iraqi security forces and we take our orders from him.

**REP9:** [Speaks in Arabic.]

**INT:** Through a meeting with some of the sheiks and the...he said that he left the command being...commanding the security forces and he's now taking care of focusing on secur-...on reconstruction process.

**MAJ GEN  
ABDUL-KARIM:** [Speaks in Arabic.]

**INT:** Well, I think you misunderstood what the prime minister said. The prime minister probably was saying that now the

priority...reconstruction process has taken priority. And that's why....he is still the commander in chief, but now security...with the security getting, you know, improving and all of that, of course it's not being number one now. But it's now secur-...now services, essential services, things that actually helps to improve the living of the people, that's something that's taking priority right now. Ninawa Province and operations there has not failed. And who said that it's been a failure? We said in the beginning...things happened and a series of procedures that we're doing...putting in place that's going to make it a successful operation.

**RDML  
DRISCOLL:**

One more question.

**REP10:**

[Asks question in Arabic.]

**INT:**

As far as Ninawa in particular, we have noticed that the things and the way you displayed and talked about the operations in Sadr City, and you said in Ninawa Province or in Mosul is going to be a reassessment for this situation. Why is that? Also, to Admiral Driscoll, in the...because of the success that the coalition force is having, is...are you going to re-...or think about a reduction for the forces?

**MAJ GEN  
ABDUL-KARIM:**

[Speaks in Arabic.]

**INT:**

Well, Ninawa did not fail. And it's an order from the prime minister to reassess or evaluate a specific point...specific points and to overcome those points quickly for two reasons. The first reason is to actually gain the confidence of the people of Mosul and to increase that confidence. And the second thing is to get the government's institutes to work effectively. And this is something deals with security forces and to the executive departments that's working inside the province of Ninawa. And this is something that we agreed upon last week and the prime minister has directed that. And we are going to get the...or receive the support from the MOD, MOI, and we're going to go there and to support the command of Ninawa Operations Command.

**RDML  
DRISCOLL:**

We're heartened by the continued drop in violent incidents that we've seen. And as the last surge brigade is leaving this week, we enter a period of consolidation and evaluation. During this period, General Petraeus will take a look at conditions on the ground and then make recommendations up the chain of command for further reductions. But those recommendations will be conditions based. Okay?

**MAJ GEN  
ABDUL-KARIM:**

Okay.

**RDML  
DRISCOLL:**

Shukran.

**MAJ GEN  
ABDUL-KARIM:**

Shukran jaziilan.

**RDML  
DRISCOLL:**

Thank you.