

PRESS CONFERENCE:

**Major General Kevin J. Bergner, Spokesman, Multi-National Force – Iraq
Dr. Tahseen al-Sheikhly, Civilian Spokesman, Operation Fardh Al-Qanoon**

DATE: May 7, 2008

TRANSCRIBED BY:

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PARTICIPANTS:

**Major General Kevin Bergner
Dr. Tahseen al-Sheikhly**

REPORTERS:

**Naji[ph] Massadi[ph] from As-Safir Newspaper
Daniel Smith from Bahrain TV
Falasal[ph] Hamadani[ph]; affiliation not provided
Jimano[ph] from CNN**

Unidentified reporters from Radio Sawa and Biladi TV.

REPORTERS 1-11

***REP1 = REPORTER 1**

DR AL-SHEIKHLY: [Speaks in Arabic. Laughs.]

INT: We'd like to thank you today for coming to this press conference
and it's an honor to talk with my friend, General Bergner, the

official spokesman for the Multi-National Forces in Iraq. Actually talking about what's going on in Baghdad in particular needs a continuous information and update because what's going on affects everyone and the Iraqi government [is] determined to set the facts in front of everyone and in a transparent way as well. Baghdad suffered during the past years from terrorism which tried in many aspects to divide it. And through the implementation of Operation Fardh Al-Qanoon, we managed to liberate several places in Baghdad that used to be hot zones and the terrorists wanted to control those places. And there were no reconstruction in those places and basic services. At the same time there were also places in Baghdad enjoyed, or used to enjoy, security and services. And there were also plans, developments to build its or their infrastructure and developing their infrastructure in the appropriate way. But what's going on now, unfortunately, that the hot zones at a certain point after being cleared and now they are clear. And they have now taken their shares from the development and the reconstruction while, on the other hand, we see that there are some places in Baghdad like Shola and Sadr City that used to be secure and used to have most of the basic services. Now it suffers from the control of the criminal gangs that control the cities of those people and make them suffer. The Iraqi government, for the past month, exerted a lot of effort to provide all the services and the humanitarian needs for

the people in Sadr City. And in the same time, with cooperation with the Multi-National Forces, there were also operations to eliminate those criminal gangs that imposed this siege and this security concern for the people. Last week we talked about allocating \$150...or \$100 million for developing this district in Baghdad or city. But now there are also further amount of money allocated by the Baghdad Amanat and the Baghdad Provisional Council and those include projects that have priority to be implemented in Sadr City. But all those or all this amount of money is now crippled due to the presence of the criminal gangs that, unfortunately, take the human pi-... or the human beings as shields. And the government is patient and it's trying to deal with those criminals wisely and carefully in a way we could avoid any casualties among the civilians. Prime Minister Maliki ordered this week to open four entrances to distribute the benzene and gas inside Sadr City. In addition to distributing the food ration—the additional food ration—within 15 years...15 days. Sorry. The Ministry of Education started also setting plans to deal with the educational situation in Sadr City, especially the school[s] that were closed or the schools that the armed men try, unfortunately, through their criminal activities to close those schools. A few days ago there was a sit in and this sit in is a situation anyone could adopt anytime, but when armed groups enter a school and they attack the staff and the

principal and they terrify the students and threaten all those people and the staff to kill them if they continue working, this is called terrorism. This is the kind of activities those criminals are carrying out in Sadr City and terrifying the people. The Ministry of Health finished...prepared also all the medicine; not only for those who have been affected by the military operations, but also medicine for people in general, for the hospitals so that we can keep the hospitals open 24/7. I leave the details for your questions, but I'd like my friend, General Bergner, to clarify all what the Multi-National Forces are doing and presenting. With cooperation with us, they opened a humanitarian center in Sadr City. And this presented over...or until now we have 500 tankers loaded with humanitarian aids that entered Sadr City. That's why today we will talk together about this aspect and also about other aspects regarding the Multi-National Forces and its operations in Iraq. General Bergner.

**MAJ GEN
BERGNER:**

Shukran jaziilan, Dr. Sheikhly. Shukran. Thank you very much. While the Government of Iraq in conjunction with the Iraqi Army and the Iraqi police are working on improving the provision of services for the citizens of Baghdad, Iraq still faces a very tough fight as we saw last week in Balad Ruz, southeast of Baqubah. There, a female suicide bomber detonated her suicide explosive vest

on a crowded city street. She was one of two suicide bombers that al-Qaeda in Iraq sent into the city that day to use indiscriminate violence killing 31 and wounding 52 innocent people. Al-Qaeda in Iraq's tactics of sending women to conduct these ruthless attacks of violence is another example of the nature of the enemy, its corrupt ideology, and the barbaric depths to which they are willing to sink. However, the Iraqi security forces, the Sons of Iraq, the tips provided by local citizens, and coalition forces are making it increasingly difficult to carry out these kinds of attacks. And accordingly, al-Qaeda in Iraq terrorists are resorting to have to use women for these purposes. Iraqi security forces, supported by the coalition, are aggressively pursuing al-Qaeda in Iraq, concentrating on areas around Mosul, the Diyala River Valley, and other areas of Iraq. And they are uncovering terrorists' facilities, disrupting their lines of communication, and capturing their leaders. Since our last update on al-Qaeda's activities, security forces detained 50 al-Qaeda in Iraq senior leaders and facilitators – many of whom were around Mosul. Ten of the most significant are shown on the slide behind me. Of those ten, two significant individuals include Ibrahim Ahmad Umar Nasir al Sabawi. He was captured near Mosul. He's an al-Qaeda in Iraq emir of east Mosul. He worked closely with Mosul's foreign terrorist network and its former leader, Jar Allah, before he was killed. The second individual is Abbas' 'Abd Ahmad

Hamad. He was captured in Baghdad where he was part of the South Karkh network that made car bombs. While our operations target the leadership of al-Qaeda in Iraq, Iraqi and coalition forces are simultaneously and relentlessly pursuing those who are firing rockets into the neighborhoods in Baghdad. On Sunday, one of these groups fired more rockets into Baghdad and the following video shows what transpired as they prepared to launch a 240 millimeter rocket. As you can see, they are maneuvering a rocket rail into position. This rocket was to be launched. It weighed approximately 250 pounds, 113 kilograms, and can inflict damage to an area encompassing some 200 meters around the point of impact. As the team is moving the rocket rail they are engaged by two Hellfire missiles. In the past few weeks over 700 rockets and mortars were launched into Baghdad neighborhoods. Iraqi and coalition forces are responding appropriately to these rocket teams who position themselves close to public buildings and within residential neighborhoods and thereby endanger innocent civilians. In this engagement, as with others, we are using as much precision and taking precautions to limit the impact on innocent civilians and property. Even as more indirect fire attacks are interdicted, others are being pre-empted by the Iraqi security forces as they are finding weapons caches that reduce the prospects of indirect fire teams being able to get their rockets to the launching rails. In Karbala on

Monday, the Karbala Operations Center Commander, Major General Jaw'dat, revealed a weapons cache discovered by a joint force of the Iraqi police and the Iraqi Army which contained some 20,000 items of ammunition, explosives, and weapons. Another recent cache that the Iraqi security forces discovered in Karbala included 400 improvised explosive devices, 170 explosive...adhesive explosive devices, 9 mortars, 4 anti-aircraft missiles, 45 rocket-propelled grenades, and over 4,000 rifles. This past Sunday, in just one day, the national police and Iraqi Army units found four separate weapons caches in Basra and Bayji that included a 240 millimeter rocket, rifles, 60 mines, mortar tubes, rocket-propelled grenades, and explosive...improvised-explosive devices. Overall in...since operations began in Basra, Iraqi security forces have found some 39 mortar tubes, 1,800 mortars and artillery rounds, 600 rockets, 87 explosively-formed penetrators, 300 improvised explosive devices, 3,500 pounds of explosives, and more than 1,000 rocket-propelled grenades. Last Thursday, the national police here in Baghdad discovered three separate weapons caches in an abandoned mosque in the We...in the Rashid District of the city. They found 10 explosively-formed penetrators [and] more than 100 pounds of homemade explosives in addition to mortar rounds and rocket-propelled grenades. These efforts by the Iraqi security forces show their growing capacity and

professionalism which is being enabled by the training and professional development that is under way. On April 25th, Iraqi Army trainers, working closely with Iraqi police cadets, helped provide a class on advanced security tactics in Taramiyah. The combined efforts of the Iraqi Army, police, and Sons of Iraq in this community have significantly reduced the violence there over the past four months. In Taji, the 36th Iraqi Army Brigade and the local Sons of Iraq continue to work together to provide a safe market for vendors and shoppers. On the 29th of April, the Furat local police station in the Mansour District here in Baghdad celebrated its grand opening. Four hundred policemen including many former Sons of Iraq and graduates of the ten-week course are now serving the community from that new station. This past week the Daughters of Iraq, a group of female security volunteers, began security operations at a security station in Yusufiyah. They help manage the checkpoint to the joint security station and insure that Iraqi women who are filing claims with security forces do not pose a threat. In Northern Iraq, 24 Iraqi Army medics participated in a three-day training event where they eval...where they were evaluated in physical fitness, mental toughness, and a broad spectrum of field medicine procedures. Nineteen Iraqi Army medics earned the very difficult to receive Iraqi Army Expert Medical Trauma Badge. As security improves in areas of Iraq, local communities are building

their infrastructure, revitalizing businesses, and establishing governing structures. A recent example of this was the reopening of the Jamiat Market in Basra yesterday. The market, which cost over \$1 million dollars, was built on the site of an old police station that was destroyed in 2006. The recent establishment of security in the past two weeks has allowed for the opening ceremony and for the start of businesses there. In Fallujah, a wastewater treatment facility – the largest of its kind there – is being built to collect and treat raw sewage and its capacity will support the city’s projected population through the year 2025. In Hawr Rajab, a rural community south of Baghdad, poultry farmers received the first shipment of chickens – 12,000 baby chickens in this case – being delivered to jump-start the region’s poultry industry which fell apart during the terrorist actions of 2007. This project, which marks the return of the local poultry business, is being facilitated by both coalition forces and the provincial reconstruction team. It will provide an important boost to the local economy and employment in the area. Last week in Fallujah, a local tribal sheik participated in a live call-in radio show, the fifth of a series of shows discussing local governance. The radio station has hosted a series of local officials and leaders to answer questions from citizens about the local governance. And the shows have been an effective medium to help educate and inform, provide transparency in the government, and connect the government to its

citizens. Also recently in the community of Salman Pak, they inaugurated the revitalization of the Garden Market. After beautifying the exterior of the market, nearly \$15,000 in micro-grants were made to shop owners to improve their stores, purchase the necessary inventory, and help jump-start the economic activity of that community. To that end, the Government of Iraq recently funded a \$510 million program, implemented by the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs, which provides further opportunities for small business owners to take loans to get the necessary capital to restart their operations. The Ministry of Industry and Minerals is also providing a larger loan program to medium and larger businesses. Iraqis are also gaining new technical skills. In the...in Jisr Diyala the Karada Vocational-Technical Training Center is offering courses in masonry, welding, sewing, [and] electrical installation, and 66 students recently graduated from the center there. The citizens in these communities are beginning to feel some benefits of the improving security and the availability of economic development funds from their government and other sources. Much more work is still required on the security and economic development front, but progress is being made thanks to the courage of the Iraqi people and the partnership between Iraqi security forces and the coalition forces. Shukran jaziilan. And with that I'll let Dr.

Sheikhly...

DR AL-SHEIKHLY:

Shukran jaziilan.

MAJ GEN BERGNER:

...lead the questions.

DR AL-SHEIKHLY:

[Speaks in Arabic.]

INT:

We will take now the questions.

REP1:

[Asks question in Arabic.]

INT:

Naji[ph] Massadi[ph]. Safir Newspaper. What is the role of the Ministry of Defense and [Ministry of] Interior on the security level in Sadr City currently? And is there any improvement in those days?

DR AL-SHEIKHLY:

[Speaks in Arabic.]

INT:

At the beginning now in Baghdad we have Operation Fardh Al-Qanoon and there is the commanding operation in Baghdad. And this commanding operation includes the members in the Iraqi Army

and the national police and those are led by General Abud[ph] Gumber[ph] and they are responsible for the security in Baghdad. That's why the commanding operation in Baghdad has the responsibility for securing Baghdad. In general, what's going on in those days in Sadr City and, to be honest with you, in some places people ask, "Why does it take a long time?" We care and we are about the safety of the people. Our troops were able to crash and eliminate those criminal gangs in a very fast way but we would like to avoid the human casualties and we are being patient and we are trying to be more patient in choosing the operations in order to deal with the op-...those situations in a serious way. That's why it seems for you that it takes a long time because those criminal gangs cannot make those people suffer. Our duty is to establish the law.

REP2: [Asks question in Arabic.]

INT: Question from Radio Sawa. Dr. Tahseen, there are news that 8,000 attacks were stopped in Sadr City. And General Bergner, there are also news from the American government saying that Hezbollah is training militias or JAM for Jaish al-Mahdi in Iran. Is that true? And the other question, the Indian minister of defense said India now has a nuclear missile that could reach Baghdad. Why Baghdad in particular? Why do you think he said Baghdad in particular?

DR AL-SHEIKHLY:

[Laughs. Speaks in Arabic.]

INT:

Well, to be honest, that the Iraqi government even is finding solutions for everything. We are planning to establish places even if there were refugees; as you've mentioned, we can provide services to them. Our major concern is the safety of the people. The people in Sadr City are asking for our help. And if you just come and listen to the phone calls, you will not believe how much those people are desperate. Some of them...some of the soldiers who fight in the Iraqi Army division and they're...on one of the tanks and they're opening fire and he says, "Sir, this is my house, but I'm opening fire because I want to eliminate those criminal gangs." He's targeting his own house because he knows very well when he opens fire at that direction, he's eliminating criminal gangs that makes his people suffer. Because the people got fed up from this. And I think General Bergner will answer the rest of the questions.

MAJ GEN BERGNER:

Yeah. Your question really takes me back to last summer when we talked about a man named Ali Moussa Dakdouk who is a Lebanese Hezbollah operative. He was being used by the Iranian Quds Force as a surrogate – a proxy really – to come into Iraq and to work closely with extremist groups here. And so this is a relationship that

we have talked about and have been very transparent about for quite some time. And it's not just intelligence; it's evidence, evidence in this case – first-hand evidence – provided by the individual who was captured, Ali Moussa Dakdouk. Shukran jaziilan.

DR AL-SHEIKHLY:

[Brief, untranslated discussion in Arabic between Dr. Al-Sheikhly and reporter 2.]

REP2:

I have a question about why Baghdad. The...

MAJ GEN BERGNER:

I haven't seen the report that you are talking about so I really...there's not much I could add to that. I didn't see the statement that you are referring to so I really can't characterize why it might involve the comment that you made. Shukran.

REP3:

[Asks question in Arabic.]

INT:

[Inaudible] Iraq and the main cause for that is for the borders. The question is where are those weapons coming from, those really new, modern weapons? And I'm asking both the general and Dr. Tahseen. The unemployment now, why don't you make an army so that those...this army could protect the borders as well? Why do

you just make checkpoints and concrete barriers in the streets and this causes a traffic jam while, on the other hand, we have the borders open? I never saw anyone comment about this.

DR AL-SHEIKHLY:

[Speaks in Arabic.]

INT:

This is an opinion and you have the right to say that. And I think that the Iraqi government is...talks about this all the time and, however, the major problem now is an internal Iraqi one. We have armed groups that try to impose a siege over the Iraqis. Do we neglect those and deal with other problems or eliminate those people so we can provide security to the people? It's impossible that for any country to build itself and a democratic society with the presence of people who impose themselves as a parallel force for the government. This is threatening for the rights of the people. As for the borders, of course I think the Iraqi government is really dealing and taking this seriously. And there are some talks with the neighboring countries about this and weapon can also.... General Bergner, do you have something to add about this?

MAJ GEN BERGNER:

The control of the borders is an important aspect of Iraq's sovereignty and it's one that is not just about Iraq's control of the

borders, but it's also about their neighbors respecting those borders and taking the necessary measures to help control them as well. That's why the Government of Iraq has engaged in a neighbors' conference with a specific committee on border security which has met to further discuss and pursue ways that they can jointly secure and improve the control of the borders around Iraq. So I think that we would all agree that that is an important component to limiting the availability of weapons, funding, [and] other resources that the extremists here in Iraq depend on. And we know that they depend on them. Shukran.

DR AL-SHEIKHLY:

Shukran. Falasal[ph].

REP4:

[Asks question in Arabic.]

INT:

Falasal[ph] Hamadani[ph]. Dr. Tahseen Sheikhy, a few days ago it was announced that there was a support council in Sadr City. And is it possible to divide Sadr City so that you can control Sadr City in a better way? And to General Bergner, in most of the countries when there is a violation from a neighboring country, we find documents and evidence that this particular country participated in the flow of weapons and they also ask the Security Council to interfere in this as well because the neighboring country is interfering in Iraq's

affair. But now we see that in Iraq there is...there are car bombs and that come from the...that come from Iran, a neighboring country. So five years and until now Iran is or didn't stop or respect Iraq. So will America still...will we...sitting on the fence or do something about this?

DR AL SHEIKHLY:

[Speaks in Arabic.]

INT:

I'll ask[sic] the question about the national reconciliation and leave the other question for General Bergner. All the institutes in the Iraqi government work on finding solutions for what's going on in Sadr City. The people in Sadr City actually are gathering so that they say that they are rejecting those people who carry weapon against their people. Those things are being now...are undergoing. But it's not necessary to announce forming those support councils but it's the responsibility at the people. And as you can see, through the cooperation with each other and the cooperation with the security forces, I see...I think that this is the awakening in its full term. That's why we are serious about this and the Follow-up Committee for the National Reconciliation is also following up this with leaders in Sadr City. And the second question I'll leave to General Bergner.

**MAJ GEN
BERGNER:**

Let me just add one other point to...if I could to Dr. Sheikhly's comment about local citizens. When the 6th Iraqi Army Division, the day before yesterday, conducted operations in Shoala, they conducted operations that involved four or five different battalion-sized units that were assembled for those. And they went in and conducted operations to remove the illegal weapons. They found four different caches of explosively-formed projectiles. They found...in fact they happened to find a couple of rocket rails, rocket-launching rails, in a local hospital in that area of the city. And after they conducted...after they finished conducting their operations, the assessment of the Iraqi Army leadership was that there were many citizens there who were now willing to work closely with the Iraqi Army and the Iraqi police to improve security and sustain the improved security that that operation has helped contribute to. And so that is an encouraging sign and it's one that I know that the Multi-National Force certainly welcomes and I know that our brothers in the Iraqi security forces do as well. And so we'll continue to work closely with those citizens and the Government of Iraq to help build on those security gains. As to your second point, I think everyone takes those threats very seriously. And certainly the prime minister's recent initiative that the Government of Iraq has undertaken to discuss directly with their neighbor the flow of illegal

arms and the training and funding of extremists here in Iraq signals the seriousness that the Government of Iraq takes concerning those unhelpful influences. And his further steps to establish a committee to work on those issues from the Government of Iraq's perspective is also an important signal of the seriousness that the Government of Iraq is taking as well. Shukran.

DR AL-SHEIKHLY:

Shukran. [Speaks in Arabic.]

REP5:

As-Salāmu `Alaykum.

MAJ GEN BERGNER and DR AL-SHEIKHLY:

`Alaykum Sala'am.

REP5:

[Asks question in Arabic.]

INT:

I have two questions. First to Dr. Tahseen Sheikhly. At the beginning we appreciate the positive outcomes that or the security gains that were achieved by Operation Fardh Al-Qanoon in Baghdad in particular. But what we have noticed, especially recently, and now that, as you have mentioned, that the Iraqi government have sent several humanitarian aids to the people in Sadr City. Will the government remain or will it continue in

sending the humanitarian aid during the daytime and the American bombing will continue at night? And the second question to General Bergner. We hear about that a large amount of money and explosive were found by the Iraqi Army especially in different places in the country. Doesn't that...don't you think that this is strange and don't you think that the Iraqi government or the Iraqi Army finds that strange that there is a large amount of money or weapons that the joint forces found? And is there any solution that...to prevent those weapons from getting back to the outlaws again?

DR AL-SHEIKHLY:

[Speaks in Arabic.]

INT:

If you could just go back...if we could just go back to slide number 1, you are upset from the bombing that you see. I hope you just take a look at this slide. On May 6th...no. Not this slide. The other one. Yes. As you can see, this is an indirect fire attack. [A] 122 millimeter rocket was fired and it hit a playground for the children in Baghdad and it targeted also a police station. The casualties were 7 in addition to 14 wounded. You don't criticize those things but you criticize us when we target the criminal gangs. Those rockets targeted playgrounds and children! So if we deal with this at day or night, this is an indication that we are keen on the security of the people in addition to the humanitarian aid which is our duty to

provide for the people. Thank you.

**MAJ GEN
BERGNER:**

Yeah. And in response to your question, the flow of weapons to extremists is one that is a very serious problem in Iraq because we know from people like Qais Kas Ali in statements that he has made that these extremist groups could not do what they are doing without the support they are receiving from other countries. And so it is one that's very serious and it's one that we're working on very hard with our Iraqi partners to reduce their capabilities. And the scope of weapons caches that I shared with you today are an example of the level of effort the Iraqi security forces are engaged in to find them, pre-empt the opportunity for extremists to use them against the Iraqi people and certainly against their government and against the coalition forces. And it reflects not just on the scope of what they've found, but it reflects on the scope of effort the Iraqi security forces are putting forth here and the commitment and capability that they now bring. It is significant. If Karbala...if you look at what's been captured in Basra by Iraqi security forces just in the last few months, thousands and thousands of weapons [are] represented there. So a significant effort by the Iraqi security forces underway at the direction of the prime minister to remove the weapons from those who are not legally entitled to carry weapons

and enforce the rule of law accordingly. And I would also just reinforce what my friend said that the kind of precision attacks that are necessary...that I showed you earlier are necessary to pre-empt the kind of result that he shared with you there. And so we are taking those attacks with great caution, great precaution, [and with] as much precision as possible – specifically and appropriately – to limit their capability to put indirect fire into Baghdad playgrounds, neighborhoods, and other facilities. Shukran.

DR AL-SHEIKHLY:

[Speaks in Arabic.]

INT:

Three rocket arrays in a school or hospital. So what do you think? [Unintelligible] supposed to target this. I just want to say that the armed men are hurting the people in Sadr City and in Baghdad. They take the human people as shields. If you are from Sadr City and if you go see the people who suffer there, so what's...there's an economic problem so what do you think people did so that they can't go to work or students can't go to school? What's the fault that they have done? What's the fault that an IED is being planted in front of his house and they threaten the people to remove them from their places? And people told me that. You cannot allow people to implant an IED right in front of your house. The bombings that...or the attacks that you see at night or at daytime are

done with precision. You can see that there is a hospital and there is a sniper on the...one of the roofs. Could you stay or do nothing? No! You can see that there is a person who is implanting an IED near the...one of the generators. They even target the electricity generators and they attack those things. Those criminal activities need a respond[sic]. And it's a good thing that the government is patient because the security and securing the people is the thing that makes us really very patient. I think that...I hope that you understand all this.

REP6: Dr. Tahseen al-Sheikhly.

DR AL-SHEIKHLY: [Speaks briefly in Arabic. Translation not provided.]

REP6: [Asks question in Arabic.]

INT: Yesterday lawmaker...one of the lawmakers said...demanded canceling or annulling the Ministry of Human Rights based that it didn't provide anything good due to what's happening in Sadr City. So what is your response about this?

DR AL-SHEIKHLY: [Speaks in Arabic.]

INT: This is a democracy and everyone can talk what he wants.

REP7: Daniel Smith. Bahrain TV. Dr. Sheikhly...

DR AL-SHEIKHLY: Which TV?

REP7: Bahrain TV – English. If I can ask you to give your answer in English, this would be wonderful.

DR AL-SHEIKHLY: Thank you.

REP 7: I am wondering about Mosul. It's often characterized as the last big area for al-Qaeda and I wanted to find out what the progress of the Iraqi forces there and the make up of them and the general situation there and if there is any kind of operational things that the general wants to comment on as well. Thank you.

DR AL-SHEIKHLY: [Speaks in Arabic.]

INT: ...in English but as long as there is translation. Mosul is one of the

main places that Operation Fardh Al-Qanoon is being imposed. But the operations that will be...that will start in Mosul and everyone knows about this because the Iraqi government is determined to make Mosul as the last stronghold for al-Qaeda because Prime Minister Maliki said that al-Qaeda will be driven out of Mosul. This is one of the priorities of the Iraqi government to eliminate the terrorism and establish the institute of law – whether in Mosul, Basra, Diyala, or any other province in Iraq. We follow up terrorism or all those who try to violate the situation in Iraq and create violence. We need to also enforce the law and the government. And General Bergner.

**MAJ GEN
BERGNER:**

Daniel, I can give you an answer in English because I can't give you one in another way. I had the privilege to serve in Mosul in 2005 as the deputy commanding general there and I've come to know General Korsheed who commands the 3rd Iraqi Army Division quite well and he is still there commanding in the western part of the province. The 2nd Iraqi Army Division is commanded by General Moutha[ph], and he commands the forces that are general disposed in the immediate area of the City of Mosul. They are supported by several thousand police under the leadership of Brigadier Khalid, who is the chief...the provincial chief of police

there now. And they're working closely with the 3rd Armored Cavalry Regiment which is part of Multi-National Division – North. All of those forces in Mosul are now unified under the leadership of what's called the Ninawa Operations Command which is led by Lieutenant General Riyadh. And General Riyadh was specifically sent there by the prime minister and this Ninawa Operations Command established by the prime minister to help unify the security effort there and improve the capability of Iraqi security forces to work closely with the provincial leadership in tackling the difficult security situation that they all face. And so there is a tough fight going on there. As I mentioned earlier, several of the al-Qaeda leaders that I briefed earlier were captured in and around Mosul which reflects their effort to try to destabilize the security situation there. But the Iraqi Army's 2nd and 3rd division, the provincial police under the leadership of General Khalid, all of that under the leadership of General Riyadh and the Ninawa Operations Command is making progress and they are disrupting al-Qaeda's capability. They are capturing and killing al-Qaeda leaders and disrupting their capability to terrorize the citizens of Ninawa. Shukran.

DR AL-SHEIKHLY:

[Speaks briefly in Arabic. Translation not provided.]

REP8:

Thank you. I'm [unintelligible]. You did mention that the extremists wouldn't be able to do what they do without weapons coming from other countries. Now you also gave us a list of weapons that you said captured...were captured since you spoke to us last. Now out of what you captured now, what percentage of that do you think would have come from foreign sources and how much of it would be...would have been sourced locally?

**MAJ GEN
BERGNER:**

Well, what we do know that I think is the most significant here – and we know this from the standpoint of the special groups themselves, from individuals that we've captured and individuals that have shared information with us – is we know that these groups in particular could not do what they're doing without the support of foreign support. And that includes the weapons. It includes the training to employ those weapons with precision. And it also includes the funding necessary to carry out these operations. And so we know that from the people who are receiving those and are dependent upon those. And they are...they say in their own words that they could not conduct these attacks without that support externally. Exactly what the percentage is is something that I would have to take and work with you in terms of what the intelligence tells us, but the evidence is unequivocal that these extremist groups

– the special groups in particular – are dependent upon those foreign sources. And I'll also point out that al-Qaeda is dependent upon foreign sources, particularly for suicide bombers. And we have been very forthcoming in talking about the network of foreign fighters and foreign terrorists that they are relying on and the collective efforts, not only of the Government of Iraq, but international law enforcement agencies in working with the countries of origin which we are doing much more now. Because of the intelligence that we've acquired here, we are able to work more closely with the intelligence communities in these other countries to help stem the flow of foreign terrorists that are seeking to come to Iraq. So it is a...it is both a function of equipment and individuals that are accelerants to the violence facing the Iraqi people. Thank you.

DR AL-SHEIKHLY:

Thank you. [Speaks in Arabic.]

REP9:

Jimano[ph] with CNN. Dr. Sheikhly, last week you provided civilian or actually casualty figures for Sadr City and we've heard lately from some NGOs that 60% of those casualties are women and children. And we're wondering if you had a breakdown because you had said most of them were militants. Also, on reports that the

number of civilians who have fled the fighting in Sadr City, you said 8,000 is an exaggerated figure and I was wondering if you had a more accurate figure for us. And...

DR AL-SHEIKHLY:

A thousand?

REP9:

Eight thousand was exaggerated, correct? Because...

DR AL-SHEIKHLY:

[Unintelligible.]

REP9:

Exactly. So we're trying to get a figure on that. And General Bergner, we've been hearing conflicting reports on whether SG leader Arkan[ph] Hasnowi[ph] has been killed recently and I was wondering if you had any information on that.

DR AL-SHEIKHLY:

Thank you. [Speaks in Arabic.]

INT:

We don't have such numbers. The number is less than that. And we try to deal with the situation with precision and also with using precision with armed men so that we can limit the casualties among the civilians. But due to the operations, when you see that a person

is implanting an IED on the main road and he detonates this IED on a vehicle that provides services – a not a military one – so this will inflict the civilians also and for those who are riding in the vehicle. So do you think that...so how can we give a percentage for these casualties? Our main goal is the safety of the people. That's why the humanitarian aids and medicine and all the other things are being provided. And we established a humanitarian center. And even the people who are leaving some of the places, we're providing services to them. And this is a good thing. As for the other question, I think General Bergner could answer this.

**MAJ GEN
BERGNER:**

Yeah. No, I don't have any information to provide you on the status of that individual. I simply don't have any other way to characterize it. Thanks.

**DR AL-
SHEIKHLY:**

Thank you. [Speaks briefly in Arabic. Translation not provided.]

UNIDENTIFIED: [Speaks in Arabic.]

**DR AL-
SHEIKHLY:**

[Speaks in Arabic. Laughs.]

REP10: As-Salāmu `Alaykum.

DR AL-SHEIKHLY: `Alaykum [unintelligible].

REP10: [Asks question in Arabic.]

INT: Biladi TV. Some of the sectors in Sadr City include or witness heavy fight and are not controlled by the security forces. How do you actually manage to reach the humanitarian aid to those places?

DR AL-SHEIKHLY: [Speaks in Arabic.]

INT: Well, it depends on the people and the humanitarian organizations. Believe me, we want to give all the services and provide all the services to the people. Even the food rations and distributing food rations, we adopted certain mechanisms so that all the food rations and the contents of the food rations will be distributed to the people. And there are some good people and some good organizations that help us in those things. In addition, we have opened a joint humanitarian center between us and the Multi-National Forces. And if you could show us the slide, number one...slide number one. Yes, you see is this happened on Monday and there was an

inauguration and there were 50 tanks loaded with weapon to Furat District 1 and 2 and also we distributed generators for the people and the hospitals and for the bakery stores as well. And we started to give the people some generators so...due to the power outages. In addition to that, on...last Monday, we also fixed five pipelines for the sewage. And we also tried to send some teams to send[?] the sewer system in some of the places. That's why you can see that the government is determined to deal with this in a serious way. But sometimes, as you know, they could even target those who provide the services and even if that person was from Sadr City itself.

**MAJ GEN
BERGNER:**

Let me just interject one thing. The interpreter in English said 50 tanks were loaded with fuel...or food. It was actually 50 trucks...

**DR AL-
SHEIKHLY:**

Trucks.

**MAJ GEN
BERGNER:**

...truckloads of food. And those were Iraqi Army troopers there, I think, helping distribute food to the citizens there. Shukran.

**DR AL-
SHEIKHLY:**

Thank you. [Speaks in Arabic. Translation not provided.]

INT: Last question.

REP11: [Asks question in Arabic.]

INT: I have two questions to you and to General Bergner. First, on the government's side, you describe Sadr City that there are armed men in it and, on the other hand, the Sadr Trend denies that there are armed men and says that Sadr City is facing a genocide and they are trying to file a lawsuit, an international one, against the Iraqi government. So how do you think the government...the Iraqi government could deal with this?

DR AL-SHEIKHLY: [Speaks in Arabic.]

INT: The Sadr Trend is part of the Iraqi government. It is part of the political process. And our goal is to eliminate the outlaws. All the leaders in the Sadr Trend confirmed that they don't have weapons – heavy weapons – and I think the statement made by Sayyed Muqtada al-Sadr was clear when he said that the Jaish al-Mahdi has no weapon or heavy weapon. We're dealing with people who fire rockets, 120 millimeter rockets, and they have [the] kind of rockets that you can find with armies and mortar rounds. So why do you connect this with the Sadr Trend? The Sadr Trend is part of the

government. Our main goal is eliminating the outlaws.

**MAJ GEN
BERGNER:**

Yeah. In closing, I'd really just like to take a second to say thanks to a great friend and great teammate here. Rear Admiral Greg Smith, who many of you have gotten to know over the past year, will complete his tour with us next week. This will be his last press conference sitting in this room with the Multi-National Force and he'll return to his family and to a new and important position with the Department of Defense. And Greg, I just want to say thank you very much. Shukran jaziilan.

**DR AL-
SHEIKHLY:**

[Speaks in Arabic.]

INT:

Admiral Smith was a friend for a year and he leaved with us everything the operations. And he was an assistant and a great assistant to us and we will miss him. Of course we hope that he will have a good life in his new post. Thank you.

**MAJ GEN
BERGNER:**

Shukran jaziilan. Ma'salama.

**DR AL-
SHEIKHLY:**

Ma'salama.

