

PRESS CONFERENCE:

Mr. Adnan al-Asadi, Senior Deputy Minister of Interior, Government of Iraq
General Nasr Abadi, Vice Chief of Staff, Iraqi Armed Forces
Lieutenant General James Dubik, Commanding General, Multi-National Security
Transition Command – Iraq
Major General Kevin Bergner, Spokesman, Multi-National Force - Iraq

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PARTICIPANTS:

Mr. Adnan al-Asadi
General Nasr Abadi
Lieutenant General James Dubik
Major General Kevin Bergner

REPORTERS:

Unidentified reporters from Salam[ph] Satellite TV and Iraq Al-Hur

REPORTERS 1-13

***REP1 = REPORTER 1**

INTERPRETER

***INT**

**MAJ GEN
BERGNER:**

Okay. You got everybody wired in? Let's just do a sound check real quick, if we could. Ask Kamalah[ph] just to make a couple of comments. Okay. Great. As-Salāmu `Alaykum. Good afternoon everyone. Joining us today are three men whose personal and professional leadership are shaping the growth – in terms of both capacity and capability – of the Iraqi security forces. The senior deputy minister of interior, Adnan Al-Asadi, is the second-ranking leader in Iraq's Ministry of Interior. His efforts over the last year have resulted in an increase in the number of Ministry of Interior forces by more than 57,000. Deputy Minister Al-Asadi's efforts in building the police force are helping improve security in Iraqi neighborhoods and protect Iraqi citizens. He has also been personally involved in security operations over the past several months and has provided decisive leadership in deploying Iraqi police to support contingencies in Basra, Baghdad, and Mosul. It's a great privilege to have the dep-...senior deputy minister joining us again today. General Nasr Abadi is the vice chief of staff of the Iraqi Joint Forces. He oversees the operation of the headquarters joint staff in order to ensure that current and future military operations are well planned and supported. He also provides advice to the chief of staff of the joint forces and the civilian leadership of the Government of Iraq in developing and implementing the national security and military strategies of Iraq. As the second

highest ranking officer in the Iraqi armed forces, he has played a pivotal role in developing Iraq's armed forces and shaping their future direction. It is also an honor to have him here with us today as well. Lieutenant General Jim Dubik is the commanding general of the Multi-National Security Transition Command here in Iraq and he has been for the past 12 months. During that time, he has closely worked with these two wingmen to help build and shape the Iraqi security forces in the process of adding some 67,000 Army soldiers and 57,000 police forces to the ranks of the Ministry of Defense and the Ministry of Interior respectively. This work has taken place at 27 different training sites used by the ministries of interior and defense – sites used to both train, deploy new equipment, and develop the systems to sustain the Iraqi forces. General Dubik, prior to taking command of the Multi-National Security Transition Command here, was the commander of the 1st U.S. Corps at Ft. Lewis, Washington and previously commanded the 25th Infantry Division. He has been a faithful partner in press conferences here a number of times. And, sir, thanks for coming in today as well. The collective efforts of these three men and their respective teams to increase the capacity of the Iraqi security forces is a key part of the reason why we saw last week the lowest level of security incidents across Iraq in over four years. It is also why we are seeing Iraqi citizens increasingly supporting their security forces

by calling in tips on criminal activity and illegal weapons. And it is why we are seeing the Iraqi security forces conducting effective operations in Basra, Mosul, and Baghdad to enforce the rule of law. With that, I'd like to turn to General Dubik for his comments and then we'll hear from General Abadi and the senior deputy minister. Shukran jaziiilan.

LT GEN DUBIK: Thanks, Kevin. I thank you all for being here today. Together we're here to provide you an overview of the recent accomplishments of the Iraqi security forces and the security ministries as well as discuss some of the continuing challenges. So let me provide a few opening remarks. I want to begin by recognizing what all of us see; that the situation here continues to change for the better. The last 12 months have witnessed a marked decrease in violence along with a corresponding increase in the capability, professionalism, and effectiveness of the Iraqi security forces. The media has focused a great deal of attention on the surge of the coalition forces and its impact in Iraq. Equally important, however, is the concurrent and complementary surge of the Iraqi security forces; a surge not just in numbers, but also in capabilities, in professionalism, and institutional capacity. From last June until now, the Iraqi Army has increased by 52,000 soldiers. The Iraqi Air Force by 21 aircraft.

The Iraqi special operations forces by 1,400 personnel. Concurrently, the armed forces have dramatically increased their ability to sustain and replenish themselves. Two examples. Last year at this time the Iraqi Army had only about 2,500 up-armored humvees. Right now it's almost 3,200 and by the end of this year there will be over 6,200 up-armored humvees in the Army alone. Last year at this time the Iraqi Air Force was flying about 30 missions a week in support of its Army. Now the current average is 225 missions a week. This growth and the creation of key combat enablers has allowed the Government of Iraq to simultaneously execute three large and separate operations to safeguard the Iraqi people from terrorists, from special groups, and from criminals. And they continue to grow. The police forces have also, in this same period, grown by about 46,000 in the Iraqi police and 13,000 in the national police resulting in a more secure Iraq. The Ministry of Interior has had concerted effort to recruit and to train and to field a professional police force at the national and the provincial level. This has contributed greatly to [an] increase in confidence in the people that the police are to serve and protect. I'm very proud to be a partner in this endeavor. So let me turn over to one of my main partners, General Abadi.

GEN ABADI: Shukran. [Speaks in Arabic.]

INT: By the name of God I would like to welcome distinguished guests in our press conference. And I would like to present my thanks and my appreciation to our brothers, the media, who are trying to support our operation against terrorism, al-Qaida, militia...armed militia. You are the one who are transferring facts to the public and to the Iraqi people especially. Today I will try to give you a lot of information about the positive signs that have appeared and show the professionalism of our Iraqi forces and the Iraqi Army and the mentioned[?] operation in Basra, the peaceful operation in Baghdad, and [unintelligible] operation in Mosul to chase the terrorism and the criminals and try to impose law and take the illegal weapon from people. The last operations have shown the consequence of the command and control and the quick reaction and the capability to deploy units further than 600 kilometer and the level of the Iraqi IGFC are deployed within the area of responsibility. This would have not happened if we did not have the right acquisition, supplies, and to the admin system like self-support, self-service capability; services; ration; maintenance; fuel; ammunition; replenishing the personnel, weapon, ammunition; as well as the medical capability that we have through our missions within our transport regiment and our C-130 as well as an Mi-17 Huey II. The...with the...in the Basra operation we have had 385

for our Air Force and about 45 trips to Mosul. And we are continuing to support our units continuously on the operation through providing them with equipment and support supplies more than the authority or more than the authorized capability that their units would need. Our commitment for the rule of fight and making sure not to abuse personnel that we have learned and that will not give us anything except—it will not be done except if we don't have the right professional cap-...force. And it did happen through the right training that we have. It has occurred in the training institution in our...within our forces. The right training supplies and the right projectors or training projectors that our Army had which supported the technology development within our combat support capabilities. The joint performance that some of the Multi-National Forces has executed to implement the joint program to develop admin as well as the training capabilities has participated and to raise the performance and the support of our security forces which positively affected our forces. When we do a comparison between the operation...of the last operation and the current operation, we do see a lot of perf-...a lot of improvement. I would like to...the...to mention the last operations have appeared to decrease the need of the Multi-National Forces in our logistic and admin system. There has been a require-...annual requirements for all the branch of the military. We are working together with the Multi-

National Forces and we are continuing to complete it. And we are going to see that the next few years a raise in our capabilities to go to the full capabilities tactically as well as adminally[?]. And we are going to also transfer to the strategic defense marketing program after we're going to transfer the authority to the minister of interior as we have planned for the keeper of the internal security to the city. Now I'm going to leave you to the senior deputy.

MR AL-ASADI: [Speaks in Arabic.]

INT: Welcome over here for the media. Talking about the Ministry of Interior, I'm going...I'm not going to only talk about the police stations only. I'll be talking about the Ministry of Interior does include all the aspects of Iraqi life. We're going to talk about the police stations, civil defense, the...we're going to talk about the man who is going to be the policeman who is going to take care of the people once any tragedy will happen. We are going to talk about the borders and for the borders...the role that the borders that have been playing. Also, we're going to talk about the national ID directorate. We are going to talk about the Ministry of Interior as a total. And we're going to talk about the national police. Before, we used...before if somebody would used to talk about the Ministry of Interior which had just been the police forces. But since the former

regime and up to now, the Ministry of Interior has developed and the duties have been developed within the Ministry of Interior through formation...through forming some special units. Now we have about three divisions, three trained divisions of the national police that have been well-equipped, well-trained, of course, with the help of the Multi-National Forces. And from A to 0, those forces have had a great role to counter terrorism since its formation up to now. And it does have a huge role in the operation role of the operation of Basra as well as the operation in Mosul and the Fardh Al-Qanoon in Baghdad. Within the plan of the Ministry of Interior, this force has developed over Iraq and has got to the point that we have...we are forming brigades in each...a national police brigade in each province, for example, in Al-Anbar, Ninawa. And now we are going...we are forming a national police brigade in Basra. Talking about the duties and the performance of the national...of the Ministry of Interior, probably it's not going to be against the Ministry of Defense, but actually the Ministry of Interior has different rules than the Ministry of Defense. The Ministry of Defense will be accountable[?] for what's outside of the country. But over time, we are going to have a Ministry of Interior that will be an interior security for the country. That's a Ministry of Interior that's building since '04. They are preparing their personnel and trying to complete the readiness of the forces at the same time

synchronizing, like synchronizing two missions. We are fighting militia and at the same time we are training and equipping those units. Within this period of time we have got to and as the lieutenant general...as General Abadi has just mentioned from the fall of the regime up to now, Ministry of Interior has jumped as far as its performance and its transformation and as far as its responsibility. And the success in this operation, we have jumped a huge deal. And the operation that happened in Basra, the Ministry of Interior had a huge role in fighting those who were out over [unintelligible]. And at the same time in Mosul, we have done the same thing that the Ministry of Interior forces have worked together with the Ministry of Defense forces in order to achieve success in a number of the [unintelligible] in Mosul operation. And at the end I can say that we have got to a huger[sic] percent that offer success so that, and at the same time, we are going to say that we have equipped our units a great deal. Now we have in the police academy in Baghdad which we have a police college and the higher institution for the combat training. We have about 6,000 officers who are getting trained at the same time. At the beginning, we used to have the capability of this college or the institution. We didn't have...we couldn't accept more than 1,700. Now we have the capability to train about 6,000 officers in order to fill the gaps and the shortages that we have within our Ministry of Interior. The

cooperation between the Ministry of Interior and the citizens over the last two year[s] has been absolutely supportive. And the citizens are capable now to contact Ministry of Interior and to transfer information through the hotlines and as well as information that they're presenting that...which give[s] us an idea that the Ministry of Interior has been playing a greater role against the militia, special group[s], and the terrorism. We can say that we have jumped with the cooperation, of course, of the Multi-National Forces within our performance and the frame of work. We are continual to develop our effort and grow in our effort in order so we can do the complete transition or our.... Like General Abadi said, the Ministry of Interior is responsible to secure the internal affairs of the city. Thank you very much.

**MAJ GEN
BERGNER:**

Shukran jaziilan and we will be glad to take your questions. Please.
Yes, ma'am.

REP1:

[Asks question in Arabic.]

INT:

What is the mechanism of Fardh Al-Qanoon and how you are respecting human rights in Medina and Sadr City as well as the Mosul?

GEN ABADI: [Speaks in Arabic.]

INT: First thing in regard of the Fardh Al-Qanoon, as you know, Sadr City was...had a huge...it was a battle in it that we have started and the preparation we had started it some time ago and under the direction of the prime minister on how to rescue the city from the armed personnel and their specialty groups. The first step we did was to separate part of the city and between the city and the Anarjamina[ph] Market. So we can separate those two area[s]. So we can rescue the...we can help the people so they can do their shopping. And the second thing was is to get inside the third of the city so we can start partially cleaning it up. And the third phase was to complete the city...completely clearing the city from the third groups. The second part of the question?

REP1: [Repeats question in Arabic.]

INT: What was the mechanism of Fardh Al-Qanoon?

GEN ABADI: The thing is what kind of things does the citizen need? Does he need water, electricity, employment? As all...the same area we have the same thing that we have done in the other city of Baghdad.

MAJ GEN BERGNER: Yes, sir. I'm sorry. Go ahead, sir.

GEN ABADI: [Asks question in Arabic.]

INT: In regard of the services that I have attended a meeting last week with the Fardh Al-Qanoon committee...support committee. The...His Excellency, the prime minister, has allocated huge...hundred million to Sadr City and another hundred million for Shala. And he's said...prime minister said to the guy, "You are not going...you have no relation with the City of Baghdad. No municipality. You do not have anything. All you do...I've given you this money. Go to Sadr City. Hire people. Stop the unemployment." So the instruction from the prime minister was very urgently and he was very specific to the....

REP1: [Asks question in Arabic.]

INT: So does that mean for all cities or just for...all the cities or just for Sadr City?

GEN ABADI: [Speaks in Arabic.]

INT: Well, it's going to be for Sadr City, Basra, and Shoala city as well

and probably will be for Ninawa as well. The same programs.

**MAJ GEN
BERGNER:**

Yes, sir.

REP3:

[Asks question in Arabic.]

INT:

For Nasr Abadi, a question. There is some people are very scared about the detainees. There is some arrest operation that happened irrational. Whatever has been presented by the minister of interior or minister of defense...that you are doing some operation? There are many incidents that some irrational arrest operation are happening. For example, in Al-Aman neighborhood, there are many people who have witnessed that Iraqi armed forces went into the market and they arrested a huge group of people. General Bergner, is there an inquisition against the coalition...against the American forces that those...they...the American forces are who...are the one who burned the Al-Aman market and not an IED. Thank you very much.

GEN ABADI:

[Speaks in Arabic.]

INT:

In term[s] of counterterrorism is huge. I's a different battle from all other different battles because of the necessity and because of the

necessity of the Ministry of Defense, we have to work together with the coalition forces and [unintelligible] fight as well as the criminal...counter-criminal operations. We do have weekly meetings, twice a week, for all the security forces from the coalition forces as well as Ministry of Interior and Ministry of Defense get together about the oper-...special oper-...and as well as the special operation forces. We always identify the targets that we are going to do and within the next days. So whenever we have that specific area that's a bigger area, we do have to...we do require to have joint forces as we do not have enough units to do the job. And at the...any mission that is done by the Ministry of Defense or Ministry of Interior are very well-studied target, studied by the intel...so that the intel.

**MAJ GEN
BERGNER:**

One of the points I'd add...

INT:

[Speaks briefly in Arabic.]

**MAJ GEN
BERGNER:**

One of the points that I'd add to General Abadi's answer that you asked me specifically about is first, I would point out that—remember, the nature of this enemy is one that positions himself in

and among innocent civilians. He positions his weapons in municipal buildings. He hides weapons in schools and hospitals. And he places innocent civilians and their economic prosperity at risk by the way that he seeks to conduct his operations. And so when you talk about the damage that occurs, perhaps, to a market or the damage that occurs to another municipal building, remember that this is a function of this enemy who has no regard for innocent civilians and the fact that he places his weapons, his forces, and conducts operations from those kinds of places. Both the coalition forces and the Iraqi security forces take every precaution and are as precise as possible in the conduct of their operations. I would point out also that in the course of the Iraqi Army's initial operations into Sadr City, they have located rockets, rocket-launching platforms, rocket-propelled grenades, and other munitions and improvised explosive devices in a hospital, near schools. That validate[s] the concern that we all have – that all of you have as well – about the nature of this enemy and the fact that he endangers innocent civilians in the way that he positions himself, conducts his operations. He does it with complete disregard for the Iraqi people. Shukran jaziilan. Yes, sir.

REP4:

[Asks question in Arabic.]

INT: Salam[ph] Satellite TV. All the time the American side always accuse and say that Iran is sending IEDs and bombs in Iraq. In Mosul, there we did not hear any accusation about Iran, but they said that it's a similar production. Were you able to see any fingerprints or any weapon or any Iranian-made weapon in Mosul?

GEN ABADI: I...the thing is I think you can buy weapon from different area and weapon can be exported to any country. Any persons that would purchase from a producer or from a neighboring country. I think in Mosul we were able also to find some weapon that was produced in Iran.

MAJ GEN BERGNER: I would also just point out to you that as the coalition has had this discussion, we have been very clear in pointing out that special groups, the special groups criminals in particular, are those who have been most directly supported in the form of weapons, training, funding from Iranian Revolutionary Guard Corps' Quds Force and that that is a very well-established relationship. It's a dependency as we have come to understand it. And so where you find those special groups criminals is where you will also find the most direct relationship to Iranian weapons and to the sources of supply that the

special groups depend on. Shukran. Yes, sir.

REP5: [Asks question in Arabic.]

INT: For AAA[?]. The prime minister more than once has said about the Iraqi reporters and that the security forces have to deal with them with a very great manner. Today, one of our reporter[s] was abused by the Iraqi security forces and they arrested him and at the same time that they were not doing more than media event. When our reporters will feel peacefully and securely in Iraq? That today...how can you accept even to treat reporters in illegal way?

MR AL-ASADI: For the Ministry of Interior employees, we always have to respect the Iraqi citizen and the Iraqi reporters. As you know, the Iraqi reporters have a huge responsibility. What's happened here and there, believe me, within our Ministry of Interior, we deal with those and we always punish those who are going to abuse the reporters or any Iraqi citizen. We do have some registration within our Ministry of Interior to counter corruption and present those who abuse human rights. And we have fired thousands. And we have.... But the thing is, we have fired many of them. But the thing is, you know, this is not just a [unintelligible]. Of course it is going to be presented to the investigation and minister...His Excellency

minister has given me the authority if anybody from the Ministry of Interior he is going to abuse a reporter, we have to take care.

GEN ABADI: [Speaks in Arabic.]

INT: Also I would like to mention that some huge operations has happened by the Iraqi military and especially in Basra. We have also formed some investigation committees to chase the same thing. We are not going to let anybody to abuse reporters.

MAJ GEN BERGNER: Shukran. Yes, sir.

REP6: [Asks question in Arabic.]

INT: To Adnan Al-Asadi and to General Bergner. After one year of the kidnap of the British...of the Brits last year, why they have not been released? And do you think they have been kidnapped and they have been transferred to the...Iran? Do you think Iran has some connections to do with it? And what's the preparation toward...?

MR AL-ASADI: Any neighboring country...if I need to, you know, if...that they are going to Iran to Syria and the delegation. And if any neighboring country will ask them about the security about Iraq, they would say

okay, we do not have anything to do...like the weapon. We see it in the weapons, the warehouses, and the IEDs, and thousands of weapon and thousands of training program that happens. The Iranian side will say okay, we don't have anything to do with it. But [unintelligible] I can think that the militia that were and some of them do deal with a neighboring country; there is some kind of political deal between them and those.

REP6: [Asks question in Arabic.]

INT: What's your preparation?

MR AL-ASADI: The thing is we do...if you have any evidence, of course, we are not going to stop. But we don't have any evidence in our hand. We do not have any sign. And at the same time, we have coalition forces in our...and the American forces are with us. And our, you know, their government are asking for those Brits. But the thing is, we do not have any evidence so we are not going...we have not stopped one minute of we are not looking for evidence.

**MAJ GEN
BERGNER:** Yes, sir.

REP7: [Asks question in Arabic.]

INT: Iraq Al-Hur. One for...one is a joint question between...for Abadi and General Dubik. You mentioned that the logistic support in Mosul operation was an Iraqi operation. When you are going to go to...General Dubik, when do you think you're going...Iraqi will be ready for transition? And when do you think the trouble [unintelligible]? When do you think that MOI forces will take care of security in Baghdad?

LT GEN DUBIK: Well, I'll start with the logistics preparation. The Iraqi Army is doing very well in terms of its growth toward self sufficiency, as is the police force. In December of this year, the minister of defense started a self-sufficiency program in which all life support is now conducted by the Iraqi Army. The minister of interior is in the same position with the Ministry of Interior providing life support. Eight of the thirteen logistics bases for the Iraqi divisions are near completion and the other five will be completed this year. The maintenance training for mechanics and maintenance supervisors has been intensified by the joint headquarters in the past several months. So there is very great progress in all aspects of logistics for the Iraqi joint force. A similar progress for the police forces in terms of life support. And then one of the focus areas that the

minister of interior has asked assistance in the coalition force is to grow the maintenance capacity of the Iraqi police this year to include a special sustainment brigade for the national police so that as the national police move from one part of the country to another, they can carry their logistics with them. So I believe by the end of this year you'll see a substantial improvement in the logistics of all the Iraqi security forces. There will be some more work to do next year, no doubt about it. But much of the real heavy work will be done this year.

GEN ABADI: In regard of the transition for the logistic, preparing the soldier – it does take about five weeks' basic training. So about eight to ten weeks we do think that we have prepared a soldier. But at the same time, we cannot say that we have a technical capability. Neither we have a school that will be able to grad-...big school that will graduate the required number of soldiers. The training centers that we have, we have about...they are able to get 17,000 trainer after, you know, in each training course. So they...the requirement or the need for those who...for the soldiers who are combat soldiers, it does require some time to prepare them. As you know, they have a different specialty in regard of the maintenance, food. So it does require a lot of time; more time to acquire the right capability. And

then...but next year we are going to have about 60 to 70% of these [unintelligible] support.

LT GEN DUBIK: Could I follow up with...

MAJ GEN BERGNER: Yes, sir.

LT GEN DUBIK: ...another answer. Both of us focused on the military side, mostly on the Army. The Iraqi Air Force sustainment is also an area that will require increasing attention. In the last year, the Iraqi Air Force – as I mentioned in my opening remarks – went from supplying 30 missions a week to now flying 225 missions a week. This is a huge increase. Corresponding with that increase now is an increased requirement to maintain the aircraft so that they can continue to fly in support of the Iraqi Army and joint forces. This sustainment will be a very focused area of attention for the minister of defense because without sustainment of aircraft, they can't fly. And the minister wants to make sure that the number of missions available for the ground forces and other forces stay at the current level or higher. So sustainment of the Air Force is something that we will also have to watch together.

MAJ GEN BERGNER: Yes, ma'am.

MR AL-ASADI: He asked me.

MAJ GEN BERGNER: Did you have one?

MR AL-ASADI: No. He asked me...

MAJ GEN BERGNER: Okay. I'm sorry. Let's let the senior deputy minister follow up and then we'll come back to her question.

MR AL-ASADI: [Speaks in Arabic.]

INT: In term[s] of the logistic[s], Ministry of Interior, just to follow up with General Abadi and General Dubik, in the Ministry of Interior we do have now, well, you know, kind of not as self-support capability. The Ministry of Interior forces are in good shape in term[s] of ammunition, weapon. And we are getting some help from the Ministry of Defense in term[s] of transporting this ammunition and weapon to Ninawa and to Basra. And the self-support

capabilities have been really good in term[s] of the daily life support capability is pretty good. Ministry of Interior is doing a great job in term[s] of logistics support. There are some support capabilities that we get from the Multi-National Forces. The police in Baghdad is different from the other police in Baghdad. Now we are about to complete the personnel percentage of our forces. As you know, that trying to create the balance in the city, the right citizen balance in the city with a different nationality and the sectarian group in the city. We now are about to finish and complete the personnel percentage and, Insha'Allah, Baghdad will be under complete command and leadership of the Iraqi security forces.

**MAJ GEN
BERGNER:**

This lady. No. Right back there. Right back there was the lady who was about to ask a question and I cut her off.

REP8:

[Asks question in Arabic.]

INT:

Entering the Iraqi Army into Sadr City, did they think...did they get rid completely of the special group or the weapon group? And are they fearful that probably some violence will happen...occur in the city?

GEN ABADI: [Speaks in Arabic.]

INT: Is this question for me?

[laughter]

GEN ABADI: [Speaks in Arabic.]

INT: Honestly, the Sadr City...we have not done the third phase in Sadr City. After the second one will be a third phase. Surround the city was so those who have overpass[?] law and the criminals would not have an easy access to in and out of the city. And at the same time, as you know, those people need weapons. So those...the thing is they are not going to be capable of smuggling in and out weapon. That's why we had to secure the city. It has not been completed yet. The northern region of the city has still has to be completed.

REP8: [Asks question in Arabic.]

INT: Did you get rid of the...rid of all the groups of people?

GEN ABADI: Well, we have not completed the Ira-...we have not completely secured the city so how we can even get rid of all the armed group?

**MAJ GEN
BERGNER:**

Yes, ma'am.

REP9:

[Asks question in Arabic.]

INT:

From Baghdad, an institution. For Adnan Al-Asadi. There has been some formal officer who would love to come back to the service and it was initiative from the Ministry of Interior to bring them back. Some of them did not come back and some others have come back, but their hiring order has not been published yet.

MR AL-ASADI:

At the Ministry of Interior we have accepted about 6,000 from Iraqi ex-Army; 6,000 officers. And we have about another 2,000 to 3,000 from the other security agencies...from the former security agencies. As you know, according to the de-Ba'athification law, there are some things that sometimes that, you know, we can...there are some challenges we cannot bring those people back. But at the end, this is one of the challenges in the Ministry of Interior. The minister...His Excellency, the prime minister, has agreed or has promised us or the minister of interior, he has promised us or the minister of interior that those who have...there are some officers that have not been or their order have not been published formally yet, either because of something that have been shown in their background or maybe some shortages, you know, in their

paperwork. Some of them, you know, some of them have [not] graduate[d] from the police college and they have not finished it. Now they are trying to complete those courses. There's about 2,000 that have not been hired formally. Again, because they need to take some additional courses and we have sent their paper to the Ministry of Defense so they can attend the military courses. Anyway, we are going to forward their files to the prime minister.

GEN ABADI: [Speaks in Arabic.]

INT: The thing is those people have been issued some certificate of appreciation and those people are qualified. Of course we are working. But we are limited to a very specific legislation.

REP9: [Speaks in Arabic.]

INT: Please. This is very important initiative. Minister Asadi has said we have about 2,000, 3,000 have been...their orders will be issued or ordered.

**MAJ GEN
BERGNER:** Yes, sir.

REP10: [Asks question in Arabic.]

INT: Thank you. For Adnan Al-Asadi question. Two days ago there has some operations...search operation happened in Sadr City and this morning some big operations happened at Khadamiyah. The operations in Sadr City happened because they were looking for the British...for the Brits who have been kidnapped. But operations that happened this morning in Khadamiyah, is those operations was intended to look for the British who have been kidnapped or looking for the Iranian weapon? As some Iranian weapon was shot at refugee camp. Was that...?

MR AL-ASADI: [Speaks in Arabic.]

INT: Al- Khadamiyah, we did this operation because there were some people who were threatening some operation and the health and institution...educational institution. So we had some criminals in this neighborhood. There was also some people who were doing corruptions. So 1st from the 2nd Division moved and we were able to arrest a huge amount of weapon. We found weapon in unexpected places – thousands of weapon. The 2nd Division commander, when he showed me a picture, it were...they were scary pictures. Those are operation that are...they are completing the operation that have started two weeks ago about finding out hidden weapon.

REP10: [Asks question in Arabic.]

INT: How about the [unintelligible] worker that have been shoot? And they...they said well, the rockets that have been shooting at the refugee camp, it's the same rocket that have shooting at the IZ so....

MAJ GEN BERGNER: Yes, sir.

INT: ...it doesn't make a difference.

REP11: [Asks question in Arabic.]

INT: Many talks have been said about Sadr City but because of the importance of Sadr City...would like to...what's the current status of the Al-Shala. And what's the level of the separation of the military there and what's...how do you assess the security over there?

GEN ABADI: [Speaks in Arabic.]

INT: Al-Shala neighborhood is...has not been completed yet because we do not have enough units. Most of the units...because we have sent most of our units to Basra and others we have sent to Mosul to

support operations of Mosul. And the...because of...we have the units...the rest of our units in Sadr City. But because of the shortages that we have within our unit, that's why we have stopped operation in Al-Shala neighborhood and probably the operation will restart again after we have enough units coming into again.

**MAJ GEN
BERGNER:**

Yes, sir.

REP12:

[Asks question in Arabic.]

INT:

For Adnan Al-Asadi. After the success of the peaceful operation in Mosul and the operation in Basra, do you have any reform plan to clean up the police institution? And do you think that the police is effective currently?

MR AL-ASADI:

Reforming of the police has never stopped, before now and in the future. And I have a list over here. In 2005, we have about...we have fired about 577 and about 6,000. For 2006, we have fired about this number. And 2007, we have fired about 23 officers and about 16,000 policemen. And 2005, well, we have...2008, we have fired this number of the police. I was not able to catch the number, sorry. These have been fired because of the...not doing their job,

corruption, absence, many other conditions. They were not able to match. That's why the Ministry of Interior has worked continually to oversee and to monitor the performance of our police. And we are waiting for any answer from you, from the citizen about any employee within the Ministry of Interior who is not doing the right thing so we can punish them, so we can take care of it. By the way, we have about...Ministry of Interior...we have Ministry of Interior legislation. Before we used to have to send our MOI to the civilian court. Now our...now we have a security forces court or they are...this is the court that take care of all the officers or the policemen for the Ministry of Interior who are not doing the right job. So we always have a [unintelligible] clean ministry.

**MAJ GEN
BERGNER:**

I think the senior deputy minister, his comments were faster than our interpreter could catch all of the numbers. So what we'll do after the press conference is we'll make sure that for the Western journalists we close the loop on the numbers that the senior deputy minister mentioned. And we'll take one more question. Yes.

REP13:

Question for General Abadi. What...how many Iraqi troops are currently in Basra now? And what percentage of the total Iraqi ground forces is that amount? And how long do you expect to

maintain those levels in Basra?

GEN ABADI: I think we have close to two divisions there in Basra and because of the level of security is much better now, we're trying to use those forces – the ones that we brought from Amara and the ones that we brought from the west, from the 1st Division – will be withdrawn soon. There are already orders for them to withdraw.

MAJ GEN BERGNER: I want to say thank you very much to General Dubik and General Abadi and Senior Deputy Minister Al-Asadi for joining us this afternoon. And shukran jaziilan. Ma'salama.