

## FUTURE US/IRAQ COMMAND RELATIONSHIPS

BY

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## **ABSTRACT**

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With regard to future command relationships, on 17 November 2008 the US and Iraqi Ambassadors, signed an agreement agreeing to a 31 December 2011 date for the withdrawal of all United States forces from all Iraqi territory. At that time, the two forces will fall under two national complementary commands, with Iraq as the supported nation and the US as the supporting nation, across the spectrum of conflict - in crisis and war.

As a supporting nation, the US headquarters will need to perform multiple missions. The key missions include the following: support the future Iraq joint force command in deterring Iranian aggression, and if deterrence fails support Iraq in defeating Iran; support the Iraqi command in controlling Iranian support of Shi'ite militias and Shi'ite extremists; support the Iraqi command in controlling Syrian support of Sunni insurgents; support the Iraqi command in precluding the return of an ethno-sectarian civil war; control reception, staging, onward movement and integration of US Forces; and maintain US National Command over US forces. The structure of this US headquarters must enable the US to fulfill these responsibilities.



## FUTURE US/IRAQ COMMAND RELATIONSHIPS

Security protection is important in this environment, and that's not something State Department civilians do.

—Stephen Biddle<sup>1</sup>  
Council of Foreign Relations

The purpose of this paper is to conceptually describe for US strategic leaders, US allies, US strategic partners and the Republic of Iraq how a United States military joint force headquarters (provisionally called United States Forces –Iraq (USF-I)) in the Republic of Iraq might be optimally structured and operate in the future. This document is compatible with and intended to support a common US-Iraq approach to security cooperation<sup>2</sup> initially conceptualized in the 26 August 2007 “US-Iraq Declaration of Principles for a Long-Term Relationship of Cooperation and Friendship” signed by President George W. Bush and Prime Minister Nouri Kamel Al-Maliki.<sup>3</sup>

Currently both Iraq and US forces fall under the command of United States Forces Iraq (USF-I), a US headquarters led by a US four-star flag officer. As a function of national self-reliance and sovereignty, the Republic of Iraq has expressed a strong desire to command its own forces, and the current US Administration concurs with this. Accordingly, the US and Iraqi Ambassadors have reached several important agreements but none has described the future military command and control relationships.<sup>4</sup>

As the US forms the type of command and control organization needed to conduct supporting operations on the Arabian Peninsula, there are shared Iraqi and US national interests that influence its design. For the Iraqis, a long-term strategic partnership will continue to support their nascent political process in order to shape a

stable environment that will lead to building a diversified and advanced economy and enhancing economic, diplomatic, cultural and security elements. Achieving these enhancements will allow for Iraq's successful integration into the international community.

With regard to future operational control (OPCON) relationships, on 17 November 2008 the US and Iraqi Ambassadors signed the "Agreement Between the United States of America and the Republic of Iraq On the Withdrawal of United States Forces from Iraq and the Organization of Their Activities during Their Temporary Presence in Iraq" (hereafter referred to as the "Security Agreement"): this agreement established a 31 December 2011 date for the withdrawal of all United States forces from all Iraqi territory.<sup>5</sup> At that time, the two forces will fall under two national complementary commands, with Iraq as the supported nation and the US as the supporting nation, across the spectrum of conflict - in crisis and war.

As a supporting nation, the US headquarters will need to perform multiple missions. The key missions include the following:

- Support the future Iraq joint force command in deterring Iranian aggression, and if deterrence fails support Iraq in defeating Iran.
- Support the Iraqi joint force command in controlling Iranian support of Shi'ite militias and Shi'ite extremists.
- Support the Iraqi joint force command in controlling Syrian support of Sunni insurgents.
- Support the Iraqi joint force command in precluding the return of an ethno-sectarian civil war.

- Control reception, staging, onward movement and integration of US Forces.
- Maintain US National Command over US forces.

Ryan Crocker, dean of the George Bush School of Government and Public Service at Texas A&M University and former US ambassador to Iraq from 2007 to 2009, noted in August 2010, the Strategic Framework Agreement “envisions a groundbreaking long-term partnership with Iraq...Such a relationship will take sustained US engagement and resources, increasingly more civilian than military. And it may be that a new Iraqi government will request a US military presence beyond the end of 2011. If so, I hope we will listen carefully.”<sup>6</sup> In addition, Paul Wolfowitz, a visiting scholar at the American Enterprise Institute, and former deputy secretary of defense from 2001 to 2005, noted on the same day, “My hope is that the president understands that success in Iraq will be defined not by what we withdraw, but by what we leave behind.”<sup>7</sup> The structure of this US headquarters must enable the US to fulfill these responsibilities.

#### An Historical Example – The Balkans

Post-conflict operations and their associated difficulties are not unique to the current US military operations in Iraq. One can draw a parallel with the post-conflict US effort in the Balkans and the desire for a strategic endstate of a region with stable multiethnic democracies. Even though the numerous conflicts in the Balkans have a sequential quality to them, one can treat their purpose as, “a single, protracted conflict with a consistent logic—the reallocation of territory and populations among the fragments of former Yugoslavia.”<sup>8</sup>

In the “1999 National Security Strategy for a New Century”, President Clinton summarized the vital and important US national interests as:

- Vital – Physical security of US territory and that of our allies, the safety of our citizens, the economic well-being of our society, and the protection of our critical infrastructures.
- Important - Regions in which we have a sizable economic stake or commitments to allies, protecting the global environment from severe harm, and crises with a potential to generate substantial and highly destabilizing refugee flows.<sup>9</sup>

The Security Strategy goes on to relate that the participation in NATO and ending the conflicts and restoring the peace in Bosnia and Kosovo are important US national interests.<sup>10</sup> Regardless of whether there were vital and or important US national interests, once the US commits forces then it must show persistence in mission accomplishment. The US committed troops to the NATO-led forces in order to contribute to a secure environment throughout the Balkans, specifically in Bosnia and Kosovo with a long-term goal of creating conditions so that peace can exist in the future without an international military presence. In “Yugoslavia: Death of a Nation”, Laura Silber and Allan Little observed, “the former Yugoslavia is the clearest illustration to date of a central strategic reality of the post-Cold War world: if the US does not take the lead, then no one does. It was apparent that the only chance for peace is if Washington, with its military and political authority, is prepared to see it through.”<sup>11</sup> In 2003, Dr. Craig Nation offered his view on the lessons learned from the conflict:

Three lessons emerge from an evaluation of international engagement in the Balkan conflict. First, there can be no such thing as partial or limited intervention. If the international community is unwilling, or unable, to stand aside and let regional conflicts run their course, it must be prepared to engage for the long haul. Interventions bring responsibility, place the reputations of the intervening parties at stake, and entail complex

obligations to friends and allies that cannot be shirked, or frivolously abandoned, without cost. Second, in cases of incipient armed conflict where political means have been exhausted, decisive, preemptive military intervention followed by a serious commitment to peace operations should be the preferred option. Making such determinations, of course, is more easily said than done, but it is a mark of the kind of statecraft that should characterize international leadership...finally, peace operations in complex regional contingencies should if at all possible be multilateral, and ideally sanctioned under the aegis of the UN working through responsible regional organizations. The special military capabilities of the US armed forces will make them a preferred, or in some cases essential component of many such contingencies.<sup>12</sup>

So are the US and the international community still realizing long-term success in the present-day? In December 2010, Tom Countryman, Deputy Assistant Secretary for European and Eurasia Affairs, U.S. Department of State, appeared before the Helsinki Commission to give his observations. He stated that in the past 10 years, there are several encouraging signs in the political and economic development of the region and most importantly, almost all of the states now have a political structure. This political structure will enable them to sustain momentum towards membership in NATO and the European Union. In addition, most of the countries are not dominated by political centers motivated purely by nationalistic and existential issues.<sup>13</sup> Even more telling to the degree of realized stabilization was when Secretary Clinton told the Pristina Embassy staff that members with children could, beginning in the summer of 2011, bring those children to the posting in Kosovo.<sup>14</sup> Many countries now have a genuine range of parties that lean toward moderate government from the center and governments are focusing more on the daily issues of their people rather than an exclusively nationalist agenda. These post-conflicts developments would not have occurred without international and US involvement.

## US National Interests in the Middle East

In the Balkans, the US had important national interests at risk and committed resources to secure those national interests. This situation is true in the Middle East where the US has vital and important national interests. The 2010 National Security Strategy identifies the following four enduring national interests:

- Security: The security of the United States, its citizens, and US allies and partners.
- Prosperity: A strong, innovative, and growing US economy in an open international economic system that promotes opportunity and prosperity.
- Values: Respect for universal values at home and around the world.
- International Order: An international order advanced by US leadership that promotes peace, security, and opportunity through stronger cooperation to meet global challenges.<sup>15</sup>

The 2010 National Security Strategy does not specifically mention “vital national interests”, but does state, “The United States has important interests in the greater Middle East...the unity and security of Iraq and the fostering of its democracy and reintegration into the region; the transformation of Iranian policy away from its pursuit of nuclear weapons, support for terrorism, and threats against its neighbors; nonproliferation; and counterterrorism cooperation, access to energy, and integration of the region into global markets.<sup>16</sup> Using the preceding excerpt as a starting point allows one to describe and classify further four US national interests that underpin the rationale for having a US joint headquarters that serves the US and the Commander US Forces Iraq. Within the construct of USF-I, the commander directs the employment of the

military as an instrument of national power through the execution of military operations, the coordination and assessment of national strategic policies and programs and their effectiveness in the region, and in sustaining and strengthening the US- Iraq enduring strategic partnership.

The first two important US national interests are to ensure non-proliferation and support counter-proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD), missiles and enabling technology. Iran's WMD, which runs the gamut of chemical, biological and future nuclear production capability and weapon stockpiles, is a real threat to the people of Iraq and to peace and stability on the Arabian Peninsula. As Iran continues to invest huge amounts of its limited national treasure in support of the continued development of these weapons and delivery systems, it threatens not only Iraq but also the entire world.

The regime of Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, President of Iran, pursues its own ends at the expense of the people of Iran as well as regional and global stability. If Iran becomes a nuclear power, a new dynamic would certainly be unleashed in the Middle East and North Africa. Several Arab countries, including Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Morocco, Algeria and Libya, could start pursuing nuclear programs simultaneously. As recently as September 22, 2010, Ahmadinejad expressed the following while visiting New York as part of his United Nations General Assembly meetings, "that he saw a 'good chance' that talks could soon resume with the United States and its allies over Tehran's disputed nuclear program because 'there is no other alternative.' He added, new talks over Iran's nuclear policies are 'bound to happen,' because 'what is left is talks'...There's no other way."<sup>17</sup> Although the preceding quotation possibly signals a change of course for Iran, Ahmadinejad is an irrational and inconsistent world leader and the US must prepare for

an 'in extremis' situation. Iran's pursuit of a nuclear weapon would catapult the Arab world from being a nuclear weapons-free zone to being a region where governments possess nuclear technology with the potential option to pursue the path of nuclear weaponization.<sup>18</sup> In coordination with Iraq, the US must continue to sign and support non-proliferation agreements with its allies and partners in the region.

The third US national interest, categorized as an important interest, is to assist the Republic of Iraq in deterring potential Iranian aggression, and if deterrence fails, defeating Iran. Even though Iran is a nation with economic problems, it represents a clear and present threat to peace and stability in the Middle East and in the world. The US must continue to deter and contain this threat. The Iranian regime continues to build and maintain a military arsenal beyond its requirements for self-defense, devoting national resources at the expense of the people of Iran. Iran has some 3,000-3,200 operational medium and heavy artillery weapons and multiple rocket launchers. This total is very high by regional standards and reflects the continuing build up of artillery strength that began during the Iran-Iraq War. Iran also has an arsenal of short-range, liquid-fuelled missiles including the Scud B and Scud C and is now able to produce Scud-type missiles on its own, thanks to assistance provided by North Korea. Iran's short-range missile inventory also includes solid-fuelled missiles, such as the Chinese-made CSS-8 (also called the Tondar-69) and the Fateh A-110 (range 200 Km). Iran is also working to expand the reach of the medium-range rocket, the Shahab-3, currently with a range of approximately 1,300 -1,600 km.<sup>19</sup> Iran's artillery can target Baghdad, where nearly seven million of Iraq's population resides, as well as many other Iraqi

cities. Although the Department of Defense saw a less portentous future as illustrated by this report to Congress in December 2009,

Iran continues to attempt to exert influence in Iraq, although many senior Iraqi officials are privately pushing back on Iranian pressure and appear intent on limiting Iran's direct manipulation of Iraqi politics. Leveraging its strategic alliance with Syria and its strong economic and religious ties to the Iraqi Shi'a population, Iran has intervened to moderate disputes between Iraq and Syria...Iran will likely continue to use its economic, financial, and religious influence to shape Iraqi political alliances toward its own interests.<sup>20</sup>

Nevertheless, Iran's missile and nuclear weapons development programs are ominous. Ahmadinejad and his military continue to seek out new capabilities while the civilian support infrastructure weakens. Deterring Iranian aggression is an imperative should Iran try to assert itself as a regional power. In addition, Iran has the initiative in picking the day and hour the conflict begins, but the US and its strategic Iraqi partner must regain the initiative quickly and transition to offensive operations as soon as possible to take the fight to Iran and achieve the objectives and endstate agreed to by both nations through a consultative process.

The fourth national interest is vital and it is to demonstrate US presence in Southwest Asia in support of its economic interests. The nation and people of Iraq and the nation and people of the United States have formalized their shared hardships and commitment to freedom in formal agreements between the respective presidents and ambassadors. The US has always prided itself on its support of democracy, free market economies, and promotion of security and stability. Maintaining an active US presence within the region, and specifically on the Arabian Peninsula, is essential to US economic interests, and more specifically to the uninterrupted flow of oil, and contributes both directly and indirectly to the security of US, allied, and partner interests

throughout the world. Three Middle Eastern countries (Saudi Arabia, Iraq and Kuwait) are currently in the top 12 countries that export oil to the US. These three countries account for 20 per cent of the total barrels per day.<sup>21</sup>

This presence is physical proof of the US commitment to allies and partners and will promote regional stability and preclude a return to an ethno-sectarian civil war. A return to an ethno-sectarian civil war will cause a disruption of the international oil market and economy. In addition, approximately 2.5 percent of US active and reserve military strength is committed to Southwest Asia.<sup>22</sup> This commitment is a very small investment of military power for such an enormous return in economic activity, peace, stability, and demonstration of democratic ideals. The strategic methodology for promoting regional stability includes the implementation of the national security and military strategies of the US, its regional allies and partners, current and future defense agreements and US diplomatic efforts in the region and at international forums. The operational methodology for promoting regional stability is the employment of United States Central Command (USCENTCOM) through USF-I and supported by its service components.

#### Natural Tendencies in the Middle East

The aforementioned US national interests determine US actions. Accordingly, concerned nations and non-state actors in the Middle East will execute actions consistent with their national interests. In regards to Iraq, a US presence is imperative. The US adds a stabilizing influence to a country divided along sectarian lines. There remains a huge lack of trust within Iraq among Sunnis, Shi'as and Kurds (and even within sub-groups within each of them). The Shi'a majority, without the US pressure, could and mostly likely would, execute actions to eliminate the influence of the Sunni

minority. The Sunni minority, realizing this existential threat, would retaliate and force Iraq into greater chaos. In addition, ongoing state weakness has made Iraq less of a counter to Iran than it was before the US-led invasion. Problems the US faces in Iraq now stem from the decisions made in 2003-2004 on the de-Baathification of Iraqi society and the dismantling of Iraq's security forces, which had "effectively pulled the rug out from under the bureaucracy that made the country run, as many Iraqis had needed to be Baathists simply to get a job within Saddam's government."<sup>23</sup>

Concerning Iran, the US-led invasion and occupation of Iraq acted as an inadvertent boost to Iran's stature in the Middle East, replacing its main regional competitor with a Shi'a-led government and making the US to some extent dependent on Iranian support for Iraq's long-term stability. Iran has also positioned itself as a champion of the anti-Israeli cause, winning it a great deal of popularity in the Muslim world. Coupled with ongoing suspicions regarding its nuclear program, this increased standing in the region has been a major source of concern for its Sunni neighbors, particularly Saudi Arabia and Egypt not to mention the Israelis who consider a nuclear-armed Iran an existential threat to their country.<sup>24</sup> For the near-term, Iran will continue to seek to restore its cultural and religious presence in a Shi'a Iraq, offer covert and overt assistance to the fledgling Shi'a government, and pursue economic integration. These actions will attempt to posture Iran as a regional power.

As mentioned above, Iran is concerned with its Sunni neighbor Saudi Arabia. Saudi Arabia and Iraq will continue to be natural enemies across sectarian lines. On the surface, Saudi foreign policy objectives are to maintain its security and its paramount position on the Arabian Peninsula, defend general Arab and Islamic

interests, promote solidarity among Islamic governments, and maintain cooperative relations with other oil-producing and major oil-consuming countries. Under the surface, there are competing interests in Saudi Arabia. Some in Saudi Arabia will continue to stoke Sunni extremism in Iraq to keep the Iranian Shi'a influence out of Iraq. They are doing this in order to keep Iran from becoming a regional power. A possible hypothesis is that a Shi'a dominated Iraq could signal to the opponents of the Saudi Arabian Monarchy that the Monarchy has lost power and influence in the region and there is time for a change of leadership.

Another neighbor, Syria, has regional interests. The Ba'ath Party and the minority Alawite sect control the regime and dominate the armed forces and the security services. When Bashar al-Assad succeeded his late father in July 2000, there was significant optimism from the US that Syria would adopt a more flexible foreign policy and initiate the reforms necessary to revitalize Syria's authoritarian system and diversify the economy away from an unsustainable reliance on its oil reserves but Islamist violence has stymied the reform progress. Reforms concerning Kurdish citizenship rights and the institution of political parties have also stalled. As a result, the presidency has found itself relying on Iran for support, a strategy that affects the troubled relationship between the minority Alawite regime and the Sunni majority, with many Syrians antagonized by the regime's closeness to Shi'a Iran.<sup>25</sup> The new US administration has initiated a policy of engagement with Syria, which although progressing slowly, has afforded the country a modicum of regional and even international acceptability. However, as demonstrated by Syria's alleged involvement with Hezbollah, Syria retains a streak of unpredictability that frequently incites

unnecessary regional and even international tension. Syria's overall goal is regime survival.

Jordan strongly supports the Iraqi government and its attempts to bring stability to the country. Jordan's interests lie mainly in the economic realm and the country is consistently a proponent of peace, stability and moderation. Because Jordan is ninety-two percent Sunni Muslim, Jordan will remain fearful of the Iranian Shi'a influence in Iraq. Jordan is a small country with limited natural resources and is among the most water-poor countries in the world. These circumstances dominate its actions. Other concerns revolve around the fate of the thousands of Iraqi refugees who fled the war and sought sanctuary in Jordan. If for no other reason than for these people begin to return home and unburden Jordan's already overburdened health and education services, the Jordanians seek the return of stability to Iraq.<sup>26</sup>

Turkey has been a strong ally to the US and its primary political, economic, and security ties are with the West. Since the fall of Saddam Hussein, Turkey has experienced shifts in its relations with Iraq. In addition to economic interests in opening petroleum lines between the two countries, Turkey's broad interest has been a realist strategy toward preserving Iraq's territorial integrity and unity, as well as preventing Iraqi Kurds from declaring independence from the government in Baghdad. It is also intent on eradicating the Partiya Karkerên Kurdistan (PKK) members living in the remote mountain regions of northern Iraq. Prior to the war, Turkey regularly crossed the border to attack PKK rebels in northern Iraq. The combination of the PKK and fears of the emergence of an independent Kurdish state have meant that the Turkish policy towards Iraq has focused on the north of the country. Initially, Turkey refused to engage

officially with the Kurdish Regional Government (KRG) in order not to show any outward appearances that it was recognizing its political authority in the north and encouraging it to declare independence. However, starting in early 2008, Turkey gradually began to hold talks with KRG officials in an attempt to encourage them to restrict the movement of personnel and supplies to the PKK's camps in the Qandil Mountains.<sup>27</sup> Regardless of the US posture, Turkey will continue to strengthen its ties with the central Iraqi government in Baghdad.

The US removed Kuwait's chief external threat in 2003 but tensions with the new government in Iraq remain. Kuwait still wants to resolve outstanding issues including border delineation and reparations and loans (up to 27 billion dollars). In addition, Kuwait faces internal security challenges because of spreading Islamic radicalism across the Gulf, and particularly because of spillover from instability in Iraq. The Shi'a (both Arabic and Persian ethnic groups) constitute 20-30 percent of the population of Kuwait and with the rise of the Shi'a to political power in Iraq, sectarian tensions have surfaced more frequently in Kuwait. Kuwait will continue to support the Iraqi political process and will remain a strategic partner of the US but if the US departs the region, Kuwait will look to other world powers to provide internal protection and to promote regional stability.<sup>28</sup>

### Maintaining Unity of Effort

The US national interests and the competing interests of Iraq's regional neighbors lead the US to maintain a headquarters in the region. The current USF-I structure achieves unity of command and effort and in the future unity of effort will be instrumental. As is always the case in bilateral operations, both nations maintain a

national command string on their forces, authorizing the USF-I Commander to exercise Command and Control (C2) of his forces within selected parameters while reserving the right to modify missions or withdraw forces at any time. In the future US "supporting to supported" construct, the USF-I Commander will exercise OPCON over US forces while appropriately placing committed US forces in supporting roles to Iraqi forces.

Command and control relationships will range from supporting to TACON with selected levels of ADCON.<sup>29</sup> The future Commander, USF-I must also have the capability to conduct selected independent US operations in the Iraqi Theater of Operations in accordance with strategic partnership agreements and the partnership consultative processes. Figure 1 illustrates this future command relationships. Specific USF-I command relationships with US higher authorities (US CENTCOM, JCS, OSD, etc.), as well as any relationship with regional powers and entities will be determined in Chapter 6, Title 10 and appropriate consultative processes and agreements.

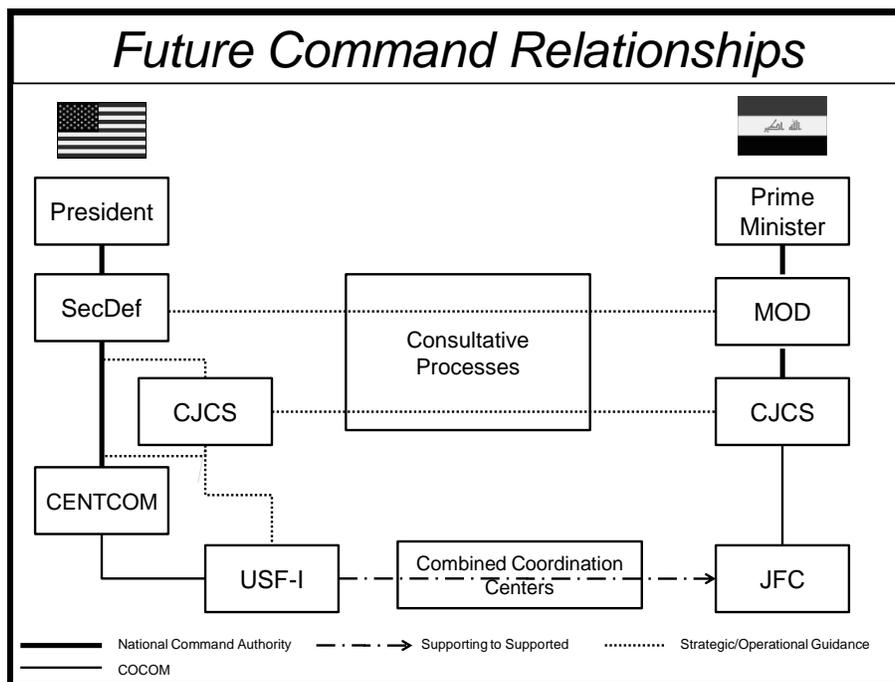


Figure 1. Future Command Relationships

Key to future unity of effort will be a requirement for a new set of strategic partnership linking mechanisms, or enablers, for achieving effective planning and coordination. As such, both the US and Iraq will be required to structure and field a range of coordination centers, cells, and liaison teams which do not exist now under USF-I. Additionally, US Service Component Commands will be OPCON to USF-I and will also be required to execute command and ensure support with their Iraqi Service Components. There will also be a requirement for a range of Service specific coordination activities to ensure effective supporting operations at the Service level.

As a joint headquarters, the US must structure USF-I to execute ten essential functions while conducting and sustaining combat operations throughout the operational environment. These headquarters functions are related capabilities and activities grouped together that enable USF-I to integrate, synchronize and direct joint operations in support of the Iraqi military within the Iraq Theater of Operations (ITO). While some of these functions will have an obvious correlation to a staff section of the USF-I headquarters, there is not a one-to-one correlation of these functions to staff sections. USF-I and each directorate within the command must be organized and structured to execute or support the execution of these functions to varying degrees:

- Operations - A military and/or intergovernmental agency (D, I, E) action, or the carrying out of missions (strategic, operational, tactical, service, training, or administrative) in a supporting to supported role to Iraq within the ITO. In accordance with Consultative processes, USF-I must also execute selected independent operations in the ITO in order to protect and secure the

command, its forces and its personnel, while maintaining military freedom of action.

- Command and Control - The exercise of authority and direction by CDR, USF-I over assigned and attached forces in a supporting to supported role to Iraq forces.
- Coordination - The active pursuit of harmonizing complementary actions between the US and Iraq and other parties to achieve common objectives across the full spectrum of military operations and in all elements of national power within the ITO area of interest.
- Sustainment - The planning, organizing, coordinating and executing of joint logistics and personnel services required to maintain and prolong operations until successful mission accomplishment.
- Intelligence - The process of collection, processing, integration, analysis, evaluation, and interpretation of available information about all actors throughout the ITO.
- Planning - Actions directed by the CDR, USF-I towards the employment of US-Iraq or multinational military power within the context of consultative processes in a supporting to supported relationship with the Iraq military.
- Communications - The system, means or method that conveys information to provide the CDR, USF-I the capability to rapidly adapt to changing requirements; to provide information that is needed (the right information), where needed (the right place), and when needed (the right time), protected from interception and exploitation and presented in a useful format.

- Protection - The preservation of the effectiveness and survivability of mission-related US, Iraq, UN, allied, coalition, and partner military and nonmilitary personnel, equipment, facilities, information, and infrastructure deployed or located within the ITO.
- Assessment - The process that determines the progress of all elements of national power toward accomplishing a task, creating an effect, or achieving strategic partnership objectives in the ITO.
- Civil Military - Activities that establish, maintain, or influence relations between US and Iraq military forces and civil authorities, both governmental and nongovernmental, and the Iraqi populace in friendly, neutral, or hostile portions of the ITO to facilitate military operations and consolidate strategic, operational, or tactical objectives.

### Operations and Coordination

USF-I will utilize Coordination Centers, Cells, Groups, Bureaus, Offices, Elements, Boards, Working Groups and Planning Teams as appropriate to ensure fully coordinated and synchronized operations within the US Joint HQ and with the Iraq military. A key requirement to ensure effective coordination involving decisions is to have the coordination cell co-located with the decision-making apparatus. This establishes a requirement for embedded cells within Iraq or US operational staff functional activities, such as a Joint Operations Center. However, where the coordination involves sharing of information and not decision making, a separate "stand alone" combined center may be most useful. For example, a US-Iraq Intelligence Coordination Center will likely be the best way to ensure effective strategic partnership

intelligence collection, analysis and dissemination during peacetime, crisis or war. A key peacetime Coordination Center that will establish strategic partnership linking mechanisms between the US Military and the Iraq Military and US civilian leadership is an envisioned Strategic Partnership Coordination Center (SPCC). Figure 2 illustrates a potential organization of the US Element of the SPCC.

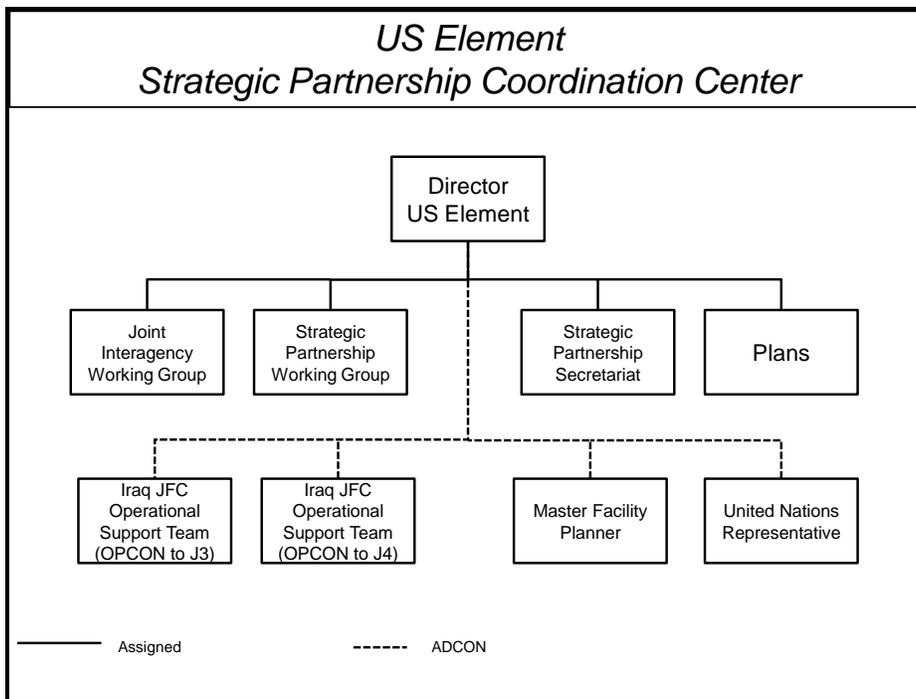


Figure 2. Strategic Partnership Coordination Center

The US-Iraq SPCC will be a stand-alone center. The SPCC will enhance unity of effort between the two nations and within the strategic partnership. Assigned to the J-5, USF-I, the US Element of the SPCC facilitates Iraq and US strategic coordination and partnership cooperation through daily interaction with Iraq counterparts. Key missions include: 1) Support periodic Partnership Security Consultative Meetings (PSCM), Military Committee Meetings (MCM), and Security Policy Initiative Meetings (SPI); 2) Assist with the coordination of bilateral, US-Iraq symposia (to be determined); 3)

Coordinate existing or the development of warplans and military protocols; and 4) Coordinate bilateral distinguished visitor meetings and visits. The SPCC also contains the US-Iraq Security Agreement (SA) Secretariat that serves as the office of primary responsibility for all matters pertaining to all US-Iraq agreements. The SA Secretariat oversees the implementation and administration of the agreements and advises the CDR, USF-I on the impact of US-Iraq political and economic relations and related factors. The Director of the US Element, SPCC will also be responsible for ADCON of US personnel working in embedded cells within the Iraq Command Posts (CPs) in Baghdad. However, the embedded cells will remain assigned to and work for their respective USF-I staff directorates.

#### USF-I Headquarters Overarching Considerations

The established US headquarters will need to operate from an enhanced sanctuary distinctly separate from the Iraqi headquarters. This headquarters will be a modern peace and warfighting facility of approximately 500,000 square feet that offers operational sanctuary and protection from missile attacks, air attacks, chemical and biological infiltration, and local tactical penetration. The HQ and Main CP must be operational in peacetime, crisis and war. The facility must be designed to accommodate the full USF-I headquarters in peacetime, and an echeloned Main Command Post during crisis and wartime. The facility must accommodate continuous operations in a mid-intensity combat environment. Certain overarching requirements will drive the operational and organizational construct of the headquarters.

The HQs must be able to execute Network Operations (NETOPS) as part of mission command. NETOPS provides integrated network visibility and end-to-end

management of networks, global applications, and services across the Global Information Grid (GIG), establishing, maintaining, and protecting DOD's networks that are a part of cyberspace. NETOPS focuses on the combat power that can be generated from the effective linking or networking of the supporting USF-I headquarters and its components to the supported Iraq JFC. NETOPS is characterized by the ability of two complementary and coordinated national Iraq and US commands to create a high level of shared operational environment awareness that can be exploited via self-synchronization and other network-centric principles across the spectrum of conflict in armistice, crisis and war.

NETOPS is an inherent requirement for an agile warfighting headquarters. An agile warfighting Main Command Post provides USF-I with an organizational and physical structure, a command and control system, and supporting systems that have the capability to reorganize and reconfigure in accordance with mission requirements to execute effective combat operations in support of the Iraq JFC. The physical structure must have modular capabilities, be able to incorporate UN personnel and US individual augmentees rapidly and efficiently, employ reachback capabilities as part of USF-I's command and control, and provide sanctuary for secure, rapid decision making.

A command post that resides outside of the continental US must always focus upon protection, one of the warfighting functions. Protection focuses on: (1) Active defensive measures that will protect USF-I personnel, information, infrastructure, and lines of communication (LOC) from an adversary's attack; (2) Passive defensive measures that make the facility and its systems difficult to strike and destroy; (3) Technology and characteristics to reduce the risk of fratricide; (4) Emergency

management and response to reduce the loss of personnel and capabilities due to attack, accidents, health threats, and natural disasters; and (5) Redundancy to ensure there are no critical single points of failure in battle command, communications, power or life support mechanisms.

Besides the protection warfighting function, another of the warfighting functions, sustainment, is critical. The focus of USF-I HQ sustainment is to provide adequate life support for its personnel. This must include stocks for critical supplies such as food, water, and waste disposal. The HQ Main CP is not expected to have living quarters for 24 hour operational tempo for the entire staff; however, selected protected habitats for key and essential command and staff leaders will be necessary. The need for life support systems for these personnel and the facility in general should be balanced with capabilities already available near the new headquarters location in order to provide adequate provisions of logistical and personnel services necessary to maintain and prolong operations until mission accomplishment.

#### USF-I Main CP Location Considerations

Initially, the US must locate this headquarters in Baghdad in order to execute effective coordination with the Iraqi government and military. Stephen Biddle, from the Council on Foreign Relations, said US diplomats would have difficulty controlling Sunni-Shiite and Arab-Kurd rivalries in the absence of a sizable US military presence, “normally stabilizing a situation like this requires peacekeepers. Peacekeepers are Soldiers. That doesn’t say there aren’t important and valuable things that government civilians can do. But...security protection is important in this environment and that’s not something State Department civilians do.”<sup>30</sup>

Furthermore, two Senate Foreign Relations Committee staff members visited Iraq recently to examine the military-to-civilian transition in detail. These are their principle findings: First, it is unclear whether the State Department has the capacity to maintain and protect the currently planned diplomatic presence without US military support; and second, uncertainty about the nature of the US military presence in Iraq after 2012 is complicating all other aspects of transition planning.<sup>31</sup> Putting the onus on the State Department to assume full responsibility for all security matters in a still dangerous and unpredictable environment would be irresponsible and reckless. Once the environment reaches an acceptable level of security, the US could transition the headquarters and associated military personnel to an “over-the-horizon” posture.

#### USF-I Main CP Facility Operational Considerations

The overarching requirements drive the need for the HQs to meet certain minimum operational considerations. The USF-I HQ Main CP will include an underground bunker facility, constructed to survive explosions of up to several hundred psi of overpressure, which is protected beneath a fenced perimeter. The underground bunker complex should have reinforced concrete walls, protective doors, provide military grade electromagnetic pulse (EMP), and tempest shielding. A 24-hour sentry, IP closed-circuit television (CCTV), state of the art alarm systems and a series of sophisticated access controls will protect the facility and monitor all entry.

The command and control system in the HQ Main CP must achieve high levels of Information Assurance (IA) and support assured Operational Security (OPSEC) to deny an adversary critical US and strategic partnership information that could adversely affect US operations. To ensure the protection of US ONLY classified information, physical

and virtual “firewalls” must exist between Iraqi and US personnel. These firewalls must still facilitate shared partnership situational awareness in order to achieve unity of effort.

The HQs must remain continuously operational so redundancy is critical. There can be no HQ, USF-I Main CP single points of failure in battle command systems or servicing power supplies. Technology and power generation must have reliable backup capability.

#### USF-I Main CP Facility Support Considerations

Besides meeting the preceding overarching and operational considerations, the USF-I HQs must take into account support considerations. During crisis and wartime, Servicemembers will work in the facility on a continuous basis. The facility needs to include a dining facility, a gymnasium, latrines, locker rooms, showers, a small chapel, appropriate AAFES and MWR facilities, and a distribution and mail center.

The command and control system is a center of gravity for the facility. As such, the facility must support future generation C2 Networks and Information Integration and operating systems. It must be able to support the spiral fielding of new technology with no loss of operational capability. The design of the facility must allow routine maintenance on systems and the facility itself without degradation of HQ capabilities.

The HQ Main CP must have resilience giving it the ability to recover from or adjust to damage or a destabilizing perturbation in the environment. This includes Iranian or other adversary’s efforts to destroy information through electronic interference, exploit US information by interception, and inflict physical damage on USF-I’s vital C2 facilities and systems.

In order to support the senior leader decision-making process, the USF-I HQ Main CP must have the capability to provide the Command Group with a suite that enables performance of duties in an efficient and effective manner.

### Summary

The establishment of a future joint headquarters (provisionally designated USF-I) can still meet the administration's requirement for a gradual and responsible drawdown. Simply removing all US forces after 31 December 2011 without meeting any measurable metrics of a stable, representative government and environment in Iraq is irresponsible. Inherent in this scenario is the requirement for the US and Iraq to negotiate a new security agreement. In addition, the establishment of a command, USF-I, sends a signal to Iraq, neighboring countries and non-state actors that the US intends to meet all its obligations that it unwittingly assumed responsibility for in 2003. The US "broke" Iraq and maintaining a presence in the Middle East serves US ends. The establishment of this headquarters does not come without risk. Any US presence in the region could enflame extremists who view the US as an occupier, thus this approach requires a sophisticated and nuanced diplomatic approach in order to serve US ends.

Since planning does not always equal intent, at the least, the US needs to plan for the establishment of the command. The current USF-I structure achieves unity of command and in the future the focus will be on unity of effort between the two national commands. Iraq is a country that can only prosper if all of its people, Sunni and Shia, Arab and Kurd, Muslim and Christian, see that the government protects and reflects their interests. The future USF-I structure is an integral part of this achievement and

must involve both military and civilian personnel and must include representatives from the Iraqi civilian and military leadership. Now is not the time for the US to disengage.

## Endnotes

<sup>1</sup> Stephen Biddle, "Bombings kill 76 across Baghdad," *Carlisle (PA) Sentinel*, November 3, 2010.

<sup>2</sup> US Department of Defense, *Foreign Internal Defense*, Joint Publication 3-22 (Washington, DC: US Department of Defense, July 12, 2010), GL-11, defines Security Cooperation as, "All Department of Defense interactions with foreign defense establishments to build defense relationships that promote specific US security interests, develop allied and friendly military capabilities for self-defense and multinational operations, and provide US forces with peacetime and contingency access to a host nation."

<sup>3</sup> Office of the Press Secretary, *Declaration of Principles for a Long-Term Relationship of Cooperation and Friendship Between the Republic of Iraq and the United States of America*, <http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2007/11/20071126-11.html> (accessed September 27, 2010).

<sup>4</sup> Summary of Current Agreements: August 2007: *Principles for a Long-Term Relationship of Cooperation and Friendship*; November 2008: *Agreement Between the United States of America and the Republic of Iran On the Withdrawal of United States Forces from Iraq and the Organization of Their Activities during Their Temporary Presence in Iraq*; November 2008: *Strategic Framework Agreement for a Relationship of Friendship and Cooperation between the United States of America and the Republic of Iraq*.

<sup>5</sup> *Agreement Between the United States of America and the Republic of Iraq on the Withdrawal of United States Forces from Iraq and the Organization of their Activities during their Temporary Presence in Iraq*, [http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/papers\\_pdf/85029\\_2.pdf](http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/papers_pdf/85029_2.pdf) (accessed September 29, 2010).

<sup>6</sup> Ryan C. Crocker, "A future to write in Iraq; Washington needs to stay engaged and slow down its clock", *The Washington Post*, August 31, 2010, p. A.17. Retrieved October 31, 2010, from ProQuest National Newspapers Core. (Document ID: 2124903471).

<sup>7</sup> Paul D. Wolfowitz, "In Korea, a Model for Iraq", *New York Times*, August 31, 2010, p.A. 21.

<sup>8</sup> R. Craig Nation, *War in the Balkans, 1991-2002* (Honolulu, Hawaii: University Press of the Pacific, 2004), 325.

<sup>9</sup> William J. Clinton, *A National Security Strategy for a New Century* (Washington, DC: The White House, December 1999), 1.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, 2.

<sup>11</sup> Laura Silber and Allan Little, *Yugoslavia: Death of a Nation* (New York, NY: Penguin Books, 1997), 30.

<sup>12</sup> R. Craig Nation, *War in the Balkans, 1991-2002* (Honolulu, Hawaii: University Press of the Pacific, 2004), 364.

<sup>13</sup> U.S. Congress, Senate, Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe: U.S. Helsinki Commission, *The Western Balkans: Developments in 2010 and Hopes for the Future: Hearings Before the Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe*, December 8, 2010, [http://csce.gov/index.cfm?FuseAction=ContentRecords.ViewDetail&ContentRecord\\_id=491&ContentRecordType=H,B&ContentRecordType=H&CFID=47738121&CFTOKEN=65561688](http://csce.gov/index.cfm?FuseAction=ContentRecords.ViewDetail&ContentRecord_id=491&ContentRecordType=H,B&ContentRecordType=H&CFID=47738121&CFTOKEN=65561688) (accessed January 26, 2011).

<sup>14</sup> U.S. Department of State, "Secretary Clinton Meets with Pristina Staff and Their Families," October 13, 2010, <http://www.state.gov/secretary/rm/2010/10/149477.htm> (accessed January 26, 2011).

<sup>15</sup> Barack H. Obama, *National Security Strategy* (Washington, DC: The White House, May 2010), 17.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, 24.

<sup>17</sup> Paul Richter, "Ahmadinejad expects new nuclear talks; The Iranian president, in New York for U.N. meetings, says it's the only option. Sanctions haven't hurt, he adds." *Los Angeles Times*, September 22, 2010, p. A.3. Retrieved November 1, 2010, from Los Angeles Times. (Document ID: 2143324841).

<sup>18</sup> Jane's, "Iran starts nuclear reaction in Arab States," March 19, 2010, [http://search.janes.com.ezproxy.usawcpubs.org/Search/documentView.do?docId=/content1/janesdata/mags/jiaa/history/jiaa2010/jiaa5265.htm@current&pageSelected=allJanes&keyword=Iranian Nuclear weapons&backPath=http://search.janes.com.ezproxy.usawcpubs.org/Search&Prod\\_Name=JIAA](http://search.janes.com.ezproxy.usawcpubs.org/Search/documentView.do?docId=/content1/janesdata/mags/jiaa/history/jiaa2010/jiaa5265.htm@current&pageSelected=allJanes&keyword=Iranian Nuclear weapons&backPath=http://search.janes.com.ezproxy.usawcpubs.org/Search&Prod_Name=JIAA) (accessed October 2, 2010).

<sup>19</sup> Jane's, "Jane's Sentinel Security Assessment – The Gulf States," September 27, 2010, [http://search.janes.com.ezproxy.usawcpubs.org/Search/documentView.do?docId=/content1/janesdata/sent/gulfsu/irans150.htm@current&pageSelected=allJanes&keyword=Iranian Missile systems%2C number and range&backPath=http://search.janes.com.ezproxy.usawcpubs.org/Search&Prod\\_Name=GULFSU&#toclink-j3631239115778427](http://search.janes.com.ezproxy.usawcpubs.org/Search/documentView.do?docId=/content1/janesdata/sent/gulfsu/irans150.htm@current&pageSelected=allJanes&keyword=Iranian Missile systems%2C number and range&backPath=http://search.janes.com.ezproxy.usawcpubs.org/Search&Prod_Name=GULFSU&#toclink-j3631239115778427) (accessed October 2, 2010).

<sup>20</sup> Department of Defense, *Measuring Stability and Security in Iraq*, Report to Congress in accordance with the Department of Defense Supplemental Appropriations Act 2008 (Section 9204, Public Law 110-252) December 2009, p.8.

<sup>21</sup> US Energy Information Administration, "Crude Oil and total Petroleum Imports Top 15 Countries," November 2010 Import Highlights: Released January 28, 2011, [http://www.eia.doe.gov/pub/oil\\_gas/petroleum/data\\_publications/company\\_level\\_imports/current/import.html](http://www.eia.doe.gov/pub/oil_gas/petroleum/data_publications/company_level_imports/current/import.html) (accessed February 3, 2011).

<sup>22</sup> There are approximately 2,000,000 active and reserve forces. Our current commitment in Iraq is 50,000 military members (both active and reserve). The projected commitment for the new headquarters and assigned troops would be for approximately 25,000 military members but will remain at 2.5 percent because of the need to fill it from active duty forces (approximately 1,000,000 active duty Military Members). In addition, the new headquarters would have civilians assigned to it (those not assigned to State Department entities).

<sup>23</sup> Bob Woodward, *The War Within, A Secret White House History 2006-2008* (New York, NY: Simon and Schuster, 2008), 49.

<sup>24</sup> Jane's, "Jane's Sentinel Security Assessment – The Gulf States," June 4, 2010, [http://www8.janes.com/JDIC/JMSA/documentView.do?docId=/content1/janesdata/sent/gulfsu/irans080.htm@current&pageSelected=&keyword=Iranian\\_Goals\\_in\\_the\\_Middle\\_East&backPath=http://jmsa.janes.com/JDIC/JMSA&docCountry=Iran&Prod\\_Name=GULFS&activeNav=http://www8.janes.com/JDIC/JMSA#toclink-j1141141221859532](http://www8.janes.com/JDIC/JMSA/documentView.do?docId=/content1/janesdata/sent/gulfsu/irans080.htm@current&pageSelected=&keyword=Iranian_Goals_in_the_Middle_East&backPath=http://jmsa.janes.com/JDIC/JMSA&docCountry=Iran&Prod_Name=GULFS&activeNav=http://www8.janes.com/JDIC/JMSA#toclink-j1141141221859532) (accessed October 29, 2010).

<sup>25</sup> Jane's, "Jane's Sentinel Security Assessment – Eastern Mediterranean", October 7, 2010, [http://www8.janes.com/JDIC/JMSA/documentView.do?docId=/content1/janesdata/sent/emedsu/syris010.htm@current&pageSelected=&keyword=Saudi\\_Arabia&backPath=http://jmsa.janes.com/JDIC/JMSA&docCountry=Syria&Prod\\_Name=EMEDS&activeNav=http://www8.janes.com/JDIC/JMSA#toclink-j1091209389391449](http://www8.janes.com/JDIC/JMSA/documentView.do?docId=/content1/janesdata/sent/emedsu/syris010.htm@current&pageSelected=&keyword=Saudi_Arabia&backPath=http://jmsa.janes.com/JDIC/JMSA&docCountry=Syria&Prod_Name=EMEDS&activeNav=http://www8.janes.com/JDIC/JMSA#toclink-j1091209389391449) (accessed November 1, 2010).

<sup>26</sup> Jane's, "Jane's Sentinel Security Assessment – Eastern Mediterranean," June 8, 2010, [http://www8.janes.com/JDIC/JMSA/documentView.do?docId=/content1/janesdata/sent/emedsu/emed001.htm@current&pageSelected=&keyword=Kuwait&backPath=http://jmsa.janes.com/JDIC/JMSA&docCountry=Jordan&Prod\\_Name=EMEDS&activeNav=http://www8.janes.com/JDIC/JMSA](http://www8.janes.com/JDIC/JMSA/documentView.do?docId=/content1/janesdata/sent/emedsu/emed001.htm@current&pageSelected=&keyword=Kuwait&backPath=http://jmsa.janes.com/JDIC/JMSA&docCountry=Jordan&Prod_Name=EMEDS&activeNav=http://www8.janes.com/JDIC/JMSA) (accessed November 3, 2010).

<sup>27</sup> Jane's, "Jane's Sentinel Security Assessment – Eastern Mediterranean," July 6, 2010, [http://jmsa.janes.com/JDIC/JMSA/documentView.do?docId=/content1/janesdata/sent/emedsu/turks010.htm@current&pageSelected=&keyword=&backPath=http://jmsa.janes.com/JDIC/JMSA&docCountry=Turkey&Prod\\_Name=EMEDS&activeNav=/JDIC/JMSA](http://jmsa.janes.com/JDIC/JMSA/documentView.do?docId=/content1/janesdata/sent/emedsu/turks010.htm@current&pageSelected=&keyword=&backPath=http://jmsa.janes.com/JDIC/JMSA&docCountry=Turkey&Prod_Name=EMEDS&activeNav=/JDIC/JMSA) (accessed November 3, 2010).

<sup>28</sup> LTC Abdullah Alqahtani, Kuwaiti Armed Forces, interview by author, Carlisle, PA, November 5, 2010.

<sup>29</sup> US Department of Defense, *Department of Defense Dictionary Terms*, Joint Publication 1-02 (Washington, DC: US Department of Defense, April 12, 2001 (as amended through September 30, 2010)), 339, 457, 5, 449.

Operational Control (OPCON) - Command authority that may be exercised by commanders at any echelon at or below the level of combatant command. Operational control is inherent in combatant command (command authority) and may be delegated within the command. Operational control is the authority to perform those functions of command over subordinate forces involving organizing and employing commands and forces, assigning tasks, designating objectives, and giving authoritative direction necessary to accomplish the mission. Operational control includes authoritative direction over all aspects of military operations and joint training necessary to accomplish missions assigned to the command. Operational control should be

exercised through the commanders of subordinate organizations. Normally this authority is exercised through subordinate joint force commanders and Service and/or functional component commanders. Operational control normally provides full authority to organize commands and forces and to employ those forces as the commander in operational control considers necessary to accomplish assigned missions; it does not, in and of itself, include authoritative direction for logistics or matters of administration, discipline, internal organization, or unit training.

Tactical Control (TACON) - Command authority over assigned or attached forces or commands, or military capability or forces made available for tasking, that is limited to the detailed direction and control of movements or maneuvers within the operational area necessary to accomplish missions or tasks assigned. Tactical control is inherent in operational control. Tactical control may be delegated to, and exercised at any level at or below the level of combatant command. Tactical control provides sufficient authority for controlling and directing the application of force or tactical use of combat support assets within the assigned mission or task.

Administrative Control (ADCON) - Direction or exercise of authority over subordinate or other organizations in respect to administration and support, including organization of Service forces, control of resources and equipment, personnel management, unit logistics, individual and unit training, readiness, mobilization, demobilization, discipline, and other matters not included in the operational missions of the subordinate or other organizations.

Supported Commander - 1. The commander having primary responsibility for all aspects of a task assigned by the Joint Strategic Capabilities Plan or other joint operation planning authority. In the context of joint operation planning, this term refers to the commander who prepares operation plans or operation orders in response to requirements of the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. 2. In the context of a support command relationship, the commander who receives assistance from another commander's force or capabilities, and who is responsible for ensuring that the supporting commander understands the assistance required.

Supporting Commander - 1. A commander who provides augmentation forces or other support to a supported commander or who develops a supporting plan. This includes the designated combatant commands and Department of Defense agencies as appropriate. 2. In the context of a support command relationship, the commander who aids, protects, complements, or sustains another commander's force, and who is responsible for providing the assistance required by the supported commander.

<sup>30</sup> Stephen Biddle, "Bombings kill 76 across Baghdad," *Carlisle (PA) Sentinel*, November 3, 2010.

<sup>31</sup> US Congress, Senate, Committee on Foreign Relations, Iraq: *The Transition from a Military Mission to a Civilian-Led Effort, A Report to the Members of the Committee on Foreign Relations*, 112<sup>th</sup> Cong., First Session, January 31, 2011, 2.

