

Advance Policy Questions for Lieutenant General Lloyd J. Austin III, USA
Nominee to be General and Commander, U.S. Forces-Iraq

Defense Reforms

The Goldwater Nichols Department of Defense Reorganization Act of 1986 and the Special Operations reforms have strengthened the warfighting readiness of our Armed Forces. They have enhanced civilian control and clearly delineated the operational chain of command and the responsibilities and authorities of the combatant commanders, and the role of the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. They have also clarified the responsibility of the military departments to recruit, organize, train, equip, and maintain forces for assignment to the combatant commanders.

Do you see the need for modifications of any Goldwater Nichols Act provisions?

Not at this time. The integration of joint capabilities under the Goldwater-Nichols Act has been a success. The integration of our military forces continues to improve and we are more interoperable today than ever in our nation's history. This achievement has been remarkable. The next step is to ensure the ability of military and civilian departments to work closely together to foster whole of government approaches to address concerns of national interest.

If so, what areas do you believe might be appropriate to address in these modifications?

Not at this time. However, I do believe that there are key principles of teamwork, cohesion, and interoperability that could be applied to enhance a whole of government approach to today's challenges.

Duties

What is your understanding of the duties and functions of the Commander, U.S. Forces-Iraq?

United States Forces Iraq (USF-I) is the military component of the U.S. - Iraq bilateral relationship, responsible for defense and security cooperation. Its mission is to strengthen security and stability in Iraq and to support Iraq's continued development as a sovereign, stable, and self-reliant strategic partner and thereby contribute to peace and stability in the region.

The Commanding General of USF-I commands the U.S. military forces within Iraq and is responsible for all military activities in Iraq conducted in support of the U.S. Ambassador and U.S. objectives. He provides the political-military interface with the U.S. Embassy and Government of Iraq and is responsible for strategic and operational issues affecting security and stability in Iraq. USF-I is under the Operational Control of U.S. Central Command. USF-I conducts operations in

support of the Government of Iraq, U.S. Mission, and other international organizations.

What are the differences between the duties and functions of the Commander, U.S. Forces-Iraq and the Commander, Multi-National Corps - Iraq?

When I served as the Commander of Multi-National Corps – Iraq (MNC-I), an operational headquarters, it fell under Multi-National Force – Iraq (MNF-I), a strategic headquarters. Since that time MNF-I, MNC-I, and the Multi-National Security Transition Command - Iraq headquarters have been combined to form the USF-I Headquarters. The USF-I Commander's responsibilities are substantially broader than those of the Commander of the former MNC-I and include national and regional strategic and political-military issues. The USF-I Commander also has direct responsibility for the missions previously performed by subordinate headquarters under MNF-I. This includes operations, training and assistance, and strategic engagement which now reside directly within the USF-I headquarters.

What background and experience, including joint duty assignments, do you possess that you believe qualifies you to perform these duties?

My professional military education, operational experience, and assignment history over 35 years of service provides a broad knowledge and experience base and thorough understanding of what is needed to command USF-I in support of the strategic goals outlined by the President for the mission in Iraq. Multiple tours of duty in Iraq and Afghanistan coupled with service at U.S. Central Command and on the Joint Staff, have provided invaluable experiences and insights on this mission and enabled an appreciation for what is needed to accomplish our nation objectives in Iraq during this transitional time in our bilateral relationship.

A summary of key joint and operational assignments includes:

- Assistant Division Commander (Maneuver), 3d Infantry Division (Mechanized), Fort Stewart, Georgia and OPERATION IRAQI FREEDOM, Iraq
- Commanding General, 10th Mountain Division (Light) with duty as Commander, Combined Joint Task Force-180, OPERATION ENDURING FREEDOM, Afghanistan
- Chief of Staff, United States Central Command
- Commanding General, XVIII Airborne Corps/Commander, Multi-National Corps-Iraq, OPERATION IRAQI FREEDOM, Iraq
- Director, Joint Staff

Do you believe that there are any steps that you need to take to enhance your ability to perform the duties of the Commander, U.S. Forces-Iraq?

I believe I am fully qualified and positioned to assume this important position. If confirmed, I would take steps to establish or re-establish relationships across the U.S. and Iraqi governments, academia, and the business world to ensure full

access to the most current information and diversity of perspectives on the strategic issues affecting Iraq and the region.

Iraq

What is your assessment of the current situation facing the United States in Iraq?

Overall:

Iraq is generally secure and a return to levels of violence seen in the 2006/2007 timeframe is unlikely as long as all communities continue to pursue their goals through the political process. The Iraqi Government continues to improve its capability to provide security, essential services, effective governance, and a functioning legal system.

Security:

Security incidents are the lowest on record and continue to decline. Although Iraqi and U.S. operations have eroded the strength and capability of most insurgent and terrorist groups, extremist groups still retain the will and a capability to conduct attacks. In particular Al Qaeda in Iraq (AQI) remains capable of high-profile attacks that damage public perceptions of stability in Iraq; however, the group lacks sufficient popular support to achieve its strategic goals of toppling the Iraqi government and establishing a base for a new caliphate. The Iraqi security forces are continuing to develop their capability and capacity but remain reliant on U.S. enabling capabilities such as logistics, intelligence, and advisory and training assistance.

Governance:

Iraq conducted a successful national election in March 2010, but political accommodation remains uneven. Mutual distrust among ethno-sectarian groups limits progress in resolving major issues such as control of hydrocarbon resources, revenue sharing, and the relationship between Baghdad and the regions and provinces. An inclusive, popularly accepted new government would be a key indicator of Iraq's ability to eventually overcome these challenges, while prolonged government formation would likely perpetuate policy paralysis.

Unresolved Arab-Kurdish issues, including the status of Kirkuk, remain a primary concern. Ongoing dialogue among Arab and Kurdish leaders, international mediation, the presence of U.S. forces in disputed territories and the deferral of controversial issues are important factors in helping prevent these disputes from escalating to violence.

Development:

Economic conditions have stabilized but remain dependent on current oil prices and levels of production. I am encouraged by recent agreements with major international oil companies to expand the development of some of Iraq's largest oil reserves. Such contracts have the potential to create jobs and stimulate growth. However, corruption, inadequate infrastructure and essential services, and a poor

business environment remain obstacles to investment and hinder economic diversification.

What do you believe are the most important steps that the United States needs to take in Iraq?

We need to address the primary areas of risk to stability in Iraq. A key to this effort will be support for the transition of the national leadership resulting from the recent elections and the establishment of effective relationships with the new Iraqi Government. The results of this election and the potential for an inclusive coalition government offer an opportunity to help Iraq move toward national unification and a national vision. We need to assist in the continued development of effective ministries to enable the Iraqi Government to appropriately meet the needs of the people and maximize their economic potential. We need to support efforts to develop positive strategic relationships between the Iraqi Government, its regional neighbors, and the United States. We need to support efforts to implement enduring solutions to Arab-Kurd issues. Security and stability are foundational requirements and necessary conditions for progress in these areas. Capable, professional Iraqi security forces are a prerequisite and our ability to effectively train, advise, and equip them is key.

In your view, what are the major challenges that confront the Commander, U.S. Forces-Iraq?

The Commander USF-I will be faced with supporting the establishment of a new government and establishing relationships with new national leaders. The government formation process will span a period of months and potentially create a significant lapse in governing functions. This will undoubtedly create some degree of degradation in services to the people and legislative actions.

The issues along the disputed internal boundary with the Kurdish Regional Government remain unresolved and the associated Arab-Kurd tensions remain a significant challenge. The underlying economic, social, and security issues must be addressed to achieve an enduring solution.

The establishment of constructive relationships between Iraq and its regional neighbors is required for long term regional stability. Diplomatic efforts to foster these relationships and counter malign external influences will be key to U.S. interests in the region.

The major challenge is managing and communicating risk during the responsible drawdown and transition to full Iraqi sovereignty thereby ensuring that internal and external violent forces do not threaten the security environment.

If confirmed, what broad priorities would you establish and what actions would you initially take as Commander, U.S. Forces-Iraq?

If confirmed, my priorities and initial actions would center around the essential elements of the mission and the key areas of risk. This would include sustaining

the gains in security and stability, mitigating Arab-Kurd tensions, continuing the development of effective, professional Iraqi security forces, establishing positive relationships with the Iraqi Government, maintaining a whole of government approach and productive integration with U.S. Embassy-Baghdad efforts, protecting U.S. forces and activities, and managing the responsible drawdown of U.S. forces in accordance with the President's guidance.

Lessons Learned

What were the major lessons that you learned from your experience as Commander, Multi-National Corps-Iraq, that are most applicable to the duties you would assume if confirmed?

A major lesson is that our counterinsurgency doctrine is sound and that the true center of gravity is the Iraqi People. To hold our gains we needed to stay among the people. To achieve long term success we needed to have Iraqi security forces capable of holding those gains. This requires partnership based on mutual trust. That partnership had to extend across the Iraqi security forces, into the ministries, and throughout the Government of Iraq.

A second lesson is that there must be a whole of government approach to operations in Iraq. A purely military approach is inadequate. Unity of effort amongst the interagency must be a top priority. Establishing effective relationships and partnerships are critical to accomplishing our national objectives. It is through military to military partnership that we maximize the development of the Iraqi security forces' capabilities, maintain situational awareness, and achieve common operational objectives.

What do you consider to be the most significant mistakes the U.S. has made to date in Iraq?

We did not recognize and address the reasons for the rapid growth in the level of political disenfranchisement of the Iraqi people that led to the insurgency. This allowed extremist groups to establish themselves and gain support of the population.

We failed early on to appreciate the requirements and adequately resource our forces and civilian agencies in Iraq with the appropriate capabilities that would enable them to work government formation and reconstruction tasks.

We began to transition missions and responsibilities to the Government of Iraq and Iraqi security forces before they had adequate capacity to effectively govern and secure the population resulting in significant instability and ethno-sectarian violence that was exploited by extremist groups.

Which of these mistakes, if any, still impact U.S. operations, and what corrective action, if any, will you take if confirmed?

I believe the evolution of our resourcing, force posture, doctrine, and operating procedures have effectively addressed these issues over time.

U.S. Force Reductions in Iraq

By the end of August 2010, U.S. forces are expected to number at or below 50,000 troops primarily involved in training and equipping Iraqi security forces, force protection, and targeted counter terrorism operations. All U.S. forces are scheduled to depart by the end of December 2011.

Do you believe that there is a purely military solution in Iraq, or must the solution be primarily a political one?

Iraq requires a U.S. whole of government effort in support of our strategic relationship. The capabilities U.S. Government civilian agencies and international organizations provide are essential to progress in national unification, development of Iraq's government, and the establishment of normalized strategic relations within the region and the rest of the international community.

In your view, what conditions on the ground in Iraq would allow for a recommendation to make further reductions in U.S. forces?

If confirmed I would continually assess the operational environment and based on this assessment, I would shape the size of the force. It is possible that the environment could change allowing a recommendation for early troop reductions to occur. Examples of such conditions are:

- Regional diplomatic progress that helps Iraq secure its borders and decreases malign external influence.
- The beginnings of a resolution of Arab-Kurd issues including disputed internal boundaries, status of Kirkuk, and hydrocarbons revenue distribution.
- A significant increase in the capability and capacity of national, provincial and local Iraqi governments that results in a marked increase in stability and the provision of essential services.
- An increase in the capability of Iraqi security forces ahead of programmed development.

In your view, what is the risk, if any, associated with the delay or inability of the Iraqi's to form a government after certification of this year's election results?

I am encouraged by recent signs of progress in the seating of the government and it appears that all sides are committed to a political resolution of the stalemate. Prolonged government formation is likely to delay movement on major policy issues and, over time, diminish Baghdad's capacity to improve the delivery of services. However, as long as all groups remain engaged in negotiations, Iraqis will probably

tolerate a protracted government formation period. An inability to form a government, or marginalization of the Sunni Arabs or Sadrists in the new government, could result in broad cynicism about the political process and halt or reverse the generally positive trajectory of political accommodation in Iraq.

Do you believe that compromise among Iraqi political leaders is a necessary condition for a political solution?

Yes. I think that an overwhelming majority of Iraq's political leaders are committed to compromise and realize that in order for the new government to be accepted it must be inclusive.

What do you believe will induce Iraqi political leaders to make the compromises necessary for a political solution?

Political leaders appear dedicated to peaceful government transition in accordance with their constitution. Diplomatic engagement encouraging adherence to constitution procedures reinforces political leaders obligations to the people and the nation. Key leaders of all Iraqi political blocs recognize, and have publicly called for, inclusiveness in the next government. This recognition is the key for Iraqi political leaders to make the compromises necessary for a political solution.

What leverage does the U.S. have in this regard?

Our strategic relationship with the Iraqi government and the Iraqi people, and our continued commitment and support for their development is a key lever. Iraqis perceive the U.S. to be an honest broker among all the players in government formation and value our role. The U.S. has and will continue to advocate for an inclusive and representative government that works on behalf of all the Iraqi people. In the longer term, our commitment to developing a broad strategic relationship with Iraq through the U.S. - Iraqi Strategic Framework Agreement sustains our credibility as a strategic partner in Iraq's future.

Earlier this year, current U.S. Forces—Iraq commander General Raymond Odierno stated that, based on the reasonably high voter turnout and low-level of violence during the Iraqi elections, U.S. forces are still on track to end its combat mission and continue the withdrawal of troops. According to General Odierno, “Only a catastrophic event would keep us from doing that now.”

Do you agree with General Odierno's assessment that the U.S. troop drawdown plan remains on track for August and beyond?

Yes. I agree with General Odierno's assessment.

What, in your view, are the greatest remaining risks to the successful transition of the mission in Iraq and withdrawal of U.S. forces as planned and required by the Security Agreement, and what would you do, if anything, to mitigate these risks?

The greatest remaining risks to the successful transition include continued communal rivalries across sectarian lines, the insufficient capacity of the Iraqi Government to provide for its people, violent extremist organizations, and malign influence from external countries. These risks cannot be mitigated by USF-I alone. They will require a whole of U.S. Government and Iraqi Government approach. This would include adequate funding for the continued development of the Iraqi security forces and the tasks associated with the transition to a State Department lead in Iraq.

Intercommunal Conflict

Over the last two years, civilian and military leaders in Iraq have noted that the conflict there has evolved and that, although there is still terrorism and insurgency, the greatest current threat is the potential intercommunal conflict over power.

In your view, what have been the most important aspects of the enduring and changing fundamental nature of the conflict in Iraq?

The absence of a shared national vision and development of a new political culture compatible with democracy represent enduring challenges to stability in Iraq. While there currently is not an effective insurgency that immediately threatens the survival of the Government in Iraq, a lingering Sunni Arab insurgency remains and will rise or further recede based upon political successes of the next government in integrating the Sunni Arabs into the system. Today, the vast majority of Iraqi people want peace, and they want effective governance and prosperity. The Iraqi people and their leaders increasingly see political accommodation and inclusion as the approach for peaceful unification. Some progress has been made in Northern Iraq, but Arab-Kurd tensions over Kirkuk and other disputed internal boundaries as well as hydrocarbons and revenue sharing remain key problems that could trigger violent conflict in the next year.

How would you recommend that military strategy adapt, if any, to the evolving nature of the conflict?

I believe the current military approach is sound. As always, the commander must continuously assess the situation on the ground and adjust operational procedures accordingly. Based on current conditions the force is postured to transition its focus from combat to stability operations on 1 September 2010. We will partner with, enable, advise, train and equip the Iraqis to ensure the continued development of their capabilities. The development of effective government institutions and the Iraqi security forces is critical for lasting stability and security in Iraq. Confidence building measures like those we are promoting to ensure peaceful resolution of the disputed internal boundaries between the Iraqi Government and Kurdish Regional Government are also a key component.

What is the appropriate role of U.S. forces in response to the threat and conduct of intercommunal violence among militant groups vying for control, particularly in northern Iraq?

The appropriate role of U.S. forces is to partner with the Iraqis to develop a non-sectarian army and police force capable of maintaining internal security and preventing intercommunal violence and a functioning legal system based on the rule of law. Additionally, USF-I should continue to develop trust and interoperability between the Iraqi security forces and those of the Kurdish Regional Government through the combined security mechanisms established in northern Iraq. Assistance to the Iraqi Government to enhance situational awareness of conditions on the ground will reduce the probability of violent encounters.

Recent months have seen an increase in kidnappings and murders of non-Muslim religious leaders.

In your opinion, are non-Muslim religious minorities in Iraq at greater risk?

Non-Muslim minorities are vulnerable to the same sectarian tensions that exist throughout Iraq. Insurgent and militant groups continue to attempt to ignite ethno-sectarian violence though recent attacks and have failed to this point. The Iraq Constitution affords minorities the right of protection, and I believe that the Iraqi government has made efforts to ensure their protection and that many Iraqis recognize minority rights.

Are there any groups that are particularly vulnerable?

I believe non-Muslims, particularly Yazidis and Chaldean Christians are more vulnerable in certain distinct areas of Iraq, primarily in the central and northern portions of the country. Christians remain a target for AQI and historically they have been targeted in Mosul. The bombing of a bus with Christian students in 2010 highlights the persistent threat posed by AQI. AQI has also attacked members of Iraq's Yazidi minority using suicide vests and vehicle borne improvised explosive devices. It is important to note, however, that every ethnic group in Iraq has been the victim of kidnappings and murders.

If so, what is the appropriate role, if any, for the U.S. military in addressing their vulnerability?

This requires an Iraqi solution and commitment. We would advise and assist the Iraqi government and the Iraqi security forces to provide equal protection and enforce minority rights of protection under the rule of law. As the institutions of the Iraqi government strengthen and grow increasingly capable of providing security for all of its citizens, the threats to non-Muslim religious minorities will diminish.

Confronting the Militias

Based on your understanding, is the Iraqi government taking the steps it must to confront and control the militias?

Through a combination of security operations and engagement policies, the Iraqi government is working to manage the challenges presented by Sunni and Shia

militia groups. Programs like the Sons of Iraq aim to integrate former Sunni Arab insurgents into the government or security forces or retrain them for other professions. Reconciliation initiatives have also contributed to Muqtada al-Sadr's decision to suspend his Jaysh al-Mahdi militia. However, some terrorist groups, such as Kataib Hizballah, are more difficult for the Iraqi government to target because they operate covertly and are backed by Iran.

What role would you expect to play on this issue, if confirmed?

I believe our role would be to support the Iraqi government's anti-militia policies, and improve the stability of Iraq in order to negate the conditions which generate support for militia groups. We would do this by continuing to develop the capabilities and professionalism of the Iraqi security forces and by encouraging inclusive political processes. Our intelligence capabilities also contribute significantly to this effort as Iraq's capabilities continue to grow. I would continue to monitor militia groups and provide recommendations to the Iraqi government to address this issue.

Long-term Security Relationship

If confirmed, what actions, if any, would you take to ensure an effective and efficient transition from the current military mission through December 2011 to a long-term security relationship with Iraq?

Along with the U.S. Ambassador to Iraq, we will continue to work with the Iraqi Government, via the Strategic Framework Agreement, to build a long term security relationship with Iraq. In the short-term, I would continue the progress made in developing the Iraqi security forces through our training and foreign military sales. As leadership for the U.S. mission in Iraq transitions from USF-I to Embassy Baghdad, I will continue to support planning for a robust Office of Security Cooperation under Chief of Mission authority. The Strategic Framework Agreement serves as the cornerstone of our partnership with Iraq and I would continue efforts through the Joint Coordinating Committees to solidify our long-term security relationship with Iraq.

If confirmed, what actions, if any, would you take immediately or in the near-term to build a standard security cooperation relationship with Iraq for long-term military sales and support such as the United States has with many other nations in the region and around the world?

After I have made an assessment I will work with the Ambassador, CENTCOM, and our Iraqi partners to develop a security relationship based on U.S. interests which contributes to regional security and stability.

Iraqi Security Forces

In your view, what are the minimum essential capabilities required by the Iraqi security forces in order to assume full and independent responsibility for the internal security of their nation?

It is essential that the Iraqi people feel safe and believe that their police, army, and border forces provide them with an acceptable level of security. The Iraqi security ministries, institutions, and forces must be able to work together to secure the population and critical infrastructure; conduct basic manning, training, and equipping functions; support and enforce the rule of law; conduct operational level command and control; and sustain their respective forces.

What is your understanding of the level of agreement or disagreement, if any, on the definition of these minimum essential capabilities between the Government of Iraq, Ministry of Defense, and U.S. Forces-Iraq?

I believe there is common understanding and agreement by all parties of what the Iraqi security forces must be able to do in order to assume full and independent responsibility for the internal security of their nation.

If there is disagreement between Iraq and the United States on the minimum essential capabilities required for Iraqi security forces, how would you propose to resolve this challenge if confirmed?

We would routinely assess capabilities and maintain an ongoing dialog with the Iraqi leadership on missions, threats, readiness, and requirements. Through this partnered process, I would convey my assessments and best military advice. Experience has shown they have an appreciation for our capability assessment methodologies and understand the process to be very mature, based in a regional security context, and not a direct U.S. force comparison.

What is your understanding of the state of training and equipping of Iraqi security forces?

Due in large part to USF-I's tremendous efforts to date, I believe the Iraqi security forces are now functioning well as an internal security force, and all organizations are striving to reach their minimum essential capability objectives. Within the MoD, the Iraqi Army is functioning well as a counterinsurgency force. The Iraqi Navy is providing point defense for both of the country's off-shore oil terminals and is on track to achieve its objectives. The Iraqi Air Force has shown significant improvements in accessions, training, and ground support. Within the MoI, both the Federal Police and Oil Police are assessed as operationally capable while the Provincial Police and Border Police have shown progress in performing their security functions.

What is your assessment of Iraqi security forces progress toward assumption of full responsibility for internal security?

While we are witnessing Iraqi security forces that are increasingly independent and capable of providing internal security much work remains to be done. Continued U.S. efforts to train, advise and equip the Iraqi security forces will be required to meet the President's guidance and vision for a sovereign, stable, and self-reliant

Iraq. Without the continued support of the entire U.S. Government, including Congress, we put the achievement of our nation's objectives for Iraq at risk

In your view, what is the importance, relative priority, and urgency, if any, of the Iraqi security forces developing the capability to defend its borders and airspace from external threats?

In order to establish its legitimacy, both with its own population as well as with its neighbors, a sovereign nation must be able to defend and enforce its own borders and airspace from external threats. Iraq is no exception to this, as such, I consider this issue to be vital. Iraq is particularly vulnerable to border violations due to the malign intentions of some of its neighbors. We also recognize that there will be gaps in Iraq's ability to enforce its own airspace for some time to come. Both of these issues will require our continued attention and assistance to mitigate.

What is the appropriate role of U.S. forces, if any, in supporting the development of this capability with training, equipment, or other resources?

Through training, advising, and assistance efforts, USF-I has and will continue to play a critical role the development of the Iraqi security forces' capacity and capability. While we recognize that some gaps will exist when we withdraw, particularly in their ability to defend against external threats, we will make every effort to mitigate the risks associated with those gaps.

How would you characterize the performance of Iraqi forces in the conduct of security operations during and since the elections earlier this year?

We are seeing Iraqi security forces that are increasingly capable of conducting counterinsurgency operations and providing internal security for the population of Iraq – a fact that was highlighted by their performance during the March elections. Their actions since the elections have also been critical to maintaining the relatively low level of violence that we have witnessed during the critical period of government formation.

As U.S. forces are withdrawn, are Iraqi Army units assuming the areas and missions of these units?

Iraqi units have the lead for security throughout the country. U.S. forces and Iraqi Army units work together to ensure that as U.S. units move the Iraqi Army is prepared to assume responsibility.

If so, are gains in reduced violence and increased stability achieved by U.S. forces being effectively maintained in the areas for which Iraqi Army forces have assumed responsibility?

Yes. Iraq's security environment remains stable at historically low levels of violence. The Iraqi security forces continue to lead the security efforts in Iraq and to disrupt the violent extremists networks.

What is your understanding of the ability and commitment of Iraqi security forces to adequately maintain the readiness of the equipment they have been given or purchased?

My understanding is that over the past year, the two security ministries have made some progress in developing both infrastructure and capacity, but logistics and sustainment remain areas for continued focus. Supporting the maturation of the Iraqi supply and maintenance system, training a cadre of Iraqis to sustain and maintain their own equipment, and working to increase emphasis across the Iraqi leadership will ultimately result in an effective force. I believe the Iraqi security forces' leadership has an increasing appreciation for their shortfalls and will want our continued assistance to improve their strategic, operational, and tactical logistics systems.

If confirmed, what action would you take, if any, to expand the development of logistics capabilities and a commitment to a culture of maintenance within the Iraqi security forces to ensure that the equipment they have been provided is maintained and ready to meet their security needs and protect the investment of billions of U.S. and Iraqi dollars over the years?

I would continue with our detailed efforts, and fully support the priority the Iraqis have placed on getting their logistics capability to a higher level. The U.S. has the best military logisticians in the world, and our example and mentorship for the Iraqi security forces' leaders have been key to improving Iraqi capabilities and leader competency. As commander of MNC-I, I took on the task of emphasizing the importance of logistics competency with the senior Iraqi security forces leadership during visits to Iraqi units, in senior commander forums, and with the national leaders. I would continue this effort if I return as the commander of USF-I.

Advise and Assist Brigades and Military/Police Transition Teams

In your view, does the size, structure, number, and operating procedures for U.S. Advise and Assist Brigades and Military and Police Transition Teams embedded with Iraqi security forces need to be changed in any way? If so, what would you recommend?

As the MNC-I Commander I played a key role in the development of the size, structure, number, and operating procedures for U.S. Advise and Assist Brigades and am pleased to see that they are performing well. These organizations as well as the embedded Transition Teams provide the appropriate flexibility, partnership capacity, mobility, and force protection for the evolving conditions in Iraq. Adaptations will be addressed as conditions on the ground and feedback from tactical leaders dictate. Part of my responsibility is to recognize when change is needed and convey that to our Service institutions so they can responsively adapt to meet USF-I requirements.

What is your view of the potential transition of this mission to contractors?

If confirmed, I would thoroughly assess the viability of contractors doing these type missions but I think this could be a viable option. I believe the best approach would be military led, managed, and directed training teams in which contractors provide instruction, subject matter expertise, and team/individual skills training.

Contractors in a supporting versus lead role is appropriate in many if not most cases for military/police training. Based upon our department's recent experience, we utilize highly skilled, former and retired U.S. military & U.S. law enforcement personnel as contractors who are (often) OIF experienced and have the requisite military and police skills. We can leverage contracts and contractors to accomplish this training mission by keeping a military to military or military to police relationship as the organizing and leadership principle that directs the training goals and objectives.

The key to success in this effort as in almost all contracted support efforts is oversight. Oversight starts with adequate numbers of well trained contracting officer representatives. If we were to pursue this, ensuring we have the right oversight personnel and processes in place to monitor contractor performance would be one of my biggest priorities.

What in your view is the appropriate distribution of responsibility and resources for the security assistance, train, advise, and equip mission between special operations forces and general purpose forces in Iraq?

I think the distribution is based on the nature of the security environment and the current capability of the Iraq special operations and general purpose forces. USF-I's Deputy Commanding General for Advise and Training has responsibility to assess both of these Iraqi forces, and provide recommendations to the USF-I Commander on any re-distribution. From my understanding, the current plan for distribution of resources is effective and producing good results. I do foresee the potential to adjust the "distribution" in the future, but I am not in a position now to give specific recommendations.

What is your understanding of how the Army is ensuring that general purpose forces are properly trained for the advise and assist or transition team mission, to include dissemination of "lessons learned" to incoming brigades and teams?

Our Army is doing a tremendous job in providing trained and ready forces for Iraq. The Army adapted quickly to these requirements and is meeting USF-I's requirements and continuously working to improve their procedures based on deployed unit feedback and USF-I requirements and recommendations. If confirmed, I would maintain the active on-going dialog with our military services to make sure we properly train our service members and their units for our remaining military tasks in Iraq.

If confirmed, what would you recommend in this regard?

I foresee a potential requirement to better integrate our Transition Teams with the Advise and Assist Brigades. We started this initiative when I was last in Iraq, and I suspect we can always improve our integration efforts as we learn more lessons and reduce our presence. I also believe we can do the same for the integration of U.S. civilians into the construct. The civilian transition is a key component of our strategy and we must work together by sharing our military experiences and best practices with our civilian team members.

Command and Control

What is your understanding of the lessons learned about U.S.-Iraqi command and control of combined operations over the last year and especially since the withdrawal of coalition forces from Iraqi urban areas?

Iraq is an extremely challenging environment in which to command control, but over the last several years we have learned valuable lessons and instituted many interoperable procedures. The most significant of these, which we began in earnest during 2008 and 2009, was working hand in hand with our Iraqi counterparts at their national and provincial operations centers, as well as in combined joint tactical operation centers and outposts throughout Iraq. As we reduce our presence at the tactical operations centers we must ensure that we maintain or increase our presence at the national and provincial centers.

What concerns, if any, do you have about command and control relationships with Iraqi forces in combined operations, and if confirmed, what actions would you take, if any, to mitigate challenges or improve capabilities in this regard?

I do not have any major concerns over the command and control relationship with Iraqi forces, but I do foresee the need to routinely assess where we are and adjust accordingly as we draw down. It is imperative to maintain situational awareness and an active advisory capacity as force levels decline.

Burden Sharing

In your view, what is the appropriate role for the United States, and particularly of U.S. Force-Iraq, in reconstruction activities in Iraq going forward?

In my view the role of USF-I and the United States in reconstruction activities needs to remain focused on Iraq's efforts and expenditures to improve essential services and infrastructure. USF-I plays a role in advising Iraqi counterparts on security implications, critical infrastructure protection, and security and support for U.S. Government and other international civil development efforts. I am encouraged by reports that the Government of Iraq is currently spending a significant portion of this year's budget on infrastructure and essential services improvements. I think this indicates the effectiveness of U.S. advice and that the Iraq government recognizes its importance.

In your view, what capabilities or support should be the highest priorities for U.S. financial assistance to the Iraqi security forces?

I believe the highest priority for U.S. financial assistance to the Iraqi Government should go towards those requirements directly related to the establishment of the minimum essential capabilities for the Iraqi security forces. Once that effort is complete, we should focus our long term security assistance efforts on building a credible capability to deter external threats.

In your view, what capabilities and support for the Iraqi security forces should be the sole financial responsibility of the Government of Iraq?

I believe we should view this as a partnered effort that involves a variety of cost-sharing options that eventually leads to a long-term security relationship. The Iraqi government funds the preponderance of the Iraqi security forces' costs, but U.S. financial assistance is still critical for ensuring that there is no degradation of progress.

Readiness of U.S. Forces

What is your assessment of the readiness of U.S. forces that have been deployed and are deploying in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom? Have you observed any significant trends or gaps with respect to personnel, equipment, or training readiness in units in theater?

All forces I observed, inspected, and fought with on multiple tours to Iraq were well trained, led, and prepared for the mission.

In my experience in Iraq, any significant gaps in readiness are proactively addressed by the Service Chiefs to ensure trained, equipped, and prepared forces. If confirmed, I will stay engaged with the Service Chiefs to ensure no lapse during our responsible drawdown.

What are your views on the growing debate over whether the Army is putting too much emphasis on preparing for counterinsurgency operations and/or too little emphasis on preparing for high intensity force-on-force conflict?

I believe our current force is very capable of prevailing in other conflicts and contingencies that may arise. I believe our nation has the intellectual capital, and institutional and industrial capacity to maintain the force we have, and to adapt that force to meet future defense and contingency requirements. I think we have adapted our Department of Defense and whole of government approaches to win the wars we are currently fighting with an eye on what the future may portend, and with the type capabilities our nation will require in order to meet the security challenges of the future. At the tactical level the COIN fight is equally a force on force, controlled violence activity. We have the best trained and equipped military in the world, and we have the best, most adaptive and seasoned combat leaders in our nation's military.

Transition to Lead U.S. Agency

As the mission of U.S. military forces in Iraq changes and large numbers of troops begin to redeploy, responsibility for leading the planning and management of U.S. assistance to the Government of Iraq has begun to transition from the Department of Defense (DOD) to the Department of State.

What is your understanding and assessment of the theater's plans for this transition?

Considerable work has been done over the past year in both Washington and Baghdad to ensure the smooth transition from military to civilian lead in Iraq. I believe the transition plans, developed through the interagency process, are executable. The key to the plan in my mind is to synchronize the State Department's assumption of lead responsibility with our military troop withdrawal, and for our government to resource the Department of State to accomplish the task. A close civil military partnership with the Ambassador and the interagency will be critical. If confirmed I would work closely with U.S. Embassy Baghdad in the coming months as these plans are put in motion.

What is your understanding and assessment of the progress being made toward the completion of this transition?

I believe this will be a tough but essential effort. I understand that progress is being made, and Department of State and other U.S. agency capacity shortfalls are being identified and addressed by the Administration and Congress. Substantial planning and coordination for this transition is ongoing. As an example, more than 1,000 tasks currently being conducted in Iraq by members of USF-I have been analyzed to determine whether they should transition to Embassy Baghdad, transition to the Iraqi Government, or be terminated. It is this level of detailed planning that will ensure our transition success.

In your view, what are the most significant challenges to the efficient and effective transition of these agency roles?

Our strategy depends on the development of Iraqi security forces that are capable of defending their population against internal threats and a robust civilian effort that can sustain the positive momentum gained over the last two to three years. Inadequate resourcing of either could have profoundly negative impact on our partnership with Iraq and their re-integration into the region. The challenge is seamlessly transferring these tasks without degradation in mission performance. This requires that the recipient of the transfers has sufficient capacity to perform the task.

If confirmed, what action would you recommend or take, if any, to deal with these challenges and ensure an efficient, effective, and timely transition?

I would maintain constant interaction by teaming with the Ambassador and the embassy staff to ensure that all of our transition objectives are met in an effective and timely manner. I would provide my best military advice on how we can

complete the transition effectively and efficiently within the scope of U.S. goals for a sovereign Iraq.

Rule of Law Training

How important do you consider continued U.S.-supported training to Iraqi leaders in establishment of the “rule of law”?

I believe that U.S. supported training to Iraqi leaders in establishing the rule of law is critical to the success of the mission in Iraq. Establishment of the rule of law is key to providing domestic legitimacy to the Government of Iraq. The Iraqi government must have this continued U.S. support to succeed, and I believe this model is an example for the entire region.

What is your understanding and assessment of the impact of previous rule of law training initiatives and the current organization of U. S. government-led efforts to foster commitment to the rule of law in Iraq?

Achieving U.S. objectives in Iraq hinges on advancing gains made over the last several years. As a result of previous initiatives, the Iraqis have made progress in the development of the rule of law. There is still much work to do to ensure that mature, professional judicial and criminal justice institutions are in place to complement an increasingly capable police force. It will be critical to our success in Iraq that the U.S. government allocates the necessary resources to sustain further progress in this area.

Do you believe that additional effort is needed by U.S. military forces and through an inter-agency approach to develop doctrine and resources for rule of law training?

I believe sustained effort by U.S. military forces through an interagency approach to continue developing doctrine and resources for rule of law training is important to our overall objectives and that our interagency approach is effective. This type of U.S. sponsored activity increases our democratic credentials in the world, and the application of this program affords the U.S. the opportunity to improve and refine our doctrine and resources for “rule of law” training efforts in Iraq, the region, and internationally.

Sustainment of U.S. Commitment

Based on your knowledge of the Army and its state of readiness, how long do you believe the Army can sustain U.S. troop levels in Iraq of approximately 50,000 troops at their projected operational tempo?

I have tremendous confidence in the Army leadership and the American people to sustain the force requirements of the drawdown plan. All indications to date project a continued withdrawal of our forces in Iraq under the current timeline. This drawdown also supports our Army’s initiative to put the force more in balance and

within desired dwell rate ratios in order to improve readiness and Army Soldier and Family support programs.

Force Protection

What is your understanding of the status of U.S. forces' distribution in partnership with Iraq forces and to small local bases throughout the area of operations?

Force distribution and force disposition plans focus on transferring responsibility to Iraqi Forces, and consolidating and protecting U.S. forces at larger bases as we withdraw. The plan is being executed under the guidelines that leaders ensure U.S. service members are adequately trained and resourced for the mission, that they have the authorized rules of engagement that allow for their right of self-defense and unit protection, and that leaders implement thorough risk assessment and risk mitigation procedures. Also, stringent safety procedures for U.S. forces are being practiced and strictly enforced by leaders at all levels. Regardless, U.S. forces must maintain the logistical capability to conduct independent resupply operations throughout the theater.

If confirmed, how would you ensure the protection of those forces and the forces which would have to resupply them on a daily basis?

Protecting U.S. personnel would be one of my overarching priorities. I have confidence in USF-I's base and route consolidation plan because it was developed in large measure to provide for protection of U.S. forces while we transition responsibility to Iraq, and conduct our withdrawal. Equally, the plan focuses on providing security to the U.S. civilians who will work in some of these locations. The "hub and spoke" bases and routes will require appropriate resourcing, and constant assessment, adaptation and adjustment to maximize force protection of U.S. personnel and conduct an effective transition and withdrawal.

Intelligence Support for Ground Forces

Since the attacks of September 11, 2001, U.S. Special Operations Command and the national intelligence agencies have developed effective equipment, tactics, and intelligence dissemination practices to target al Qaeda personnel and personnel from other related terrorist networks. The effectiveness of these tools and their utility for regular ground forces in battling militias and improvised explosive device networks are now more widely recognized. As a result, some of these tools and capabilities are migrating to Army and Marine Corps general purpose ground forces.

Do you believe that regular Army general purpose ground forces can replicate the capabilities developed by special forces?

Yes. Our U.S. general purpose forces have adopted many of the same technologies and procedures developed by Special Forces. For example, our Special Operations Forces developed an intelligence gathering, analysis, targeting, exploitation and dissemination process that our general purpose forces follow. We

also have a greater level of integration and sharing at our combined fusion centers that provides enhanced intelligence and geo-location capabilities for special and general purpose forces.

What is your understanding of how commanders within U.S. Forces-Iraq are attempting to accomplish this?

The sharing of tactics, techniques, and procedures is active in Iraq, and reinforced by our Service institutions and agencies through a variety of web-based information initiatives, and with forward deployed support elements in theater. Experience within both communities has increased dramatically in the last several years, and our forces in the field are receiving the benefit of growing institutional knowledge of threats and threat capabilities. An example is the Joint Improvised Explosive Device Organization's and their deployed Task Force Troy in Iraq. Commanders and leaders at all levels are aggressively gathering information and collaborating with deployed support agency elements to maintain a qualitative edge in the fight. As Commander of MNC-I, we benefited enormously from these efforts, and we were able to counter serious threats to our forces. We have also shared a tremendous amount this knowledge and capability with our Iraqi partners so they can be more capable and independent. If confirmed, I would want to make sure the focus and support is commensurate with our withdrawal and the transition to the Department of State.

In your view, has DOD provided the resources necessary to acquire the equipment and intelligence dissemination support to enable Army and Marine Corps general purpose ground forces to adopt or adapt these tactics, techniques, and procedures?

Yes, DoD has been committed to acquiring and fielding these resources to our general purpose ground forces. However, as U.S. Forces in Iraq continue their drawdown I expect there will be challenges meeting USF-I's intelligence needs. If confirmed, I would continually assess those needs and the ability to meet them with the capabilities available.

Detainee Treatment Standards

Do you agree with the policy set forth in the July 7, 2006, memorandum issued by Deputy Secretary of Defense England stating that all relevant DOD directives, regulations, policies, practices, and procedures must fully comply with Common Article 3 of the Geneva Conventions?

Yes, I agree with the policy set forth in Deputy Secretary of Defense (DEPSECDEF) England's memorandum of July 7, 2006.

Do you support the standards for detainee treatment specified in the revised Army Field Manual on Interrogations, FM 2-22.3, issued in September 2006, and in DOD Directive 2310.01E, the Department of Defense Detainee Program, dated September 5, 2006?

Yes, I support the standards of detainee treatment specified in the revised FM 2-22.3 and DoD Directive 2310.01E. I believe those standards and procedures are correct guidelines and were developed based on the hard lessons our forces learned early on in Iraq. They are consistent with our American national values.

Do you share the view of the Judge Advocates General that standards for detainee treatment must be based on the principle of reciprocity, that is, that we must always keep in mind the risk that the manner in which we treat our own detainees may have a direct impact on the manner in which U.S. soldiers, sailors, airmen, or marines are treated, should they be captured in future conflicts?

I believe the rationale for prohibiting inhumane and degrading treatment goes far deeper than reciprocity. It is an important consideration and I agree it is an element that should guide us in the standard of treatment for detainees.

Do you believe it is consistent with effective counterinsurgency operations for U.S. forces to comply fully with the requirements of Common Article 3 of the Geneva Conventions?

Yes, I believe that it is consistent with effective counterinsurgency operations for U.S. forces to comply fully with the requirements of Common Article 3. The joint doctrine for counterinsurgency operations explains the benefits of complying with the standards of the Geneva Conventions and risk associated with failure to comply.

Iraqi State-Owned Enterprises

What is your understanding and assessment of the status of DOD efforts to help restart Iraqi state-owned enterprises to increase employment in Iraq?

The Strategic Framework Agreement establishes the foundation for building a prosperous, diversified, and growing economy in Iraq. These principles are fundamental to achieving both short and long-term stability and security. On the tactical level, the Commander's Emergency Response Program (CERP), and on the strategic level, the Task Force for Business and Stability Operations (TFBSO) are utilized toward this end.

The Task Force for Business and Stability Operations (TFBSO) is a great example, and one I am intimately familiar with from my last assignment in Iraq. TFBSO was dedicated to revitalizing Iraq's economy and creating jobs for Iraqis. TFBSO placed civilians with expertise in industrial operations and factory management on the ground in Iraq—skills previously absent from the American presence there. TFBSO provided training for employees, upgraded equipment, and prepared the factories for large-scale private investment, and provided the example for greater private investment in Iraq. Other efforts like Texas A&M University's in-country agricultural development teams improved Iraqi agricultural diversity, capacity, and environmental protection responsibilities.

Programs like these proved vital for commanders at all levels, and were a key component in establishing the conditions for our withdrawal, and can continue be a contributor to Iraq's stability and development during and after our transition. If confirmed, I will take a personal interest in these programs to make sure they are effective.

Iraqi Refugees

The United Nations estimates that over 2 million Iraqis have been displaced, of which 1.8 million have fled to surrounding countries while some 500,000 have left their homes to find safer areas within Iraq.

What is your assessment of the refugee problem in Iraq? Are more Iraqis returning home?

The refugee problem from the Iraq war is a regional problem, drawing interest from Syria and Jordan among others. There are over 200,000 Iraqi refugees registered with the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), and it is likely that there are a significant number of unregistered refugees.

Approximately one million Iraqis remain displaced in Iraq from the Saddam era. I do not believe the refugees who are returning home are being supported by a mature Iraqi system that fully reintegrates them back to their homes, and provides for their basic needs. Ultimately, the solution to the problem of Iraqi refugees and internally displaced persons is a stable, secure environment where these displaced people can reintegrate into Iraqi society and obtain employment.

Beyond working to improve the security environment in Iraq, do you believe that the U.S. military should play a role in addressing this issue?

USF-I can directly help in this effort by encouraging the Iraqi security forces to provide a safe and secure environment. Continued U.S. and international effort under the United Nations is needed to emphasize to the new Iraqi government that the successful return and reintegration of Iraqi refugees is the Iraqi government's responsibility, in their national interests, and a key component for normalized relations with their neighbors.

What should the role of the U.S. military be, in your view, with respect to those Iraqis who are returning to find their homes occupied by others?

USF-I, in conjunction with Embassy Baghdad, will continue to assist the Government of Iraq in addressing the issue of displaced persons. It is important to remember that with the implementation of the Security Agreement in 2009, the Iraqis assumed sovereignty of their country and people. We will continue to advise and assist them as they handle these complex issues.

Special Inspector General

The Special Inspector General for Iraqi Reconstruction (SIGIR) conducts comprehensive audits, inspections, and investigations which are valuable to Congress.

If confirmed, what steps, if any, would you take to support the audits, inspections, and investigations conducted by the SIGIR?

The reports of the Special Inspector General for Iraqi Reconstruction (SIGIR) provides valuable insights to the Force Commander, the Ambassador, officials in Washington, and to the government and people of Iraq. I fully supported the activities of the SIGIR as the MNC-I Commander and, if confirmed, I would continue to embrace this important Congressional body.

Traumatic Brain Injury

Recent press reports allege that there is a lack of leadership and policy with respect to the evaluation of and treatment for traumatic brain injuries in theater.

What is your understanding of the policy or policies in place that address the needs of deployed service members who have experienced an event which could result in traumatic brain injury or a concussion?

I acknowledge traumatic brain injury as a very real medical condition, and one that is adversely affecting many of our service members who have served in Iraq. I know that our military services and medical professionals in and out of the military are aggressively pursuing strategies and treatments for this type injury. I understand that we are developing clinical care instructions for all levels of TBI severity to cover both the deployed, and the non-deployed environment which includes mandatory concussion screening. I believe the Department's protocol for diagnosing, evaluating, treating, and following up on combat related concussion injuries is based on the best scientific evidence available, which is being enhanced through ongoing research efforts. Emerging DoD guidance on mandatory evaluations and rest times after a defined event will help to better address these incidents. If confirmed, I would maintain constant attention on this issue, and the other issues that affect the health and well being of our service members.

In your view, are these policies effective?

In my view, we need to improve compliance with our protocols, encourage reporting of signs/symptoms, and stay ever vigilant for further improvements in procedures. Clearly in the past, we have missed service members that sustained concussions or TBI whether because they didn't want to leave their unit or because they or their leadership did not understand the importance of being checked out and treated early. New DoD guidance will help as it mandates evaluations close to the injury and establishes policy, assigns responsibility and provides procedures on the medical management of traumatic brain injury in a deployed setting. Services and COCOMs have already begun to implement this guidance. If confirmed I would be committed to ensuring they are effective in Iraq.

Mental Health Assessments in Theater

The Army's Mental Health Advisory Team (MHAT) has made six separate assessments over the past several years detailing the immediate effects of combat on mental health conditions of U.S. soldiers deployed to Iraq. The most recent study, MHAT VI, found that "soldiers on their third and fourth deployment report lower morale and more mental health problems," and that stigma continues to prevent some soldiers from seeking mental health care. These types of reports lend support to the fact that increasing numbers of troops are returning from duty in Iraq with post traumatic stress, depression, and other mental health problems.

What is your understanding of the key findings of this and previous MHAT assessments, actions taken by the Army to address key findings, and the effect of such actions?

The MHAT is a great Army program. The results of MHAT VI reported that psychological problems and combat exposure in maneuver units are significantly lower than every year except 2004 in Iraq. It was also reported that multiple deployments and dwell time are correlated to mental health issues. There remain barriers to care and stigma associated with seeking care although some improvement in stigma was documented. The Army has augmented mental health staffing in both theaters, particularly Afghanistan where the need was shown to be high. In response to the observed need for resilience, in 2008, the Army established the Directorate of Comprehensive Soldier Fitness to correct the observed gaps in resilience capability. If confirmed, I would focus on effective implementation of corrective actions and procedures to address the underlining findings, and improve the mental health of our service members in Iraq.

If confirmed, what measures would you support to ensure ongoing mental health assessments of U.S. forces in Iraq?

I would support all DoD health assessment programs and emphasize leaders' roles in creating resilient units through leadership training and resiliency training. I would stress access of medical assessment teams to all our service members. And I would specifically work to decrease the perceived stigma of reporting one's own mental health concerns to medical personnel.

Do you have any views on how to best address the mental health needs of our troops, in terms of both prevention and treatment?

I have great trust and confidence in our dedicated medical professionals. I would stay abreast of these issues and recommendations, and would work on how to best implement them in Iraq. I would emphasize leaders' roles in providing for the mental health needs of their service members. And I would work to ensure adequate staffing, increase access to mental health services, stress the importance of resiliency, and insist on positive, proactive leadership.

Do you believe that mental health resources in theater are adequate to handle the needs of our deployed service members?

I currently have not had an opportunity to assess all the resources available in theater. In previous tours in Iraq I found resources to be adequate and effective, but with room for improvement. My combat experience also showed me it wasn't necessarily about how many medical resources we had, but whether they were at the right locations, doing the right procedures. I would follow this approach but would not be hesitant to request more mental health resources if warranted.

Sexual Assault

If confirmed as Commander, U.S. Forces-Iraq, you will be responsible for ensuring compliance with DOD policies on prevention of and response to sexual assaults involving U.S. military and civilian personnel in Iraq.

What lessons did you learn, if any, while implementing sexual assault training, reporting protocols, and command awareness while serving as Commander, XVIII Airborne Corps and Commander, Multi-National Corps-Iraq that can help improve any of these policies or their implementation in theater?

I believe that our policies are effective but this remains a core leadership responsibility. Leaders at all level must ensure that there is a culture and climate in place that allows victims to come forward and that each allegation is taken seriously and investigated thoroughly. The implementation of the "I Am Strong" campaign will help to address the concerns victims have about coming forward.

What are the unique issues, if any, that you believe need to be addressed to ensure that policies on prevention, reporting, medical treatment (including mental health care), and victim support are available in the operational environment of Iraq?

There are several environmental issues in Iraq that have bearing on this issue. Forces and bases will be in a fairly continuous state of transition. The regular turnover of units and personnel could affect the continuity of and quality of care for service members in theater. Maintaining the necessary capabilities to address sexual assault as we reduce our force structure must be carefully planned for to ensure our service members' needs are being met.

What is your assessment of the adequacy of sexual assault prevention and response resources currently available in the U.S. Central Command area of responsibility?

I currently have not had an opportunity to assess all the resources available, but during all my previous combat tours in CENCTOM, I found it to be adequate and effective, but with room for improvement. This is also being addressed in all Service programs like the Army's "I Am Strong" campaign.

Congressional Oversight

In order to exercise its legislative and oversight responsibilities, it is important that this Committee and other appropriate committees of Congress are able to receive testimony, briefings, and other communications of information.

Do you agree, if confirmed for this high position, to appear before this Committee and other appropriate committees of Congress?

Yes. I welcome Congressional oversight and I look forward to a continued relationship.

Do you agree, when asked, to give your personal views, even if those views differ from the Administration in power?

Yes. I will always give my best military assessment to our nation's leadership.

Do you agree, if confirmed, to appear before this Committee, or designated members of this Committee, and provide information, subject to appropriate and necessary security protection, with respect to your responsibilities as Commander, U.S. Forces-Iraq?

Yes.

Do you agree to ensure that testimony, briefings, and other communications of information are provided to this Committee and its staff and other appropriate Committees?

Yes.

Do you agree to provide documents, including copies of electronic forms of communication, in a timely manner when requested by a duly constituted Committee, or to consult with the Committee regarding the basis for any good faith delay or denial in providing such documents?

Yes.