


CJTF-OIR HISTORIAN

2020 OCTOBER 28

**COMBINED JOINT TASK FORCE – OPERATION INHERENT RESOLVE**

MISSION



STRIKE ISIL ACROSS THE
BREADTH AND DEPTH OF
THEIR SO-CALLED
“CALIPHATE”




TRAIN AND EQUIP, ADVISE
AND ASSIST REGIONAL
PARTNERS



MAXIMIZE EFFECTIVENESS
OF COALITION
CONTRIBUTIONS

ONE MISSION, MANY NATIONS

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#InherentResolve

Transcript of Oral-History Interview LTG R. Pat White – Commander, CJTF-OIR 2020 September 08

Interview by COL Christopher Eng – 7th Military History Detachment

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Executive Summary

7th Military History Detachment conducted an end-of-tour oral-history interview with LTG White – commander for CTJF-OIR (Combined Joint Task Force – Operation Inherent Resolve) on 2020 September 08. Field historians conduct oral-history interviews with key leaders in order to provide personal perspective and preserve institutional knowledge through introspective story telling.

This product is a year-in-review (2019-2020) -- LTG White tells the story of his one-year deployment – with flashbacks to his previous deployments, as well as his vision for the future. Audio file will be archived for the historical record at the Army Center of Military History. This product is for Soldiers' benefit – to gain insight into how a 3-star general thinks and operates at his sphere of influence to achieve results envisioned by the CJTF-OIR military campaign design.

Soldiers who read this transcript will learn how LTG White's years of experience leading up to this deployment helped him understand the importance of synchronizing joint military doctrine, applying partner-capacity-building with a global coalition and unified action partners, and leveraging diverse talent to win multi-domain battles of the future.

This product is presented in Q-and-A format because it is a transcript of the oral-history interview, conducted with LTG White at the end of his one-year deployment. Along the way, infographics were inserted to provide context for LTG White's answers to the interview questions. All infographics used here were published for a public audience. Generally, the infographics were inserted in chronological order of when they were publicly released, like a historical yearbook.

Key Insights

This product is primarily a transcript of the oral-historical interview with LTG White, with a collection of historically significant and publicly released documents inserted as context or proof of campaign progress -- one year of a multi-year military campaign and global coalition effort to accomplish enduring defeat of ISIS, now referred to as Da'esh.

LTG White said, during a 2020 May press briefing, "The ISF increasingly conducts independent operations in the fight against Daesh, including last year's Heroes of Iraq campaign... The ISF and SDF had achieved tactical overmatch against Daesh... The coalition remains steadfast in supporting our partners in Iraq and Syria. Moving forward, our efforts will focus more heavily on advising our increasingly capable partner forces."

LTG White said, during this interview, "We've been executing Phase-4 tasks -- we just never called it that, because we allowed it to grow into a political decision... This really is about campaign continuity... Only by the will and hard work of all the members of the Coalition, did we get this thing back on track with the partner force, really ... Therefore, the requirement is – you can fight *with* a partner – *for* a partner – or *through* a partner... You are only where you are today because of the efforts of those who came before you ... we stand on the shoulders of a lot of people – we never do it alone ... We'll see you on the objective."

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Transcript of oral-history interview with LTG R. Pat White; 2020 September 08



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
HEADQUARTERS, III CORPS AND FORT HOOD
1001 761ST TANK BATTALION AVENUE
FORT HOOD, TEXAS 76544-5000

September 25, 2020

It was my honor to spend the last year (2019-2020) as the commander of the Combined Joint Task Force – Operation Inherent Resolve (CJTF-OIR) and working alongside some of the hardest working service members, civilians, and partner agencies from around the world. It is the hard work of those who came before us and these talented individuals that made, and continue to make, the impressive progress in Iraq as successful as it has been.

My previous experiences in Iraq, serving as a battalion, brigade and division commander, laid the foundation for me to understand the environment, the people and the mission. Most importantly, those experiences initiated relationships and created trust with Iraqi forces that the overall Coalition was able to leverage to help the collective to continue to succeed.

Although at the end of the yearlong tour we made steps forward toward campaign objectives, there were unforeseen bumps in the road that stymied progress. From the Turkish incursion into Syria to rogue militia attacks to the global pandemic which required all forces to assess force protection to a greater level than ever before, the campaign to defeat Da'esh was always on the forefront of our leaders' minds. Ultimately, we saw great progress with Iraqi Security Forces operating independently toward connected operations to create effects on the enemy and showed high levels of potential for further reduced levels of coalition forces. This opens the door for NATO and the international community to potentially take the lead to support the security of Iraq. A decision that will take place this fall.

This transcript provides my thoughts of how we as a Coalition operated to ensure the security of Iraq and supported Iraqi forces to become more independent. With our eye on the objective, the campaign will move forward and maintain continuity. I know the security of Iraq will improve thanks to the hard work of the service members of the coalition, partnered agencies and the people of Iraq. God Bless and I appreciate the global contributions that were made over the course of this past year. It was truly a team effort!

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "R. White", is positioned above the printed name.

ROBERT P. WHITE
Lieutenant General, U.S. Army
Commanding

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Lieutenant General R. Pat White



Before becoming the 6th commanding general of CJTF-OIR (Combined Joint Task Force - Operation Inherent Resolve), Lieutenant General R. Pat White became the 61st commanding general of III Armored Corps; and Fort Hood, Texas – commanding four combat divisions, one sustainment command, one cavalry regiment, one field artillery brigade, and multiple enabler units – comprised of almost 90,000 Soldiers – on five military posts – across five states.

LTG White earned his Army commission as an armor officer in 1986. He served in a variety of Army and Joint/Combined command and staff positions while stationed in the United States, Europe, Middle East, and South Asia. These include combat tours for Operation Iraqi Freedom, Operation Enduring Freedom, and Operation Inherent Resolve.

In July 2017, as the commanding general of 1st Armored Division; and Fort Bliss, Texas – he deployed to Baghdad, Iraq – and assumed duties as the commanding general of CJFLCC-OIR (Combined Joint Forces Land Component Command – Operation Inherent Resolve) during the final defeat of ISIS in Iraq. He most recently served as J-3 (Director of Operations) at EUCOM (U.S. European Command).

LTG White earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in History from Claremont McKenna College, where he was a distinguished military graduate. He earned a Master of Science degree in Administration from Central Michigan University; and a Master of Science in Strategic Studies from the United States Army War College.

His awards and decorations include the Legion of Merit with 3 oak leaf clusters, Bronze Star Medal for Valor, Bronze Star Medal with 3 oak leaf clusters, Defense Meritorious Service Medal with oak leaf cluster, Meritorious Service Medal with 3 oak leaf clusters, Army Commendation Medal with 2 oak leaf clusters, Army Achievement Medal with 4 oak leaf clusters, Combat Action Badge, Parachutist Badge, and Joint Chiefs of Staff Identification Badge.

He is happily married to his wife, Emma, of 30+ years. They are proud parents of three children, and grandparents to three grandchildren.

COL Eng: This segment is the stage setter for the oral-history interview.

It's a rare opportunity to be able to interview a 3-star general to gain insight beyond what might be presented during a public affairs media interview. We anticipate a 1-hour block of time for this oral history interview, but it can be as short or long as you like. I've always admired how generals seem to have a natural ability as great story-tellers, so these interview questions are designed with a simple, 4-part framework, designed to prompt you to tell your story for the historical record. *This interview is structured to gain insight into your thinking over the course of your deployment as CJTF-OIR commander.* The 4-part framework will ask you to tell stories related to (1) Before, (2) During, (3) After, and (4) your vision for the future. We intend that your narrative be published for an audience of Soldiers, similar to how you have published letters to the force during your time as CJTF-OIR commander.

Before we begin with questions, here is a quick historical summary of CJTF-OIR:

Operation Inherent Resolve – 2014 October 17 to present
(United Nations Security Council Resolutions 2170, 2254)

CJTF-OIR MISSION: In conjunction with partner forces, CJTF-OIR (Combined Joint Task Force - Operation Inherent Resolve) defeats ISIS in designated areas of Iraq and Syria, and sets conditions for follow-on operations to increase regional stability.*

* www.inherentresolve.mil/About-CJTF-OIR/

CJTF-OIR commanders

1. 2014 Oct 17 - LTG James Terry (ARCENT)
2. 2015 Sep 22 - LTG Sean McFarland (III Corps)
3. 2016 Aug 21 - LTG Stephen Townsend (XVIII Corps)
4. 2017 Sep 05 - LTG Paul Funk II (III Corps)
5. 2018 Sep 14 - LTG Paul LaCamera (XVIII Corps)
6. 2019 Sep 14 - LTG Robert Pat White (III Corps)
7. 2020 Sep 09 - LTG Paul Calvert (TF III)

-- 2004-2014 – ISIS (Islamic State of Iraq and al Sham), also referred to as Da'esh, emerged from remnants of al Qaeda in Iraq. The making of ISIS happened over 10 years, but their rise to power became visible to the international stage after coalition forces withdrew from Iraq in 2011. By mid-2014, ISIS took control of key cities in Iraq and Syria.

-- In October 2014, CJTF-OIR was established. Following the campaign design (www.inherentresolve.mil/campaign/) through history:

CJTF-OIR accomplishes its mission – *to militarily defeat Da'esh in the CJOA (Combined Joint Operations Area) – by, with, and through – regional partners – in order to enable whole-of-government actions – to increase regional stability* – by conducting a campaign against Da'esh in Iraq and Syria – in four phases.

-- Phase 1 lasted to the end of 2015.

- 2014-2015 – *Phase 1 (Degrade)* – CJTF-OIR conducted strikes against Da'esh to blunt their expansion into Iraq and to begin to reduce their combat effectiveness.

-- During Phase 2, coalition forces liberated key cities in Iraq and Syria.

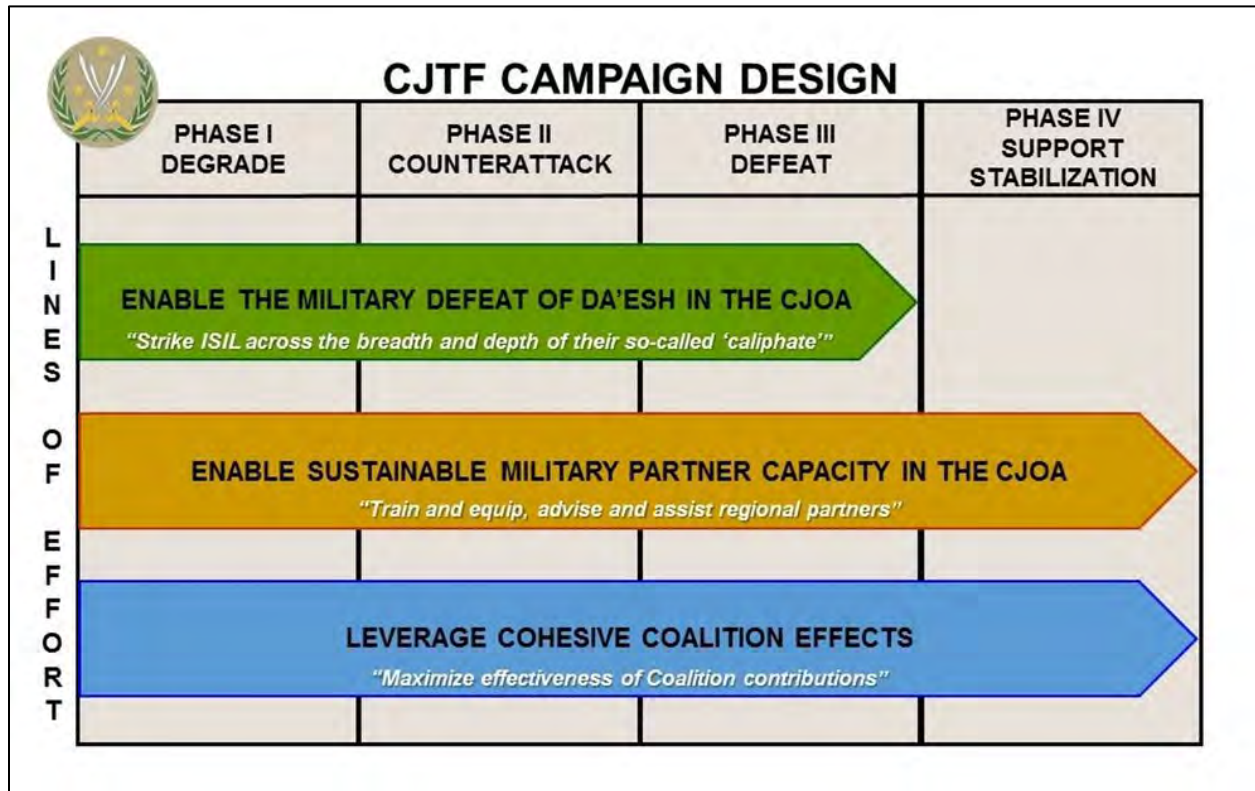
- 2016-2017 – *Phase 2 (Counterattack)* – CJTF-OIR supported ISF (Iraqi Security Forces) and partnered-forces in Syria as they attacked to liberate territory and people under control of Da'esh.
- 2017 July 17 – Liberation of Raqqah, Syria
- 2017 July 20 – Liberation of Mosul, Iraq

-- During Phase 3, coalition-partnered forces in Iraq and Syria worked together to clear all but the last 200 square kilometers of the Middle-Euphrates River Valley. March 2019 marked the end of ISIS control of any physical territory, reducing ISIS to an underground organization.

- 2017-2020 – *Phase 3 (Defeat)* – CJTF-OIR conducted strikes in support of decisive battles against Da'esh.
- 2017 December 09 – Iraq declared victory over ISIS
- 2018 May 12 – elections for Iraqi Parliament
- 2019 March 23 – Final destruction of physical caliphate

-- During Phase 4, coalition forces shifted to an advising role, and transferred bases to host-nation control.

- 2020 to present – *Phase 4 (Support Stabilization)* – CJTF-OIR provides security, planning, and required support to the Government of Iraq and appropriate authorities in Syria.
- 2020 July 02 – TF-Iraq transitions to MAG (Military Advisory Group)
- 2020 July 25 – Besmaya base transfer
- 2020 August 23 – Taji base transfer



CJTF-OIR (Combined Joint Task Force – Operation Inherent Resolve) organizes its tasks and missions along three *lines of effort* to bring about the military defeat of Da'esh in Iraq and Syria. A *line of effort* is a line, linking multiple tasks and missions, using the "logic of purpose" – i.e., cause and effect – to focus efforts to establishing conditions at the strategic and operational levels.

In other words, a line of effort links all the unit's actions – military and non-military – toward establishing a set of conditions to accomplish the mission.

In support of LOE 1, CJTF-OIR **enables military defeat of Da'esh in Iraq and Syria**. We accomplish this primarily by striking Da'esh across the breadth and depth of the so-called "caliphate" throughout both countries.

In support of LOE 2, CJTF-OIR **enables sustainable military partner capacity in Iraq and Syria**. We accomplish this primarily by training and equipping and advising and assisting our partnered forces in both counties.

In support of LOE 3, CJTF-OIR **leverages cohesive effects** of the contributions of the contributing nations of the Coalition. We accomplish this primarily by maximizing effectiveness – or harnessing power – of Coalition contributions of people, equipment, and logistics – in support of our partnered forces.

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Transcript of oral-history interview with LTG R. Pat White; 2020 September 08

COL Eng: This 1st segment is for **Before** you became the 6th commander of CJTF-OIR: **How did you get here?**

COL Eng: -- How has your prior experience prepared you for command of CJTF-OIR?



May 2017: MG White discusses operations with coalition forces in Besmaya, Iraq.

OCT. 12, 2017

<https://www.defense.gov/Newsroom/Transcripts/Transcript/Article/1341557/departments-of-defense-press-briefing-by-general-white-via-teleconference-from-b/>

Department of Defense Press Briefing by MG White via teleconference from Baghdad, Iraq.
MG White – commanding general of CJFLCC (Combined Joint Forces Land Component Command for Operation Inherent Resolve).

Watch video here -- OCT. 12, 2017

<https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=1929322120667253&extid=pgXp6rQ6VHH0eiOf>

MG White (Iron 6) – commanding general of CJFLCC, briefed the Pentagon Press Corps about operations in Iraq & Syria.

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[0:30] LTG White: *Generally speaking, I spent some time in Iraq*, which gave me a view of the very tactical edges of battalion commander, all the way up to a division commander – serving in various capacities of command in Iraq – over a decade and half or so. It gave me a pretty good view on both the tactical environment and the operational environment, and **the trust you got to establish with the partner force you are working with.** They do many, many things for you, which we'll talk about later on, I'm sure. One is, *just the experience here in Iraq has allowed me to view, over time, where the Iraqi security forces were headed;* and all the things we were doing to invest in their capacity and capability. It culminated with the end of the fight as I went out the door in 2018 – and the liberation of Iraq from the scourge of ISIS. So that broke that chapter off.



Combined Joint Forces Land Component Command
Operation Inherent Resolve

Nov. 3, 2017
Release # 20171103-01
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Iraqi Security Forces liberate Al Qaim

BAGHDAD – The Coalition congratulates the Government of Iraq and the Iraqi Security Forces (ISF) on their significant victory against ISIS in Al Qaim, western Anbar province Nov. 3.

The liberation of Al Qaim district and the key border crossing with Syria is a significant milestone in the ongoing campaign against ISIS. The ISF, with the support of the Global Coalition, have now liberated nearly all ISIS-held territory in Iraq.

"Iraqi Security Forces have fought hard to reach this point, and their battle-proven troops captured ISIS's last Iraqi stronghold swiftly and thoroughly," said Maj. Gen. Robert P. White, Commanding General of the Combined Joint Forces Land Component Command – Operation Inherent Resolve.

"The threat remains, and there is still hard work to do, but we will continue to stand side-by-side with the Iraqi Government and the ISF to ensure the enduring defeat of ISIS," said White.

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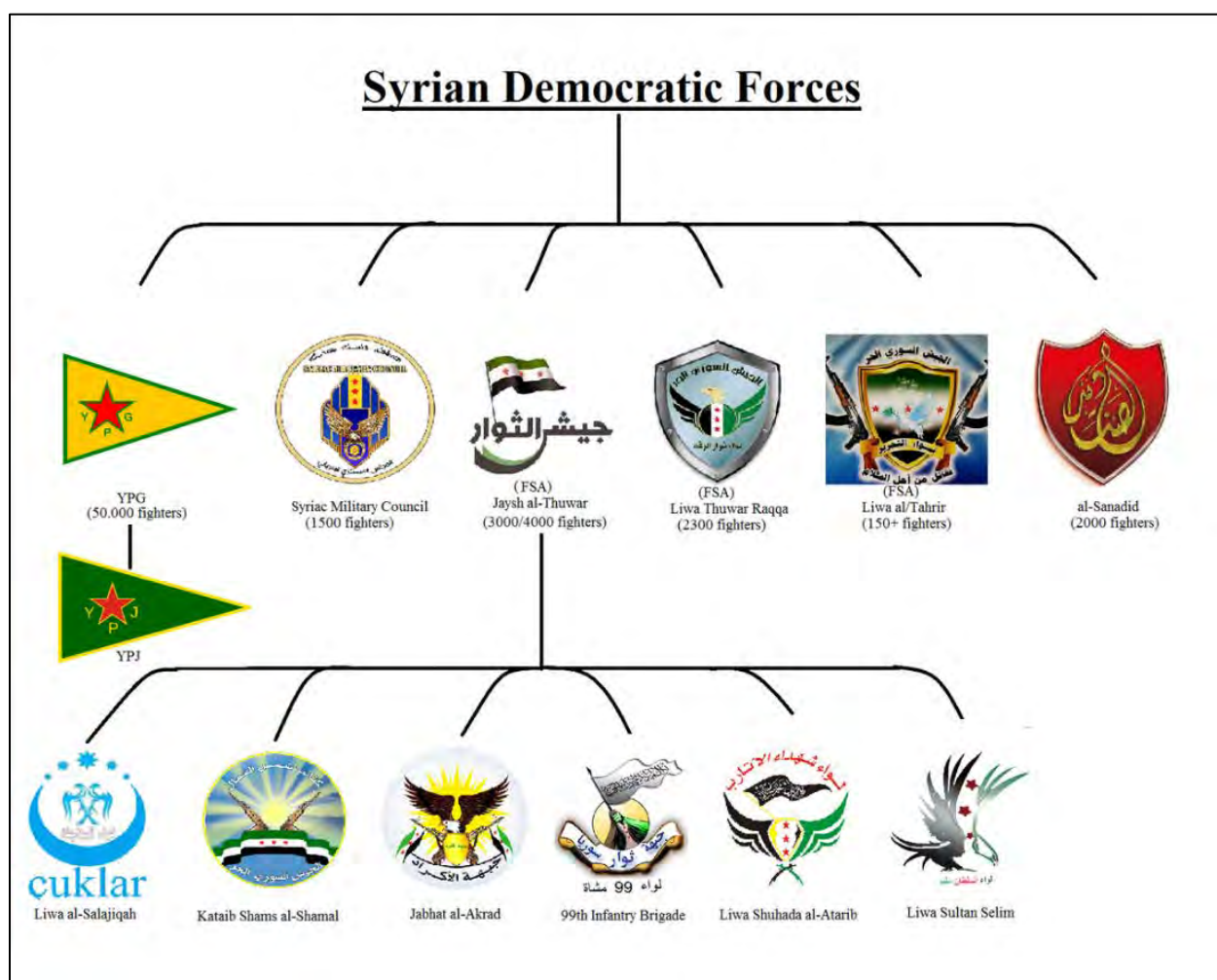
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Iraqi Security Forces





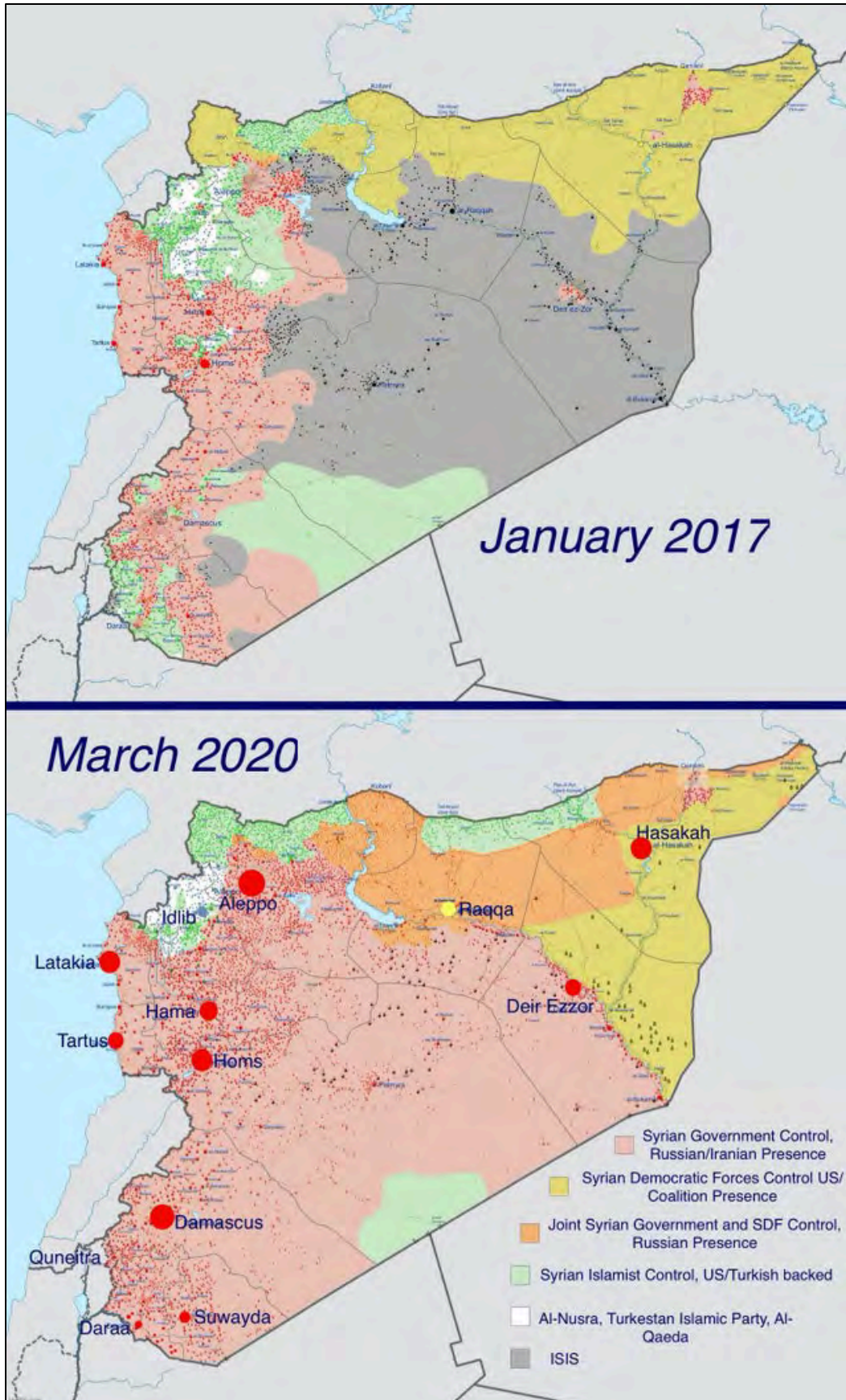
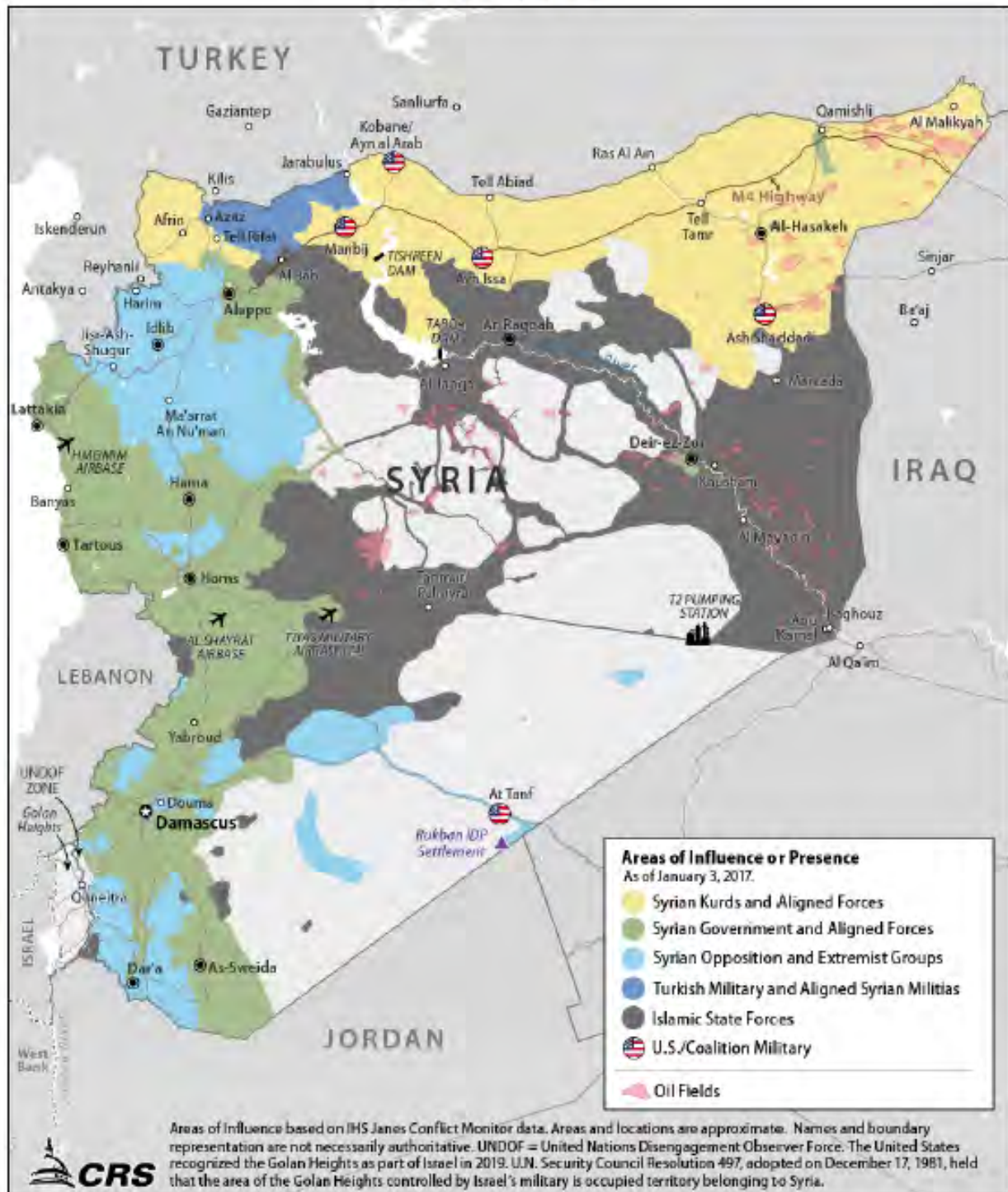


Figure 4. Syria Areas of Influence 2017

As of January 3, 2017

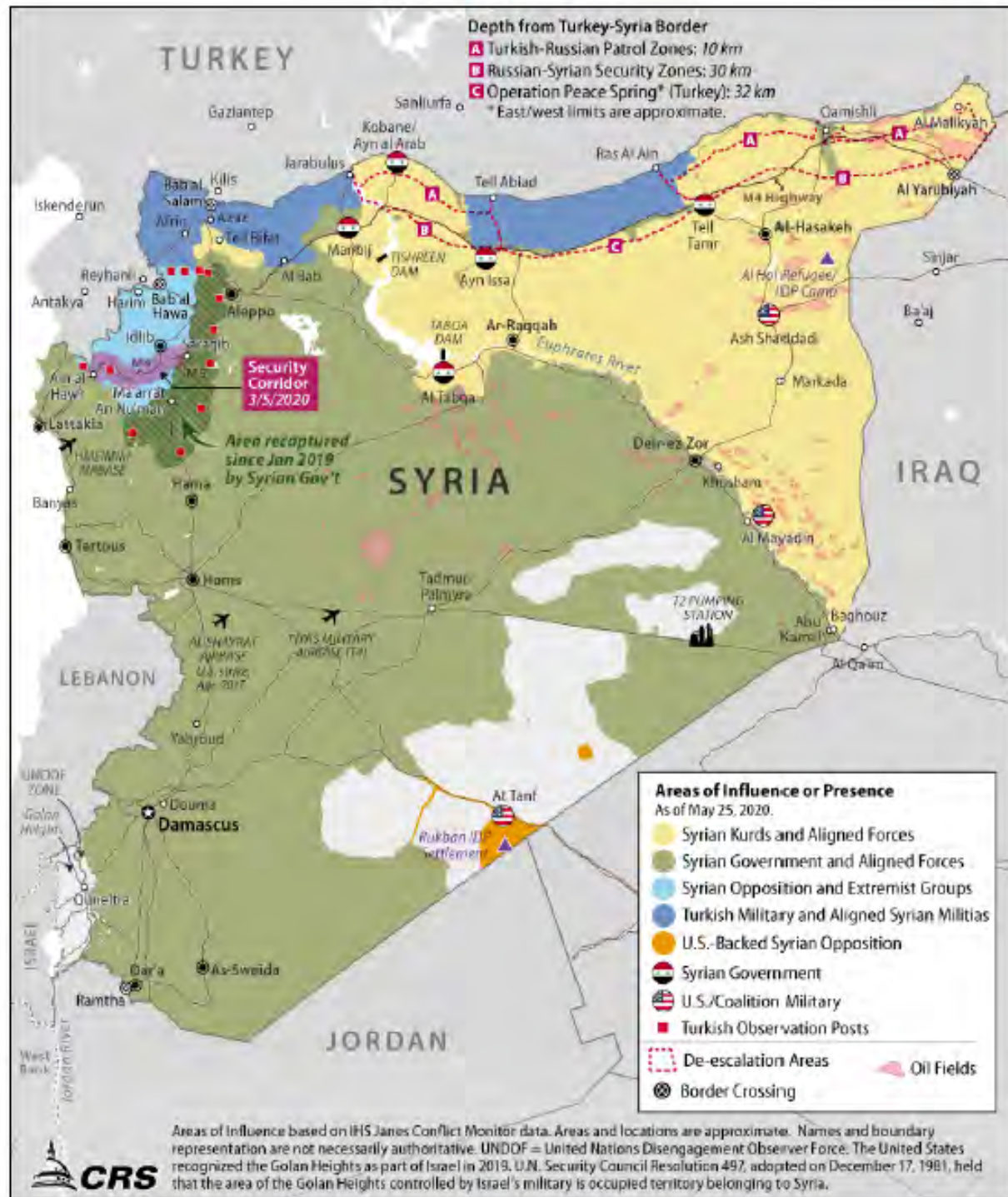


Sources: CRS using area of influence data from IHS Conflict Monitor. All areas of influence approximate. Other sources include U.N. OCHA, Esri, and social media reports.

Note: U.S. military officials have acknowledged publicly that U.S. forces are operating in select areas of eastern Syria to train, advise, assist, and equip partner forces.

Figure 3. Syria Areas of Influence 2020

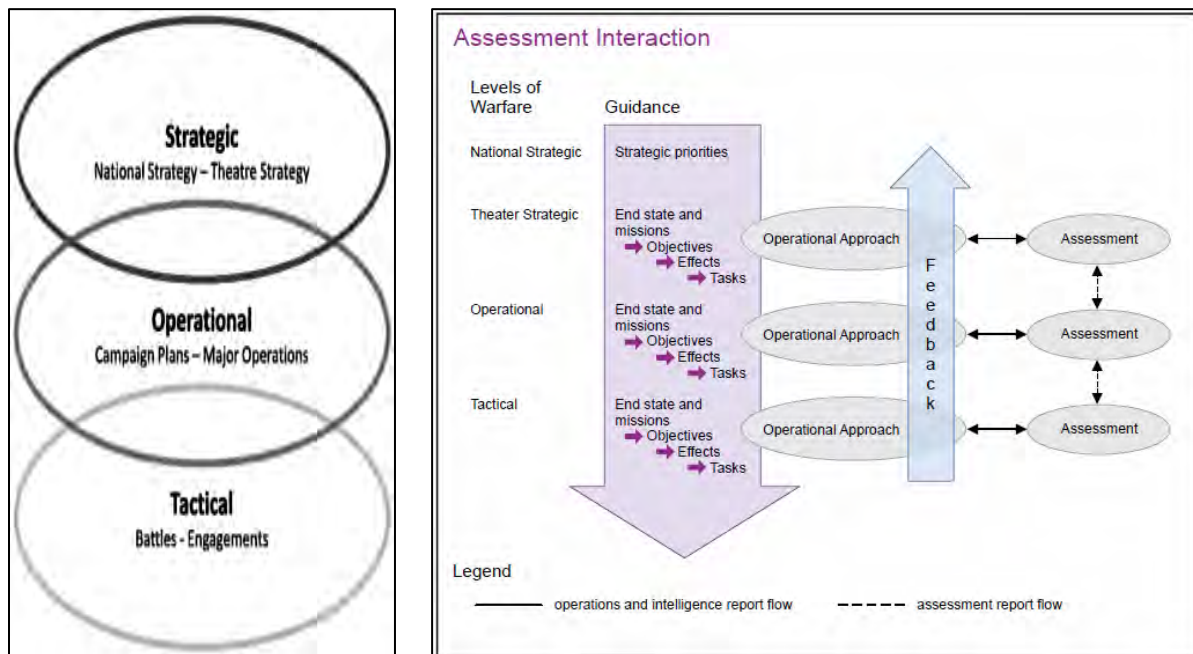
As of May 25, 2020



Sources: CRS using area of influence data from IHS Conflict Monitor, last revised May 25, 2020. All areas of influence approximate and subject to change. Other sources include U.N. OCHA, Esri, and social media reports.

Note: U.S. military officials have acknowledged publicly that U.S. forces are operating in select areas of eastern Syria to train, advise, assist, and equip partner forces.

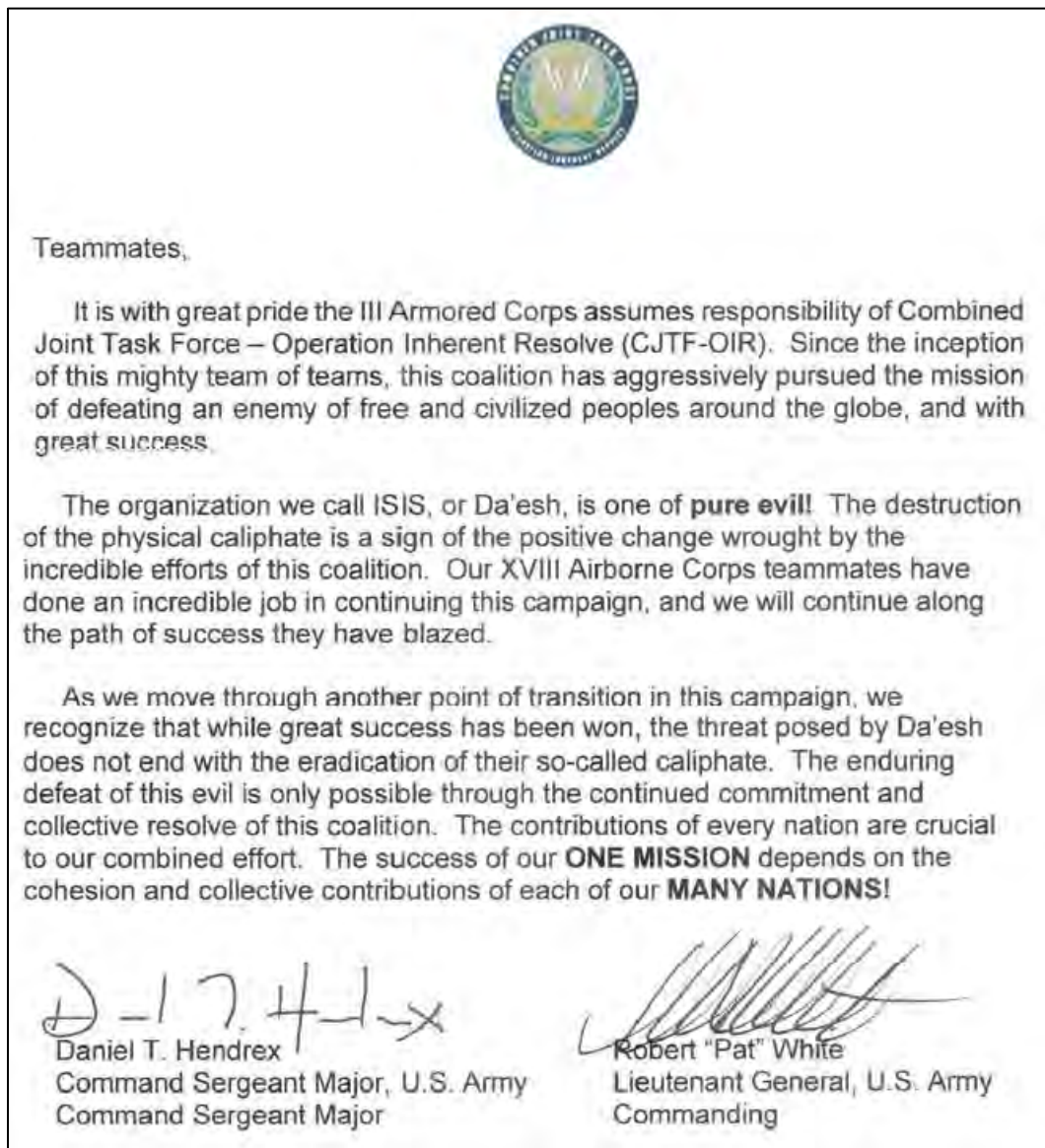
I went back and served some time in a combatant command headquarters [EUCOM], which was important for this particular deployment [CJTF-OIR] because it gave me a *really* good view from the top on how combatant commanders manage areas of responsibility, and the problem sets that they are responsible for. So I viewed the top, viewed the middle – on the three levels of war [strategic, operational, tactical] – and then combine all that with the education and experience over time as a military officer in an environment of a corps headquarters at the behest of the chief of staff of the Army. *Now, I'm filling in the blanks – those places that I haven't been before – with what I think is a better understanding of an approach*, which we'll talk about in a little bit.



[Joint Publication 3-0, Joint Operations, 2018]

First and foremost, it was understanding situational at tactical and strategic level **to help shape at the operational level, what we could do and what we would want to achieve through the partner force.** So tactical to strategic is one thing – and a little bit of historical context weaved in there – watching the Iraqi people, the Iraqi governments (plural) over time, and the challenges they've experienced – up north with the integration of the Kurds into the One Iraq policy with the United States – just things that happened in this part of the world, and all the challenges that are

associated with them. So again, over time, a little bit of context to help in the present, when I got here.

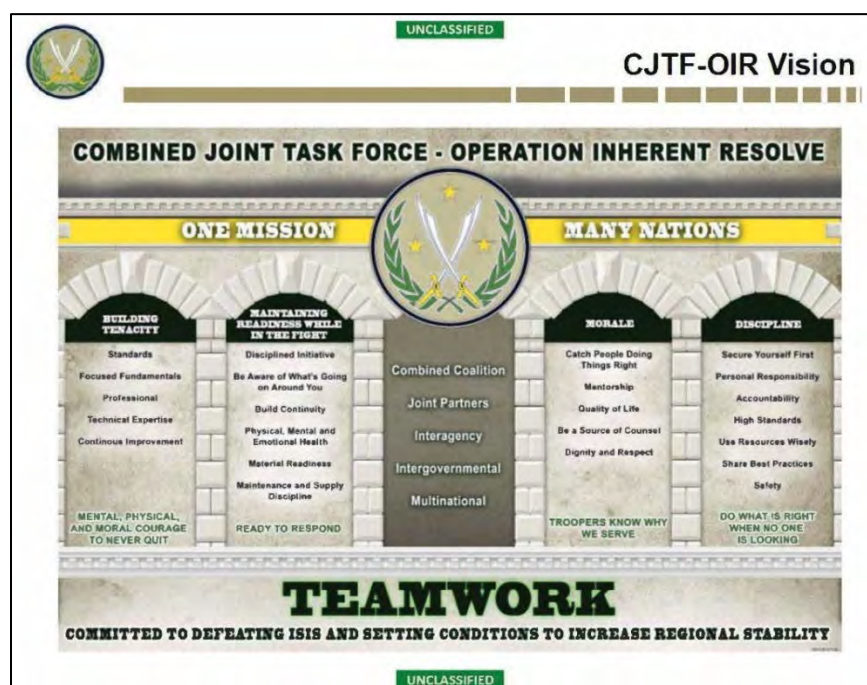


Lastly, in what gave us a little bit of momentum when I came in and took over from [LTG] Paul LaCamera, was **the relationships I had established over the years with the partner forces.** Most of the senior leadership in the Iraqi security forces, both up north in Kurdistan and in Syria – I had either fought with, met and conducted meetings with, or had been associated with, in the 2017-2018 time frame in Syria. [...] There were very few new personalities, which then built my trust and my understanding of what their

capabilities were, professionally and personally. So, I knew who to lean on, or who I thought I could lean on.

And then, I watched this fight [OIR] from the EUCOM [United States European Command] J-3 [Director of Operations] job in between leaving [Iraq] in 2018 and coming back [to Iraq] in 2019 – because Turkey is a part of EUCOM partnership, and Turkey was involved in joint patrols with the U.S., and developing battle programs around EUCOM headquarters to execute.

So, I think it rounded me out – a really long answer to your question, but *all past experience set the foundation for an understanding of the environment, the people, and the mission* that we were taking on with the campaign as it progressed through time. Over. [5:24]



One Mission, Many Nations			
Building Tenacity Mental, Physical, and Moral Courage to Never Quit	Maintaining Readiness While in the Fight Ready to Respond	Morale Troopers Know Why We Serve	Discipline Do What is Right When No One is Looking
Teamwork Committed to Defeating ISIS and Setting Conditions to Increase Regional Stability			

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Transcript of oral-history interview with LTG R. Pat White; 2020 September 08

<https://www.centcom.mil/MEDIA/PRESS-RELEASES/Press-Release-View/Article/1960770/cjtf-oir-transitions-commanders-for-defeat-isis-mission/>



U.S. Army LTG Robert White (commanding general of III Armored Corps), and CSM Daniel Hendrex (command sergeant major of III Armored Corps) – uncased the III Armored Corps colors at the CJTF-OIR (Combined Joint Task Force – Operation Inherent Resolve) transfer-of-authority ceremony in Baghdad, Iraq, on September 14, 2019.



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U.S. Army LTG Paul J. Lacamera (commanding general of XVIII Airborne Corps), and CSM Charles Albertson (command sergeant major of XVIII Airborne Corps) – cased the XVIII Airborne Corps colors at the CJTF-OIR transfer-of-authority ceremony in Baghdad, Iraq, on September 14, 2019.

U.S. Army's XVIII Airborne Corps (deployed from Fort Bragg, North Carolina to areas in Southwest Asia) – transferred its command authority to III Armored Corps (deployed from Fort Hood, Texas).





U.S. Marine Corps Gen. Kenneth McKenzie (commander of CENTCOM) transfers authority of CJTF-OIR – from LTG Paul LaCamera (commander of XVIII Airborne Corps) – to LTG Robert “Pat” White (commander of III Armored Corps) – during the transfer-of-authority ceremony in Baghdad, Iraq, on September 14, 2019.



CJTF-OIR is a global coalition with 81 member nations – which works “by, with, and through” partner forces – to defeat ISIS in designated areas of Iraq and Syria, and set conditions for follow-on operations to increase regional stability.

[5:25] COL Eng: -- How did you organize your team? Is there anything special about how you decided on their division of labor?

LTG White: We're pretty structured in the headquarters, with the general officers and flag officers from the many nations that we have that are serving within the headquarters, so *there was an established division of labor amongst the general officers.*

As I peered into the future, as I entered the theater again, *I saw a need for an adjustment to where some of our general officers and flag officers put the majority of their effort.* So, some tweaks on the [DCOM-O] (deputy commanding general for operations and intelligence), in what I expected of him. Some tweaks to the [DCOM-S] (deputy commanding general for strategy), in where I wanted him to work. And then a little bit more involvement by our Coalition general officers who have connections, as well, with both the Iraqis and Kurds, and taking advantage of those connections.

What it really resulted in was a *re-write of the Terms of Reference for the general officers at the headquarters* that we took about 60 days to test out. Then, I signed it around December [2019], to put that into play – *that was based on projecting to move into Phase 4 at some point*, so we [would be] already aligned at the headquarters, and [wouldn't have to be] trying to catch up.

That also helped establish new relationships and give us entry into areas of the GoI [government of Iraq] and the CASF [Coalition Aligned Syrian Forces] forces in Syria – that maybe we hadn't been touching on before – that we would need to have a relationship built – if we transitioned out of [Phase] 3-Charlie into Phase 4. [7:25]

**ANNEX A TO APPENDIX A
CHECKLIST FOR THE CHIEF OF STAFF**

1. Has a terms of reference or directive in accordance with the commander's guidance and deputy commander's input to delineate roles and responsibilities of the command group and key staff members been developed?
2. Has a deliberate process been established for staff training for receiving new personnel and augmentees, in the areas of predeployment, reception, and continuous sustainment?
3. Is there an effective staff training and integration program in place?
4. Has an effective RFI management process across the staff been established that effectively supports and employs the cross-functional and functional staff structures?
5. Has a staff tasker tracking system and business rules for use and management been assigned and has the staff been trained?
6. Has a post meeting minutes' process for all battle rhythm events been established?
7. Does the post meeting minutes process support staff integration and staff shared understanding in support of the commander's decision cycle?
8. As the designated battle rhythm process owner:
 - a. Does the JTF battle rhythm effectively support the JTF planning, decision cycles and other commander requirements and functions?
 - b. Has the JTF battle rhythm been mapped to provide a logical arrangement of events to show the critical path information flows to the commander using the JECC/JPSE IM and knowledge sharing methodologies or another technique?
 - c. Does the battle rhythm provide unscheduled time to support product development?
 - d. Is there a process and seven-minute drill template in place to facilitate the development of seven-minute drills? This process and drills will support effective cross-functional staff planning events that process inputs and deliver required outputs in support of the commanders decision cycle.
 - e. Does the battle rhythm effectively support continued staff shared understanding of the current SA and commander's intent?
 - f. Does the battle rhythm support commander battle field circulation time?
 - g. Is there a staff member assigned to be the battle rhythm manager?
 - h. Is there a battle rhythm management control process in place?
 - i. Does the battle rhythm support effective decision cycles for all critical paths?

A-A-1

[JP 3-33, Joint Task Force Headquarters, 2018]

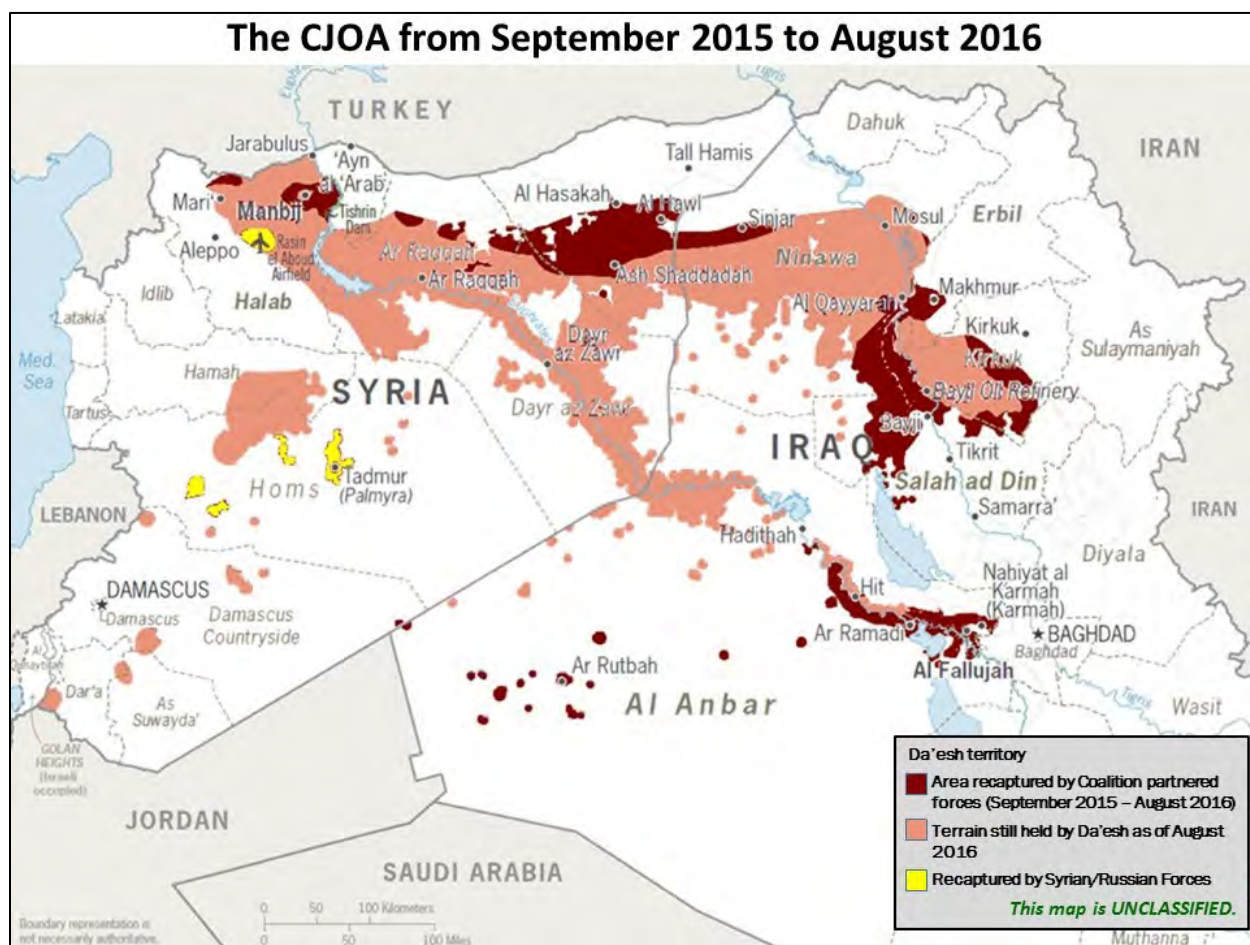
[7:30] COL Eng: This 2nd segment is for **During** this deployment: **What happened during your time as commander of CJTF-OIR?**

COL Eng: -- What were some priorities and objectives that you planned to accomplish, and what is your assessment of progress toward achieving CJTF-OIR campaign goals? Highlight stories of success and opportunities for improvement.

LTG White: All incoming commanders, when they assume the guidon, *take a period of time to conduct an assessment*. So, you've got these pre-conditioned beliefs of what it's going to be like when you enter – and the first thing you do is validate, or not, what's in your head. That consists of anywhere between 30 and 60 days to conduct an assessment. Then, based on that assessment, is when you really start to lean into things you may need to change.

I think the most forgotten aspect of the campaign over time that you may or may not have heard us trying to stress is – **this was really all about the partner force – this part of our campaign**. In trying to convince the Global Coalition, the higher headquarters, lateral headquarters, and down inside the formation, that what we really wanted here was **that capable partner force that could sustain itself for independent operations**. That's what we've always wanted. They needed help at the start – in 2014, they asked for it; we gave it – but they had progressed along a path, based on our military campaign, to where *I felt they could begin to take on a little bit more of the load independently*, without our direct intervention in some areas.

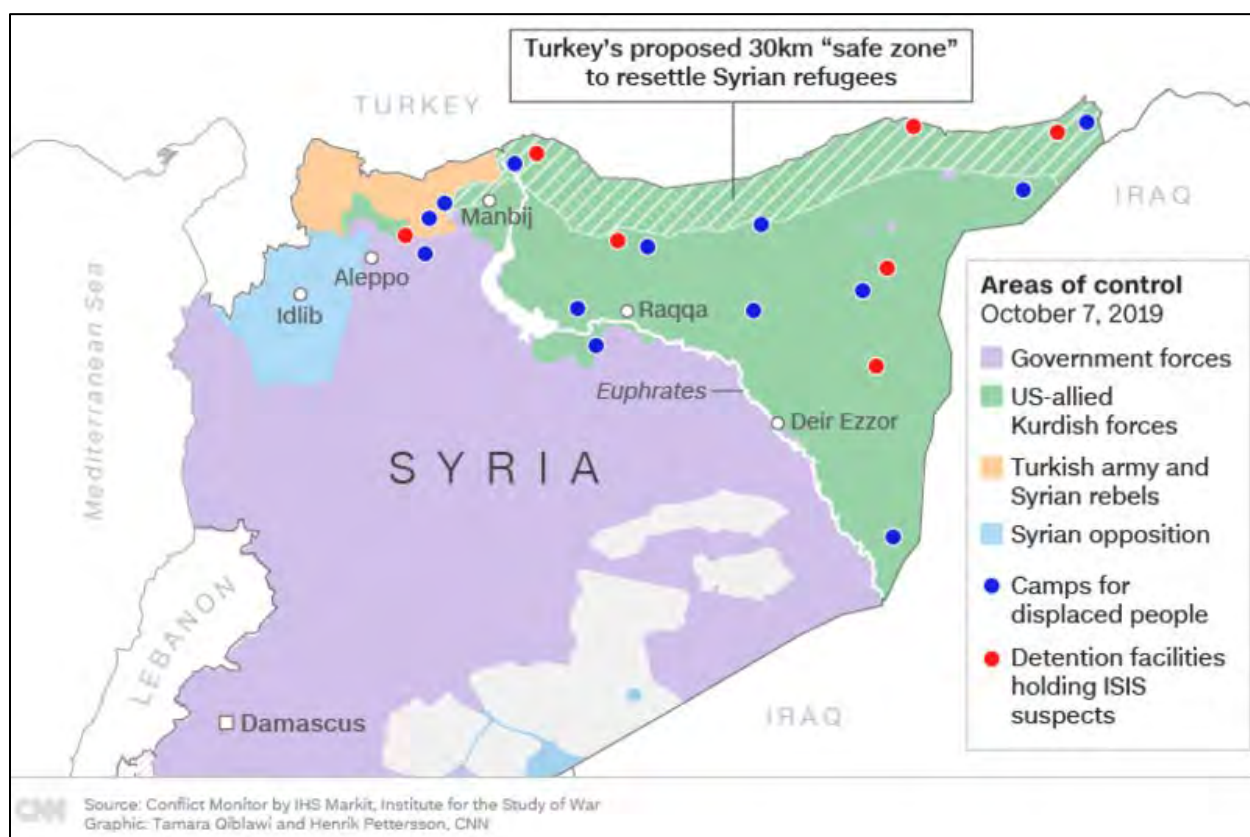
We took the existing campaign plan first – laid it side-by-side with my commander's assessment – and balanced what looked about right (and the same), and what was kind of a little bit off kilter (that we had vectored away from, and maybe taken part of the by-with-and-through mentality that we had been operating off of, but may have been trying to hang on to it too much, so that we could validate our existence here).



In my assessment, what I noticed was, **the Iraqis were actually conducting operations independently**, without necessarily our direct intervention – but often, those operations had no effect on Da’esh. It was, what you would describe as, framework operations that were just meant to generate activity in the partner force. *I knew that if we could get them steered in the right direction through mentorship and advising at the senior level*, that they would begin to pull it together. That was the path that we were on, moving into the latter half of October [2019]. We were starting to steer them towards – “Hey, if you’re going to get a couple of brigades out on the ground, how about we get them out on the ground in the right areas? So, let’s talk about your intelligence feeds, and how you’re developing where Da’esh is, and what Da’esh is doing.”

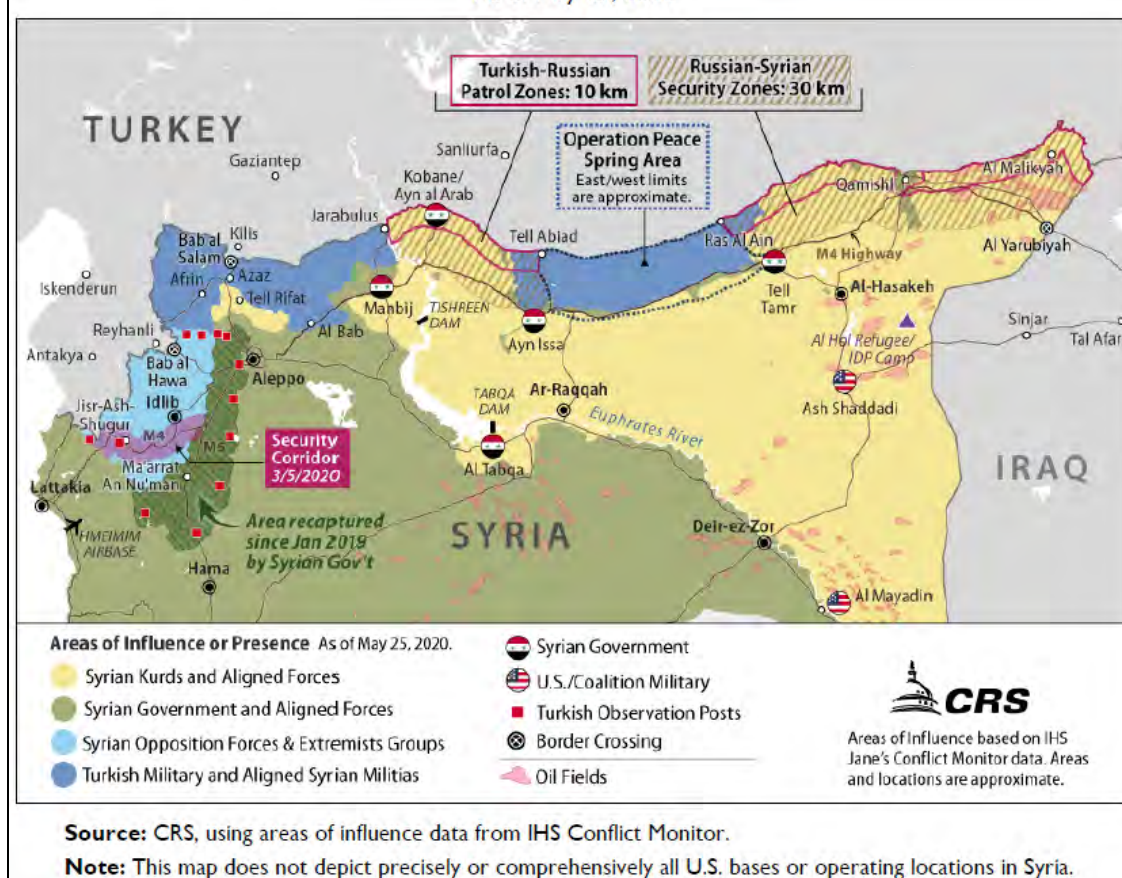
At the forefront of this Coalition's mind, I tried to [impress upon them] that this is about the partners. What allows us to normalize in a year or two is **a partner force that can get out there and get after it by themselves**; and that they can sustain operations over time; and that they maintain tactical overmatch against the adversary.

That set the foundation by which we thought we would move forward – that [during] *this one year of a multi-year campaign* – we would see some growth in the security forces; we could focus our efforts along the way, so that over about a year and a half, we could re-posture ourselves into those locations where it mattered the most – and then that all changed in November [2019]. [11:47]



**Figure 5. Syria-Turkey Border**

As of May 25, 2020



[11:48] *All of the best-laid plans that we had, started to go a little bit wonky*, as we came out of the Turkish incursion in Syria. We began to have some national effects against Da'esh senior leadership, and then began to experience violence against the Coalition (for the reasons that they want to prosecute violence against the Coalition) – and that did cause us to have to re-prioritize what we thought our 18-24 month plan was going to be; to continue on path with the mission.

First, it was in Syria – to change the way we looked at Syria, as it had been over the past three or four years – with [turmoil along] the Syrian border, coming in contact with portions of our partner force – [we began to view] Syria as a security zone for Iraq – not an independent operation, but a connected operation to Iraq – where *you've got defense at your back, your strength is up front, and you are still pursuing the defeat-Da'esh mission* in an environment that is much smaller and a little bit more contentious, because of all the varying interests.

There were some absolutely amazing stories during the October [2019] time frame when we began to get the word and direction to pull back and *re-position ourselves in Syria, while still providing, what I deemed as, a security zone for Iraq*. There are a number of service members who were a part of that experience that moved and got out safely; tremendous amount of equipment; stayed with the partner force; and then set in areas on very short notice that would buoy our security zone for Iraq.

So, that was Syria. When we started experiencing a little bit of additional violence here in Iraq, that was really an extension of the violence from May [2019], where the rogue militia groups believed that all problems in Iraq emanated from the Coalition and the United States. So, what better way to affect our decision-making, after watching what happened in Syria, than to begin to attack us at pace, with some increased frequency, and increased volume. *We had to re-prioritize the resources that we were putting against the defeat-Da'esh mission into a force-protection mission. Protect the force first – you can't do the mission unless you have your force protected.*

And then that extended into the partner force – “Hey, I can’t do this all on my own; we can’t do this all on our own, because we don’t have a lot of combat troops. Therefore – you have the standing army – you need to provide security for the bases, that are yours, that we are occupying.”

Then the prime minister [Adel Abdul Mahdi] resigned, and it threw the whole government [Iraq] into disarray. That was right towards the end of November [2019], which then gave more [freak] back into the rogue militias to do what they felt needed to do outside of what you would generally describe as governments in control. As the violence in Iraq against the Coalition increased – we did take some casualties – *I had begun a series of formal letters to the prime minister, requesting assistance in protecting our forces;* to get the rogue militia groups to stop attacking us – basically started to send warning signals – “Look, you’re going to back me into a corner – somebody is going to die, or a bunch of people are going to get hurt, and I’m going to respond – and none of us want that to happen, because we are all here for D[efeate]-Da’esh; not for these rogue militia groups that are malign and backed by those [who] don’t have Iraq’s best interest in the forefront of their minds.”

Essentially, on the 29th [December 2019], after the third letter that I had sent to the prime minister, I called him and said, “Hey, look, I’ve got to take action. We’ve lost some of our teammates due to these attacks. Your security forces aren’t helping; you won’t go public in condemning these things; so the only recourse I have is to respond.” And we did respond. *I tried to respond in an area that would be less contentious – away from the center of Baghdad – but where these groups housed both ammunition and personnel.* Then, from there, the security environment degraded more rapidly than I had seen anywhere in my 35 years in the United States Army. [17:12]



After we struck the Kata’ib Hezbollah facilities on the border and killed a number of their fighters that were also in a PMF [Popular Mobilization Forces] brigade, the PMC [People’s Mobilization Committee] and the leadership of *the malignant groups decided it would be a great time to march on the U.S. embassy peacefully – or at least that’s what they claimed.* They actually sold the prime minister and our partner here in the JOC-I [Joint Operations Command – Iraq] on the belief that they would just camp out for the day, peacefully protest the presence of American troops, and then they would leave. Whether the full truth was briefed, or whether there was collusion – not for me to judge – but what I do know is that it lasted more than a day, and it wasn’t peaceful.

That started generating more momentum back in [Washington] D.C. and the CENTCOM headquarters – how do you respond; reinforce? “Hey, I need some extra guys up here for force protection” – then days – within 24 hours of the streets clearing of those rioters and the attack on the U.S. embassy – Qasem Soleimani and Abu [Mahdi al-]Muhandis were killed on Baghdad Road in an attack against their convoy, which then stoked the fire – so the cycle of violence was just increasing and increasing. *Go back to what I said at the beginning – none of this did we rehearse, did we think the environment would turn this way* – “This was supposed to be a nice year; let’s progress through this campaign, it’s all good...” The only thing we were thinking about was a withdraw from Syria.

US, UK, France military presence in Iraq

Eyes have turned to U.S. military bases in Iraq after Iranian threats of retaliation to the Jan. 3 killing of top military general Qasem Soleimani in a U.S. drone airstrike.



U.S. HAS NINE MILITARY BASES IN THE COUNTRY

Roughly 5,000 U.S. troops have remained deployed in Iraq since 2014.



Camp Victory Army

Base at Baghdad International Airport and al-Taji Military Base are used for training Iraqi forces.

Habbaniyah Air Base

and Ain al-Asad Air Base have been used actively during the anti-Daesh campaign in 2014.

The Harir Air Base

came to the forefront after Donald Trump's decision to withdraw U.S. troops. The Harir base is regarded as very safe for the U.S. as it is located in an area where the Daesh threat is less effective than other parts of the Iraq. The Harir base is also strategically important given it is the closest U.S. military base to the Syrian border.



The U.K. does not have military bases in Iraq. It currently has **400** military personnel in the country.

However, the total number of U.K. soldiers and civilian personnel is estimated at around **1,400** with the additional deployments made to combat Daesh.



French military presence in Iraq

France currently deploys **300** military training staff in Iraq.



January 7, 2019



UNCLASSIFIED

Transcript of oral-history interview with LTG R. Pat White; 2020 September 08



DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE
COMBINED JOINT TASK FORCE – OPERATION INHERENT RESOLVE
UNION III, BAGHDAD, IRAQ
APO AE 09348



January 22, 2020

Members of the Coalition to Defeat Daesh,

Force protection remains my top priority and we continue to monitor all threats. We know that malign groups aim to expel Coalition forces through political intimidation and threats, and some have plans to resort to violence if this effort fails. As demonstrated by the recent rocket attack on the U.S. Embassy, the risk to force remains high.

My second priority is maintaining relationships with our Iraqi partners. As a result of your efforts, those relationships remain good, but there are areas of friction, particularly at the higher levels. I need you all to continue to work this as long as force protection conditions permit.

Our mission remains the enduring defeat of Daesh, which we have conducted by, with and through a willing partner. At this time, some of our partners have been ordered not to work with the Coalition. This is a sensitive issue requiring careful messaging, coordinated by my HQ. My staff will issue the appropriate orders when the environment permits us to resume our primary mission, so it's imperative you stay current with the latest FRAGOs. I know we would all prefer to resume A2E and training activities immediately, but I will not order the restart without a clear understanding of the risk related to this decision – to the Coalition and our Iraqi partners.

Following the successes of 2019, the time was right to adjust our laydown. The events of the last few weeks accelerated this, particularly with the move of the staff out of Union III. I do not intend to re-grow our forward presence in Baghdad – in fact, we will reduce further, so you should plan accordingly. In December, I had already decided to cease our permanent presence at Qayara West, and this will go ahead as planned. I will consider the need for further adjustments in the coming weeks.

For the next few months we will see an increase of information pertaining to our partnership and mission in the media, particularly about our presence in Iraq. Some of it will be informed and some of it will be rumor. During this time our messaging will be critical and require restraint and careful control of information; words matter and we must be disciplined in our communications. We are in a sensitive political environment, and you must all ensure that you play your part by not speculating about future options in public.

I remain incredibly proud of what you are all achieving every day in support of this righteous mission.

One Mission, Many Nations

Robert P. White
Lieutenant General, USA
Commanding

UNCLASSIFIED

[18:59] *The equation in the campaign plan was definitely being affected.* I gotta tell you – having watched the Marines that came in from the Special [Purpose] MAGTF [Marine Air-Ground Task Force – Crisis Response – Central Command] to reinforce the U.S. embassy when it was being attacked [December 31, 2019 to January 1, 2020] by those groups with Molotov cocktails and hand grenades – and they were ripping the doors and windows and computers out with some of these entry points – the amount of discipline and control that they [Marines] exhibited was pretty phenomenal. These guys [Marines] withheld lethal fires – I'm not really sure that if I was a 22-year-old, and guys were tossing Molotov cocktails at me, and trying to climb over the wall of the United States embassy – sovereign U.S. territory – I may not have been as disciplined. *It's just an amazing story.* I think that's what allowed us to bring that riot, and that attack on the embassy to closure sooner than later – because had we responded kinetically, and with lethal fires, it just would have gotten worse. But they [rioters] could not get a reaction, other than pure defense [from the Marines]. *Again, those Marines were absolutely phenomenal in their discipline and control.*



[20:30] While all this is going on, I'm thinking, "What in the heck is going to happen to the D-Da'esh campaign now?" – because now the primary threat that has exhibited itself are *these outlaw militia groups that don't pay attention to what the government is saying*, because there is no government – there is a caretaker (prime minister) – and who are freely lobbing 107s and 122-rockets – it was a free-fire zone inside the IZ [Iraq] and at some of our bases out there.

February 9, 2020 — CJTF-OIR reflects on 2019 and looks forward to 2020.

<https://www.centcom.mil/MEDIA/NEWS-ARTICLES/News-Article-View/Article/2078679/cjtf-oir-reflects-on-significant-gains-in-2019/> CJTF-OIR reflects on significant gains in 2019

- ☐ Overview: One Mission, Many Nations
- ☐ January – March: Defeat of the Physical Caliphate
- ☐ April – June: Period of Transition
- ☐ July – September: A Will of Victory
- ☐ October – December: Changes in Iraq and Syria
- ☐ 2019: A Year of Building Partner Capacity – Transitioning from Training to Mentoring
- ☐ January 2020: CJTF-OIR Shares Security Goal with Iraqi Partners and Stands Ready to Resume Defeat-ISIS Mission
- ☐ Remembering Sacrifice

What are we going to do about the D-Da'esh campaign? I came to a conclusion that, if we had the opportunity, we would accelerate the 18-24-month plan, to *re-position ourselves, to reduce the attack surface for these groups, and make it a lot harder for them to come after us*. If they did come after us, it was going to be in places where we could easily defend and respond.

An amazing job by the entire Coalition – to begin to transfer and close – of the 17 bases that we were in – three quarters of those bases – scheduled for about two years – in a five-and-half-month period. All those decisions were being made in early January [2020], as I went through the thought process of, "*How do I maintain being able to get back to a D-Da'esh mission once this thing settles?*" How do I reduce the attack surface and take wind out of the sails of the outlaw groups, and how do I re-establish the partnership with the Iraqi security forces?" – because they [ISF] broke when this violence started.




[22:13] *We were able to regain a little bit of the initiative with the partner force.* They began conducting operations. We re-established our relationship – talked to the prime minister, minister of defense, and the chief of defense, and explained what we were doing with our re-positioning, which then allowed them a narrative that the Coalition was doing some things based on what they had asked – it was interesting to watch the interplay there.

In the end, all I was trying to do was get to some places where we could defend, and we could get back on track. We had hung on to some very small bases that were very vulnerable and not easily defendable, and they were not truly serving a purpose in the campaign. We had moved past the purpose of having those bases. Although unfortunate, *it was an opportunity to take advantage of that to begin to reduce, both our posture and our presence,* especially around Baghdad, which is why Taji [base transfer on August 23, 2020] was such a big deal.

August 24, 2020 <https://twitter.com/coalition/status/1297937966015197184>

Camp Taji, Iraq – what's been achieved?





Coalition forces have trained over
47,000
Iraqi personnel at Taji in skills such as conducting operations and administering medical aid.










ISF soldiers and units trained at Taji played an essential role in the Iraqi Army's
liberation of Mosul
in 2017.




In 2019 the Iraqi School of Infantry Non-Commissioned Officers became the first Coalition training facility to achieve
independent operating capability.


Following the handover of Camp Taji, Coalition forces will continue to provide specialist support including
intelligence, surveillance & reconnaissance.



التحالف الدولي
GLOBAL COALITION

[23:24] Then, of course, *we're just starting to get momentum there* – we've re-established with the partner forces – it's March-ish [2020] time frame, and outlaw groups come at us again. So, again, in discussions with the prime minister – *“Hey, look, we've been here before; we've been down this road.”* I'm only going to send you one letter. You've seen the other letters; you saw what happened; you saw the cycle of violence that it led to. I need your help stopping this.”

This time, the difference was, the Iraqi security forces stepped up. They began to provide security in and around our bases – their bases where we were housed – *but, unfortunately*, in one of these [rocket] attacks [March 11, 2020, at Camp Taji, Iraq], *we lost three of our partners here in the Coalition* [two Americans, one British]; which, really in the end, left me zero choice in the escalatory ladder of a response. So, again, cycle of violence began over. I think what slowed this down this time was that the Iraqi security forces put themselves in between us and the outlaws. **So, they began to become accountable, because they understood that if this continued down a path, they wouldn't have a partner to help with the enduring defeat of Da'esh.**

Two U.S. troops and one U.K. troop killed in a rocket attack at Camp Taji, Iraq; March 11, 2020:

1. Army SPC Juan Miguel Mendez Covarrubias, 27, of Hanford, California. Mendez Covarrubias was assigned to 1st Battalion, 227th Aviation Regiment, 1st Air Cavalry Brigade, 1st Cavalry Division, Fort Hood, Texas.

2. Air Force Staff Sgt. Marshal D. Roberts, 28, of Owasso, Oklahoma. Roberts was assigned to 219th Engineering Installation Squadron of the Oklahoma Air National Guard's 138th Fighter Wing.

3. U.K. Lance Corporal Brodie Gillon, 26, was previously identified by the British military.

“The international military coalition is capable and credible because of warriors like Juan, Marshal, and Brodie” said LTG Pat White (commanding general of CJTF-OIR, the coalition to defeat ISIS). “They volunteered to serve the United States and United Kingdom to improve their lives and help keep the world free from ISIS terrorism. Our fallen comrades have a legacy that will never be forgotten.”

March 23, 2020 https://twitter.com/iicorps_cg/status/1242118941251682306



**Coalition Military Commander's Statement
One-Year Anniversary of the Battle of Baghouz**

On this day, one year after the historic Battle of Baghouz, completing the destruction of Daesh's physical territory, we honor and remember the many sacrifices of the Iraqi Security Forces, Syrian Democratic Forces, and Global Coalition to defeat Daesh. The final fight through the Middle Euphrates River Valley proved the mettle of our partner forces and commitment of the Coalition to strike a final blow and liberate the last ISIS-held land in Syria. We honor the fallen heroes of our partner forces and those wounded in our fight to eliminate ISIS in Iraq and Syria.

Due to the tremendous sacrifice, strength, and success of the Iraqi Security Forces, Syrian Democratic Forces, and Coalition personnel – and as a measure of our collective success – we have reached a point in the campaign where our partners are taking the fight to the remnants of Daesh independently and preventing Daesh's resurgence. As a result, the Coalition will consolidate to fewer bases with fewer people and remains committed to supporting our partners ensuring the enduring defeat of Daesh.

~Lt. Gen. Pat White, Commanding General of Combined Joint Task Force – Operation Inherent Resolve

#DefeatDaesh

“ONE MISSION, MANY NATIONS”

March 24, 2020 <https://twitter.com/PolandMFA/status/1242502684952969216>

**COALITION STATEMENT ON THE FIRST ANNIVERSARY
OF THE FALL OF THE SO CALLED "CALIPHATE"**

One year ago the Global Coalition to Defeat Daesh/ISIS, in conjunction with our local partners, liberated ISIS's last remaining stronghold in Baghouz and crushed its territorial ambitions. Today, nearly eight million people have been freed from ISIS's control in Iraq and Syria. Many have returned home to rebuild their lives thanks to various forms of Coalition assistance and stabilization support.

Progress in our campaign allows for the restructuring of our footprint, without prejudice to our ability to carry out our mission. In the meantime, the unprecedented challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic to the Iraqi and Syrian people, and to our mission, led to temporary adjustments to protect the force during this period, in full coordination with Iraqi authorities.

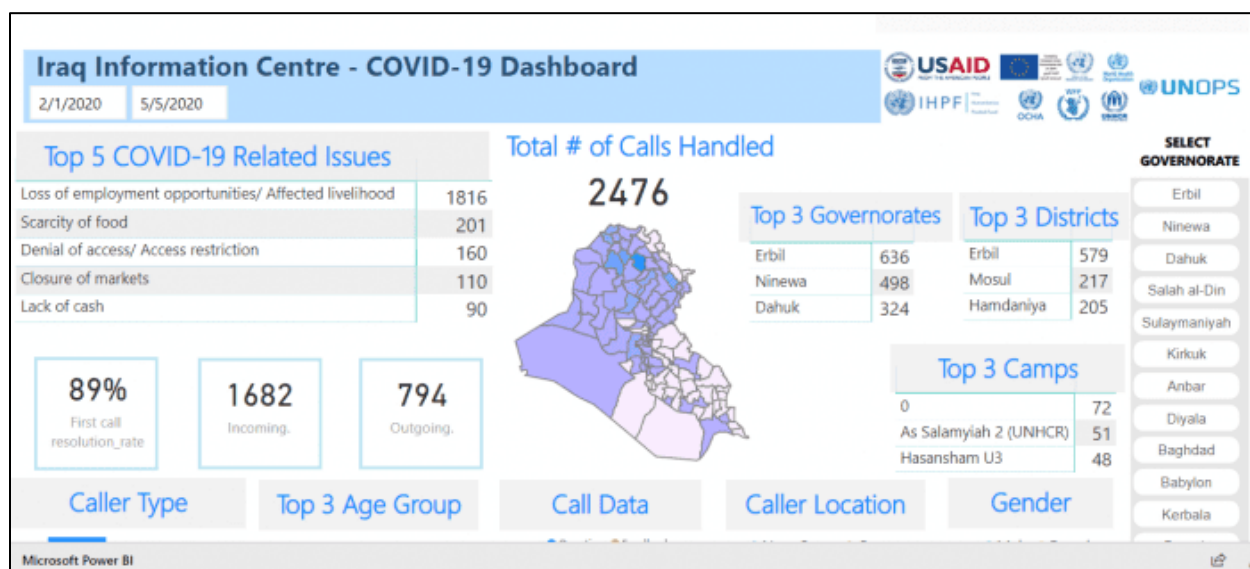
While we celebrate this critical milestone in the fight against ISIS, the work of the Global Coalition is far from complete as Daesh/ISIS remains a significant threat. The Global Coalition will continue its comprehensive efforts in Iraq and Syria, and globally, to deny ISIS's ambitions and the activities of its branches and networks, until the job is done.

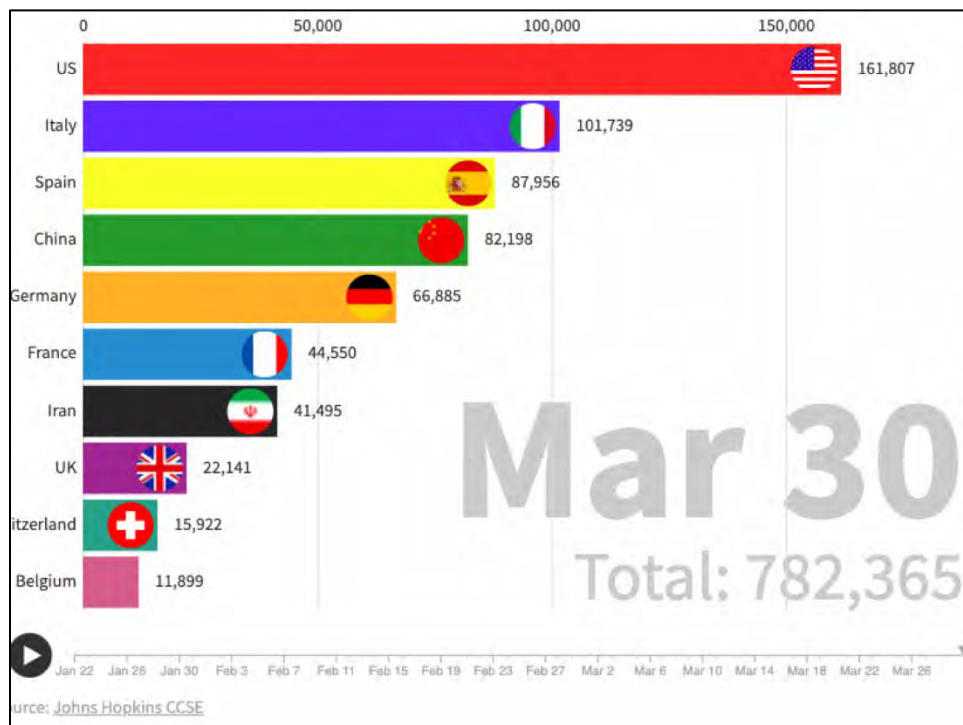


Ministry of Foreign Affairs

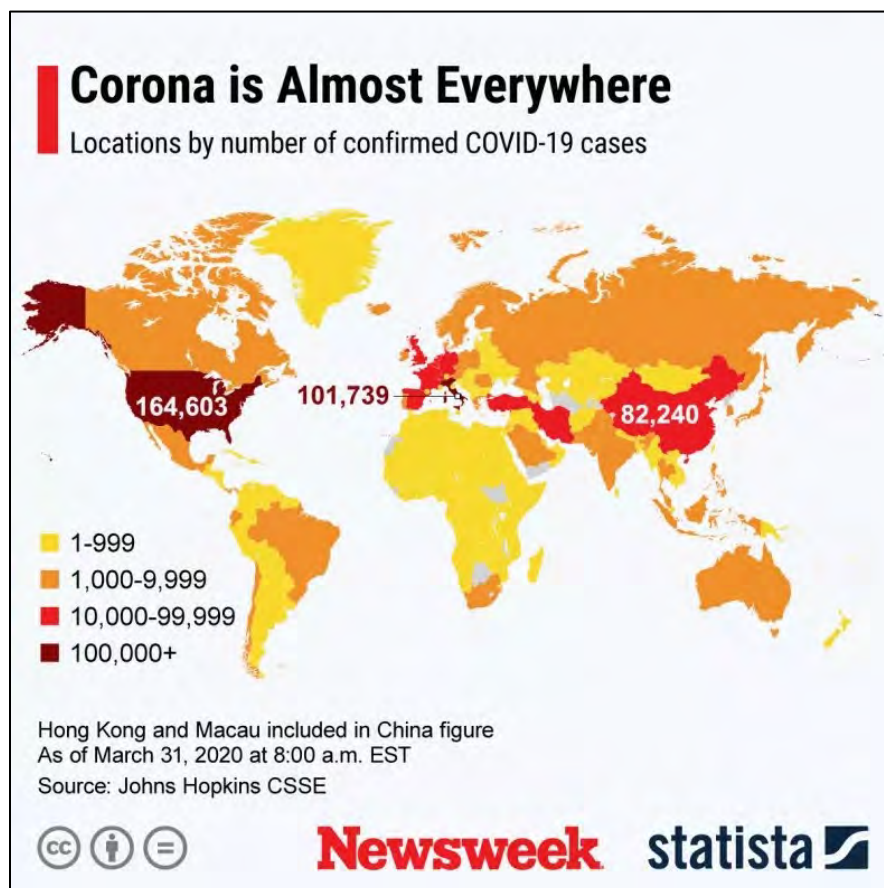
[24:52] *I think the March [2020] time frame is really where this all truly changed.* We had to go through some growth. We had to go through some very traumatic experiences – but at the end of March, we had a partnership back; we had trust back; and we were starting to get back after D-Da'esh – and then, COVID[-19] hit. *We gained momentum – boom – COVID drops on top of us.* I'll tell you, **I made some decisions early on – to protect the force from COVID – at risk to the mission.** So, again, I'm trying to describe this sine wave curve of relationships with the Iraqi security forces – our purpose in life – and we were just starting the uphill climb again, and COVID hits – I broke our relationship with the Iraqi security forces and told them we would come back and talk to them when we were ready – but we needed to see what was happening.

Interestingly, in Iraq, COVID hadn't quite started to sweep through, yet. But *the rest of the world was getting hammered*, and I didn't want that to happen to the force, because we were not medically set, nor did we quite understand the virus and anything about the virus – so, it was kind of a squat-and-hold. [26:04]





<https://www.newsweek.com/animated-charts-coronavirus-pandemic-1495227>

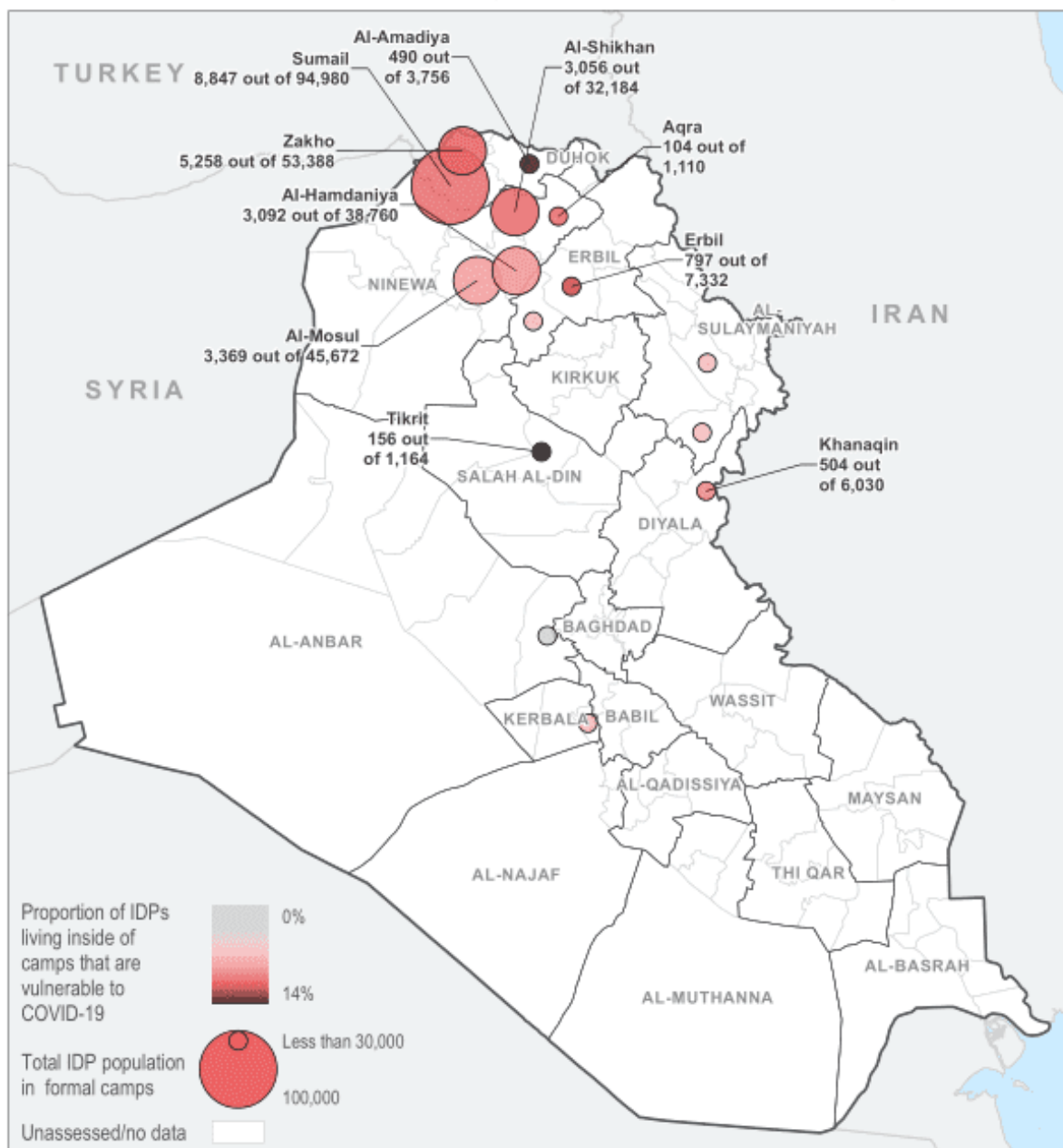


Iraq: COVID-19 Vulnerable Populations Among IDPs Living Inside of Formal Camps - March 2020



27,500 out of 335,800 Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) living in formal camps are estimated to be vulnerable to COVID-19*

*Vulnerable populations are identified as people age 65 and above and/or with a pre-existing health condition



Households considered to be internally displaced in camps are those displaced from their sub-district between 2014-2017, but still living in Iraq, living inside of formal camps.

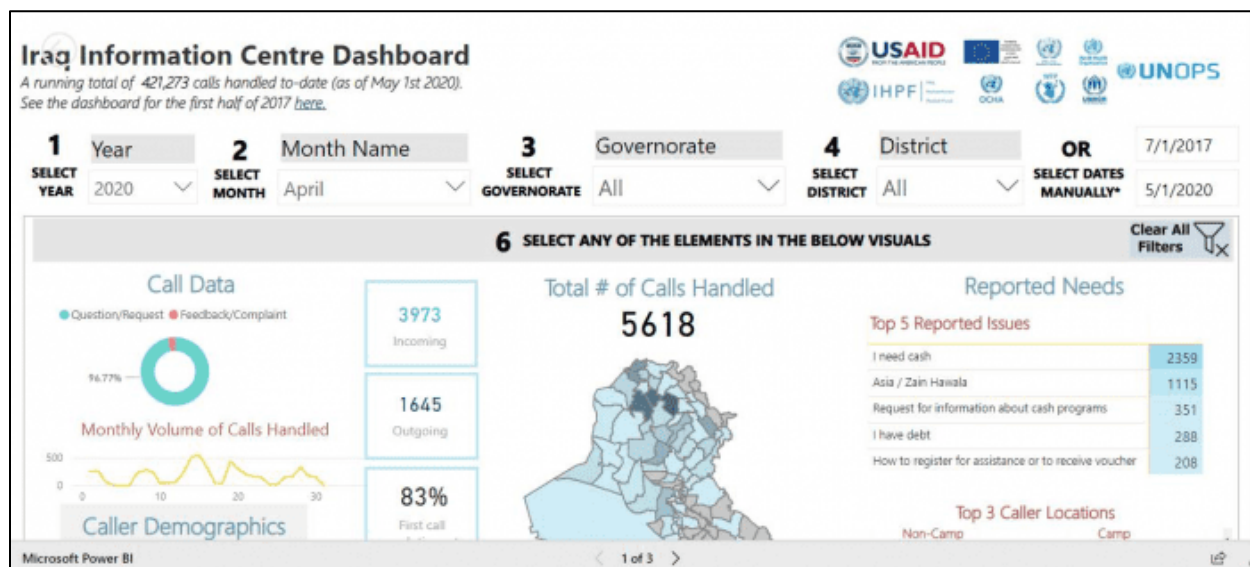
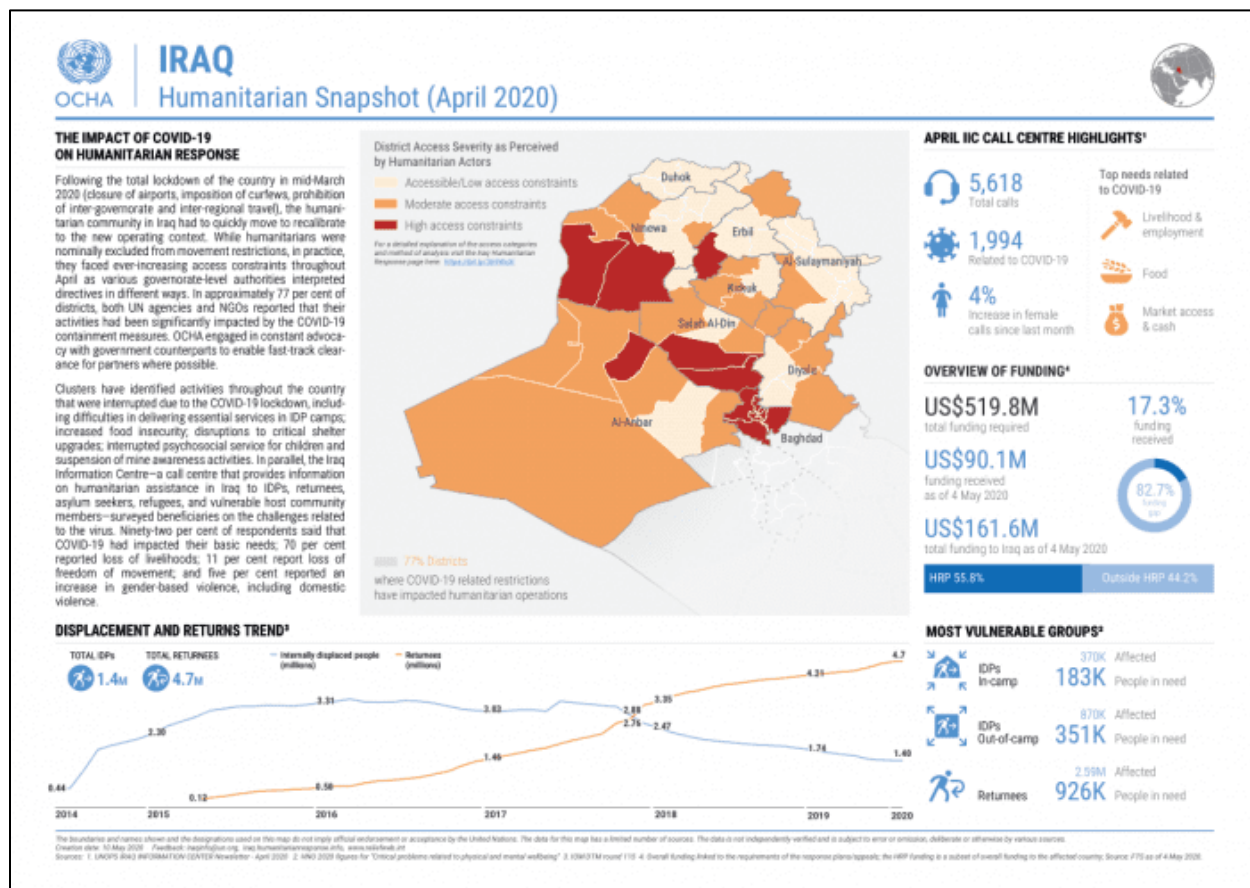
Data sources:
IOM DTM Returnee & IDP Master Lists February 2020
REACH MCNA August 2019

Note: Data, designations and boundaries contained on this map are not warranted to be error-free and do not imply acceptance by the REACH partners, associates, donors mentioned on this map.

0 50 100 Km

For humanitarian use only
Production date : 25 March 2020

REACH An initiative of
UNHCR, UNICEF, WFP, WHO, and UNWFP





DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE
COMBINED JOINT TASK FORCE-OPERATION INHERENT RESOLVE
UNION III, BAGHDAD, IRAQ
APO, AE 09348



March 24, 2020

Members of the Coalition to Defeat Daesh,

All members of the Coalition are well aware of the COVID-19 pandemic that is of utmost concern to all of our nations. For the CJTF, the management of this pandemic is further complicated by the challenging operating environment we currently face. I am grateful for the spirit of cooperation and understanding you have all shown.

The daily order issued on March 16 directs subordinate units to take consistent action across the CJTF to protect us from COVID-19. This is a new experience for all and our ability to limit the impact of the pandemic relies on the entire team working together; to follow hygiene and social distancing protocols, communicate signs and symptoms of illness to our medical professionals, and adhere to the movement and work restrictions being imposed.

In an effort to reduce the risk of transmission, and in consultation with the ISF, I have decided to pause training until May 12. I have also directed that CJTF-OIR members currently on leave or traveling outside the CJOA not return without the approval of a 2 Star Flag Officer in the OIR chain of command. I acknowledge each nation will have their own approach to dealing with the pandemic, and the CJTF will support these national approaches where we can. National restrictions must not be less restrictive than the measures I have ordered. The risk of COVID-19 infecting the force has serious implications to mission and to forces.

I have also directed that personnel whose function in OIR has been paused due to COVID-19 restrictions should consider repositioning within or outside of the CJOA. This is a national decision, but you must keep my headquarters informed as your plans develop, as the circumstances allow we will remain ready to resume our partnering with the Iraqis.

COVID-19 will affect our plans for leave, individual and unit rotations, and normal operations, but we must take action now in order to protect our force and our mission. I need everyone to approach this task with urgency and professionalism.

One Mission, Many Nations.

Robert P. White
Lieutenant General, USA
Commanding

*** Footnote from the CJTF-OIR Historian: LTG White published two additional letters to the force in this chronology of letters on the on the topic of COVID, that are not included here because they are "unclassified - for official use only." (1) 2020 April 10 -- LTG White's letter to the force regarding COVID -- CJTF-OIR headquarters update. (2) 2020 April 17 -- LTG White's letter to the force regarding COVID -- Preserve the Force.

UNCLASSIFIED

Transcript of oral-history interview with LTG R. Pat White; 2020 September 08



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DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

COMBINED JOINT TASK FORCE – OPERATION INHERENT RESOLVE
UNION III BAGHDAD, IRAQ
APO AE 09348



25 April 2020

Team,

We continue to face an unprecedented challenge with the COVID-19 pandemic. Despite the uncertainty and risk, we are performing our mission with the same professionalism, determination, and unity that enabled the military defeat of Daesh. I am proud to be your commander.

COVID-19 remains a significant threat to our force and my top priority is to protect our service members, civilians, and families. I have therefore extended the Public Health Emergency and the U.S. Secretary of Defense issued a STOP movement order until June 30, but we have recently been given authorization to execute some mission essential RIPs. This does not include returning everyone currently on R&R. The specific details will follow shortly.

With the news changing everyday back home, I need you to remain focused on your share of the task to PRESERVE THE FORCE. You must understand the anti-COVID best practices and hold yourself and your teammates accountable. If unsure, your chain of command can confirm this information or use the OIR COVID Information Portal on NIPR.

The pandemic is a threat to physical health, but it can also take a toll on psychological and behavioral health. It is common for individuals to feel stressed or worried in times of great uncertainty. Changing our social patterns is hard, but essential. I encourage service members to remain engaged with their leadership, use local specialists such as our Behavior Health unit or the Chaplain, and lean on your battle buddies when required. The goal is 'Physical Distancing' not 'Social Isolation.'

This pandemic has touched all of our lives and will continue to do so for some time to come. I need you to stay connected to your family and friends at home and deployed. We are in this together and will get through it as a team.

Stay fit, stay healthy, and remain mission ready. One Mission, Many Nations!

Robert P. White
Lieutenant General, USA
Commanding

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Transcript of oral-history interview with LTG R. Pat White; 2020 September 08



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DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE
COMBINED JOINT TASK FORCE-OPERATION INHERENT RESOLVE
UNION III, BAGHDAD, IRAQ
APO AE 09348



May 8, 2020

Team,

I'd like to thank each and every one of you for the professionalism that you have shown in pursuing our mission to **PRESERVE THE FORCE**. Your actions and commitment have ensured that CJTF-OIR remains mission ready. I remain extremely proud to be your commander.

Due to this success, I have begun to progressively relax some of the Force Health Protection (FHP) measures while remaining mindful of the persistent threat posed by COVID-19. We cannot afford to rest on our laurels. A lack of discipline or adherence to the remaining FHP and Behavioral Health (BH) actions can quickly reverse our success. I will not hesitate to revert to tougher restrictions if warranted. We must remain vigilant!

As news from home and across the globe highlight good news stories such as flattening curves or businesses slowly starting to re-open, we cannot assume that all is well and we will soon see a return to normal. Nothing has been won yet and we still have lots of work ahead of us. Respect the FHP and BH measures that are in place, act professionally, and set the example for others. **IT IS EVERYONE'S RESPONSIBILITY** to stay in the fight.

I also encourage you to maintain contact with your friends and family. Physical distancing does not mean social distancing. Be creative and continue to develop ways to maintain your interactions with them. Remember that they are also going through trying times. In some cases, your loved ones may have faced greater hardships. Lean on each other – we are all in this together.

Finally, look after your battle buddies, and never forget the Chaplains, the Behavioral Health teams, and your chain of command are here to help. The COVID-19 Information Portal on the CJTF-OIR NIPR Homepage is another resource that will help keep you informed with accurate, relevant information.

Stay fit, stay healthy, and remain mission ready. One Mission, Many Nations!

Robert P. White
Lieutenant General, USA
Commanding

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Transcript of oral-history interview with LTG R. Pat White; 2020 September 08



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DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE
COMBINED JOINT TASK FORCE-OPERATION INHERENT RESOLVE
UNION III, BAGHDAD, IRAQ
APO AE 09348



June 15, 2020

Teammates,

The challenges of COVID are not going away and this threat will persist into the foreseeable future. We have been successful in protecting our force because of the disciplined application of our battle drills, vigilance in monitoring our environment, and enforcement of our standards. Your actions have allowed us to remain focused on the mission of defeating Daesh and for that I thank you.

Protection and preservation of the Force remains my top priority. You will likely have heard some information over the last few days regarding a small cluster of positive COVID tests within the Force. This situation was mitigated through the quick and decisive action of our leaders and teammates. It is unlikely this will be the last time we deal with a COVID cluster, especially as we execute a series of RIPs and see a rise in civilian cases across the CJOA, both of which heighten our level of exposure. I need all members of the OIR team to re-double your efforts. Do not let down your guard or become complacent. Operating with COVID-19 as a reality is the new normal for us.

You must familiarize yourself with our current public health guidance and the OIR COVID prevention measures. A second extension of the Public Health Emergency commenced on 28 May 2020 and will terminate on or about 25 August 2020. We have a new CJTF OIR Policy for Risk Management in a COVID-19 Environment that supports commanders in achieving my intent to counter-COVID. I am also increasing measures to further restrict inter and intra theatre travel as an added mitigation measure. These changes will have an impact on you, so ensure you understand what these mean to you and your team.

If you have any questions, you can get the latest information through your chain of command and the CJTF-OIR COVID-19 information portal on NIPR. Remember - understand and apply our battle drills, remain alert to your environment, and hold yourself and others accountable. This will keep us all fit, healthy, and mission ready.

Thank you for your service. One Mission, Many Nations!

Robert P. White
Lieutenant General, U.S. Army
Commanding

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[26:05] Luckily, the Iraqi security forces continued to conduct operations. Then, of course, they began, in early April [2020], to take their own measures against COVID. And, we're kind of where we are with COVID now – **we've developed all the tactics, techniques, and procedures to protect the force** – we've got battle drills for reaction – when a virus breaks out, and blossoms in certain places – because it's never just one person – it's always one-person-plus, depending on how big of a group that person or service member operates in. And we've maintained that posture since, probably mid-April [2020] or so – *re-established contact with the Iraqi forces – re-established our partnership* – and, along the way, we began to put in place – what I thought was a more appropriate relationship – at the headquarters-level with the [JOC-I] (Joint Operations Center – Iraq) where the Iraqis work for the prime minister – *and began to turn it into an advisory group, instead of a strike cell*. Basically, we were sitting on a strike cell – providing intel, and dropping a bomb – but what the Iraqis really needed the most was to empower *their* staff and *their* deputy for the prime minister [Mustafa Al-Kadhimi] to get after what was most important to them, while we steered them towards what we thought was also important. [27:30]

May 8, 2020

<https://www.inherentresolve.mil/Releases/News-Releases/Article/2182255/special-briefing-via-telephone-lieutenant-general-pat-white/>

Special Briefing via Telephone - LTG Pat White (commanding general of CJTF-OIR) briefed the Department of State Dubai Regional Media Hub.

[...]

Lieutenant General White: [...] *Ramadan mubarak*, everyone, and good afternoon or evening or morning, depending upon your time zone. I really appreciate you all joining us today. As I speak to you from the headquarters here in Iraq for Joint Task Force – Operation Inherent Resolve, troops from more than 30 military contributing nations remain partnered with the Iraqi Security Forces and the Syrian Democratic Forces in our shared goal of the enduring defeat of Daesh. Additionally, we work with multiple international organizations like USAID, our Special Envoy for Counter-ISIS from the U.S., the International Red Cross, the Northeast Syria Forum, and the United Nations Development Program, to assist in stabilization, humanitarian aid, detainee operations, and internally displaced persons efforts.

Before we start with your questions, I think it's important to provide some context and give you a picture of where the coalition was, *where the coalition is now, and where we think we're heading in the future*.

Prior to the coalition forming in 2014, Daesh controlled approximately 110,000 square kilometers, an area that included Raqqa, Mosul, Ramadi, and Fallujah. And there were approximately 40,000 terrorist fighters in that area. From this peak our partners in Iraq and Syria, with coalition support, liberated nearly 8 million people from Daesh's rule. Today Daesh no longer controls any territory, and the threat continues to be confronted head on in Iraq and Syria by our partners.

The ISF increasingly conducts independent operations in the fight against Daesh, including last year's Heroes of Iraq campaign – or last year's World Victory campaign, and this year we're looking followed to their Heroes of Iraq campaign. And I'll get into that later if there are questions.

The region remains an incredibly complex and challenging area in which to operate. In Syria, OIR has had to deal with a number of events in the last years that include the Turkish incursion into Syria, the Russian military presence, Iranian militia interference, and the presence of large numbers of Daesh detainees and IDPs. In Iraq, OIR has been subject to the threat from Iranian-backed rogue and militia groups who have recently killed four coalition members, delays in the government formation, which we now see some positive movement on, and the challenge of operating in the model of the global pandemic. Despite this, over the past few months we've seen notable successes in the fight against Daesh, including the death of Abu Baghdadi.

Since the start of the year, the ISF has conducted more than a thousand independent ground operations and several precision air strikes using their air force against Daesh. In Syria, the SDF has captured or killed Daesh operatives, former emirs for finance and health, and dismantled many smuggling networks. They also continue to detain thousands of Daesh members, keeping them off the battlefield, including foreign terrorist fighters from more than 50 nations.

Shortly after my return to Iraq last September, and as a result of our collective success against Daesh, the conditions were right to look at consolidating and focusing our military operation. It was clear to me that **the ISF and SDF had achieved tactical overmatch against Daesh.** That is to say, more people, better equipment, more lethality, and with the coalition helping to expand their operational reach through technical expertise, advanced intelligence collection, and occasional requested air strikes. In coordination with the Government of Iraq, we transferred small coalition compounds that were inside of several Iraqi bases over to full Iraqi control. And although we operate in fewer places with fewer people, *the coalition remains steadfast in supporting our partners in Iraq and Syria.*

Moving forward, our efforts will focus more heavily on advising our increasingly capable partner forces. We will continue our coordination with Iraqi operations centers, including the Joint Operations Center here across the street in Baghdad, where coalition troops work closely with Iraqi officers planning and supporting the ISF as they conduct ground and air operations against Daesh. In Syria, our partnership will not change. We will remain postured to support our troops' defeat Daesh operations. With respect to our coalition special operations forces, we will maintain our advisory role with our partners in both Iraq and Syria.

So now that I've described our support to our ongoing efforts to deal with Daesh remnants, I want to mention a little bit about our partner force development efforts towards training and mentoring. *The coalition's former primary partner development role was training.* We trained and mentored more than 225,000 ISF, including army, air force, Peshmerga, federal police, counterterrorism service border guards, and energy police. The 2020 ISF are better equipped, led, and trained than just a few short years ago, and their success has allowed us to shift our focus from training to higher level mentoring and advising.

In order to help our partners in Iraq and Syria maintain tactical overmatch against Daesh, the coalition, through the counterterrorism training and equipping funds, has divested more than \$4 billion worth of armored trucks, weapons, body armor, heavy engineering equipment, as well as conditions-based stipends. Although the Government of Iraq has temporarily paused all training due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the coalition remains ready to resume mentoring the ISF once these restrictions are lifted.

So what does the future hold for the coalition? First, we'll remain partnered in Iraq and Syria to defeat Daesh and continue conditions-based divestments of military equipment and stipends. As well, *the North Atlantic Treaty Organization may take a more prominent role in partner force development beyond their current institution-building efforts.* I look forward to the U.S.-Iraq strategic dialogue scheduled for next month. Although an important opportunity to define the future relationship between our two nations, this dialogue will also help shape broader context of the coalition's commitment to defeating Daesh.

Lastly, *our business is built on people.* So before I turn this back over for questions, I want to share a couple of stories with you.

[...]

Moderator: [...] first question [...] Hoshang Hasan of the North Press Agency in Syria [...] "What is the coalition's plan in northern Syria right now?"

[...]

Moderator: [...] next question [...] Maya Gebeily with AFP [...]

Question: [...] I wanted to ask about the Iraqi context and the rocket strikes that were really common last year, which died down towards the end of March. And we saw another new case a couple of days ago. Your military planning to strike – the Pentagon's military planning to strike KH, what recommendations did you make in your memo back to the Pentagon early in March? Did you receive a response, and is that planning still on the table, to carry out a widespread campaign against the – against KH [?].

[...]

Moderator: [...] next question [...] Maan Alkhoder from Al Jazeera Arabic [...] "In recent days there have been increasing reports of a possible attack against pro-Iranian groups. Is this true?"

[...]

Moderator: [...] This is pre-submitted. It reads, "In recent days, it looks like there are reports of possible imminent attacks against pro-Iranian groups in Iraq and/or Syria." And the question is asking about that.

[...]

Moderator: [...] next question [...] Rola Al-Khatib from Al Hadath/Al Arabiya [...]

Question: [...] I have question about the latest we can say flourishing fighting attacks that ISIS are conducting since COVID-19 has started. We still don't have a clear image about these ISIS militants, what do they want exactly? Do they have new strategies? Do they have a new confronting plan? Is there a possibility that they are – that they are splitted now after Baghdadi's death? Because it was said before that many sections happen inside ISIS before Baghdadi was killed. We need to know the new ISIS we are facing. Are we still facing one ISIS or many ISISes, different groups, how they are connecting to each other? And what do they want right now? What they are doing right now?

[...]

Moderator: [...] next question [...] Jonathan Beale with BBC News [...] "What is the latest on NATO allies playing a greater role in training missions in Iraq? Which allies have said they will contribute additional troops, and has COVID-19 delayed these plans?"

[...]

Moderator: [...] next question [...] Lara Seligman from Politico [...]

Question: [...] My question is can you tell us how COVID-19 has impacted both the actions of ISIS that you are tracking in any way, and then also how it's impacted U.S. troops and U.S. departments. Are these rotations – are the planned rotations in and out, still moving forward as planned, or have there been any – have there been any changes?

[...]

Moderator: [...] next question [...] Waleed Sabry from Alwatan Newspaper in Bahrain [...] "Do you think the decision to withdraw U.S. forces from Syria exacerbated the situation and gave Russia more influence?"

Lieutenant General White: I would start the answer to that question with, we didn't withdraw. I still have a number of forces in Syria that are still partnered with the Syrian Democratic Forces that are still in pursuit of Daesh and the destruction of the remnants of Daesh. And there are areas that we left based on discussions much, much higher than my level. But **we still remain in Syria to combat Daesh through a partner force.** And as well, a secondary effect is to provide a security zone for the borders – the border of Iraq. So I would not characterize it as a withdrawal.

[...]

Moderator: [...] final question [...] Jack Ditch of Foreign Policy [...]

Question: [...] I wanted to ask you really quickly about the prison breakout in Hasaka, in SDF territory over the weekend. Has that caused any concerns within the coalition and is there any further support coming into northeastern Syria or have you seen any degradation of their capability to hold those prisons amid the COVID-19 threat?

[...]

Question: [Rola Al-Khatib from Al Hadath/Al Arabiya] Sorry, I'm going to break the rule and ask another question. First, we can't ignore the American-Iranian conflict of which Iraq is one of its theaters. I wanted just to know, is there a return of ISIS? Or will you ignore it and [inaudible] as it is, as [inaudible]? But is the return of ISIS – will it make you focus on one front and forget the other front, which is the Iranian militias?

Lieutenant General White: Yeah, no, I think the short answer for you is *my mission is defeat ISIS*, and as I mentioned before, I also have a responsibility as the commander to **protect the force**. But we are definitely not taking our eye off of Daesh, and again, partner forces are picking up the operational tempo against Daesh.

So I think we're all right online with exactly where we need to be in the final destruction of Daesh, and I'll stand by if there's a follow-on to that.

[...]

Moderator: All right, the last question – for real – will be from Barbara Starr.

Question: [...] What are you – two things. On COVID, because your troops are so far away from home and they know the economic and physical impact for their families and friends back in the United States, are you – what kind of impact are you seeing? What are you hearing from your troops about their concerns, worries about what's going on with their families back home? Have you had any situations where perhaps you have had to send troops home on compassionate leave because a spouse or a parent is ill? Has it impacted your forces in that way?

And on Iran, what I really wanted to ask was what is the current state of play you're seeing months now – a couple of months now after the al-Assad attack? Are Iranian – direct Iranian forces or Iranian-supported forces still posing a threat to you directly? [...]

Lieutenant General White: On the COVID front, we actually have – it's a really good question. We actually have sent a few of our service members home on compassionate leave. One of them was emergency leave for a very, very sick relative. We do – every Monday I address with the command the resources that are required because, as you know, we can reach back into the units in the United States if we have a service member here that is feeling uncomfortable about the family situation or loved ones or friends back home. And so it has been – it has been an eye-opening experience. People joke about it being "you're getting antsy and" – but that's not really what it's all about. What it's all about is your pattern of life has altered significantly and what help can we provide.

And so without going much further than that, ma'am, I mean it – we have had instances where I've had to send service members home out of due concern to get them back to their families, and we are in constant communication – of course I am with the 3rd Armored Corps back in the States at Fort Hood and Fort Carson and Fort Riley and the other posts that are there. But we do; we do pay attention to it.

And then on your second question about how do we gauge the direct threats by an adversary against the coalition that's here or, more specifically, some of the public threats that are tossed around here in Iraq, which you've seen. There are named groups that have made specific threats against both individuals and organizations that are here assisting the Government of Iraq at their invitation for the defeat of Daesh. And so we do keep an eye on it. There – *the intelligence apparatus that we have here first focuses on Daesh and second focuses on this force protection element* that I described earlier. And so when I see it tilting further towards a threat to the force, there's always a conversation with higher command on what that threat looks like to me here and then what it looks like more regionally and then what it looks like above that echelon to ensure we're all seeing the sight – the same sight picture.

[...]

Moderator: [...] end the question and answer portion [...] your closing remarks, sir.

Lieutenant General White: [...] We started this week with World Journalism Day and I got to tell you, I really do value the work of our journalists globally just kind of telling the stories of what's going on out there. More specifically, to me **it's about the coalition and what the coalition commitment has done here in the Combined Joint Operations area** that I operate in in Iraq and Syria. And the coalition and our partner forces have accomplished too much to take a break now and lose momentum. *The last five years have seen significant sacrifices*, but all for the better based on where we are today to give people opportunities and, more importantly, it gives the people of Iraq hope that the future will not return to what it's been in the past.

I'm incredibly humbled to lead this international military coalition and I'm inspired every day by the troops and the civilians from more than 30 nations who are supporting our partners in Iraq and Syria to achieve what I described as the enduring defeat of Daesh.

I do want to take a moment to wish a Happy Mother's Day for those that celebrate Mother's Day. That'll be Sunday in the United States of America. More specifically, we have mothers here serving their cause from their countries inside the coalition, and many, many, many women who have contributed to their nations by entrusting their children to our militaries. And so in the honor of our mothers, I've just got one last story if you can bear with me.

[...]

And so again, just showing the commitment of our mothers that are out there taking care of their children who, in this case, happen to be serving together. So *we remain committed here in the CJTF-OIR with the nations that are contributing*. We have our slogan, as many of you know, is **"One Mission, Many Nations."** And so thank you all again for taking time today to listen to me, and we'll take any follow-on questions by script and try to answer them for you.

So have a great day, everybody, and *Ramadan kareem*.

[...]

[27:31] Then, about that time, [Iraqi] General [Abdul-]Wahab [al-Saadi] [CTS commander] came on board and made a huge difference in CTS (Counter-Terrorism Service)'s direction. In discussions with General Wahab – and then [Major] General Hill [SOJTF-OIR commander] – and now [Brigadier] General Beaurpere [SOJTF-OIR commander] – *it was about pulling CTS away from the ground tactical fight as a conventional force* – because they are really good at doing that – *and applying their capability and re-building their force to do counter-terrorism operations* – develop the intel infrastructure – get your HUMINT [human intelligence] networks running again – and go after networks and cells, not standing army. Allow the JOC-I to go after the standing army.



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Transcript of oral-history interview with LTG R. Pat White; 2020 September 08



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DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE
COMBINED JOINT TASK FORCE - OPERATION INHERENT RESOLVE
UNION III, BAGHDAD, IRAQ
APO AE 09348



May 24, 2020

Teammates,

I want to take this opportunity to update you all on the progress we have made in the campaign to defeat Daesh over the past months. We have seen significant change since January as a result of the threat from Rogue Militia Groups (RMGs) and more recently from COVID-19. But these issues have not pushed us off course. Instead, we have accelerated what was already being planned.

On training, we were already shifting from training to mentoring and advising. In agreement with the Iraqi Security Forces (ISF), it became clear during the pause in activity that direct coalition support to training was no longer required. I therefore made the decision that support to training in Federal Iraq will not resume under OIR. This means we will fully hand over our training hubs at Taji and Besmayah to the ISF. It is notable that in Besmayah alone the Spanish and Portuguese have trained over 50,000 ISF soldiers for D-Daesh operations. Mentoring in Erbil will resume if COVID-19 conditions allow, but only until the end of the year.

While there has been some recent increase in Daesh activity, our clear assessment is that this is not a resurgence. Despite restrictions to OIR and our partners' activities due to COVID-19, the actual levels of Daesh activity are broadly consistent, or down, from this time last year. Daesh is not able to capture territory or control the population, and their finances are significantly degraded. The attacks that they do carry out are solely to gain information advantage, and we must not give them credibility they do not deserve. Conversely, the ISF are conducting successful operations against Daesh every day, and that is what we should focus on.

All of these factors have allowed us to accelerate consolidating our base laydown. We successfully transferred six bases to our partners. Despite no longer being at the Operations Centers (OCs), we are still able to provide the same level of support through the provision of planning assistance, intelligence support, surveillance, and strike capability through our advisor teams. We are also in the process of working with the Iraqis to set up an enhanced JOC-1 in Baghdad. The ISF will bring liaison officers from each of the OCs to Union III, and we will support them with OC Advisory Teams.

There are several decisions pending that will impact OIR. First, NATO is still considering the best way of implementing Step 1 of its expansion in Iraq. Second, the USG/Gol Strategic Dialogue should establish the basis of the future bilateral relationship which will have a direct impact on OIR. Regardless, OIR will continue to evolve to meet our tasks, and we will do so with a more focused force that is able to best support our partners as they pursue the enduring defeat of Daesh.

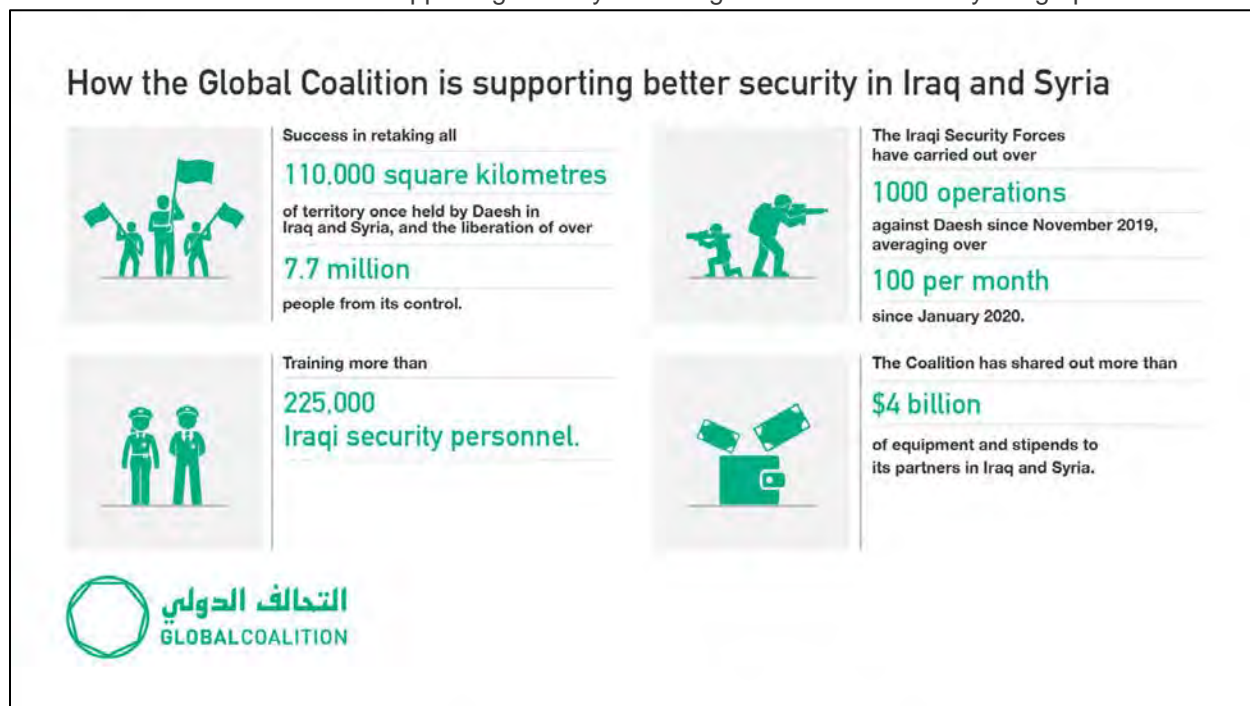
One Mission, Many Nations

Robert P. White
Lieutenant General, USA
Commanding

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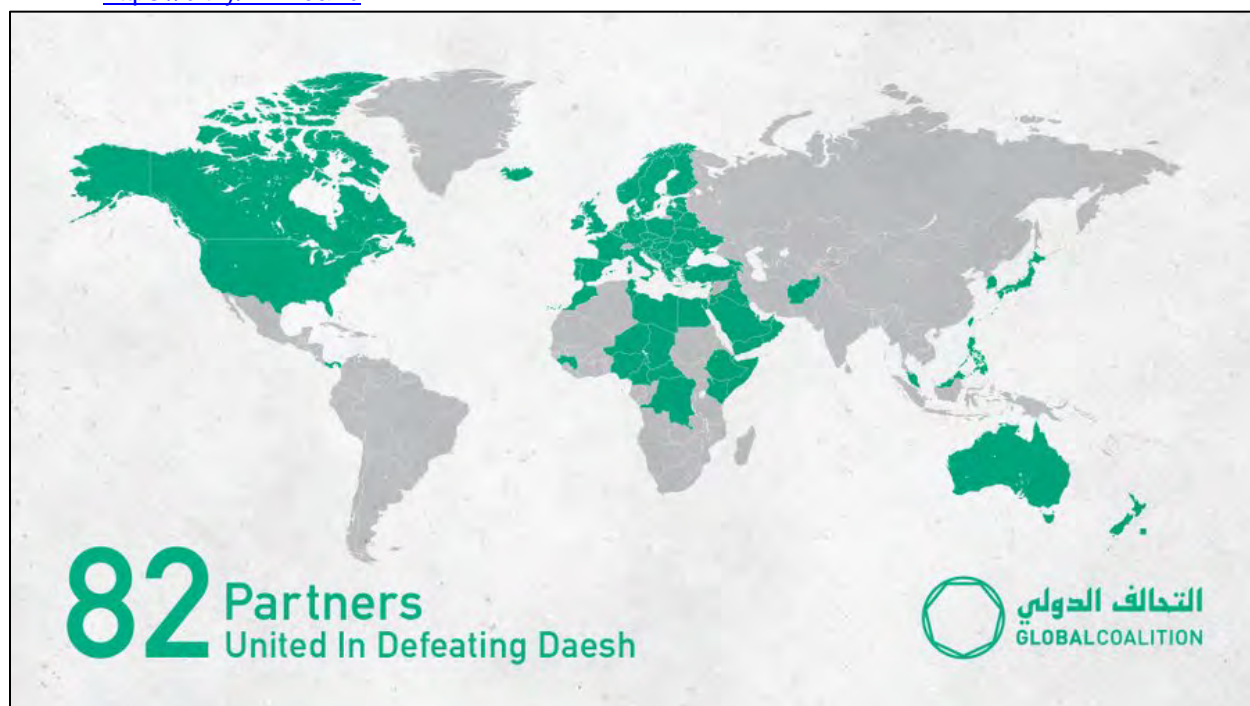
June 4, 2020 <https://twitter.com/coalition/status/1268527930277269504>

Although Daesh no longer hold territory in Iraq and Syria, the terrorists are still a threat. So how is the Coalition supporting security in the region? Here's our handy infographic:



June 4, 2020 <https://twitter.com/coalition/status/1268594615055028224>

"We welcome the establishment of a new government in Baghdad, and look forward to engaging in a fruitful dialogue with the Government of Iraq on our joint endeavour to maintain pressure on Daesh". Foreign Ministers at [@Coalition](#) meeting - statement: <https://bit.ly/2Mwdanb>



June 11, 2020 <https://www.state.gov/joint-statement-on-the-u-s-iraq-strategic-dialogue/>
Joint Statement on the U.S.- Iraq Strategic Dialogue

The delegation of the Republic of Iraq, led by Senior Under Secretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Abdul-Karim Hashim Mostafa, and the delegation of the United States Government, led by Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs David Hale, held Strategic Dialogue discussions via video teleconference today, in accordance with the 2008 Strategic Framework Agreement for a Relationship of Friendship and Cooperation between the United States of America and the Republic of Iraq. The discussions covered security and counterterrorism, economics and energy, political issues, and cultural relations. [...]

June 13, 2020 <https://twitter.com/OIRSpox/status/1272570062835191813>
Denmark trained 19,500 Iraqi Border guards since 2014. They are committed to @coalition & @NATO in Iraq.

 <p>COMBINED JOINT TASK FORCE OPERATION INHERENT RESOLVE Public Affairs Office</p> <hr/> <p>June 13, 2020 Release No. 20200613-01 FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE</p> <p>Task Force Dragon Mission Roars to a Finish</p> <p>SOUTHWEST ASIA – “Task Force Dragon,” the Royal Danish Army contingent with Combined Joint Task Force – Operation Inherent Resolve, concluded its Iraqi Border Guard training mission in Iraq, June 11, 2020 at Al Asad Airbase.</p> <p>Since 2014, Task Force Dragon, of CJTF-OIR Task Force Iraq, has led the international Coalition’s effort to train more than 19,500 members of the Iraqi Border Guard Forces. This week, TF Dragon passed the torch to their Iraqi counterparts, who will continue to train their own forces to ensure the enduring defeat the Daesh.</p> <p>“I am most proud that we managed to shift the training effort from direct training of the individual Iraqi Border Guard to ‘train-the-trainer’ mentoring, where Iraqis are training their fellow Iraqis,” said Royal Danish Army Lt. Col. Brian Busk, TF Dragon Commanding Officer. “I am also proud that the new method of training was developed in cooperation with the Iraqis, with their buy-in on the principles of how we make this training work.”</p> <p>Since 2014, TF Dragon soldiers trained their Iraqi counterparts in functions such as basic infantry skills, check-point procedures, counter-improvised explosive device training, first aid, and marksmanship. Additionally, they mentored Border Guard members on developing future training courses. This helps ensure the Iraqis can continue to train up new forces, said Busk.</p> <p>“It has impressed me to see how [the Iraqi Security Forces] make things work with sometimes limited resources, and I also appreciate their general willingness to learn new things,” he said. “It has been an honor to serve alongside all of them.”</p> <p>In addition to the Border Guard training mission, TF Dragon also contributed Mobile Training Teams with Iraqi Army units at Basmaya and Taji.</p> <p>“Task Force Dragon, like the rest of the Danish contingent, is a perfect example of why our Coalition has turned in such success against ISIS over these years,” said U.S. Army Col. Matt Brown, deputy commander of Task Force Iraq. “Great things happen when you gather the professional militaries from many nations and apply them to a clear and just mission.”</p>	 <p>COMBINED JOINT TASK FORCE OPERATION INHERENT RESOLVE Public Affairs Office</p> <hr/> <p>Denmark will continue to support the multinational Coalition by providing staff officers and planning support. The Coalition remains committed to enabling Iraqi security partner forces through high-level advising, intelligence sharing, and air support.</p> <p>Denmark also remains committed to Iraq with a recent announcement from the Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs to deploy ~285 troops to NATO Mission-Iraq.</p> <p>“Danish leadership of NATO’s Mission in Iraq will strengthen the ability of Iraqi security forces to provide the country’s own security for the benefit of Iraq’s people,” Danish foreign minister Jeppe Kofod said in a statement. “By strengthening our contribution to stabilizing Iraq, we both reduce the risk of new refugee crises while increasing our protection against the threat posed by terrorist groups such as ISIS.”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • https://vm.dk/da/nyheder-ira-udenrigsministeret/newsdisplaypage/?newsID=6697EBA9-F555-4B0F-A95A-A367866A4070 <p>Photos:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • https://www.dvidshub.net/image/6022328/operation-task-force-dragon-base-defense-exercise • https://www.dvidshub.net/image/5818463/iraqi-border-guard-force-graduating-eod-class • https://www.dvidshub.net/image/6128825/coalition-forces-transfer-arms-equipment-vehicles-iraqi-forces <p>-30-</p>
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**COMBINED JOINT TASK FORCE
OPERATION INHERENT RESOLVE**
Public Affairs Office

June 20, 2020
Release No. 20200620-01
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Camp Closed: Coalition obliterates rural ISIS hideout

SOUTHWEST ASIA – In coordination with the Government of Iraq, Coalition aircraft destroyed three ISIS camps in Wadi al-Shai, Iraq, June 19.

Wadi al-Shai is a rural area in Kirkuk Province and a known hiding place for ISIS terrorists. The camps were in densely-vegetated austere terrain, approximately 16 miles west of Tuz Khurmatu, Iraq.

Since the Iraqi Security Forces and Syrian Democratic Forces destroyed Daesh's last physical territory in March 2019, terrorist holdouts operate from rural locations. Iraqi citizens liberated from formerly ISIS-held areas reject the presence of terrorists; driving ISIS into the desert and mountains.

"The Iraqi Security Forces have tactical overmatch against ISIS; airstrikes help destroy ISIS targets in terrain difficult to reach by standard vehicles," said Col. Myles B. Caggins III, Coalition military spokesman. "Blowing up ISIS hideouts in bucolic locations ultimately results in security in cities and villages. Each Coalition precision airstrike is conducted at the request of the Government of Iraq to help achieve a permanent defeat of Daesh."

Iraqis with information about ISIS are encouraged to contact local security officials.

ISIS leaders and operatives continue to hide, because they have seen several high and mid-level Daesh officials neutralized and their safe-havens destroyed in recent weeks. The Coalition and our partners will continue to maintain relentless pressure on the terrorist organization. In addition to military operations, the Coalition has significantly disrupted and degraded ISIS propaganda operations, finance, and human trafficking networks.

Strike video available at:

- <https://www.dvidshub.net/video/756888/summer-camp-closed-coalition-obliterates-isis-mountain-training-area>
- <https://www.dvidshub.net/video/756887/summer-camp-closed-coalition-obliterates-isis-mountain-training-area>

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<https://www.inherentresolve.mil/Media-Library/Article/2250749/coalition-task-force-iraq-transitions-to-military-advisor-group/>

Coalition Task Force-Iraq transitions to Military Advisor Group | July 4, 2020

Release No. 20200704-01

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Coalition Task Force-Iraq transitions to Military Advisor Group

Task Force-Iraq, of Combined Joint Task Force-Operation Inherent Resolve, marked a new phase in its advising mission to Iraqi Security Forces, July 2, 2020.

A brief ceremony recognized the transition to Military Advisor Group, as TF-I reduces its number of personnel and reorganizes as part of a new approach to support ISF defeat Daesh operations. The MAG will be smaller in size, but with expert specialized capabilities to advise Iraqi security staff and leaders. Former TF-I personnel will return to their home countries or reallocate to support other CJTF-OIR missions.

The MAG consists of advisors from 13 Coalition nations, working side-by-side with Iraqi operational command liaison officers in one centralized Baghdad location. The MAG is led by U.S. Marine Brig. Gen. Ryan Rideout.

"It's an honor, and quite frankly very humbling, to be a part of this mission," said Rideout to his Iraqi partners at the ceremony. "I look forward to learning from and working with you as we continue to build upon the great success of the Joint Operations Command Center-Iraq."

As part of the new command structure, Coalition advisor teams will provide specialized planning mentorship to ISF directorates overseeing operations, logistics, intelligence and other military functions. The MAG will include a Joint Operational Command Advisor Team and two Operational Command Advisor Teams. All elements will assist the ISF with operational planning, intelligence fusion, and air support for Iraqi-led military operations to defeat the Daesh threat in Iraq.

After successfully training nearly a quarter million ISF members, shifting the task force's focus to centralized senior mentoring makes sense, said the departing TF-I commander, U.S. Marine Brig. Gen. Bill Seely. Although TF-I has changed in name and structure, what remains consistent is its focus on enabling the ISF to continue to defeat ISIS terrorist gangs.

"It's about assisting our Iraqi security partners where and when they request, and matching our capabilities 'tooth-to-tail' to best meet that request," said Seely.

TF-I service members and their Iraqi partners marked the transition with a change of command ceremony in Baghdad. Seely passed an Iraqi officer's baton, known as a "swagger stick," to Rideout, symbolizing the transition of command.

"The leadership of the MAG (Coalition forces) and JOC-I (Iraqi forces) going forward will truly change the country of Iraq," said Seely. "It is truly one team working toward a common goal."

As the CJTF-OIR mission continues, Coalition efforts will focus more heavily on high-level advising to ISF staff and leadership. In 2020, the ISF have conducted more than 1,200 independent operations against ISIS; the ISF is already better than Daesh. The MAG's technical advice and access to international military capabilities will enable greater operational reach for ISF missions to defeat Daesh in Iraq.

Due to the success of the Iraqi Security Forces against ISIS, the Coalition transferred small inner-compounds on six Iraqi bases to full Iraqi control between March and May 2020. Now, the new Enhanced Joint Operations Center provides centralized advising for operations across several provinces. The Iraqi Security Forces will get the same quality of Coalition support from fewer Coalition troops, operating from fewer bases.

UNCLASSIFIED

Transcript of oral-history interview with LTG R. Pat White; 2020 September 08

July 21, 2020 <https://twitter.com/CENTCOMArabic/status/1285612846089469952>



July 10, 2018 <https://twitter.com/coalition/status/1016645711721426944>



UNCLASSIFIED

JULY 22, 2020

<https://www.defense.gov/Newsroom/Transcripts/Transcript/Article/2284576/deputy-commander-cjtf-oir-provides-update-from-baghdad-on-isis-threat-and-coali/>

Major General Kenneth P. Ekman (U.S. Air Force) – deputy commander for CJTF-OIR – provides update from Baghdad on ISIS Threat and Coalition Activities

[...]

MAJ. GEN. EKMAN: [...] good morning from Baghdad, Iraq. First of all, thank you for taking the time to speak with me. I look forward to your questions during this session and I hope to catch you up on where we are in Operation Inherent Resolve.

I have served as the Deputy Commander for Operations for the Combined Joint Task Force for nearly three months. Reflecting on my experiences to date, what stands out to me is the dedication and professionalism of all the servicemen and women from our 30 nation coalition operating both inside and outside of Iraq and Syria.

Regardless of what we ask of them, they constantly adapt and apply themselves to the different challenges and circumstances that the mission throws at them. They do all of this very far from home. Our mission as the coalition continues to focus on defeating ISIS, or Daesh. We have come a long way, building on the successes of our predecessors and firmly linked with our Iraqi and Syria partners. Together, we are keeping constant pressure on Daesh to ensure their lasting defeat.

As I'm sure you all are aware, Daesh no longer holds physical territory. They struggle to conduct coordinated activities because Iraqi Security Forces find and destroy their hideouts and weapons caches. Their efforts are enabled by coalition support, including advising, intelligence planning and precision airstrikes.

The ISF continue to prove their capabilities as a cohesive force, even in complex operations. For example, the Iraqi Joint Operations Command recently wrapped up the fourth phase of their Heroes of Iraq campaign.

They showed outstanding cooperation among the Iraqi Army, Federal Police, Intelligence Service and anti-terrorism troops to clear Daesh hideouts in remote areas. Wherever Daesh seeks sanctuary, the ISF will find them.

Another tangible reflection of our partners' success involves coalition reposturing. We are getting smaller. In the early days of the coalition, a broad network of bases was essential. We were battling ISIS in Mosul, Anbar, and Abu Kamal. These bases were used to foster our relationships with the ISF and stage training and tactical capabilities.

Now, over six years later, we have trained over 250,000 ISF and built strong relationships based on trust and mutual interest. The ISF is doing things for itself, training forces, and even developing training cadre that we used to do for them. Our reduction in basing is truly a sign of progress.

So what's next for CJTF-OIR? On July 25th, this week, we will take another step by handing over control of the base at Besmaya to the Iraqis. Spain led the coalition effort there, training 50,000 Iraqi Security Forces since 2015.

Their work is done there, so the coalition in Spain can depart, divesting equipment and facilities, to include enhanced weapons, ranges, and mock urban villages valued at almost

\$5 million to the Iraqi government. These transfers to include Besmaya reflect a shift to providing high-end advice and support to the operational command level.

The Iraqis still need our help in planning, our intelligence and surveillance capabilities, and our coalition airpower. These needs frame our continued partnership with the Iraqi Security Forces. To provide this support, we activated a military advisory group on the 2nd of July in Baghdad.

This centralized location allows military advisors from 13 coalition nations to work alongside senior Iraqi officers to plan and execute operations against ISIS across all provinces in the country. This approach has already proven its value in recent, large-scale operations to clear Daesh remnants.

The Iraqi Security Forces are already stronger than ISIS. Our high-level advising approach is moving our Iraqi partners to improve self-reliance. They're doing great. Throughout, we have coordinated changes to our mission and basing with the government of Iraq. Together, we remain united and resolved to achieve the enduring defeat of Daesh and regional stability.

Just two weeks ago, I traveled with the CENTCOM Commander to northeast Syria. I want to highlight our close partnership with the Syrian Democratic Forces and their success against Daesh. They are capturing ISIS lieutenants, busting smuggling networks, and denying Daesh territory, critical infrastructure, and revenues. **Overall, the SDF is a strong, capable force and we are committed to our partnership with them.**

Before we transition to questions, I do want to remind everyone of the selfless service of our troops. Yesterday, we lost one of our young warriors who was conducting a security patrol in northeastern Syria. On behalf of our Commander, Lieutenant General Pat White, and the entire 82-member coalition, we send our condolences and prayers to the families of our fallen comrade.

With that, I'll hand it over to Commander McNulty to begin the question and answer portion. Thank you. I look forward to the discussion.

[...]

Q: [...] Lolita Baldor with the Associated Press. There were obviously some high level visits between high level Iraqis to Iran and Iranians into Iraq in recent weeks and the Iranians have made it clear that they continue to see the U.S. a threat in Iraq and that they still vow vengeance for the killing of Soleimani earlier this year. What level of activity are you seeing among the militias and would you consider the militias a greater threat than ISIS to the U.S. forces there now?

[...]

Q: [...] Tom Bowman of NPR [...] I wonder if you could expand on ISIS in Syria. Where are you seeing them? Are they slipping back into the cities like Deir ez-Zor? Are they moving west into the Syrian government area? And also, are you seeing any of them move north into Turkey? Just give us a sense of the laydown and the increasing threat, if there is one.

MAJ. GEN. EKMAN: [...] with regards to Daesh activities in Syria, we do see a residual presence of Daesh as they continue to find sanctuary in the more rural areas of Syria. That's what keeps us there, by the way.

You know, the remnants of Daesh that remain, they're largely ineffective. Daesh has been reduced to a low-level insurgency.

And so what we do as a coalition and what we do working through our partners in Syria is seek them out wherever they seek sanctuary to – to eliminate them.

And so the particular movements that you described, those aren't things that I'm specifically tracking. As you know, along the eastern border of Syria there is a bit of a concentration of Daesh still at the low insurgency levels but what our Syrian Defense Force partners and what coalition forces all remain committed to is rooting them out wherever we find them, and it's been quite successful.

Q: And as far as heading north into Turkey, you seeing any evidence of that?

MAJ. GEN. EKMAN: Yeah, so our interactions with Turkey from this CJOA (Combined Joint Operations Area) are fairly limited. As you know, we're focused on Iraq and Syria. We are aware of some of the Turkish activities to deal with some of the terrorist threats to that nation, and I know that EUCOM (U.S. European Command) and NATO work with the Turks on this matter.

[...]

Q: [... Courtney Kube of NBC ...] Two quick questions. From your opening statement, you mentioned that the casualty yesterday in Syria was conducting a security patrol. The release said it wasn't due to any contact. Can you just tell us what happened there?

And then my actual question is about coalition forces encountering Russian forces in Syria. There have been a number of reports, mainly on social media and in sort of some local press, that recently there are increasing numbers of encounters between Russian forces and particularly U.S. military but also coalition along -- particularly along the roadways in eastern Syria. How often are you seeing that happen? Is it something that occurs on a daily basis and are you seeing any instances where it's escalating?

[...]

Q: If I could just follow up, again, how often are they actually encountering face-to-face though, U.S. and Russians in Syria? Is it happening on a day to day- on an almost daily basis? And then again, on the soldier who was killed, if it was a security patrol and there was no enemy contact, I mean, surely, you must know. Did they hit an IED? Was it a traffic accident? I mean, I know it's under investigation, but can you say, with a broad stroke of what happened?

[...]

Q: [... Lucas Tomlinson with Fox News. General, how many U.S. troops are in Syria and Iraq right now? And are there any plans to remove some of those forces?

[...]

Q: So you said 5,200 in Iraq, and I didn't hear the number for Syria, General.

[...]

Q: [... Sylvie of AFP ...] You say that you are getting smaller, but answering Lucas' questions, you seem to say that the number is stable. So how are you getting smaller?

[...]

Q: So excuse me, sir. I can follow up. So you are saying that it's not done yet. You are going to get smaller.

[...]

Q: [... Jeff Seldin of Voice of America ...] Curious, there seems to be a couple of narratives coming from the U.S. military about what's going on with ISIS in Iraq and Syria. On the one hand, we've had the CENTCOM commander, General McKenzie, talked about that ISIS is always going to be around, yet we also hear repeatedly that the point of the coalition is to deal them a lasting defeat. So is there some middle ground there? I mean, what is the acceptable level of ISIS for the mission to be accomplished in Iraq and Syria?

And also, curious about how much impact the, what you've been noticing in terms of the ISIS attacks in Iraq, and especially in Syria. There was an uptick around Ramadan, but what have you seen since then, and how effective have they been? [...]

MAJ. GEN. EKMAN: [...] the current state of ISIS, and I'll just spend some time on Iraq first, is something that we look at closely with our Iraqi partners all the time. Obviously, it's our purpose for being here. *Right now overall, we assess that Daesh has been reduced to a low-level insurgency.*

You know, there's a five-stage model out there that Daesh-watchers will tend to address or consider. That's the Daesh Resurgence Model. We're actually migrating away from that because that's simply not what's occurring here. And so when we view the Daesh problem set and Daesh presence, we talk about it in terms of Daesh regression, which is really what it is.

You know, after six years, after liberating 110,000 square kilometers and liberating almost eight million people, **we've achieved tremendous success across the coalition and across our partners.** And so now where Daesh is, is they struggle just to find sanctuary in rural locations. Their leadership, their finances, their logistics, their media are all just shadows of what they used to be.

And so for us, you know, *one of our signs of success is that Daesh does not and cannot control terrain.* And so once you devolve to the point of that you have a low-level insurgency hiding in the rural areas and places, in caves and in mountains in this region, you've largely succeeded. And so it's a matter of maintaining them in that level.

I think we and our Iraqi partners, as well as the coalition alliance, Syrian forces, have no illusions that Daesh will never be fully eradicated, but within Iraq and Syria we've reduced their military strength and also their military potential immensely. *And now, what we really rely on is the 77 nations in the global coalition to continue to work on the real root of the problem, which is the Daesh ideology.*

[...]

Q: [... Laurie Mylroie of Kurdistan 24 ...] On Monday, there was a meeting in Erbil that the coalition attended between the Peshmerga and the Iraqi Security Forces about coordinating to fight ISIS in the disputed territories. Can you tell us about those discussions, what objectives do you want those discussions to achieve, and how close or far the two sides are from achieving them?

[...]

Q: [... Ryan Browne of CNN ...] I just wanted to follow up on the one question that Courtney asked about the Russians quickly. I know de-confliction's been in place for a while. You said the number of incidents has become fairly common. What is your assessment as to what the Russians are trying to achieve? Are they trying to push U.S. and coalition personnel out of Syria? I mean, are they applying pressure with these patrols that are kind of in these increased interactions?

MAJ. GEN. EKMAN: Well, in terms of the overall purpose of Russian presence in Syria, it's obviously about the regime which we oppose. We continue, from a U.S. perspective, *we continue support the objectives laid out in U.N. Security Council Resolution 2254*. And so now, as the coalition, the U.S. and Russia go about their respective objectives, we are going to have interactions with those forces.

I'll give you an air perspective first. Every day, coalition air flies over the top of Syria, **providing force protection and rooting out the remnants of Daesh in Syrian terrain**. Likewise, the Russians go out and fly -- and sometimes for the same reasons. Plus, as they provide support to the Syrian regime farther on the west side of Syria.

Despite all that combat power in the air and in the same piece of sky, *our very professional coalition aviators continue to successfully de-conflict from the Russians*. And so that gives you a sense of the day-to-day play from an airman's perspective, which I'm happy to offer you.

From a ground perspective, that contact is just as frequent. And so our concern isn't about the number of incidents -- our troops are going to see each other out on the roads day in and day out as they pursue their respective objectives. *Our goal is to make sure we abide by the de-confliction protocols and that we make sure that none of those contacts become escalatory*. And by-and-large, we've been very successful.

And so I think, you know, without giving too much credit to our -- to the Russian counterparts who are in Syria, and we talk to them multiple times a day, I think both sides agree that neither nation wants any sort of a miscalculation.

Q: And just a quick follow up on that and then I'll get to my next question. Apologies. You say 'by-and-large,' I mean, had there been a number of incidents that were considered unsafe or unprofessional with the Russians? As these increased contacts have occurred, you say 'by-and-large,' but that could have implied that there have been unsafe, unprofessional interactions.

[...]

Q: [...] I know with COVID, the U.S. and the coalition stopped accompanying Iraqi and SDF forces on raids. Has that changed or are you still no longer accompanying when they move on the objective?

MAJ. GEN. EKMAN: [...] *this is a great opportunity to highlight where we are in the campaign.* You know, not too long ago we were very involved in, you know, what I'll call train, advise, assist efforts, working very closely with our partners very close to the tactical edge.

We've trained so many Iraqi forces now and they're functioning so self-sufficiently that it's given us the opportunity to what I'll call 'lift up' our partnership and put it at a much higher level of command. *Instead of focusing on accompanying them tactically, now what we do is we advise at the operational to strategic level.*

What that means is that coalition forces really aren't out there on the front lines, the Iraqis don't need us and they're exercising immense initiative. The majority of the operations that we see out of our Iraqi partners are unilateral and quite successful.

[...]

Q: [...] Jeff Schogol of Task & Purpose ...] The former envoy to ISIS Brett McGurk tweeted a video of Russian vehicles interacting with the U.S. convoy and said the President needs to tell Russian President Putin to stop harassing U.S. troops. So I ask you, these Russian vehicles and these Russian interactions on the ground, are the Russians harassing U.S. troops?

[...]

Q: In short, are the Russians harassing U.S. troops?

[...]

Q: [...] I know you've been asked several times how often these interactions with the Russians take place. I'm guessing you get briefed on this at your battle update briefings. Can you give us a range of how frequent these interactions with the Russians are? Daily, weekly, monthly?

[...]

Q: [...] Hope Seck with Military.com ...] So you mentioned of course the July 4th stand-up of the Military Advisory Group and the transition taking place there. You also said specifically that it had been instrumental in some recent mission execution. Can you speak specifically to those missions and how that advisory group is informing them, and just provide some color and detail there?

MAJ. GEN. EKMAN: [...] *the Military Advisory Group that we just founded on the 2nd of July is really one of the cornerstones for where we are in the successful prosecution of this phase.* First, it's intensely coalition, so it is not just U.S. It's made up of a broad variety of officers from 13 different countries, right? We are one coalition.

Next, what it does is, **it relies increasingly on the Iraqis' ability to coordinate, cooperate, and generate unilateral operations.** We provide now high-level advice on how to choreograph large-scale operations within a rocky terrain. And what the MAG also does is it connects Iraqi operations with those capabilities that they haven't fully developed.

What do I mean by that? Intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance, in-depth planning support, and then finally strike assets. And so the MAG doesn't just provide advice, it connects the Iraqis to those specific resources that they're still developing within their own armed forces.

Q: Can you speak specifically to any recent missions in which this collaboration has been successful?

MAJ. GEN. EKMAN: [...] we recently completed a multiday large-force, multi-Iraqi force operation in northeast Iraq called **Heroes of Iraq IV**. That suggests that there was a one through three; there absolutely was. And Heroes of Iraq IV was the latest large-scale operation that they coordinated across multiple parts of the Iraqi military to clear significant swathes of terrain where Daesh – remnants of Daesh continue to seek sanctuary.

And so these are clearing operations, they're quite successful- everything from enemy captured to material recovered. They include a lot of intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance planning and build-up and include limited strikes. And so signature large-scale events like that are really what harness the horsepower of the MAG.

What I also want to highlight though, is while we look at those signature operations, it's actually the day-to-day constant getting after it that Iraqi forces do at the, kind of the regional level or at the operations center level, that really have a high impact on the battlespace.

That occurs all over Iraq, every day, on a very unilateral basis. And so what we're finding is they simply don't need our help for the day-to-day business of securing a lot of the country.

[...]

Q: [... Jared Szuba of Al-Monitor ...] I was wondering, you had mentioned that Turkey has taken action against terrorist threats in Syria. I was wondering if you could elaborate that -- on that, if that's against ISIS, if that's against the PKK in northeast Syria, and what the U.S. European Command involvement in that is. [...] I was wondering if you could elaborate on Turkey's efforts. You had mentioned that Turkey has undertaken efforts against terrorism in Syria, and I was wondering what NATO and European Command's role in that is, if you could elaborate on that, please.

[...]

MAJ. GEN. EKMAN: [...] the coalition is in Syria to help ensure the defeat of Daesh, right? **We continue to get after the Daesh remnants every day, and we do that largely through our coalition-aligned Syrian forces.** Obviously, the nation of Turkey has its own interests and its own security interests within the northern part of Syria, and our goal within that, frankly, is just to stay de-conflicted from them. There's a lot of de-confliction going on, as you can tell, in the northern strip along the top of Syria.

And so for us, our goal is to not have any sort of incident with Syrian forces. They are a NATO ally, after all. And what we do is, we follow their activities very closely to make sure that there's no accidental involvement between us and them.

STAFF: Sir, we have time for about two more questions.

[...]

Q: [...] Lucas Tomlinson, Fox News. It appears that the rocket attacks against Baghdad have been increasing in recent weeks. You said earlier in the briefing that the Iranian-backed forces are not your focus but aren't these rocket attacks, which you blame on those forces, making you have to focus on this threat? And is it increasing?

[...]

Q: And just one quick follow up, why are all these mysterious explosions happening in Iran? Is there anything you can tell us about that? What's causing it?

[...]

STAFF: [...] do you have any final words for us?

MAJ. GEN. EKMAN: [...] I appreciate the chance to talk to you today about *our righteous mission in CJTF-OIR* and I would just leave you with a few things.

First, I hope you gauge from the substance of this discussion **how quite capable the Iraqi Security Forces have become**. They are building on their and our successes and they are increasingly able to conduct unilateral operations to defeat the remnants of Daesh that exist within the country.

Next, *because of their success, it's allowed us to make some progress here within the coalition*. You see that by way of the base consolidation that we're doing as we turn the bases back over to our Iraqi hosts and you will see some degree of reduction of forces here in Iraq. That's just what success looks like.

And then finally, you know, as a coalition member among 26 different troop-contributing nations, it is my honor to serve alongside the nations who are willing to send forces here to pursue this absolutely important mission.

You know, and so we have a slogan here that we use as we conclude formal events – it is **"one mission, many nations."** We absolutely abide by that. Thanks for your attention today.

[...]

MAJ. GEN. EKMAN: Okay everybody, have a great day.

July 25, 2020 <https://twitter.com/OIRSpox/status/1286937148265046016>



Besmayah Base Transfer

Combined Joint Task Force - Operation Inherent Resolve

Besmayah Base

Coalition forces, primarily led by Spain, trained ~50,000 Iraqi Security Forces personnel at Besmayah. Coalition-certified Iraqi trainers will lead all future programs.



Due to Iraqi Security Forces' success in the campaign against Daesh, the Coalition is repositioning in Iraq as part of long-planned adjustments to the force.

Besmayah Data

~450 departing personnel



~\$5 million of structures and equipment transferred to Iraqis






A dining facility, one of many structures transferred at Besmayah.

Iraqi soldiers navigate an urban training site constructed by the Coalition.

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Besmayah Base Transfer

Combined Joint Task Force - Operation Inherent Resolve

Besmayah Base

From 2014 to 2020, the international Coalition invested more than \$5 million into Besmayah. The Spanish contingent transferred and divested \$4 million in classrooms, barracks, weapons ranges, mock urban training sites, and other facilities to the Government of Iraq. The United States contributed \$1 million in power generation and base force protection materials and equipment.



Besmayah Expansion



30 Aug 2009

28 June 2017

14 July 2019

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**COMBINED JOINT TASK FORCE
OPERATION INHERENT RESOLVE**
Public Affairs Office

July 25, 2020
Release No. 20200725-01
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Coalition departs Besmayah Base, transfers upgraded training site to ISF

SOUTHWEST ASIA – Combined Joint Task Force – Operation Inherent Resolve (CJTF-OIR) conducted a ceremony with Iraqi Security Forces (ISF) to transfer the Coalition area of Besmayah Base, Iraq, July 25, 2020.

Due to Iraqi Security Forces' success in the campaign against Daesh, the Coalition is adjusting its positioning and focus in Iraq. These military movements are long-planned in coordination with the Government of Iraq.

"Today marks the seventh base this year transferred to the ISF, as part of an ongoing partnership between the Iraqi security forces and the anti-ISIS international military Coalition," said Maj. Gen. Gerald Strickland, CJTF-OIR deputy commander for strategy. "Iraqi forces trained here were critical in the liberation of Mosul three years ago. Besmayah serves as a shining example of Iraqi military capability. The Coalition has supported the development of this facility, enabling the Iraqi military to deliver forces ready to root out the remnants of Daesh."

Coalition activities at Besmayah were primarily led by Spanish forces, who trained nearly 50,000 Iraqi military personnel at the site. In conjunction with their Portuguese partners, Spain's military forces trained the ISF in a broad range of military tactics and programs. Courses quickly evolved to a "train-the-trainer" approach, with Iraqis assuming daily leadership and delivery of the programs. The Spanish contingent transferred and divested \$4 million in classrooms, barracks, weapons ranges, mock urban training sites, and other facilities to the Government of Iraq. The United States contributed \$1 million in power generation and base force protection materials and equipment.

"The train-the-trainer courses were highly successful in building a sustainable future for Iraqi-led training programs," said Spanish Col. Leopoldo Ramirez, the CJTF-OIR senior national representative for Spain. "More than 5,000 Spanish soldiers served 12 rotations at this base; they can be very proud that their Iraqi partners have assumed full control and are capable of operating independently for a secure and stable future of Iraq."

CJTF-OIR will continue to relocate and consolidate personnel and equipment from Iraqi bases throughout 2020, in cooperation with the Government of Iraq. The ISF increasingly conducts independent operations in the fight against Daesh and the defense of their homeland including the 2020 series of operations "Heroes of Iraq," in which they have cleared thousands of kilometers to capture enemy fighters and equipment.

Coalition troops will depart Besmayah in the coming days. As a member of the 77-nation international Coalition, Spain firmly believes that unified, well trained Iraqi armed forces are essential to defeating Daesh, and remains committed to a long-term engagement with the Iraqi people in support of this objective. Spain therefore remains a strong member of the Coalition, providing advisors to the Iraqi Joint Operations Command and valuable helicopter support to the Coalition.

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[28:14] So, you've heard the term, "**Heroes of Iraq,**" which is really their division-level and above framework operation that occurs [...] – that between the CTS, and the JOC-I, and the federal police – they've all kind of agreed upon their roles and responsibilities – and the only reason that happened, was because of COVID – because everybody pulled back, and then you could re-structure what they were doing – because you could separate them, during COVID – isolate them and talk to them; and then bring them together for a short period of time; and then isolate them again – so, interesting dynamics there, as well. [28:51]

July 31, 2020

<https://www.inherentresolve.mil/Releases/News-Releases/Article/2296958/iraqi-security-forces-hunt-daesh-in-diyala-for-heroes-of-iraq-4/>

Iraqi Security Forces hunt Daesh in Diyala for "Heroes of Iraq 4" | Aug. 1, 2020

Release No. 20200731-01

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Thousands of Iraqi Security Forces cleared more than 250 villages and sites across more than 17,000 square kilometers in search of ISIS hideouts during Operation "**Heroes of Iraq 4**" in Diyala Province, Iraq, July 11-28.

The operation included elements from: Iraqi Army, Iraqi Special Operations Forces, Counter Terrorism Services, Iraqi Army Aviation, Rapid Response Division, Federal Police, Popular Mobilization Units, Iraqi Security and Intelligence agencies, Iraqi Air Force, and the Peshmerga.

"Under the guidance of the Prime Minister and Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces, al-Kazemi, and under the supervision of the Joint Operations Command-Iraq, Iraqi Security Forces commenced Operation "Heroes of Iraq" Phase 4," said the Iraqi Ministry of Defense in a statement. "The operation aimed to purge Daesh remnants and secure and stabilize Diyala province, areas along the administrative borders with the Kurdistan region (KRG), Samara and Salah Ad-Din provinces and the common borders with Iran."

The operation was conducted in three major phases during the month of July. During the course of the operation, ISF forces captured and destroyed hundreds of ISIS weapons and ammunition, vehicles, and disabled more than 90 improvised explosive devices, preventing their use in future terrorist attacks against Iraqi citizens. They also arrested or killed several enemy fighters, and destroyed more than 60 operating sites, denying ISIS criminals the means to freely move and hide equipment and fighters. Sadly, in their pursuit of terrorists, several brave Iraqi heroes were killed and several others wounded.

The operation included close cooperation between Diyala Operations Command leaders and the Peshmerga, to coordinate joint security operations to stabilize the boundaries between Federal Security Forces and the Peshmerga region guards. This coordination led to the prevention of terrorist groups' movement and operations in the region and associated border areas.

The operation was enabled by the CJTF-OIR (Combined Joint Task Force – Operation Inherent Resolve) MAG (Military Advisor Group). The MAG consists of advisors from 13 Coalition nations, working side-by-side with Iraqi operational command liaison officers in one centralized Baghdad location. Coalition advisor teams provide specialized planning mentorship to ISF directorates overseeing operations, logistics, intelligence, aviation and other military functions.

“As we’ve seen with previous Heroes of Iraq operations, the ISF continue to prove their commitment and effectiveness in their efforts to defeat Daesh,” said U.S. Marine Brig. Gen. Ryan Rideout, MAG director. “We remain committed to our partners as we collaborate on intelligence sharing, mission planning, and other specialized support to enable their efforts for a secure and stable future for the people of Iraq.”

Operation Heroes of Iraq 4 was the latest large-scale ISF operation that compliments the near-daily missions by the ISF to defeat the evils of terrorism in their country. The ISF continue to demonstrate their anti-Daesh combat capability in effective operations, frequently without Coalition involvement, relying on Iraqi intelligence and the Iraqi Air Force. In 2020, they have conducted more than 1,400 missions to defeat Daesh remnants and provide a safe and stable region for the people of Iraq.

[28:52] *That's kind of what's led us down this path of this discussion on Phase 4* [Support Stabilization] – by Joint doctrine [JP 3-16, Multinational Operations, 2019], the term, “**normalization**,” which is unknown, and confuses everybody else outside of military lanes – but again, it's a military [CJTF-OIR] campaign. It's not an international coalition [NATO Training Mission – Iraq; UNSCR 1546] – or interagency [DoD Directive 3000.05, Stabilization, 2018] – campaign. So you gotta do a little bit of work on selling, conceptually, where you are in the military campaign to comport it to where the interagency [Department of State, U.S. Agency for International Development, etc.] needs to be, *because they will be the ones that assume the lead in many areas where we [CJTF-OIR] were working in the past.* [29:32]

c. The Military Contribution to Stabilization Operations (Stabilization Handbook)

(1) Stabilization is a multidimensional concept involving reconstruction and normalization activities and tasks that involves attributes of other programs such as disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration and security sector reform (SSR) that must be considered in defining common approaches to a campaign.

(2) The *Stabilization Handbook* addresses the tasks normally performed by military forces in supporting stabilization operations when an HN is unable to govern and/or to provide for the basic needs of its citizens. Military forces perform myriad functions in supporting broad coalition reconstruction, SSR, and stabilization efforts in order to establish a safe and secure environment in a fragile state. The stabilization tasks accomplished by military forces during a wide range of activities help set the conditions or framework for:

- (a) Facilitating reconciliation among local or regional adversaries;
- (b) Establishing political, legal, social, and economic institutions; and
- (c) Setting the environment for transitioning responsibility to legitimate civil authority operating under the rule of law.

(3) Accordingly, the document also addresses the need to consider a comprehensive approach in planning for and conducting stabilization operations, in order to build strong relationships through cooperation, collaboration, and coordination with the various governmental, nongovernmental, private, and international organizations and agencies, as well as other military forces involved in stabilization operations.

Military Support to Economic Normalization Handbook



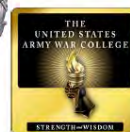
U.S. Joint Forces Command

Joint Warfighting Center
Joint Doctrine
Suffolk, Virginia

Joint Concept Development
and Experimentation
Norfolk, Virginia

29 July 2009

Handbook For Military Support to Economic Stabilization



Unified Action
Handbook Series
Book Three

15 March 2016

DoDD 3000.05, December 13, 2018

SECTION 1: GENERAL ISSUANCE INFORMATION

1.1. APPLICABILITY. This issuance applies to OSD, the Military Departments, the Office of the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (CJCS) and the Joint Staff, the Combatant Commands, the Office of the Inspector General of the Department of Defense, the Defense Agencies, the DoD Field Activities, and all other organizational entities within the DoD (referred to collectively in this issuance as the "DoD Components").

1.2. CONTEXT.

a. Stabilization is an inherently political endeavor that requires aligning U.S. Government (USG) efforts—diplomatic engagement, foreign assistance, and defense—to create conditions in which locally legitimate authorities and systems can peaceably manage conflict and prevent violence.

b. The Department of State is the overall lead federal agency for U.S. stabilization efforts; the U.S. Agency for International Development is the lead implementing agency for non-security U.S. stabilization assistance; and DoD is a supporting element, including providing requisite security and reinforcing civilian efforts where appropriate and consistent with available statutory authorities.

c. Fragile and conflict-affected states often serve as breeding grounds for violent extremism; transnational terrorism and organized crime; refugees and internally displaced persons; humanitarian emergencies; the spread of pandemic disease; and mass atrocities. Stabilization can prevent or mitigate these conditions before they impact the security of the United States and its allies and partners.

d. Stabilization must be incorporated into planning across all lines of effort for military operations as early as possible to shape operational design and strategic decisions.

(1) Stabilization is required to translate combat success into lasting strategic gains and achieve the ends for which the military operation was waged.

(2) Stabilization is a necessary complement to joint combat power at the tactical, operational, and strategic levels.

e. Because drivers of instability vary widely and are based on the unique political landscape of the host nation, stabilization requires:

(1) Thorough cultural understanding and conflict assessment, including intelligence collection and related activities to improve understanding of and ability to influence stability.

(2) A strategy to coopt, coerce, or defeat determined destabilizing actors, and a strategy to support key actors that enable stabilization.

SECTION 1: GENERAL ISSUANCE INFORMATION

3

DoDD 3000.05, December 13, 2018

(3) An integrated interagency and international unity of purpose with common objectives.

(4) Sustained commitment and sufficient support to mitigate destabilizing elements while reinforcing stabilizing elements.

1.3. POLICY. It is DoD policy that:

a. To the extent authorized by law, DoD will plan and conduct stabilization in support of mission partners across the range of military operations in order to counter subversion; prevent and mitigate conflict; and consolidate military gains to achieve strategic success.

b. DoD will emphasize small-footprint, partner-focused stabilization that works by, with, and through indigenous and other external partners to achieve strategic objectives.

c. DoD's core responsibility during stabilization is to support and reinforce the civilian efforts of the USG lead agencies consistent with available statutory authorities, primarily by providing security, maintaining basic public order, and providing for the immediate needs of the population.

d. DoD will establish a defense support to stabilization (DSS) process to identify defense stabilization objectives in concert with other USG departments and agencies; convey them through strategic documents; organize to achieve them; and prioritize requisite defense resources.

(1) DoD will design, implement, monitor, and evaluate stabilization actions based on conflict assessments, operational requirements, and complementary foreign assistance.

(2) Consistent with available authorities, DoD will prioritize efforts to identify, train, equip, advise, assist, or accompany foreign security forces conducting stabilization actions independently or in conjunction with other USG efforts.

(3) When authorized and directed, DoD will establish secure operating conditions for civilian-led stabilization efforts.

(4) When required to achieve U.S. stabilization objectives, and consistent with available authorities, DoD will support other USG departments and agencies with logistic support, supplies, and services and other enabling capabilities.

(5) When required to achieve U.S. stabilization objectives, and to the extent authorized by law, DoD will reinforce and complement civilian-led stabilization efforts. Such efforts may include delivering targeted basic services, removing explosive remnants of war, repairing critical infrastructure, and other activities that establish a foundation for the return of displaced people and longer-term development.

SECTION 1: GENERAL ISSUANCE INFORMATION


4

2-20. In an operation, stability tasks transition within the stability framework (see ADRP 3-07). Military tasks are described in the stability framework as the initial response phase, transformation phase, or fostering sustainability phase. Forces accomplish stability tasks over time, carefully planning all levels of transitions throughout operations. Army leaders consider planning stability tasks in three transition phases:

- Phase 1—Repair and (re)establish systems.
- Phase 2—Normalize systems.
- Phase 3—Transfer and exit.

2-21. Initial response tasks generally occur in transition phase 1, transformation tasks in transition phase 2, and fostering sustainability tasks in transition phase 3. (See table 2-1.) However, there is overlap. In the fostering sustainability phase, military planners should keep in mind that the efforts of partners outside the Department of Defense are likely to continue after military forces depart. However, military tasks may continue with the emphasis on security cooperation activities, including security force assistance.

Table 2-1. Phases of the stability framework and stability transition phases

Phases of the stability framework:	Initial response	Transformation	Fostering sustainability
Stability transition phases:	1—Repair and (re)establish systems	2—Normalize systems	3—Transfer and exit
Time:			

2-4

FM 3-07

2 June 2014

TRANSITION PHASE 2—NORMALIZE SYSTEMS

2-27. In this context, *systems* refers broadly to host-nation political, economic, social, and military structures that ensure—

- A safe and secure environment.
- The rule of law.
- Social well-being.
- Stable governance.
- A sustainable economy.

2-28. Transition phase 2 begins as the host-nation government becomes operational, and its management of civil security, civil control, essential services, governance, economic development, and infrastructure tasks becomes routine practice. This transition phase takes time. Host-nation personnel take the lead, while partners continue to mentor and coach. The host nation owns and operates the systems and processes. Mentors seek to understand the culture, norms, and customs of the host nation to help determine when to terminate education, training, mentoring, and coaching support.

2-29. Army leaders use MOEs and MOPs appropriate to the situation for measuring success. (See ADRP 3-07 for guidance on incorporating MOEs and MOPs in planning stability.) Determining criteria for normalized political, economic, social, and military systems is a challenge. Planners determine when to consider the actions in this transition phase complete based on achieving the end state conditions. Achieving the end state means that transition phase 2 should end and transition phase 3 should begin.

2 June 2014

FM 3-07

2-5

[29:33] So, we're still taking rockets – the new prime minister [Mustafa Al-Kadhimi] came in [May 2020] – we're getting hit on our convoys, and it's all this pressure campaign by the outlaw groups to influence our senior-level decision-makers back in [Washington] D.C. on the value of having Americans and other Coalition members in harm's way for this particular mission. *It still remains a righteous mission, and that's why we're still here.* And, we're now complete with what was going to take 24 months – we are complete with our re-posturing, and our re-sizing of the force, and our re-shaping of what we do *with* the partner force – **going back to – this has always been about the partner force – this has not been about us.**

I'm pretty comfortable that we are set in the right places – we're out west, where there is heavy Sunni influence – we're up north, with the Kurds – and we're right smack dab at Baghdad, still at Union III, mixing it up with the JOC-I and all the senior-leadership of the government – from prime minister, through the ministries; even some of the unders that work below those guys. *I think that will help stabilize us, and give the government of Iraq some breathing room to deal with these outlaw forces, while we continue the enduring defeat of Da'esh;* and framework operations; and coach-teach-mentor and advise the Iraqi security forces – and then, as applicable, provide lethal fires for them, when they don't have the capability to do it.

That was a really long answer, but that's – it wasn't where we wanted to go – I thought we could take some time – but there were some environmental changes that occurred, and *some challenges that I think gave us an opportunity* – and most of the weight that was lifted – was lifted by the young men and women that were out – not here in Baghdad – but out in the environment, to get us into a place where I felt – you know, we could set ourselves – **normalize**, and then we could begin to convince others that we've been in Phase 4 since [LTG] Paul LaCamera left [September 2019]. *We've been executing Phase-4 tasks -- we just never called it that, because we allowed it to grow into a political decision.* That's fine with me – you can call it whatever you want, but we're going to keep moving along and doing everything we can do to provide

our decision-makers some options in all national capitals, and then back in the United States. [32:10]

Joint Operations Across the Conflict Continuum

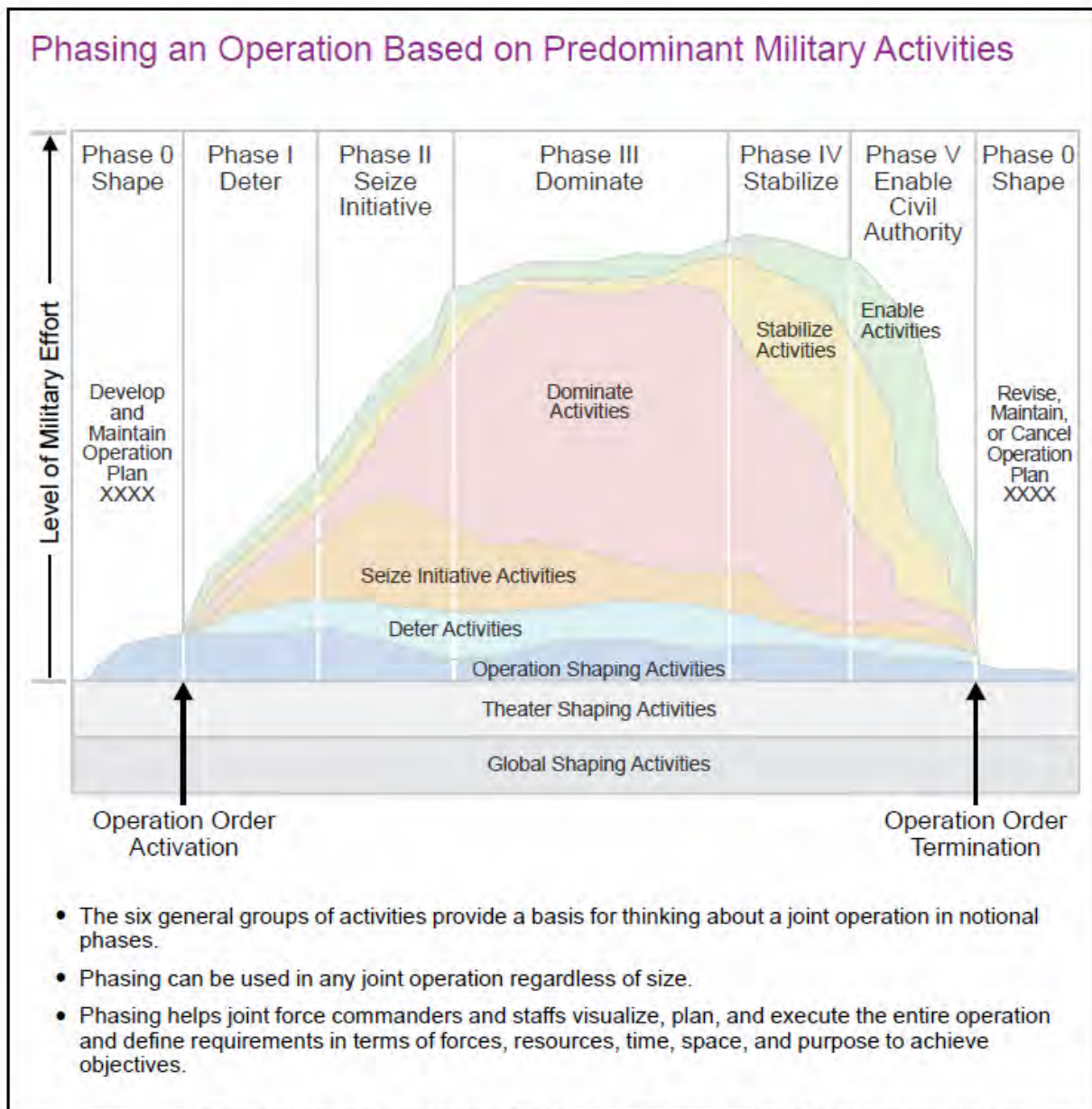
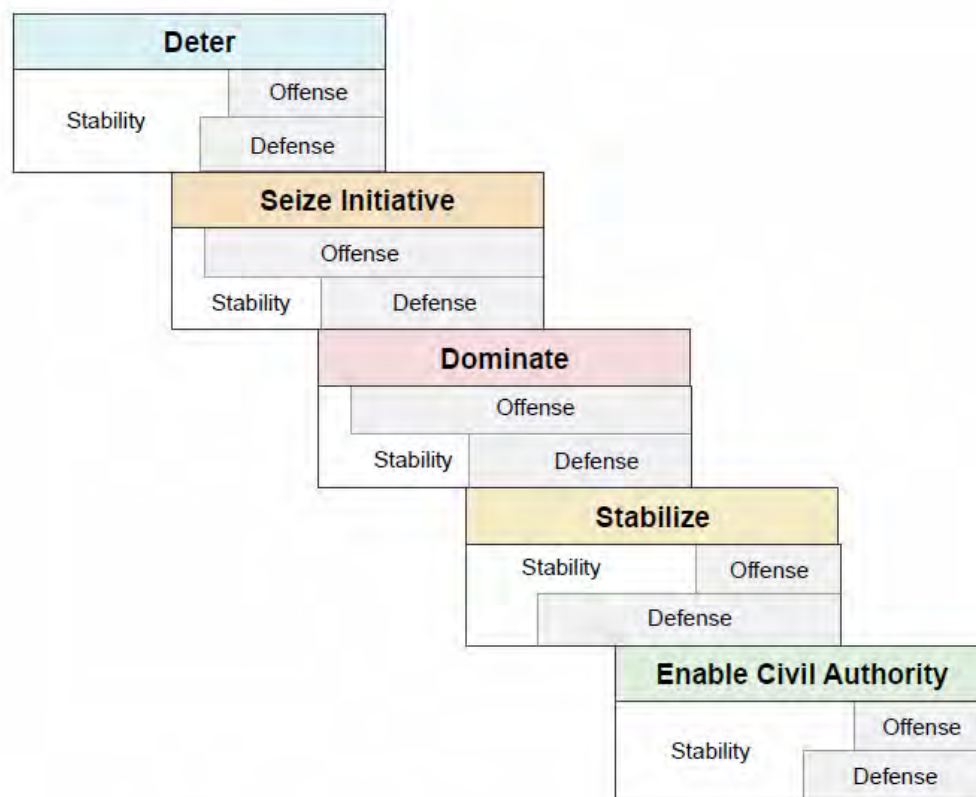


Figure V-7. Phasing an Operation Based on Predominant Military Activities

[JP 3-0, 2018]

Notional Balance of Offense, Defense, and Stability Activities




NOTES:
The figure reflects a single operation.

Stability activities are conducted outside the United States. Department of Defense provides similar support to US civil authorities for homeland defense and other operations in the US through **defense support of civil authorities** operations.

Figure V-8. Notional Balance of Offense, Defense, and Stability Activities

[JP 3-0, 2018]

 <p>COMBINED JOINT TASK FORCE OPERATION INHERENT RESOLVE Public Affairs Office</p> <p>August 7, 2020 Release No. 20200807-01 FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE</p> <p>Daesh Finances Take a Hammering</p> <p>SOUTHWEST ASIA – The fight against Daesh takes many forms, occurring both inside Iraq and northeast Syria, as well as around the world. The Global Coalition and its partners remain steadfast as they comprehensively target and attack the terrorist network.</p> <p>Daesh revenue streams remain precarious due to its lack of territorial control, which previously afforded Daesh access to highly lucrative oil fields as well as populations and commercial enterprises it could tax and extort. Over the past three years, the Global Coalition has targeted around 30 Daesh banks and financial centers, destroying tens of millions of dollars of Daesh's liquid assets.</p> <p>The actions of the Coalition's Counter-ISIS Finance Group (CIFG), the U.S. Government, and the Terrorist Financing Targeting Center (TFTC), are ensuring pressure is being maintained on ISIS's global financial networks, restricting their ability to raise, move, and use their funds. Through the use of unique authorities, and in conjunction with partners, ISIS's financial flows have been degraded to a trickle. At least 65 countries have prosecuted or arrested foreign terrorist fighters or their facilitators and Daesh's financial infrastructure has been significantly constrained.</p> <p>The targeting of individuals and businesses helping to transfer funds in support of Daesh operations further increases pressure on the terrorist organization across all fronts. Iraqi Security Forces (ISF) and Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF), supported by the international Coalition, continue to eliminate Daesh key leaders and fighters, raid and destroy their mountain and desert hideouts, and seize weapons, explosives, and supplies needed for their survival.</p> <p>The United States, in conjunction with CIFG and TFTC partners, has directly targeted multiple financing networks across the world. On November 18, 2019, the United States designated two Turkey based ISIS procurement agents and four ISIS linked companies operating in Syria, Turkey, and across the Gulf and Europe for providing critical financial and logistical support to ISIS. More recently, on July 28, 2020, the United States targeted two ISIS financial facilitators located in Syria and Turkey to disrupt their ability to continue to raise and move funds on behalf of the group.</p> <p>(more)</p> <p>CJTF-OIR Website CJTF-OIR Twitter CJTF-OIR Facebook CJTF-OIR Imagery Email CJTF-OIRmedia@mail.mil Phone +1 813 529 4636 Kuwait 00 965 221 6340 and 430-5193# Mailing Address CJTF-OIR Public Affairs APO AE 09306</p> <p>1</p>	 <p>COMBINED JOINT TASK FORCE OPERATION INHERENT RESOLVE Public Affairs Office</p> <p>Coalition airstrikes continue to destroy Daesh assets, removing their ability to control territory and stifling their ability to illegally tax the population. These strikes have contributed to the removal of key financiers from across region, thus degrading the terrorists' ability to function as a viable entity and impose their despotic ideology. The Global Coalition continues to keep up its coordinated counter-terrorism pressure on the group's leadership and cash reserves in Iraq and Syria paired with administrative and law enforcement actions to freeze its assets and sever its financial ties around the world.</p> <p>Removing Daesh fighters, weapons, and explosive materials and targeting their finances and logistics chains remains a top priority as Daesh continues to plot attacks against innocent civilians, our partners throughout Iraq and northeast Syria, and the international community.</p> <p>For more information please see: https://home.treasury.gov/news/press-releases/sm1070 https://home.treasury.gov/news/press-releases/sm831 https://home.treasury.gov/news/press-releases/sm1057</p> <p>Photo: "ISIS Illegal Fuel Refinement" (Courtesy of Newsweek) A man refines oil to produce gas and diesel. A micro-industry for fuel refinement has grown up around the desert town of Al Mansura east of Al Raqqa, the capital of ISIS. Small stills burn oil that is trucked in by the barrel load from the oil fields of Al Hasakah. Each still can process about a thousand liters of crude a day into gas and diesel. ISIS has taken oil fields from Syrian rebels and the government in recent months. They are believed to control hundreds of wells, an important source of income for ISIS and depriving Syrian President Bashar al-Assad's government of a major source of income. (November 2014)</p> <p>Video: "Daesh's Illegal Oil Trade Explained" Dec 6, 2019. (Courtesy of the Global Coalition) https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=V8YGVcXdVJg&feature=youtu.be</p> <p>-30-</p> <p>CJTF-OIR Website CJTF-OIR Twitter CJTF-OIR Facebook CJTF-OIR Imagery Email CJTF-OIRmedia@mail.mil Phone +1 813 529 4636 Kuwait 00 965 221 6340 and 430-5193# Mailing Address CJTF-OIR Public Affairs APO AE 09306</p> <p>2</p>
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August 15, 2020 -- <https://twitter.com/coalition/status/1294574554141073409>

The @Coalition stands with the #Yazidi community six years after the tragedies they faced at the hands of Daesh. The people of Sinjar continue to remain resilient as efforts to help them return and rebuild their lives continue.

6 Years Since Sinjar Massacre



More than
10,000
displaced people have returned to Sinjar in 2020.




Local and international organisations are supporting the Government of Iraq to provide **vital services** to returnees.



“
I hope that organizations and UN agencies will stay and help continuously, because people need help to renew their life. It is difficult to renew without having organizations' support.
”




UNDP assists with the rehabilitation of schools, houses, water systems, electricity networks, healthcare centres, police stations and a number of municipal buildings.



IOM provides **mental and psychosocial support** to citizens, as well as to civil society organisations for peacebuilding.



”
SaherSaeed
an English teacher



التحالف الدولي
GLOBAL COALITION

Source: UNDP and IOM



**COMBINED JOINT TASK FORCE
OPERATION INHERENT RESOLVE**
Public Affairs Office

August 17, 2020
Release No. 20200817-01
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Coalition statement on incident near Tal Al-Zahab, Syria

SOUTHWEST ASIA – On Aug. 17 at appx. 9:20 a.m. (Syria Time), Coalition and Syrian Democratic Forces, conducting a routine anti-ISIS security patrol near Tal Al-Zahab, Syria, encountered a checkpoint occupied by pro-Syrian regime forces. After receiving safe passage from the pro-regime forces, the patrol came under small arms fire from individuals in the vicinity of the checkpoint. Coalition troops returned fire in self-defense. The Coalition did not conduct an airstrike. No Coalition casualties occurred. The Coalition patrol returned to base. The incident remains under investigation.

-30-

تصريح التحالف حول الحادث قرب قرية تل الذهب ، سوريا

جنوب غرب آسيا - في 17 آب/أغسطس، وفي حدود الساعة 9:20 صباحاً (بتوقيت سوريا)، واجهت قوات التحالف وقوات سوريا الديمقراطية، أثناء قيامها بدورية أمنية روتينية تتعلق بالعمليات المناهضة لداعش بالقرب من قرية تل الذهب في سوريا، نقطة تفتيش تابعة إلى القوات الموالية للنظام الموالي. وبعد حصول الدورية على ممر آمن من القوات الموالية للنظام، تعرضت لنيران مسلحة صغيرة من أفراد متواجدين بالقرب من نقطة التفتيش. قامت دورية التحالف بالرد على النيران دفاعاً عن النفس. لم يشن التحالف أي غارة جوية. لم تقع أية خسائر في صفوف قوات التحالف، وقد عادت دورية التحالف إلى القاعدة. لا يزال الحادث قيد التحقيق.

-30-

Daxuyaniya Koalîsyonê li ser bûyera li nêzikê Til Zahab/Sûriyê

"Koalîsyona Navnetewî û Hêzên Sûriya Demokratîk, di 17ê Tebaxê danê êvarî 9:20an de (Saeta Sûriyê), li nêzî Til Zahab/Sûriyê dema ku dewriyeya rojane ya li dijî DAÎŞê pêk dianîn li rastî xaleke kontrolê ya ku ji hêla hêzên rêjîma Sûriyê ve hatiye dagirkirin, hatin. Piştî ku hêzên me peyama ewle ya derbasbûnê ji hêzên aligirên rejîmê wergirt, hewl dan xalê derbas bikin lê bi hin kesên li nêzî xala kontrolê re ketin nav pêvçûneke kurt ya çekî. Hêzên Koalîsyonê di bin banê xweparastinê de bersiva çekî dan lê Koalîsyonê ti erîşeke hewayî bi kar neanî. Hêzên Koalîsyonê vegeriyan baregeha xwe. Lêkolînên li ser vê bûyerê berdewam in."

-30-

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1



**COMBINED JOINT TASK FORCE
OPERATION INHERENT RESOLVE**
Public Affairs Office

August 16, 2020
Release No. 20200816-01
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Coalition Transfers Taji Ammunition Supply Point to Iraq

SOUTHWEST ASIA – Combined Joint Task Force – Operation Inherent Resolve (CJTF-OIR) conducted a ceremony with Iraqi Security Forces (ISF) to transfer the Coalition's Ammunition Supply Point (ASP) on Taji Base, Iraq, August 16, 2020.

The Coalition transferred approximately 50 ammunition storage bunkers, and associated secure facilities, to full Iraqi control.

In 2020, more than \$11 million of ammunition inside the ASP was divested to the ISF as part of the Coalition's Counter-ISIS Train and Equip Fund. Items included 5.56mm and 7.62mm rifle ammunition, mortar and artillery rounds, helicopter attack missiles, grenades and other items used for training and military operations. The ASP was the primary storage facility for missions in support of the ISF and anti-ISIS international military Coalition. These military movements are long-planned in coordination with the Government of Iraq.

"Iraqi Soldiers and Airmen are conducting successful operations to defeat Daesh and developed tremendous capability for your armed forces," said Col. Greg Fix, commander, 34th Expeditionary Combat Aviation Brigade, who presided over the ceremony. "The transfer of the ammunition supply point today is historic as a symbol of success and partnership between the Coalition and Iraqi Security Forces. We look forward to the continued success of Iraqi security forces and we are thankful to our Iraqi partners for allowing us to use this safe storage site."

The Coalition continues to maintain a small presence at Taji to coordinate logistics and security operations with the ISF.

Photo Captions:

- Ammunition divested to Iraqi Security Forces at Taji throughout 2020.
- Ammunition storage facility at Taji, August 2020.
- Brig. Gen. Salah (right), deputy commander of the Prime Minister's National Operations Center and U.S. Army Col. Gregory D. Fix, senior Coalition representative at Camp Taji, sign documents during the transfer ceremony of the Ammo Supply Point to the Iraqi Government at Camp Taji, Iraq, August 16, 2020. The ASP bunkers provide safe storage for ammunition used by Iraqi Security Forces to in the fight to defeat Daesh remnants. (U.S. Army photo by Sgt. Tescia Mims)

-30-



Camp Taji Base Transfer

Combined Joint Task Force - Operation Inherent Resolve

Camp Taji

Coalition forces, primarily led by Australia and New Zealand, trained ~47,000 Iraqi Security Forces personnel at Taji. Coalition-certified Iraqi trainers now lead all programs.



Due to Iraqi Security Forces' success in the campaign against Daesh, the Coalition is repositioning in Iraq as part of long-planned adjustments to the force.

Taji Data

~300 departing personnel




Iraqi special forces train at Taji Military Complex.

~\$347 million of structures and equipment transferred to Iraqis









A U.S. Marine repairs Taji Airfield ahead of the base transfer.

inherentresolve.mil



@CJTFOIR

Camp Taji, Iraq – Transfer to Iraqi partners

Samples of facilities and equipment transferred to Iraqis at Camp Taji, Iraq. The Coalition is adjusting its positioning in Iraq as part of long-planned adjustments to the force, due to Iraqi Security Forces' success in the campaign against Daesh. The Coalition's military movements are conducted in coordination with the Government of Iraq. (U.S. Army photos by Sgt. Tesola Nims)



**COMBINED JOINT TASK FORCE
OPERATION INHERENT RESOLVE**
Public Affairs Office

August 23, 2020
Release No. 20200823-01
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Coalition departs Taji, transfers \$347 million enhanced training site

SOUTHWEST ASIA – Officials from Combined Joint Task Force – Operation Inherent Resolve transferred the Coalition area of Camp Taji, Iraq, to Iraqi Security Forces in a ceremony Aug. 23, 2020.

The transfer is a result of the Iraqi Security Forces' success in the ongoing campaign to defeat Daesh remnants in Iraq, allowing the Coalition to shift its focus and role. The movement of Coalition military personnel is part of a long-range plan coordinated with the Government of Iraq.

"This is truly a historic day," said Maj. Gen. Kenneth Ekman, deputy commander of Combined Joint Task Force-Operation Inherent Resolve. "For the past six years, Camp Taji has served as a primary installation for Coalition partners to train the Iraqi Army, Iraqi Air Force, and the Qwat al-Khasah. The Coalition's efforts have enabled the Iraqis to train themselves. From this day forward, the ISF will take full responsibility for the facilities and programs at Taji and continue to use the site to lead and conduct training as part of the mission to defeat Daesh remnants."

More than 47,000 ISF members at Camp Taji learned operational skills including infantry tactics, marksmanship, operations planning, combat medicine and intelligence analysis – enabling them to take the fight to Daesh and restore their country's sovereignty.

Camp Taji has historically held up to 2,000 Coalition members, with the majority departing over the summer of 2020. Major elements based at Camp Taji over the years included a Spanish helicopter battalion and military trainers from Australia, Canada, Finland, Germany, Hungary, Italy, Netherlands, New Zealand, Poland, Turkey, United Kingdom, United States and NATO.

This ceremony marks the eighth transfer of the Coalition portion of an Iraqi base under the partnership between the Iraqi Security Forces and the anti-ISIS international military Coalition.

"This is what success looks like," said Australian Brig. Gen. Simon Johnstone, CJTF-OIR director of strategy, plans and assessments and senior Australian officer in the Coalition. "The transfer of bases like Taji is part of our campaign plan for the ISF to secure their own future and defend Iraqi sovereignty. The tremendous efforts by the ISF and the Coalition demonstrate our shared commitment from the Coalition and Australia to ensure safety, security and stability for Iraqi citizens."

Numerous improvements were made to the Iraqi base, which served as a premier training venue for the anti-ISIS forces. The Coalition transferred \$347 million in equipment and property to the Government of Iraq. This was the highest dollar figure of any base transfer. Base improvements and divestments include airfield and runway renovations, modular aircraft shelters, infantry training ranges, vehicles, and more than 90 million rounds of ammunition.

Remaining Coalition troops will depart Taji after completion of equipment transfers to the ISF in the coming days.

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**Statement from the White House Press Secretary on the Visit of His Excellency
Prime Minister Mustafa al-Kadhimi of the Republic of Iraq**

President Donald J. Trump will welcome Prime Minister Mustafa Al-Kadhimi of the Republic of Iraq to the White House on August 20, 2020. The visit comes at a critical time for both the United States and Iraq as we continue our collaboration to ensure the enduring defeat of ISIS and address the challenges from the coronavirus pandemic. As close partners, the United States and Iraq will look to expand our relations across a range of issues, including security, energy, health care, and economic cooperation.

###

البيت الأبيض - مكتب السكرتير الصحفي
للنشر الفوري
التاريخ: 7 آب، 2020

بيان السكرتير الصحفي عن زيارة دولة رئيس وزراء جمهورية العراق السيد مصطفى الكاظمي

سيستقبل الرئيس دونالد ترامب رئيس الوزراء العراقي مصطفى الكاظمي في البيت الأبيض في الـ 20 من شهر آب 2020. وتأتي هذه الزيارة في وقتٍ حرجٍ لكلٍ من الولايات المتحدة والعراق حيثُ نواصل تعاوننا لضمان الهزيمة الدائمة لداعش والتصدي لتحديات وباء فيروس كورونا. كشريكتين مقربين، سيسعى كلٌّ من الولايات المتحدة والعراق على توسيع علاقتنا عبر العمل على جملةٍ من القضايا، بما في ذلك قضايا الأمن والطاقة والرعاية الصحية والتعاون الاقتصادي.

###

**لێدوانی پۆژنامەوانی سكرتیری میدیایی كۆشكى سبى سەبارەت
بە سەردانی سەرۆك وەزیرانی عێراق**

له به‌روارى ٢٠ ئاب ٢٠٢٠، سەرۆكى وولايمته يەكگرتوو مەكانى ئەمريكا دۇنالد ترمپ پێشوازی له بەرێز مصطفى كاظمی، سەرۆك وەزیرانی كۆمارى عێراق دەكات له كۆشكى سبى. ئەم سەردانه له كاتێكى هەستیاردا ئەنجام دەدرێت كه بۆ هەردوو له وولايمته يەكگرتوو مەكانى ئەمريكا و كۆمارى عێراق گرنگه، له هەمان كاتێشدا به‌ردوام ئەبین له هەماهەنگى كردن بۆ لەناوبردنى سەرتاسەرى داعش، وە هەروەها پاس لەو گەرفتانه ئەكرێت كه هاتونامته به‌ر به هۆى ڤایروسى كۆرۆناوه له ناوچەكه. وەك دوو هاوبەشى نزیك، وولايمته يەكگرتوو مەكانى ئەمريكا و كۆمارى عێراق به‌ر به بەرفراوانكردنى پەیوەندییهكانیان ئەمەین له رووى ئاسایش و ووزو تەندروستى وە هاریكارى نابووێ.

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Transcript of oral-history interview with LTG R. Pat White; 2020 September 08

[32:12] [...] COL Eng: -- Who are the “unsung heroes” of the Coalition? Who has done incredible work but may not have been in the limelight?

LTG White: It’s so hard, because everybody’s a hero. If you lived this last year, or any portion of it, you are a part of what I just described. It wasn’t what you would have expected either. If you did expect it, then you should have come and talked to me, like last July [2019], so I could have been more prepared.

May 25, 2020 https://twitter.com/iiicorps_cg/status/1264855578683326464



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Transcript of oral-history interview with LTG R. Pat White; 2020 September 08



DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE
COMBINED JOINT TASK FORCE-OPERATION INHERENT RESOLVE
UNION III, BAGHDAD, IRAQ
APOAE 09348



May 24, 2020

To the members of the Combined Joint Task Force – Inherent Resolve:

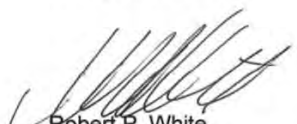
Today, in the United States of America, we honor the sacrifice of thousands of fallen service members from wars past and present. Since its 2014 formation, the Coalition has lost many brave and selfless members who made the ultimate sacrifice supporting our partners in Iraq and Syria.

I encourage you to take a moment today to reflect on our fallen heroes – the men and women who died wearing the cloth of their nation. Their selflessness and bravery left an indelible mark on the Coalition, one that will not soon fade.

The international military Coalition remains formidable – with troops from almost 30 nations – drawing strength from the memory of our fallen comrades. We remain committed to our Iraqi and Syrian partners and honor their martyrs as we focus on the lasting defeat of Daesh.

One Mission, Many Nations

Most Respectfully,


Robert P. White
Lieutenant General, USA
Commanding

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[32:58] A unit that I have to tell you – really helped tremendously – was 1st [Brigade Combat Team] of the 82nd [Airborne Division]. We ask a lot of that formation. On very, very short notice, when the cycle of violence was rapidly gaining momentum, and I didn't – I don't have combat forces – I mean, we have a couple of QRF [Quick Reaction Force] forces set – I asked General McKenzie [CENTCOM commander], "I need some help here. I need to be able to protect our bases, and [LTG] White with three mags and a 9-mil is not how we go about doing this. Can I get some capability, either from CENTCOM reaction forces – but they might get sucked in here for a while – or not?"

The Army deployed [1-82] (1st of the 82nd) – basically, the headquarters out first, to get integrated – we put them on task for some planning of – how do we strengthen our defenses – and then we began moving company teams in – basically just flying them in and moving them around the battlefield without the permission of the Gol [government of Iraq] – because I was significantly worried about the risk to the force at that point in time.

Those guys [1-82] were probably planning on having a nice spring break – and we disrupted all of their lives – and they got here, and they did exactly what we needed them to do. It took a little bit of stress and weight off of me, because I knew I had a brigade commander [COL Andrew Saslav] – and then a division commander [MG James Mingus] – who was interested in what we were doing. Having a division commander and his staff – and a brigade commander and his staff – working on a problem for you – is super helpful while you're trying to get back on track with D-Da'esh.



[34:45] The other group that I would mention – I mean, there's so many people out there – are our medical providers. You gotta realize that *“trauma care” is the word-of-the-day in this theater*; it always has been, and it always will be. It's about saving life, limb, and eye; we have to have that capability; I can take risk anywhere else, but I've got to be able to stabilize – and get an injured service member – from the nations that are here – to a place where we can save that life, or that limb – and, they've always done a fantastic job.

COVID is a whole different fight; COVID isn't about trauma. We were a little off-balance when COVID hit. We had plenty of medical capacity – it just wasn't the right kind of medical capacity. So, we relied on the medical community here pretty heavily, just to bridge for us until we got the proper type of medical professionals into theater – we spread them out – the testing equipment. As always, the medics are the first people you give a hug to. In this case, what it really did was allowed the campaign to continue to move, without it becoming a distraction – because COVID – as we all know now, which we didn't really know when it first started popping up – it easily could have decimated formations here. *The advice the medical community gave, some of the care they gave, until we got our request-for-forces in – really helped stabilize, and let me focus on the mission.* Over. [36:30]



[36:31] [...] COL Eng: This 3rd segment is for **After** this deployment. **What's next for you?**

COL Eng: -- How has this experience prepared you for your next assignment?

LTG White: Well, I go back to the [III] Corps – I'm also the commander of III Armored Corps, back in the United States, stationed at Fort Hood [Texas]. We've been doing this – I think I'm the 6th OIR [Operation Inherent Resolve] commander – we've basically been rotating the XVIII [Airborne Corps] and III Corps in and out of theater every year – dislodging the corps headquarters and a number of staff that are part of the headquarters – to come here to fight this good fight. I assumed command [June 5, 2019] of the [III] Corps about two months before coming over here. *I'll go back* – uncased the colors – *and get back to what was job-1 prior to deploying here* as the [C]JTF[-OIR] commander – and then however long that lasts.

The good news is that along the way in crunching this [18-24] month campaign plan into about [4.5-5] months is – we were able to not have the XVIII Airborne Corps come in behind us. The XVIII Airborne Corps has been focused on contingency operations for the United States military – instead of preparing to come to Iraq – bifurcating the leadership, and sending some forward, and leaving some at home station. In the end, when I get back home, *we'll have bought back two corps headquarters for the United States Army. I think that's a significant achievement.*
[38:17]

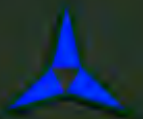
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Transcript of oral-history interview with LTG R. Pat White; 2020 September 08

<https://usacac.army.mil/sites/default/files/publications/17849.pdf>

NEWS FROM THE FRONT

March 2019



Lessons in HQs Evolution for Commanders and Staff



Reorganizing a CJTF-OIR HQs

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Figure 1. Deployment Cycle for CJTF-OIR 2017 to 2018.

Figure 2 depicts a change in deployment. As planned, XVIII ABN Corps departed the AOR on schedule and III Corps took over the CJTF. Shortly after, the CJFLCC command was to transition to a new commander and staff. However, this could not happen with new orders for CJFLCC deactivation. Therefore, CJTF staff needed a transition plan, a start date, and timeline to deactivate a CJFLCC while retaining land component responsibilities that would have belonged to the CJFLCC had it still been operational. This plan worked well and timelines were appropriate. As anticipated, staff workloads at CJTF increased without the subordinate CJFLCC.

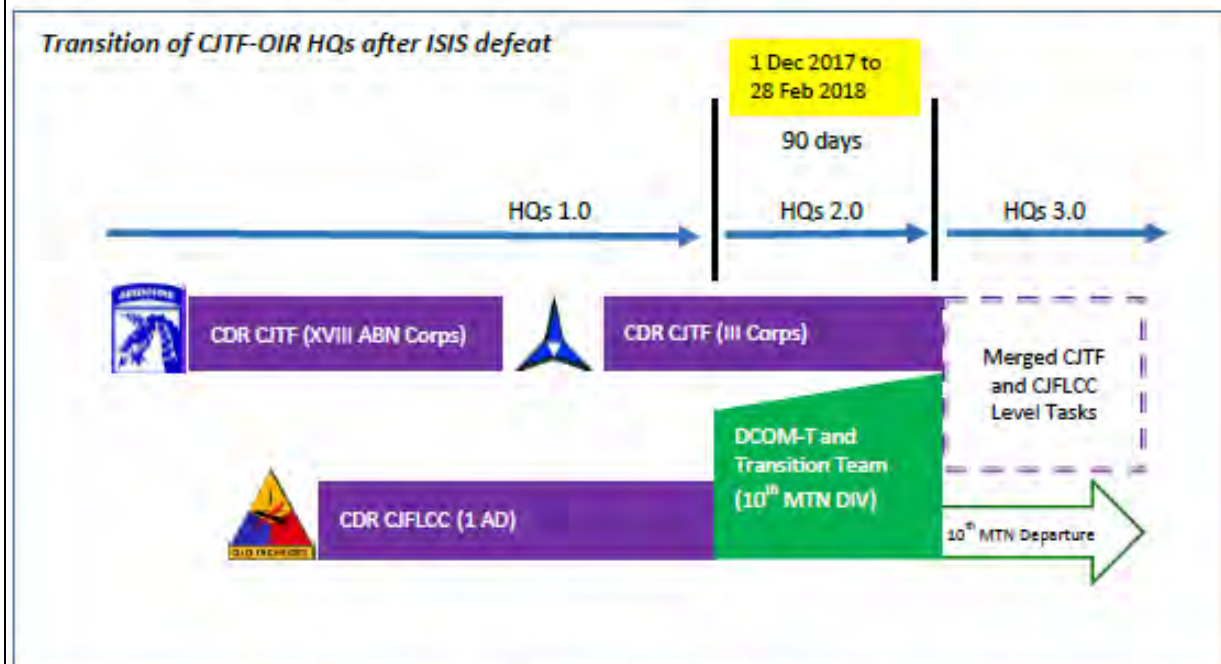


Figure 2. Adjusted Deployment Cycle for 2017 to 2018.

References: White, Robert "Pat", MG, US Army – End-of-Tour Oral-History Interview – Transcribed by Steven Frank – Command Historian, III Corps – 2018 March 15.

[38:18] *You're always challenged – leadership is always challenged* – when you got to pick a formation apart, at whatever level – but certainly at the corps level – it begins to constrain you when you drag your primary staff forward – it's not that those that are deputies are no good, it's just that they're not as experienced, and they are not the primary. So, there is a difference in how you operate. There's no depth – so when the commander is back, and others are back, you have some depth – back to one of your questions about – “what did the DCOM-O [Maj. Gen. Kenneth Ekman, U.S. Air Force] do? – what did the DCOM-S [MG Gerald Strickland, U.K.] do?” – our DCOM-S was in an office right next door to me. He is my 2-star deputy back at Fort Hood. There was one guy back there – 2-star general [MG Scott Efflandt], trying to do the job of three generals while we were forward – So, lots of challenges.

Going back to being III Corps commander – I look forward to it. It is clearly the most powerful corps in the world. You could just take a look at it. We are re-entering – [...] – I'll talk to them on the plane – on the flight – *“You are not going back home to what you left ...”* – it was never that case anyway – when you deploy – *“... because the void you left was always filled in somehow.”* It was a compensation by what their battle rhythm is at home – they go buy a new puppy – you know, buy a new TV – binge-watch Netflix – I don't know – but it's your presence and departing as a Soldier – that void is always filled somehow. In the past, we've had to re-integrate ourselves – *that's why we call it re-integration* – into the change of the family units – the change of the loved ones – and the change of the units that are back there that have compensated for your absence for a year – 9 months – 15 months – whatever it happens to be.

On top of all that, our lifestyles have changed. It's not just about the void – it's COVID – we have problems with racism – both in America, and within our United States Army. *Fort Hood has some unique challenges that have popped up most recently* – that are being challenged by others – that we're going to have to take a look at. It ain't gonna be the same. *“Slow down a little bit when you get back home. You've got*

to get your situational understanding built before you just jump back in the saddle and think it's just gonna be like it was when you left – it ain't even gonna be close this time.”
 – but everybody is pretty excited – as long as that plane lifts off – we'll be good to go. [40:59]

<https://www.yellowribbon.mil/>



<https://readyandresilient.army.mil/CSF2/index.html>



<https://www.usar.army.mil/DHAP/>



[41:00] COL Eng: This 4th segment is for your **Vision for Future**. **What's next for CJTF-OIR?**

COL Eng: -- Now that you are at the end of this deployment, what advice do you have for your successor?

COL Eng: -- What happens for Iraq and Syria after OIR ends?

LTG White: I think, I've shared some personal thoughts with the CENTCOM commander [Gen. Kenneth McKenzie] and with Lieutenant General Paul Calvert – you know, “If you were to keep me here another year, here’s some things I would work on” – those are things for General Calvert to assess – he’s going to do the same thing – he’s going to assess – he’ll institute changes, or reinforce success, as he sees fit.

What we do know is that, *politically, there is still appetite for the U.S. military to partner with the Iraqi security forces* – and in that partnership, be a lead nation for a coalition that would also like to be here – because the threat of Da’esh – although they are beat down hard – and we’ve got our boot on their neck – they still aspire to do *bad* things. Bad things started in Raqqa [Syria], and rolled right into Iraq last time; we can’t let that happen again.

The investment of the international community, in a partnership – militarily with Iraq and Syria – should be focused on how you maintain what I described before – which is tactical overmatch that you generate into operational overmatch over time through systems and programs – *but generally, be here for the Iraqis and show them that what they are doing is important for the international community; it’s not just all about Iraq*.

Therefore, you should have a partnership. What that looks like – I don’t know how this will all end. I do know – at some point in time – as you move through this military campaign – Phase 4 – *there is an intent to transition out of Phase 4* – when you do that, what you are doing is divesting and

transitioning responsibilities – either back to the host-nation security forces – or you are giving it to a [UAP] unified-action partner to take the lead – or you are deliberately deciding that this no longer needs to be done – (that might have been done a few years ago – doesn't need to be done, moving into the future).

NATO Mission Iraq is growing in capacity. Somewhat stimey'd by COVID, to be quite honest with you. They have a plan; they're going to vote on that plan this fall [2020]. I think those two complementary things – [1] *an international community that wants to contribute to the security of Iraq* – and see Iraq win and succeed – and [2] *NATO Mission Iraq who is a little bit longer-term developed to reform at the institutional level* – those things come together really, really nicely.



It doesn't have to be a large investment. The [CJTF-OIR] headquarters doesn't have to necessarily be what is today. So, I think that's what you'll see, if you're still around next year about the same time – and you are interviewing General Calvert – he'll be describing to you what that transition looked like, and why he made the decisions he made, recommendations he made – to get them into a position where we now have an enduring relationship like we have with other nations across the globe – where it's transactional in nature, but there is a mil-to-mil relationship with the Iraqi security forces – and Da'esh can't gain the upper hand.

That's a loosey-goosey answer, but is an answer I will give you because I will not be in command [of CJTF-OIR], and I do not want to pre-suppose – plus, go back to my long-winded diatribe here about how the environment changed, a month into this thing – and crushed my campaign plan that I had envisioned for two months at Fort Hood – and threw me off-course. *Only by the will and hard work of all the members of the Coalition, did we get this thing back on track with the partner force, really.*

April 16, 2020 – <https://theglobalcoalition.org/en/statement-by-the-political-directors-of-the-global-coalition-to-defeat-isis-small-group/>

Statement by the Political Directors of the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS Small Group

The Political Directors of the Global Coalition to Defeat Daesh/ISIS Small Group met today virtually to reaffirm our shared commitment to continue the fight against Daesh/ISIS and maintain unity of purpose and cohesiveness in Iraq and Syria.

The Political Directors agreed to maintain maximum pressure on Daesh/ISIS despite the several and multifaceted challenges, including those posed by the COVID-19 pandemic in order to achieve the enduring defeat of the terrorist group in Iraq and Syria, and to remain vigilant against the threat of Daesh/ ISIS around the world. In particular, the Political Directors agreed upon the importance of maintaining and allocating adequate military and civilian means and resources to sustain Coalition efforts in Iraq and Syria, including providing support to legitimate partner forces, in order to safeguard our collective security efforts.

The Political Directors agreed that Operation Inherent Resolve's training role, temporarily suspended due to the pandemic, will resume as conditions permit.

The Political Directors of the Global Coalition, while maintaining the importance of guaranteeing the sovereignty of Iraq, also stressed the importance of increasing our various forms of assistance and stabilization support to liberated areas.

They also emphasized the need to remain focused on the Coalition's civilian and military lines of effort in the areas of Communications; Foreign Terrorist Fighters; Stabilization; Countering ISIS Financing; and, Political Military Coordination, and encouraged Working Group members to connect virtually to continue their vital work.

The Political Directors expressed unwavering solidarity and determination in the fight against Daesh/ISIS in Iraq and Syria during the current global health crisis and look forward to the next full Ministerial meeting of the Global Coalition in Italy as soon as conditions allow.

Ok, back over to you.

[45:17] COL Eng: -- For those officers who may be in your position during the next 5-10 years in the future, what is your vision of the future for them?

LTG White: If you look at our Department of Defense, and the direction we are headed, with near-peer and peer-to-peer competitors that are in the world, *you'll see more interest in our ability to fight large-scale* – don't equate it to World War II; the environment has changed; the challenges have changed – but large-scale joint and combined operations *[Multi-domain Battle Concept]*. That's what this mission has been since 2014; it's been a joint and combined operation, with tens of thousands of coalition partners – plus, **the Iraqi partners are the largest coalition partner, by the way – getting after it.**

It just so happened that the United States provided the senior leadership and headquarters lead for that effort, as is depicted in our joint doctrine in 3-0 [Joint Operations] and 3-33 [Joint Task Force Headquarters] – corps headquarters plugs in. For young officers now who are colonels and lieutenant colonels and majors, it's about exposure to that type of – relationships was the word I was going to use, but that's not necessarily the right way to term this – *it's exposure over time to understanding that in rare instances, will we ever fight alone. Therefore, the requirement is – you can fight with a partner – for a partner – or through a partner.* It does not matter at what scale it is – whether it's large scale, or where we are now, in this particular environment – kind of an insurgency-type, low-level insurgency-type environment. You have to interact with others; you have to be able to row in the same direction – but you also have to understand national caveats – and you have to understand your authorities – which are often left behind when we look at it – by which authorities are we operating. [47:32]

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Transcript of oral-history interview with LTG R. Pat White; 2020 September 08

https://usacac.army.mil/sites/default/files/publications/NFTF_White.PDF

NEWS FROM THE FRONT

May 2, 2018



Commander's Perspective CJFLCC-OIR Operations

**Insights from MG Robert "Pat" White,
Commanding General, 1st AD and CJFLCC-OIR**

COL Robert Blaesing
CALL Military Analyst (forward)

Approved for Public Release
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CENTER FOR ARMY LESSONS LEARNED

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Center for Army Lessons Learned conducted a key leader interview (KLI) with MG Robert “Pat” White, Commanding General of the 1st Armored Division (1AD). MG White assumed responsibility of Combined Joint Force Land Component Command-Operation Inherent Resolve (CJFLCC-OIR) on 12 July 2017. Building off of the momentum and gains of its predecessors the 82nd Airborne Division, and the 1st Infantry Division – CJFLCC-OIR worked by, with, and through its partner forces to defeat the ISIS Core in Iraq.

This News from the Front (NFTF) is a transcription of the KLI covering various topics ranging from the preparation to transition from a division to a combined-joint entity to working by, with, and through the Iraqi Security Force (ISF) partner force.

Key takeaways:

Multi-domain Battle Concept: The convergence of capabilities to create windows of advantage across multiple domains and contested areas throughout the depth of the battlespace to seize, retain, and exploit the initiative; defeat enemies; and achieve military objectives. The changes needed must break the way we think about how the Army operates in any environment. As part of a joint and coalition force, how we train and educate in our institutions has to be very deliberate – capable of resonating across generations.

Information Operations: Information Operation must be able to keep up with the changing environment and battlefield in order to address unfolding events and the adversary narrative. Both lethal and non-lethal targeting become a by, with, and through methodology if you’re going to come to a place like Iraq. It’s more about the Iraqis getting in front of the camera and talking about their success vice the U.S./Coalition.

Mission Command Post – Operational Detachment (MCP-OD): The MCP-OD is a unique unit made up of 91 National Guard and 5 Army Reserve personnel. The unit can deploy all or just what the Commander requires for the forward mission. The unit is well designed and able to flex to meet any mission. What the MCP-OD brings to the Division headquarters flows back to the reduction of the active component headquarters by numbers and skills.

Accelerated Campaign Challenges: The greatest challenge for us was what we called Prime Directive #1, (and still do), which consists of two things: first, don’t become the main effort and second, don’t make the ISF wait for us.

These items address the adaptability and flexibility inherently needed in military operations. Additional details and insights are included within the base document.

NEWS FROM THE FRONT

We are all one team and in one fight together. MG Robert White

Q: Some 30 years ago we were prepared for the big war to occur in the Fulda Gap, but times have changed and doctrine has changed to meet new and ever-changing threats. Where do you see the major changes in doctrine that will need to be addressed? Are you able to integrate any of the ideas expressed in the multi domain battle concept?

MG White: I think that if we're moving forward with multi-domain battle, at least in my mind based on where we are in the Army today, there needs to be a very deliberate process for us as an institution to break the way we think about how our Army operates in any environment. If multi-domain battle is the watchword for the Army, as part of a greater joint and coalition force, then I think how we train and how we educate in our institutions has to be very deliberate, and over a period of time be sufficient enough for it to resonate across generations. I mention that because the hardest transitions will be the older guys, who are used to operating in a certain way.

Although we think we are not biased in how we think, your experience is what you draw from. I think if you're trying to compare and contrast air-land battle and then name whatever our operational framework is for the Army in joint and combined operations, you'll find it difficult. That's because environments change over time. The way we approach operations changes daily both from a human capital perspective and from what technology exists at that period of time. Air-land battle as compared to multi-domain battle is apples and oranges. It's all about the environment.

The way we approach operations changes daily both from a human capital perspective and from what technology exists at that period of time.

When you commit the Army, you're committing the nation; you're committing human capital to that fight. The environment that existed back in the 70s and 80s and somewhat so into the 90s is tremendously different than the one that we're dealing with today. Today's environment affects how you interact with partnered forces, how you interact with your coalition forces and how you interact amongst our services; this is not solely because of technology.

Q: How has the Iraqi Security Forces (ISF) changed since you were here last?

MG White: The last time I was here was as a brigade commander. Where I focused and the missions that we were taking on, were a component or a subcomponent of a broader, multi-national Division, multi-national Corps and Multi-National Forces Iraq nested up and down in each of those headquarters. I

Multi-Domain Battle*

convergence of capabilities to create windows of advantage (often temporary) across multiple domains and contested areas throughout the depth of the battlespace to seize, retain, and exploit the initiative; defeat enemies; and achieve military objectives.

** Proposed definition from
Multi-Domain Battle: Evolution of Combined Arms
for the 21st Century 2025-2040, Version 1.0,
December 2017.*

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Transcript of oral-history interview with LTG R. Pat White; 2020 September 08

https://www.tradoc.army.mil/Portals/14/Documents/MDO/TP525-3-1_30Nov2018.pdf



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The U.S. Army in Multi-Domain Operations 2028 concept proposes a series of solutions to solve the problem of *layered standoff*. The central idea in solving this problem is the *rapid and continuous integration of all domains of warfare* to deter and prevail as we *compete* short of armed conflict. If deterrence fails, Army formations, operating as part of the Joint Force, *penetrate* and *dis-integrate* enemy anti-access and area denial systems; *exploit* the resulting freedom of maneuver to defeat enemy systems, formations and objectives and to achieve our own strategic objectives; and consolidate gains to force a *return to competition* on terms more favorable to the U.S., our allies and partners.

To achieve this, the Army must evolve our force, and our operations, around three core tenets. *Calibrated force posture* combines position and the ability to maneuver across strategic distances. *Multi-domain formations* possess the capacity, endurance and capability to access and employ capabilities across all domains to pose multiple and compounding dilemmas on the adversary. *Convergence* achieves the rapid and continuous integration of all domains across time, space and capabilities to overmatch the enemy. Underpinning these tenets are mission command and disciplined initiative at all warfighting echelons.

To win tomorrow, we must evolve how we organize and integrate the Army as part of the Joint Force. To do this we will (1) continue to refine a warfighting concept that provides our azimuth to the future--*The U.S. Army in Multi-Domain Operations 2028* is that concept; (2) develop a comprehensive Army modernization strategy linked to this concept and synchronized with a joint approach to force development; (3) drive rapid, non-linear solutions in Army doctrine, organization, training, material, leadership and education, personnel, facilities, and policy; (4) deepen the operational integration of general purpose and special operations forces and with our allies and partners.

TRADOC Pamphlet 525-3-1

This concept is about warfighting and its centerpiece is the American Soldier. Throughout the United States Army's 243-year history, the grit, ingenuity and initiative of the American Soldier stands at the forefront of our Nation's success in peace, competition, and armed conflict.

As a concept, this is not the final answer. We will refine and update this concept as we learn from our operations, exercises and experiments as well as from other services, allies and partners and even our adversaries. The evolution of this concept into doctrine and practice will inform the way the Army recruits, trains, educates, operates and drives constant improvement and change to ensure the U.S. Army can deter, fight and win on any battlefield, against any foe, now and into the future.

VICTORY STARTS HERE!

Stephen J. Townsend
General, U.S. Army
Commander, TRADOC

[47:33] I would finish it off by saying – our joint force and our Army – I’ve been around for a while – I don’t have much hair – it’s getting gray – I don’t run as fast on the PT test [Army Physical Fitness Test / Army Combat Fitness Test] anymore – but I will tell you that the caliber of service members and Soldiers that we have today far exceed anything I ever was as a young lieutenant or captain or lieutenant colonel. *The talent that we have, and the ingenuity, and the ability to operate in an ambiguous, uncertain environment – is amazing.* That’s why we’ve had success; it is somewhat about the leadership, but it’s more about the Coalition, and its ability to adapt and overcome. That only happens because of the people who are a part of that organization.

I think we’re all on a good course – professionally, we’ve got the right kind of PME [professional military education] – we can tweak it on the fringes – but it’s about challenging ourselves and understanding that it might not always be somebody wearing this [U.S. Army uniform] that you are fighting [partnered] with. It could be anybody from 77 nations that are contributing troops for the [D-Da’esh] fight – that you have got to figure out how to organize and take advantage of – both their capacity and capability, and their skillsets.

So, what else?

<https://talent.army.mil/>



The Army is undertaking the most comprehensive reform of its three officer personnel systems (Active, Guard, and Reserve) across the Total Force since the Officer Personnel Act of 1947. The 2019 National Defense Authorization Act granted several new authorities that provide the Army flexibility to determine the characteristics of a future talent-based system. The Army has determined how it will implement the new authorities and is on the verge of releasing several new policies and initiatives that set Army Talent Management in motion.

[49:00] COL Eng: That was our last one, but if there are any alibis you have or other comments...

LTG White: I'm just immensely proud of the effort put forth by everybody – over the last five years. Again, I remind people often – *“You are only where you are today because of the efforts of those who came before you.”* Sometimes we learn tough lessons; sometimes we learn from success – but either way, all those efforts – whether you are a repeat offender – and you've been here before, or not – the only way we got to where we are today is because somebody started this thing – somebody came in behind them – then somebody came in behind them – so if you want to talk talent of our joint force and our Army – it's all that talent that came before where we are today – that enabled us to take advantage of the opportunities – and I would make a leap of logic that you are going to see this thing accelerate over the next year. For all of goodness – for all the successes that have been had – *we stand on the shoulders of a lot of people – we never do it alone* – so it's always good.

Over to you.



[50:12] COL Eng: Sir, that's super inspiring – are you sure you don't want to stick around for another year?

LTG White: Yeah, no – I'm good. My wife – she's got plans – so does my dog. But, thanks for taking time to do this. It'll be a little bit all over the map, but you guys do a great job cleaning it up, making sense out of it.

If you throw in the words, "campaign continuity" – I think that's important. *This really is about campaign continuity* – independent of what year you are in, or what leader is leading the organization. It cannot be a series of one-year campaigns; it has to be a series of five – ten – and fifteen-year campaigns. That's how we structure it.

God bless you guys. Thanks for your contributions. Good talking to you. *We'll see you on the objective.* [51:15]



July 12, 2020 – <https://twitter.com/coalition/status/1282223166887063552>

How can journalists and media outlets ensure Daesh does not receive the notoriety and legitimacy it craves? Check out our glossary on the correct terminology to use [#WordsMatter](#)

September 24, 2018 -- <https://theglobalcoalition.org/en/counter-daesh-dictionary/>



Guidelines for Media Reporting on Daesh

General Guidelines:

- Use dispassionate language when describing attacks or terrorists.
- Avoid publishing images of Daesh members or terrorists in combat gear unless there is a public safety reason for doing so (ex. if the perpetrator is still being sought by authorities).
- Exercise caution in reporting Daesh's claims as fact. Statements by Daesh's propaganda unit, Amaq, following recent terror attacks in the UK and abroad actually show that Daesh had no prior knowledge of these attacks.
- Avoid war terminology as it fuels fear, gives terrorist organisations power and mirrors their language.
- Avoid glorifying perpetrators by giving them a nickname ex. 'White Widow' or 'The Beatles'.

Term(s)	Alternative(s)	Why?
Amaq News Agency Al Hayat Media Centre	Daesh's propaganda unit, Amaq	Daesh does not produce objective news or facts. Employing Daesh's terms plays into its narrative and misleads the reader.
Caliphate	Daesh-held territory	Using 'Caliphate' gives Daesh false legitimacy as it is not a legitimate state.
Daesh military commanders / generals	Senior Daesh terrorist	Using warlike terminology implies that Daesh is a legitimate state actor which it is not.
Emir Caliph	Terrorist	Emir and caliph confer a positive connotation and a level of legitimacy to Daesh's claims of an Islamic caliphate.
Foreign fighters	Terrorist Foreign terrorist fighter	Avoid as it can glorify criminal activity.
Islamic	Islamist	Avoid using 'Islamic' so as not to conflate Islam with terrorism. An Islamist is someone who wishes to impose their interpretation of Islam on society, usually expressed as a desire to enforce Sharia.

Term(s)	Alternative(s)	Why?
Islamic State IS / ISIL / ISIS	Daesh	Daesh is not a state and no legitimacy should be given or implied. The Arabic acronym Daesh has a negative connotation.
Jihad / Jihadi / Mujahid(a) / Mujahideen	Fighter / Perpetrator / Terrorist *(only when sure of accuracy)	These terms theologically legitimize the perpetrator's intentions and ignores the complex religious meanings of 'jihad'. If reporting insists on its usage, ensure it is distinguished as 'violent jihad'.
Jihadi bride	Avoid this term as it negates women's agency.	
Lone wolf	Lone actor	'Wolf' has a positive, almost heroic connotation. Care should be taken not to glorify criminal activity.
Mastermind(s)	Perpetrator	Mastermind gives credit to the criminal.
Rumiyah	Daesh's propaganda paper/ magazine	Rumiyah should be clarified as Daesh's propaganda paper.
Soldier(s)	Fighter(s), Perpetrator(s)	War terminology should be avoided as it incites fear and adds a sense of authority and legitimacy to both the crime and criminal.
Terrorist	Avoid term until confirmed by relevant authorities.	During an attack describe the action ex. 'bombers' or 'gunmen'.
Terrorist attack	As Above.	Only use when law enforcement and appropriate authorities have declared this.
Warrior Martyr	Daesh follower/member Dead suicide bomber Suicide bomber	Avoid all words that may lead to glorification or imply martyrdom.

 <p>COMBINED JOINT TASK FORCE OPERATION INHERENT RESOLVE Public Affairs Office</p> <p>September 3, 2020 Release No. 20200903-01 FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE</p> <p>\$5 billion with a B: The Global Coalition invests in the future of Iraq, Syria</p> <p>SOUTHWEST ASIA – As the 2020 fiscal year draws to a close, and Combined Joint Task Force – Operation Inherent Resolve (CJTF-OIR) adjusts its mission and presence, the command reflects on one of the world's most powerful anti-terrorism tools – money.</p> <p>As the military arm of the Global Coalition to defeat Daesh in Iraq and Syria, CJTF-OIR oversees the execution of the U.S. Counter-ISIS Train and Equip Fund (CTEF) in these nations. CTEF is a U.S. Congressionally appropriated, enemy-focused, geographically-bound funding stream to enable our partner forces to defeat Daesh in Iraq and Syria.</p> <p>CTEF includes financial and material support for training, equipment, logistics, supplies and services, infrastructure repair and renovation (does not allow new construction) and sustainment. CJTF-OIR uses CTEF to directly increase and enable its key lines of effort – enhance partner force readiness and capabilities, ensure regional security at national borders and historic ISIS operating areas, and further develop force protection / COVID mitigation for partner forces.</p> <p>From 2014 to 2020, the CJTF-OIR CTEF program divested or obligated more than \$5 billion to its partner security forces. These funds go to a wide range of materials, from a small 6-cent washer to repair a vehicle, to a \$13M equipment set for a full Peshmerga brigade. Other examples included items such as uniforms and body armor, machine guns, mine-resistant armored vehicles, surgical medical kits and supplies, communications equipment, construction equipment and construction materials. The program also provided more than 110 million rounds of small arms ammunition, grenades, rockets and mortars.</p> <p>"The conditions-based divestments for our security partners in Iraq and Syria gives them a significant edge over ISIS," said Lt. Gen. Pat White, commanding general, CJTF-OIR. "At our recent site transfer at Camp Taji, we divested more than \$300 million in equipment and munitions that directly empower our Iraqi partner forces to train themselves, arm themselves, and bring the fight to Daesh. That money leads to enhanced capability for the ISF, allowing the Coalition to adjust our size, scope, and reduce our footprint in Iraq."</p> <p>For the past six years, Camp Taji served as one of the primary sites for CTEF divestments in Iraq, for Coalition partners to train and equip the Iraqi Army, Iraqi Air Force and Qadisiyah. As of Aug. 23, the ISF now have full control of facilities, programs, operations and sustainment at Taji, where they lead training and operational missions to defeat Daesh remnants in the country. Coalition improvements and divestments at the Taji base included airfield and runway renovations, modular aircraft shelters, infantry training ranges, vehicles and weapons.</p> <p>Although vast in size and scope, CTEF is not "free" money for the Iraqi Security Forces (ISF), Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF), Iraqi Counter-Terrorism Services (CTS), Peshmerga and other partner forces. Every dollar and every line item is carefully scrutinized versus several criteria. Does this item</p> <p>CJTF-OIR Website CJTF-OIR Twitter CJTF-OIR Facebook CJTF-OIR Instagram Email CJTF-OIRmedia@mail.mil Phone +1 813 529 4636 Kuwait 00 965 221 6340 and 430-51938 Mailing Address CJTF-OIR Public Affairs APO AE 09306</p>	 <p>COMBINED JOINT TASK FORCE OPERATION INHERENT RESOLVE Public Affairs Office</p> <p>contribute to the military tactical capability to defeat Daesh? Does the partner force have a plan and capability for the enduring use and maintenance of this item? Why can the partner force not pay for the item themselves? This item is only funded or provided once these questions are answered and verified.</p> <p>Moreover, CTEF funding only goes to partner force units that are carefully vetted, to ensure their adherence with international laws of war, and international humanitarian and human rights policies and agreements. Senior leaders and units are evaluated for compliance with requirements such as the U.S. State Department "Leahy Law," which evaluates and assesses available information about their human rights records or any enemy force affiliation, reviewing a full spectrum of open source and classified sources.</p> <p>CJTF-OIR, NATO-Mission Iraq, and the U.S. State Department's Office of Security Cooperation-Iraq (OSCI) provide advising to partner forces and governmental bodies on supply-chain management, logistics planning, and other key programs to prevent loss due to negligence or corruption.</p> <p>Finally, the CJTF-OIR commanding general places stipulations on host nation military units in order to receive CTEF "conditions-based divestments." If he assesses that items are not being used appropriately, or not being used to aggressively pursue and defeat ISIS terrorists, these conditions-based divestments can be paused or diverted to other units. So far, this has not been the case, and the commander expects a strong future CTEF program.</p> <p>"Looking ahead, our partners will prioritize sustaining the recently folded tactical equipment and forecasting requirements for critical supplies to keep pressure on ISIS remnants," said White.</p> <p>As a result of the ISF's success in the ongoing campaign to defeat Daesh remnants in Iraq, the International Coalition is adjusting its focus and role in coordination with the government of Iraq. CJTF-OIR is growing smaller and more specialized in its advising, intelligence, aviation and logistics support to our partner forces. Correspondingly, the CTEF program will reduce in size and budget. CTEF will continue to be judiciously employed in a tailored, targeted and deliberate process to support our partners in their defeat ISIS mission.</p> <p>All CTEF divestments are coordinated with the OSCI for sustainability planning and de-confliction of support. CTEF funding is currently authorized by U.S. Congress through 2022, and will remain active for an additional two years following the conclusion of Operation Inherent Resolve. OSCI is the United States program for long-term partner relation development.</p> <p>(more)</p> <p>CJTF-OIR Website CJTF-OIR Twitter CJTF-OIR Facebook CJTF-OIR Instagram Email CJTF-OIRmedia@mail.mil Phone +1 813 529 4636 Kuwait 00 965 221 6340 and 430-51938 Mailing Address CJTF-OIR Public Affairs APO AE 09306</p>
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