



White House Releases Broad Iraq Strategy

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(State Department) -- The United States issued a national strategy November 30 that carefully defines three stages for victory in Iraq, describes the enemy facing coalition and Iraqi forces, and reports on progress being made along political, economic and security fronts.

The report -- National Strategy for Victory in Iraq -- explains the broad strategy President Bush set forth for success in Iraq in 2003, but also provides an update on progress and the challenges that remain, according to the White House. The strategy released November 30 is the first time much of the material has been assembled in an unclassified document, the White House said.

Currently, the United States has 160,000 combat troops in Iraq along with thousands of combat troops from coalition nations, and there are approximately 212,000 Iraqi security forces, Defense Secretary Donald H. Rumsfeld has said.

Rumsfeld said at a Pentagon briefing November 29 that quitting Iraq now before Iraqi forces can protect and secure their own country would add considerable security risks to the United States. "Quitting is not an exit strategy," he said.

President Bush gave a speech November 30 at the U.S. Naval Academy at Annapolis, Maryland, that addressed the American objectives in Iraq and the plan for victory. The national strategy released by the White House and prepared by the National Security Council is designed to expand on Bush's remarks.

"As the central front in the global war on terror, success in Iraq is an essential element in the long war against the ideology that breeds international terrorism," the strategy says.

The strategy defines victory in three stages:

- Short term: Iraq is making steady progress in fighting terrorists, meeting political milestones, building democratic institutions and standing up security forces.
- Medium term: Iraq is in the lead defeating terrorists and providing its own security, with a fully constitutional government in place, and on its way to achieving its economic potential.
- Long term: Iraq is peaceful, united, stable and secure, well integrated into the international community, and a full partner in the global war on terrorism.

"Failure in Iraq will embolden terrorists and expand their reach; success in Iraq will deal them a decisive and crippling blow," the strategy says. "The fate of the greater Middle East -- which will have a profound and lasting impact on American security -- hangs in the balance."

Failing in Iraq would permit terrorists to use Iraq as a safe haven from which they could plan attacks on the United States, its interests abroad, and on U.S. allies and friends, according to the strategy. "Middle East reformers would never again fully trust American assurances of support for democracy and human rights in the region" if the United States withdrew from Iraq before securing the nation, the strategy says.

The national strategy says that the United States will help the Iraqi people build a new Iraq with a constitutional, representative government that respects civil rights and has security forces sufficient to maintain civil order and keep Iraq from becoming a safe haven for terrorists. "To achieve this end, we are pursuing an integrated strategy along three broad tracks, which together incorporate the efforts of the Iraqi government, the coalition, cooperative countries in the region, the international community, and the United Nations," the strategy states.

The [National Strategy for Victory in Iraq](#) is available on the White House Web site.

Following is the national strategy's executive summary:

Executive Summary

OUR NATIONAL STRATEGY FOR VICTORY IN IRAQ:

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Helping the Iraqi People Defeat the Terrorists and Build an Inclusive Democratic State

Victory in Iraq is Defined in Stages

- Short term, Iraq is making steady progress in fighting terrorists, meeting political milestones, building democratic institutions, and standing up security forces.
- Medium term, Iraq is in the lead defeating terrorists and providing its own security, with a fully constitutional government in place, and on its way to achieving its economic potential.
- Longer term, Iraq is peaceful, united, stable, and secure, well integrated into the international community, and a full partner in the global war on terrorism.

Victory in Iraq is a Vital U.S. Interest

- Iraq is the central front in the global war on terrorism. Failure in Iraq will embolden terrorists and expand their reach; success in Iraq will deal them a decisive and crippling blow.
- The fate of the greater Middle East - which will have a profound and lasting impact on American security - hangs in the balance.

Failure is Not an Option

- Iraq would become a safe haven from which terrorists could plan attacks against America, American interests abroad, and our allies.
- Middle East reformers would never again fully trust American assurances of support for democracy and human rights in the region - a historic opportunity lost.
- The resultant tribal and sectarian chaos would have major consequences for American security and interests in the region.

The Enemy Is Diffuse and Sophisticated

- The enemy is a combination of rejectionists, Saddamists, and terrorists affiliated with or inspired by Al Qaida. Distinct but integrated strategies are required to defeat each element.
- Each element shares a common short-term objective - to intimidate, terrorize, and tear down - but has separate and incompatible long-term goals.
- Exploiting these differences within the enemy is a key element of our strategy.

Our Strategy for Victory is Clear

- We will help the Iraqi people build a new Iraq with a constitutional, representative government that respects civil rights and has security forces sufficient to maintain domestic order and keep Iraq from becoming a safe haven for terrorists. To achieve this end, we are pursuing an integrated strategy along three broad tracks, which together incorporate the efforts of the Iraqi government, the Coalition, cooperative countries in the region, the international community, and the United Nations.
- The Political Track involves working to forge a broadly supported national compact for democratic governance by helping the Iraqi government:
 - Isolate enemy elements from those who can be won over to the political process by countering false propaganda and demonstrating to all Iraqis that they have a stake in a democratic Iraq;
 - Engage those outside the political process and invite in those willing to turn away from violence through ever-expanding avenues of participation; and
 - Build stable, pluralistic, and effective national institutions that can protect the interests of all Iraqis, and facilitate Iraq's full integration into the international community.
- The Security Track involves carrying out a campaign to defeat the terrorists and neutralize the insurgency, developing Iraqi security forces, and helping the Iraqi government:
 - Clear areas of enemy control by remaining on the offensive, killing and capturing enemy fighters and denying them safe-haven;
 - Hold areas freed from enemy influence by ensuring that they remain under the control of the Iraqi government with an adequate Iraqi

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security force presence; and

- Build Iraqi Security Forces and the capacity of local institutions to deliver services, advance the rule of law, and nurture civil society.
- The Economic Track involves setting the foundation for a sound and self-sustaining economy by helping the Iraqi government:
 - Restore Iraq's infrastructure to meet increasing demand and the needs of a growing economy;
 - Reform Iraq's economy, which in the past has been shaped by war, dictatorship, and sanctions, so that it can be self-sustaining in the future; and
 - Build the capacity of Iraqi institutions to maintain infrastructure, rejoin the international economic community, and improve the general welfare of all Iraqis.

This Strategy is Integrated and its Elements are Mutually Reinforcing

- Progress in each of the political, security, and economic tracks reinforces progress in the other tracks.
 - For instance, as the political process has moved forward, terrorists have become more isolated, leading to more intelligence on security threats from Iraqi citizens, which has led to better security in previously violent areas, a more stable infrastructure, the prospect of economic progress, and expanding political participation.

Victory Will Take Time

- Our strategy is working: Much has been accomplished in Iraq, including the removal of Saddam's tyranny, negotiation of an interim constitution, restoration of full sovereignty, holding of free national elections, formation of an elected government, drafting of a permanent constitution, ratification of that constitution, introduction of a sound currency, gradual restoration of neglected infrastructure, the ongoing training and equipping of Iraqi security forces, and the increasing capability of those forces to take on the terrorists and secure their nation.
- Yet many challenges remain: Iraq is overcoming decades of a vicious tyranny, where governmental authority stemmed solely from fear, terror, and brutality.
 - It is not realistic to expect a fully functioning democracy, able to defeat its enemies and peacefully reconcile generational grievances, to be in place less than three years after Saddam was finally removed from power.
- Our comprehensive strategy will help Iraqis overcome remaining challenges, but defeating the multi-headed enemy in Iraq - and ensuring that it cannot threaten Iraq's democratic gains once we leave - requires persistent effort across many fronts.

Our Victory Strategy Is (and Must Be) Conditions Based

- With resolve, victory will be achieved, although not by a date certain.
 - No war has ever been won on a timetable and neither will this one.
 - But lack of a timetable does not mean our posture in Iraq (both military and civilian) will remain static over time. As conditions change, our posture will change.
 - We expect, but cannot guarantee, that our force posture will change over the next year, as the political process advances and Iraqi security forces grow and gain experience.
 - While our military presence may become less visible, it will remain lethal and decisive, able to confront the enemy wherever it may organize.
 - Our mission in Iraq is to win the war. Our troops will return home when that mission is complete.

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