

Joint Resolution on Stabilizing Iraq and Redeploying United States Armed Forces

Whereas the International Compact with Iraq agreed to in Sharm el-Sheikh, Egypt in May 2007 brought together Iraq, Iraq's neighbors, the United Nations, and notable members of the international community to address the challenges in stabilizing and rebuilding Iraq;

Whereas the International Community agreed in the International Compact with Iraq to "build a secure, unified, federal and democratic nation, founded on the principles of freedom and equality, and providing peace and prosperity for its people;"

Whereas the United States has recently engaged in bilateral and multilateral diplomatic negotiation with Iran and Syria during the International Compact meetings in Sharm el-Sheikh and since then;

Whereas the Ministerial Conference of the neighboring countries of Iraq, Egypt and Bahrain, the permanent members of the United Nations Security Council, and the G-8 nations met in Istanbul in November 2007 and reaffirmed the goals of the International Compact with Iraq;

Whereas these goals were agreed to in both instances by the United States and reflect the President's objectives in Iraq;

Whereas the defense capabilities of the United States have suffered a significant decline as a consequence of the long effort in Iraq;

Whereas four of five overseas strategic military reserves of

munitions and materiel have been depleted to meet the demands of continuing action in Iraq;

Whereas the United States has been limited in its combat capabilities in Afghanistan as a result of its deployments in Iraq;

Whereas the majority of United States National Guard units are no longer fully combat capable as a result of support for operations in Iraq;

Whereas continuing to provide adequate numbers of fighting men and women for operations in Iraq has required that tour lengths in Iraq exceed the targets of the Department of Defense;

Whereas the United States Armed Forces is unable to provide its members time at home equal to time spent deployed in combat zones and the Congress is unable to resolve this deleterious condition;

Whereas the toll on members of the United States Armed Forces and their families has been severe;

Whereas the unclassified National Intelligence Estimate released in July 2007 assesses that al Qaeda “has protected or regenerated key elements of its Homeland attack capability, including: a safehaven in the Pakistan Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA), operational lieutenants, and its top leadership;”

Whereas al Qaeda leaders, including Osama bin Laden and Ayman al-Zawahiri, remain alive and free more than six years after the 2001 attacks;

Whereas the violence in Iraq is no longer simply an anti-occupancy fight and a sectarian fight, but has grown to include Shiite-on-Shiite violence in Basra and Sunni-on-Sunni violence in Anbar province and other areas, making it implausible that the United States can support one faction over another and demonstrating the inability of the United States to pacify Iraq on the present course;

Whereas the rise of the Awakening Councils in Iraq demonstrates the likelihood that Iraqi citizens will fight and kill or drive from their country foreign fighters responding to calls from al Qaeda to travel to and fight inside Iraq;

Whereas alternative effective and safer basing modes are available outside Iraq in the Gulf area;

Whereas private United States citizens have recommended a stabilization strategy that combines increased international support for Iraq with a withdrawal of United States fighting forces in furtherance of United States National Interests;

Whereas the recommended Iraq Transitional Assistance Group offers a credible plan to help create a stable, democratic Iraq that does not threaten its neighbors, and to which the United States can remain diplomatically supportive;

Whereas the objectives of the United States outlined in the October 2002 Joint Resolution to Authorize the Use of United States Armed Forces Against Iraq have been accomplished;

Whereas the ongoing utilization of United States combat forces in Iraq is no longer in furtherance of the objectives in the October 2002 Joint Resolution authorizing military action against Iraq;

Whereas the Congress did not surrender any authority under the War Powers Act when approving the October 2002 Joint Resolution;

Whereas the War Powers Act authorizes the Congress to order the return of United States forces committed to overseas operations by the President that have not been authorized by Congress;

Whereas the Congress has not used its authority under Article I, Section 8, of the Constitution to declare war on Iraq;

Now, therefore, be it resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SEC. 1. SHORT TITLE

This joint resolution may be cited as the “Iraq Stabilization and Armed Forces Redeployment”

SEC. 2. UNITED STATES DIPLOMATIC INITIATIVES

The President shall order the Secretary of State, Secretary of Defense, and all other resources and activities of the United States government deemed appropriate to pursue the establishment of an Iraq Transitional Assistance Group of regional states that would provide diplomatic and technical assistance, including observation and monitoring, to the Iraqi government during and after the timely withdrawal of U.S. forces from the country; and

The President, shall notify and negotiate the establishment of the

Iraq Transitional Assistance Group with the United Nations Security Council, the Organization of the Islamic Conference, the signatories of the International Compact with Iraq and the 3 November 2007 Istanbul Communiqué including especially the immediate neighbors of Iraq, and the Government of Iraq; and

The President shall request the approval of a United Nations Security Council Resolution approving the creation and roles of the Iraq Transitional Assistance Group requiring annual reauthorization and preserving a United States veto over the Iraq Transitional Assistance Group's actions; and

The President shall commit those authorities and diplomatic assets under his control to achieving these ends not later than September 30, 2008; and

The President shall continue to pursue the establishment of the Iraq Transitional Assistance Group after September 30, 2008 concurrent with the redeployment of United States Armed Forces and afterwards if necessary.

SEC. 3. REDEPLOYMENT OF UNITED STATES ARMED FORCES

The President shall begin the orderly and safe return of all United States combat forces from Iraq to begin not later than September 30, 2008; and

The withdrawal and redeployment of United States forces shall proceed irrespective of the status of negotiations for the establishment of the Iraq Transitional Assistance Group as related in SEC. 2. of this legislation; and

The President shall provide in the next budget submission a complete assessment of the equipment and material needs to return the overseas strategic reserves to full capacity and all United States combat forces to full capability; and

The President shall, as deemed necessary, redeploy those forces withdrawn from Iraq to support the achievement of objectives associated with Operation Enduring Freedom; and

The President shall place high emphasis on the apprehension of Osama bin Laden and Ayman al-Zawahiri and on ensuring the complete and total defeat and elimination of the al Qaeda organizational leadership and cells; and

The President shall reconstitute those forces not immediately required in support of Operation Enduring Freedom to provide a ready reserve force capable of supporting Operation Enduring Freedom and of responding to threats to national security such as the recent instability in Pakistan and similar crises; and

The President shall confirm to the Congress not later than December 31, 2008 that the activities of any remaining United States forces assigned to Operation Iraqi Freedom are limited to supporting missions and operations authorized by this legislation; and

Such missions and operations shall consist solely of protecting United States national assets such as the Embassy and all assigned personnel; training Iraqi national forces; providing logistical support for Iraqi national forces and Iraq Transitional Assistance Group monitors; and providing those limited kinetic military operations requested by Iraqi national leadership and authorized by

Iraq Transitional Assistance Group monitors when such monitors are present; and

The President shall order all United States forces located in South West Asia be assigned to Central Command or prepared to assist Central Command in supporting these objectives.