



For Immediate Release
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Fact Sheet: The Strategic Framework Agreement and the Security Agreement with Iraq

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The United States and the government of Iraq have

negotiated two historic agreements: a Strategic Framework Agreement (SFA) that covers our overall political, economic, and security relationship with Iraq, and a Security Agreement – otherwise known as the Status of Forces Agreement (SOFA) – that implements our security relationship.

- **Both agreements protect U.S. interests in the Middle East, help the Iraqi people stand on their own, and reinforce Iraqi sovereignty.**
- **The SFA normalizes the U.S.-Iraqi relationship with strong economic, diplomatic, cultural, and security ties – and serves as the foundation for a long-term bilateral relationship based on mutual goals.**
- **The Security Agreement guides our security relationship with Iraq and governs the U.S. presence, activities, and eventual withdrawal from Iraq.** This agreement ensures vital protections for U.S. troops and provides operational authorities for our forces so we can help sustain the positive security trends as we continue to transition to a supporting role.

The Success Of The Surge And The Courage Of The Iraqi People Set The Conditions For These Historic Negotiations

- **The sustained security gains and increasing capacity and confidence of the Iraqi government and the Iraqi Security Forces are reasons the United States and the Iraqis were able to negotiate these agreements.**
- **These Agreements are what our troops have been fighting for and working toward:** the moment when Iraqis could begin taking responsibility for security and governance on their own – something they could not have done two years ago.

To Ensure That The Security Agreement Is Consistent With The Capacity Of Iraq's Security Forces, The Dates Included In This Agreement Were Discussed With The Iraqis, General Petraeus, And General Odierno – They Allow For The Continued Transition Of Security Responsibilities To The Iraqis

As we further transition security responsibilities to the Iraqi Security Forces, military commanders will continue to move U.S. combat forces out of major populated areas so that they are all out by June 30, 2009.

- **The Security Agreement also sets a date of December 31, 2011, for all U.S. forces to withdraw from Iraq.** This date reflects the increasing capacity of the Iraqi Security Forces as demonstrated in operations this year throughout Iraq, as well as an improved regional atmosphere towards Iraq, an expanding Iraqi economy, and an increasingly confident Iraqi government.
- **These dates therefore are based on an assessment of positive conditions on the ground and a realistic projection of when U.S. forces can reduce their presence and return home without a sacrificing the security gains made since the surge.**

The Security Agreement Will Protect The United States And Our Troops And Incorporates The Visions Of An Independent And Bipartisan Commission

- **U.S. soldiers and civilians on the ground will continue to have uninterrupted and essential protections while serving in Iraq.** Our troops will also continue to have essential operational authorities to sustain positive security trends seen in Iraq over the past year.
- **The Security Agreement also reflects the Baker-Hamilton Iraq Study Group's recommendation that the Security Agreement include authorities for the United States to continue fighting al Qaeda and other terrorist organizations in Iraq, continued support for Iraqi Security Forces, and political reassurances to the government of Iraq.**

These Agreements Will Advance A Stable Iraq In The Heart Of The Middle East

- **The SFA and Security Agreement with Iraq move us closer to the strategic vision we all hope for in the Middle East:** a region of independent states, at peace with one another, fully participating in the global market of goods and ideas, and an ally in the War on Terror.
- **The SFA implements the Iraqi and U.S. desire for a long-term relationship based on cooperation and friendship as set out in the Declaration of Principles signed in November 2007.** The SFA also includes commitments on:
 - Defense, security, law enforcement, and judicial cooperation and development.
 - Further improvement of political, diplomatic, and cultural cooperation.
 - Economic, energy, health, environment, technology, and communications cooperation.
 - Joint Coordination Committees to monitor the implementation of the SFA.
- **The SFA and Security Agreement do not tie the hands of the next President.** This package provides a solid foundation for the next President to pursue a full range of policy options with Iraq.

The SFA And Security Agreement Are The Final Steps In Iraq's Request For Normalized Relations

- In a Communiqué issued on August 26, 2007, Iraq's five principal political leaders – Prime Minister Maliki, President Talabani, Vice Presidents Hashimi and Abd al-Mahdi, and Kurdistan Regional Government President Barzani – requested an end to Chapter VII status under the U.N. Security Council and the establishment of a long-term relationship with the United States.
- This led to the U.S.- Iraq Declaration of Principles signed on November 26, 2007, which laid out a "table of contents" that the United States and Iraq would discuss in official negotiations. Bilateral negotiations began in earnest in March 2008.
- The SFA and Security Agreement, which are the result of the Communiqué and the Declaration of Principles, were approved by the Iraqi Cabinet and the Council of Representatives on November 27, 2008. On December 4, Iraq's three-person Presidency Council endorsed the COR's vote.

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