

June 5, 2004

Excellency:

Recognizing the request of the government of Iraq for the continued presence of the Multi-National Force (MNF) in Iraq, and following consultations with Prime Minister Ayad Allawi of the Iraqi Interim Government, I am writing to confirm that the MNF under unified command is prepared to continue to contribute to the maintenance of security in Iraq, including by preventing and deterring terrorism and protecting the territory of Iraq. The goal of the MNF will be to help the Iraqi people to complete the political transition and will permit the United Nations and the international community to work to facilitate Iraq's reconstruction.

The ability of the Iraqi people to achieve their goals will be heavily influenced by the security situation in Iraq. As recent events have demonstrated, continuing attacks by insurgents, including former regime elements, foreign fighters, and illegal militias challenge all those who are working for a better Iraq.

Development of an effective and cooperative security partnership between the MNF and the sovereign Government of Iraq is critical to the stability of Iraq. The commander of the MNF will work in partnership with the sovereign Government of Iraq in helping to provide security while recognizing and respecting its sovereignty. To that end, the MNF stands ready to participate in discussions of the Ministerial Committee for National Security on the broad framework of security policy, as referred to in the letter from Prime Minister of the Interim Government of Iraq Allawi dated June 5, 2004. On the implementation of this policy, recognizing that Iraqi security forces are responsible to the appropriate Iraqi ministers, the MNF will coordinate with Iraqi security forces at all levels – national, regional, and local – in order to achieve unity of command of military operations in which Iraqi forces are engaged with the MNF. In addition, the MNF and the Interim Government of Iraq will keep each other informed of their activities, consult regularly to ensure effective allocation and use of personnel, resources, and facilities, will share intelligence, and will refer issues up the respective chains of command where necessary.

His Excellency

Mr. Lauro L. Baja, Jr.,  
President of the Security Council,  
United Nations,  
New York, New York.

Under the agreed arrangement, the MNF stands ready to continue to undertake a broad range of tasks to contribute to the maintenance of security and to ensure force protection. These include activities necessary to counter ongoing security threats posed by forces seeking to influence Iraq's political future through violence. This will include combat operations against members of these groups, internment where this is necessary for imperative reasons of security, and the continued search for and securing of weapons that threaten Iraq's security. A further objective will be to train and equip Iraqi security forces that will increasingly take responsibility for maintaining Iraq's security. The MNF also stands ready as needed to participate in the provision of humanitarian assistance, civil affairs support, and relief and reconstruction assistance requested by the Iraqi Interim Government and in line with previous Security Council Resolutions.

In addition, the MNF is prepared to establish or support a force within the MNF to provide for the security of personnel and facilities of the United Nations. We have consulted closely with UN officials regarding the United Nations' security requirements and believe that a brigade-size force will be needed to support the United Nations' security effort. This force will be under the command and control of the multinational force commander, and its missions will include static and perimeter security at UN facilities, and convoy escort duties for the UN mission's travel requirements.

In order to continue to contribute to security, the MNF must continue to function under a framework that affords the force and its personnel the status that they need to accomplish their mission, and in which the contributing states have responsibility for exercising jurisdiction over their personnel and which will ensure arrangements for, and use of assets by, the MNF. The existing framework governing these matters is sufficient for these purposes. In addition, the forces that make up the MNF are and will remain committed at all times to act consistently with their obligations under the law of armed conflict, including the Geneva Conventions.

The MNF is prepared to continue to pursue its current efforts to assist in providing a secure environment in which the broader international community is able to fulfill its important role in facilitating Iraq's reconstruction. In meeting these responsibilities in the period ahead, we will act in full recognition of and respect for Iraqi sovereignty. We look to other member states and international and regional organizations to assist the people of Iraq and the sovereign Iraqi government in overcoming the challenges that lie ahead to build a democratic, secure and prosperous country.

The co-sponsors intend to annex this letter to the resolution on Iraq under consideration. In the meantime, I request that you provide copies of this letter to members of the Council as quickly as possible.

Sincerely,

Colin L. Powell