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For Immediate Release
Office of the Press Secretary
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Fact Sheet: America and Our Allies Are Working Together to Keep Our Nations Safe

President Bush Thanks Allies At CENTCOM Coalition Conference For Dedication To Cause Of Freedom

 [President Bush Addresses CENTCOM Coalition Conference](#)

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Today, President Bush Addressed The CENTCOM Coalition Conference At MacDill Air Force Base In Tampa, Florida.

America is joined in the fight against terrorists by more than 90 nations, including every country represented in the CENTCOM Coalition. The work of these countries has helped liberate millions of people, has kept brutal enemies on the defensive, and has helped keep millions of our citizens safe.

- **Currently, 64 Nations Have Military Representatives Assigned To The CENTCOM Headquarters.**

CENTCOM is one of nine Defense Department Unified Combatant Commands assigned operational control of U.S. combat forces. Its area of responsibility includes Iraq and Afghanistan as well as: Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bahrain, Djibouti, Egypt, Eritrea, Iran, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kyrgyzstan, Lebanon, Oman, Pakistan, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, the Seychelles, Somalia, Sudan, Syria, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, United Arab Emirates, Uzbekistan, Yemen, and the northwestern Indian Ocean, Arabian Sea, and Arabian Gulf.

America And Our Allies Are Working Together To Address The Dangers Of Our Time

An Era Of New Threats Requires New Forms Of Engagement, So We Have Reinvigorated Historic Alliances, Such As NATO, And Formed New And Dynamic Coalitions To Address The Dangers Of Our Time. Our broad Coalition has protected millions of people. We have worked to stop the spread of dangerous weapons, and we have taken the fight to the enemy where they live, so we do not have to face them where we live.

- **Working Together, America And Our Allies Have Shared Intelligence That Has Helped Thwart Many Terrorist Plots.**

- We uncovered and stopped terrorist conspiracies targeting embassies in Yemen and Singapore and ships in the Straits of Hormuz and Gibraltar.
- We stopped a Southeast Asian terror cell grooming operatives for terrorist attacks and an al-Qaeda cell seeking to develop anthrax.
- British authorities disrupted a plot to blow up aircraft flying over the Atlantic toward the United States.

- **Coalition Forces Have Captured Or Killed Key Leaders Of Terrorist Networks.**

- Philippine forces killed top leaders of an al-Qaeda affiliate.
- Spanish police captured fugitives wanted in connection with the Madrid train bombings.
- Terrorist cells have been broken up by countries including Britain, Canada, Denmark, Italy, France, Indonesia, Jordan, Saudi Arabia, Tunisia, and Turkey.

- **America And Our Allies Have Shut Down Funding Channels And Frozen Terrorist Assets, Making It Harder For Our Enemies To Finance Attacks, Purchase Weapons, And Train Recruits.** The international community through the United Nations has imposed measures to identify terrorist financiers and prevent them from using international financial systems to fund acts of terror.

- **America And Our Allies Are Training Local Forces To Conduct Counterterrorism Activities In Their Own Regions.**

- We are helping key nations – including Indonesia, the Philippines, and Yemen – stop terrorists from establishing safe havens inside their borders.
- The Trans-Sahara Counterterrorism Partnership provides counterterrorism and military assistance to Chad, Mali, Niger, Mauritania, Algeria, Morocco, Nigeria, Senegal, and Tunisia.
- The East Africa Counterterrorism Initiative provides border security and police training to Comoros,

Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Madagascar, Tanzania, and Uganda.

- **Our Coalition Is Taking Steps To Stop Terrorists From Obtaining The World's Most Dangerous Weapons.** More than 80 nations have joined the Proliferation Security Initiative and are working to stop shipments of materials related to weapons of mass destruction on land, at sea, and in the air.
- **America And Other Nations Have Acted Boldly To Confront Adversaries Who Threatened International Security.**
In Afghanistan, Coalition forces drove the Taliban from power, removed al-Qaeda training camps, and helped bring freedom to 25 million people.

Our Coalition Is Going On The Offense Against The Taliban And Its Al-Qaeda Allies In Afghanistan

Since Their Liberation, The Afghan People Have Made Enormous Strides. Afghans chose the first democratically-elected President in their history and held free elections for a National Assembly. The Afghan economy has doubled in size, and more than 4.6 million Afghan refugees have come home in one of the largest return movements in history.

The Taliban And Its Al-Qaeda Allies Are Actively Working To Undermine This Progress And Reclaim Power, And Our Coalition – Led By NATO – Is Going On The Offense Against Them. Coalition and Afghan forces have conducted dozens of operations over the past few months to go after the enemy in their strongholds, including an operation launched this week targeting the Taliban in Helmand Province in the South. We have seized dozens of caches of weapons, ammunition, and improvised explosive devices, and we are making progress in training the growing Afghan National Army.

- **At Least 20 Other Nations Are Supporting Efforts To Rebuild Afghanistan.** The United States appreciates these contributions, and we will stand with our partners and the Afghan people until our work is done.

We Are Also Committed To Winning The Fight In Iraq

After An Extensive Review, President Bush Ordered A New Strategy In Iraq And Appointed General David Petraeus To Carry That Strategy Out.

This new strategy recognizes that our top priority must be to help the Iraqi government secure its capital so they can make political and economic progress. The Iraqis cannot yet do this on their own, so the President ordered reinforcements to help Iraqis secure their population, go after those inciting sectarian violence, and get their capital under control.

- **This Strategy Is Still In Its Early Stages, Yet At This Early Hour, We Are Seeing Some Signs That Give Us Hope.** Some of the reinforcements General Petraeus requested have not yet arrived in Baghdad, and he believes it will take months before we can accurately gauge the strategy's potential for success. Yet at this early hour:
 - Coalition forces have captured a number of key terrorist leaders who are providing information about how al-Qaeda operates in Iraq.
 - Coalition forces have stopped a car bomb network, which had killed many citizens of Baghdad, and they have destroyed major car bomb factories.
 - There has been a decline in sectarian violence.
 - In some areas of the capital, Iraqis are returning to their neighborhoods with an increased feeling of security.
- **Success In Iraq Is Critical To The Security Of Free People Everywhere.** Terrorists continue to unleash horrific acts of violence in Iraq, and al-Qaeda is playing a major role. Last week, General Petraeus called al-Qaeda "probably public enemy number one" in Iraq and said that al-Qaeda has made Iraq "the central front of their global campaign."

America Is Deeply Grateful For The Contributions Of Nations Supporting Operations In Iraq. Today, more than 30 nations are supporting operations in Iraq. Seventeen NATO nations have contributed forces or been part of the NATO Training Mission to help train Iraqis, and Georgia also recently decided to contribute 2,000 troops. America joins in honoring the Coalition troops who have been killed in Iraq and the others who have been wounded in combat.

America Is Also Grateful For The Increasing Contributions International Organizations Are Making To Iraq's Stability.

- On May 3, the United Nations will host a conference in Egypt to sign an International Compact for Iraq. This agreement will bring new economic assistance in exchange for greater economic reform in Iraq.

On May 4, Iraq's neighbors will meet to discuss ways to promote political reconciliation in Iraq. These meetings will be attended by Secretary Rice and senior officials from the G-8 nations. Iran and Syria have been invited to attend.

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