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STATEMENT BY

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COMMANDER, III CORPS AND FORT HOOD
UNITED STATES ARMY**

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Mr. Chairman, distinguished members of the Subcommittee, thank you for this opportunity to appear before you. I am pleased to report to you today on the readiness of the military units I was privileged to command in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF), and give you my thoughts on the future readiness challenges I will have as the III (U.S.) Corps Commander.

I come before you today as the former commander of Multi-National Corps-Iraq (MNC-I) and the current commander of III Corps and Fort Hood. I hope my perspective as a joint warfighter in theater, where I fought and allocated the resources given us by the Department will be useful to you. Additionally, as commander of III Corps and Fort Hood, it is now my job to train, equip, and deploy the next set of forces General Casey and other Joint Commanders will employ on the battlefield. Let me first say a little about the III Corps.

Over the past year, III Corps has deployed or redeployed nearly every one of its 75,000 Soldiers and 24,000 combat vehicles and aircraft to OIF from Fort Hood, Fort Carson, Fort Riley, Fort Sill, and Fort Bliss. These forces represent over 35 percent of all the United States Army active component ground combat power. We have just returned home one of the deployed III Corps major subordinate commands, one I am very proud of – the 1st Cavalry Division – whose Soldiers secured Baghdad and provided much needed armor, mechanized infantry, attack aviation, and artillery for the major battles in Najaf and Fallujah. Their protection of the Interim Iraqi Government leadership and security in the greater

Baghdad area set the conditions for the Iraqis to hold their first free elections in over 40 years. The other major units of the Corps, which have all participated in the Global War on Terror over the past year, are as follows:

1. The 4th Infantry Division, which operated in the Sunni Triangle and captured Iraqi Dictator Saddam Hussein in OIF-1, is now resetting in preparation for deployment to OIF-4 this fall.

2. The 3rd Armored Cavalry Regiment, which occupied Al Anbar province along the Syrian border, returned and reset in 2004, and has just redeployed to southern Baghdad for OIF-3.

3. III Corps has two separate heavy brigades, 1st Brigade, 1st Infantry Division and 3rd Brigade, 1st Armored Division, that are stationed at Fort Riley, Kansas. Both deployed to Iraq during OIF-1, and one of them, the 3rd Brigade, 1st Armored Division, has also reset and redeployed to Iraq for OIF-3.

4. Elements of III Corps Artillery, 13th Corps Support Command (COSCOM) and the Corps Separate Combat Support Brigades (Intelligence, Signal and Military Police) have all deployed in support of OIF-1, 2 and 3 – some for a second or even a third time – and are currently resetting their units.

As the Commander of MNC-I, I experienced first hand the wide ranging demands placed on each of my units and saw how these superb young Soldiers, Marines, airmen, and sailors met every challenge. The units I commanded were superbly led, ready for the relentless demands of combat, and were as trained and ready as any unit in this nation's history. I would like to briefly discuss several key components of that readiness that were critical to the MNC-I's success during OIF-2 – training, equipping, maintenance and logistics, and personnel and family support.

Training

The Army's training strategy produced Soldiers, leaders and units that were well prepared for the intense demands of counter-insurgency operations in Iraq. Our training strategy relies on a building block approach that first emphasizes sound application of basic skills, and then increases the complexity of the tasks and demands of the environment. Everything begins with the individual Soldier, who must be ready to fight anytime, anywhere. No rear area exists in Iraq, only frontlines, and every Soldier knows it. They have to be ready from the moment they cross the berm into Iraq, and they were.

The training strategy we use reinforces individual Soldier skills which are then combined to build well-trained crews and small units. Units work up to company and battalion-level training through maneuvers at their home station and the use of computer simulations, training a broad range of missions that support its wartime mission essential tasks. The tasks performed during OIF were generally a subset of these. After a unit was alerted for deployment, we refined its training to focus in on critical theater tasks. In some cases, we trained units for roles outside their normal specialty by leveraging the base of fundamental Soldier skills common to all branches. For example, during OIF-2, we employed field artillery units in lieu of military police (MP) for convoy security and external guard at detention facilities. The capstone exercises for deploying units were conducted in the most realistic environments we could create at the Combat Training Centers at Fort Irwin; Fort Polk; and Hohenfels, Germany. The Division and Corps staffs were exercised through simulation-driven command post exercises, which Joint Forces Command and the Army's Battle Command Training Program monitored and mentored. Our training strategy works.

Leaders, Soldiers and units were well-prepared for the rigors of combat in Iraq.

I am especially proud of is the way our home station training is continually adapted to the evolving tactical situation in theater. Operational assessments and intelligence reports feed directly back into the way we train. Multinational Corps Iraq and Army organizations like the Improvised Explosive Device (IED) Task Force continuously assess operations to detect changing trends in enemy weapons and tactics. This information is shared with the headquarters responsible for training and validating both Active (AC) and Reserve Component (RC) units. The IED Task Force, for example, adapts the training it provides to deploying units based upon changes in the way the enemy employs IEDs in Iraq. Further, units preparing to deploy remain digitally linked to the unit they will relieve in order to maintain situational awareness of their future mission and area of operations. Members of division and corps staffs who are serving in Iraq participate in the Mission Rehearsal Exercise of the units that will replace them in order to make this training as realistic and current as possible. Consequently, these staffs are completely ready to assume the duties of their predecessors, and we can transition in as little as five to ten days. This feedback loop between ongoing operations in Iraq and the conduct of training at home station has allowed deploying units to rapidly assimilate the lessons learned by the units in the fight.

I should note, however, that training does not stop when a unit deploys. Once in Kuwait, Soldiers receive theater-specific training on ranges run by Third Army, culminating in a very realistic convoy live-fire exercise. This training reinforces individual, crew, small-unit, and leader training before deployment. By the time Soldiers

cross into Iraq, they are confident in themselves, their leaders, and their equipment. They are well-prepared for the challenges they will face in combat.

The procedures for mobilizing, training, and validating Reserve Component units are also working well. During our deployment we found the greatest success came from linking an RC unit's training to its AC counterparts. The 39th Enhanced Separate Brigade (eSB) from Arkansas trained at Fort Hood with the 1st Cavalry Division, to which it was attached in Baghdad. This allowed the 39th to train as it would fight and they became an integral part of the 1st Cavalry Division's Task Force Baghdad. Since Reserve Soldiers have limited time to mobilize, train, and deploy, we must identify their specific role and task organization as early as possible to use their available training time wisely.

I am convinced our training strategy enhanced our combat power and survivability in combat. Operations in Najaf, Samarra, Fallujah, and Mosul are good examples. We operated in the most challenging terrain any Soldier faces – cities, where insurgents have the significant advantage in knowing the terrain. Historically, urban operations can take a heavy toll in casualties. However, our units took comparatively few casualties while involved in fierce urban combat. Our Soldiers fought side-by-side with Marines and airmen, employing a wide variety of joint firepower. Yet, even as we conducted some of our fiercest engagements, our warriors followed strict rules of engagement to minimize civilian casualties and collateral damage. Our precise and disciplined use of firepower, especially air power, allowed us to destroy insurgents while avoiding damage to important religious and cultural sites, such as the Imam

Ali Mosque in Najaf, and minimizing non-combatant deaths – a true mark of our warriors' discipline and professionalism.

Our training also made our units flexible and thus able to adapt to missions beyond their normal specialization. Field artillerymen, infantrymen, and tank crewmen served in roles normally performed by military police. Logisticians became infantrymen as they engaged insurgents during convoys. Some units had to rapidly deploy out of their sector in response to a spike in violence elsewhere. They had to quickly adapt to operations under different Army or Marine headquarters, often in close coordination with coalition partners, and no loss of momentum.

No matter how large the operation – and the fight for Fallujah, for example, was a massive operation – success starts with the skill, courage, and discipline of the individual Soldier or Marine and their leaders stepping into harm's way. The Marines state it as, "Every Marine a rifleman." The Army states it as, "Every Soldier a warrior." The principle is the same. The emphasis on basic combat skills was fundamental to our success. Whether a cook, an engineer, a helicopter crew chief, or a mechanic, first every Soldier is a warrior and every Marine is a rifleman. Everyone is on the front line – no safe rear areas exist. I expect future wars, whether conventional or unconventional, will have this characteristic. Our training does and must always reflect this reality.

Finally, I gained a renewed appreciation for the training and education system that produces our young battalion and brigade commanders. I watched them act with decisiveness, confidence, and skill in the most demanding circumstances. These leaders do not come about by accident; they have spent years being trained and

educated through our professional education and development system, have numerous training and operational deployments under their belts, and have been mentored by the Army's best leaders. It takes a substantial investment to grow one of these young leaders, but it is worth every bit of effort we put into it. When you combine that degree of leader preparation with the high-quality Soldiers and equipment – we have well-trained, equipped, and disciplined units capable of almost anything.

Equipping

The success of our Soldiers was also testimony to the high quality of our equipment. Today, I will focus my comments on our individual equipment and our vehicles.

When III Corps deployed to Iraq in January of 2004, almost every Soldier deployed with Individual Body Armor (IBA). We identified some spot shortages of Small Arms Protective Insert (SAPI) plates, and some Soldiers did deploy without complete IBA. These shortages, however, were rapidly filled, and within a few months every Soldier had IBA and SAPI plates. This exemplifies how the Army quickly reacted to theater operational assessments and provided our Soldiers with the best equipment.

Similarly, through the Rapid Fielding Initiative, we issued ballistic eye glasses and improved helmets, Camelback hydration systems, moisture wicking t-shirts and socks, and better boots to every Soldier. This program allowed commanders to set policies mandating wear of this protective gear whenever Soldiers left their forward operating bases (FOBs) and helped our Soldiers perform in a high-threat environment and 125 degree temperatures. Other critical equipment, including optical sights for weapons and fiber optic

viewers, enhanced force protection by allowing our Soldiers to observe the enemy from distant and protected positions.

One of the key initiatives that contributed immensely to our force protection was the ongoing effort to harden our wheeled vehicle fleet. I want to extend my thanks to this Subcommittee for the support they have given the Army in this effort. While the enemy did intensify his attacks on us using IEDs or roadside bombs, we reacted to this threat. As the enemy situation changed, the Army responded first with additional appliqué armor plating kits for HMMWVs and cargo trucks, known as Level II armor, and eventually with a steady supply of up-armored HMMWVs (UAH). In January 2004, less than 10 percent of light wheeled vehicles in Iraq were hardened with Army-procured appliqué armor kits. Where we experienced shortfalls, units worked to apply locally fabricated armor plates, also known as Level III armor. By August 2004, MNC-I was receiving approximately 20 – 30 UAHs every week, and by the end of our deployment, over 90 percent of our HMMWVs were armored. The combination of additional fielding of UAHs, appliqué armor – both Level II and Level III – and the vehicles that remained in theater as part of the Stay Behind Equipment (SBE) policy, we were able to achieve our goal by mid-February 2005 of every vehicle leaving a forward operating base having armor protection. From my perspective, the energy and resources expended to harden the fleet resulted directly in saved lives. I think it speaks well of the Congress, the Department, and our civilian and military leadership that everyone has worked tirelessly to save lives of our young men and women. As a commander, I am grateful.

Our efforts to harden the fleet must continue as more up-armored HMMWVs and appliqué armor kits are required. The

hardened vehicles, often with their weapons and communications systems, must stay behind in theater for the next unit. This in turn means the equipment is no longer available to the unit when they return to home station and resume training. Thus Soldiers, especially from the RC, may lack some critical equipment needed for home station training in preparation for their next deployment. I am confident in our ability to continue to address this concern, but it is a fact of life we have to be aware of.

I would also like to say a word about our armored force. I found I needed tanks, infantry fighting vehicles, and helicopters in all major engagements and that these systems played an important role on every battlefield, especially cities. Our division commanders called for more armor soon after we arrived, especially when the enemy situation changed in April 2004. These assets were quickly dispatched from Germany and Fort Hood. The quality of our combat systems—their firepower, protection, and situational awareness they provide through digital command and control systems—is unmatched. New equipment for the Abrams, including better protection of the tracks, the crew-served machine guns, and the engine compartment, will make the tank even more survivable in urban combat. New anti-personnel rounds for its main gun will make it more lethal against infantry at the short ranges common to urban operations. These improvements, further installation of digitization, and a field telephone for coordination with dismounted riflemen will make our infantry-armor team more deadly and survivable in cities.

We are now in the second iteration of the Stryker Brigade Combat Team in Iraq, and their performance has been superb. Based upon my experience in Iraq, the operational mobility, survivability, and flexibility of the Stryker is simply beyond dispute.

This vehicle repeatedly proved its worth, and the Stryker Brigade was one of my most effective and responsive units. On several occasions they were able to self-deploy several hundred miles across Iraq in response to a sudden outbreak of violence in another sector. Using their digital command and control suite, they were able to go directly from the march into the fight with superb situational awareness and control. Once in the fight, their unique combination of capabilities – a high degree of situational awareness, well-trained infantry, tactical mobility, and remarkable survivability – made them more than a match for anything the enemy could throw at them.

Finally, I would like to mention our digital command and control systems. The ability to see ourselves – in real time, without manual input, across the battlefield proved to be absolutely invaluable. It allowed us to quickly clear fires, make coordination, and synchronize the fight often with little or no radio discussion. This situational awareness means faster, more accurate and safer application of our immense firepower as we destroy the enemy.

Now that I am back at Fort Hood, I recognize that resetting and reconstituting our units that deployed to OIF-1 is a resource and labor intensive program. The trends we have seen with III Corps equipment returning from OIF-1 indicate the equipment has been subject to intensive use during the deployment. After a one year deployment in OIF-1, wheeled fleets returned with an average of five to six years of operational miles on them and the track fleet averaged four to five years. Initial assessments from the 1st Cavalry Division indicate that they have exceeded even this OPTEMPO and have operated some of their combat systems up to the equivalent of 10-15 years. These trends are evidenced by the significant number of man

hours required to reconstitute redeploying equipment, which far exceed a unit's available man hours to repair equipment themselves within our 180 day timeline goal. Our Army invested \$435.4 million in parts and contracted service providers at Fort Hood alone since Fiscal Year 2003 for units that have deployed to Southwest Asia. With an even higher OPTEMPO for units who just redeployed from OIF-2, our current estimate for remaining reconstitution costs for OIF-2 units is at least \$292 million. We will continue to capture lessons learned and serve as good stewards of our resources to ensure our units are adequately reconstituted, trained, and equipped to meet our Nation's future requirements.

In-Theater Maintenance and Logistics Support

The U.S. logistics operation in Iraq was one of the most complex and challenging missions in our history. Our combat logisticians proved successful in supporting a force of approximately 165,000 Coalition Soldiers, airmen, Marines, and civilians serving in a country the size of California. On a daily basis, logisticians distributed an average of 1.2 million gallons of fuel, 55,000 cases of bottled water, 13,000 cases of Meals Ready to Eat, 60 short tons of ammo, and 200 pallets of repair parts. As a commander, I was pleased and proud of the monumental logistics operations and accomplishments during our deployment.

Early in the tour, the April 2004 uprising and interdiction of our supply lines from Kuwait served as a significant milestone and influenced the future approach of logistics support in theater. We adjusted and improved logistics operations by shifting from a centralized distribution system to decentralized regional hubs increasing the system's flexibility and redundancy. This modification also helped us better assess civilian convoy routes on

the battlefield and avoid risk when possible through the highest threat areas. Nevertheless, every convoy, whether a recovery mission or a mail delivery, must be executed as a combat mission and logisticians must have the training, confidence, and weapons skills to conduct supply missions in this high-threat environment.

I want to highlight the Air Force's contribution to the safety and success of our resupply efforts. Not only did the Air Force play a major role in our logistics command and control and overhead security along major supply routes, their support for the establishment of additional strategic air hubs in Iraq, and for more frequent flights, helped keep approximately 40 additional trucks off the road per day. This meant at least 80 Soldiers every day were kept out of harm's way. This endeavor also streamlined deliveries from the U.S. directly to remote locations like Quayarrah-West and Al Taqaddum for critical repair parts and essential non-bulk items. I appreciated the support for these initiatives to minimize risk to Soldiers whenever possible.

Daily patrol missions and intense battles continued to generate massive logistics requirements during the deployment. Collectively, logistics providers from the U.S., Germany, and Kuwait did a tremendous job in supporting the Corps, and despite a high OPTEMPO, operational rates for our fleets were generally on par with Army averages. As I mentioned before, in many cases, tracked vehicles experienced over 12 times the programmed OPTEMPO. 1st Cavalry Division tanks that deployed from Baghdad to An Najaf, Fallujah, and other hot spots accumulated up to 12,000 miles during the deployment, far beyond the 800 mile annual programmed projection. Similarly, some Infantry Fighting Vehicles far exceeded the 300 mile annual projection and accumulated up to 3,000 miles in

operations. OPTEMPO also affected our aircraft flying hours, which more than doubled during OIF-2. Again, supportive organizations such as the Aviation and Missile Command played an important role in getting us necessary repair parts and special tools which helped us remain at or above DA readiness averages throughout the deployment. However, this support effort required additional assets to maintain our fleets. Clearly, aviation contracts, Logistics Civilian Augmentation Program (LOGCAP) maintenance augmentation teams and Army Materiel Command's Forward Repair Activities were critical combat multipliers. Additionally, LOGCAP and other contractors provided essential services throughout Iraq such as dining facility and housing operations at base camps, fuel delivery, and movement control, to mention just a few.

Our logisticians supported not only U.S. forces, but also supported our Coalition partners and the emerging Iraqi Security Forces. We found that some coalition partners benefited from programs such as LOGCAP, particularly in the operation of dining facilities. Combat units in the Iraqi Security Forces are being successfully employed and rapidly built, but the logistics infrastructure to support these units is a much slower process. Therefore, support from contractors and from our forces was essential to sustainment of the Iraqi Security Forces during their training and security missions. Towards the end of our deployment, the Iraqi Ministries of Defense and Interior were developing the capability to take on the sustainment mission for the Iraqi Security Forces, but supporting these forces will remain a challenge for a period of time.

I was very proud of the Soldiers who provided our logistics support in Iraq. We really are One Army, and our logistics team

demonstrated that every day. Eighty-nine percent of the Corps Support Command consisted of Reserve units, and these Soldiers demonstrated courage, flexibility, and determination every day as they supported the demands of a growing force. Every night and day they traveled the dangerous roads to make sure our units had what they needed, and they never let us down.

Personnel and Family Support Programs

As MNC-I Commander in Iraq, I was pleased with our ability to maintain personnel readiness across our combat forces for 13 months. All combat units deployed to theater were manned at 90 percent or better and maintained that strength despite combat losses. Our AC and RC Combat Service Support (CSS) units deployed at 80-89 percent strength, and occasionally we had some challenges in maintaining these units at their desired strength, but at no time did that threaten to impact our operations.

I was very pleased with the AC personnel replacement system, as we had solid systems in place to reach back to home station in order to support combat units forward. We did experience some challenges with RC replacements. When we first arrived in theater, RC personnel requisitions were being filled at approximately 15 percent, but this rate improved to over 70 percent by the time we departed Iraq. The Army worked very hard to fill RC shortages, and continues to do so in a high OPTEMPO environment.

Other personnel programs that were highly successful during our tenure in theater included: our casualty notification system; medical care; and our Morale, Welfare and Recreation (MWR) programs. The casualty notification system from foxhole to family members in CONUS was accurate, timely and responsive. Like every

Service, the Army cannot fail in such a sensitive area, and we were proud of our success. Medical care in theater was second to none and unparalleled in military history. I was continually amazed at the speed with which we evacuated our wounded from the battlefield and had them on their way to medical facilities in the U.S. and Europe. Soldiers knew that if wounded, they would be evacuated with speed and professionalism and supported with exceptional medical care all the way back to home station. Our MWR programs ensured the best possible quality of life for Soldiers and connectivity with their families during extended deployments. MWR in theater, such as the R&R leave program, commercial telephone banks, internet cafes, USO and Red Cross all helped our service men and women cope with a long and difficult combat deployment.

An important Army initiative in 2004 was the addition of the Family Readiness Group (FRG) Paid Assistance Program. This initiative helped us properly care for and manage family issues during our deployment. The growing experience of FRGs in handling various family situations paid huge dividends in support of unit Command Teams and families. This critical resource, which assists and coordinates at all levels the requirements involved in taking care of families, allows the commander to focus on training and Soldier readiness while providing a conduit for families who need assistance from the Command Team or installation support agencies.

While our families did well during this deployment, as I resume my duties as III Corps Commander in CONUS, I continue to be alert to the impact of continued high OPTEMPO of the force. In some cases, we have Soldiers who will experience less than 12 months at home station between year-long deployments. We will continue to work hard at mitigating these circumstances, and I am confident that

our Soldiers will continue to stand ready to meet any future missions in the Global War on Terror.

Conclusion

I can tell you from having spent a year with our Soldiers, Marines, sailors, and airmen; they are men and women of character who are confident in their training, their leaders, and their equipment. They are confident that their families are cared for back home when they are deployed. As the Commander of Multi-National Corps-Iraq, I have had the privilege of commanding these brave men and women in combat. As many of you have seen first-hand in your visits to Iraq, and I witnessed every day, these young Americans are as dedicated, skilled, and courageous as their predecessors whom we honor and emulate. They did their duty exactly as they were trained – some did not return because they were determined to do their duty. I am humbled to have been their commander and I pray for them every day.

I hope I have clearly described how we manned, trained, and equipped a superbly capable force. I have no doubt that challenges still lie before us. As the III Corps Commander at Fort Hood, I am alert to the strain on our force, our equipment and our families. I am deploying many young men and women to Iraq for their second tour of duty, some in less than a year's time. While our Soldiers remain ready and willing, we have to recognize what frequent deployments mean to families, support services, and employers. The leadership of the Army is in touch with these challenges and has encouraged an open dialog among commanders to address these concerns. We must address these concerns to ensure we mitigate their impact on our readiness. My Commanders and I will do just that. Adequate quality of life programs such as family housing and health care,

along with strong Family Readiness groups, are crucially important in determining the ability of Soldiers and families to make it successfully through long deployments. When our support to the family is solid, our Soldiers and families are equal to the challenge.

I have been given a great privilege to serve our country for almost 39 years and most recently in Iraq. I am proud of what we have done to advance the cause of freedom for the people of Iraq and the security of the free nations of the world. I look forward to your questions.