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28 Dec 04/OSD Policy

### Making the Case for Sticking to the Iraqi Election Timetable

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Date: OCT 09 2014

• **Legal:**

- The Iraqi Interim Government is bound by the *Transitional Administrative Law* to hold elections before the end of January 2005.
- *UN Resolution 1546* confirms this timetable and gives the election commitment an international dimension.

• **Moral:**

- Delay gives the Saddam loyalists and Islamist fascists a victory and might encourage them to increase their efforts to derail the entire political process.
- Polls show the majority of Iraqis, including Sunnis, want the elections to take place on time.
- Voters in Afghanistan, Colombia, and El Salvador braved violence and intimidation to cast their ballots. Iraqis are no less brave.

• **Practical:**

- It is not known whether security will be materially better or worse in six months.
- Staggering the election over several weeks might enable security forces to concentrate their efforts, but it might also allow the enemy to concentrate.
- Delay could provoke a Shi'a and Kurdish backlash (80 percent of the population), possibly creating a large new security problem.
- Delay could put undue stress on the thousands of election workers and polling sites already in-place for the election.

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**How to prevent the formation of a non-representative National Assembly if a significant number of Sunni Arabs do not vote?**

- **Keeping Sunni Arabs onboard -- Mosul is key.**
  - Providing a secure election environment (both real and perceived) in Mosul should help build voter confidence and turnout.
  - Polls show 56 percent of the public in Arab parts of northern Iraq want elections on schedule; better security (both real and perceived) should encourage them to vote.
  
- **Improving security in Mosul:**
  - *What we are doing now:*
    - Stood up an Operational Joint Command Center (JCC).
    - MNF-I and the Iraqi Security Forces have now shown they can shut down and control security in the city at will.
    - Battalions of the Iraqi National Guard (ING), Iraqi Army, and Police Commando Battalions are now filling the void left by the November 10th police force collapse.
    - The Iraqi National Guard repelled a number of insurgent attacks on police stations over the last two weeks.
    - Tips from local citizens are increasing, leading to more arrests (400 this month).
    - Terrorist freedom of movement has decreased significantly over the past 30 days and their leadership disrupted by MNF-I operations.

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- *What we will do:*
  - Continue to build up Iraqi National Guard manpower, equipment and coordination.
  - Add an additional Police Commando Battalion (en-route now).
  - Add another Iraqi Army Brigade in January.
  - Conduct joint Iraqi and MNF-I operations to steadily improve election security in Mosul.
  
- *What we should also do:*
  - Mount a major public information campaign now to demonstrate what Iraqis are doing to improve election security in Mosul. Three audiences:
    - Iraqi people.
    - American people.
    - International.

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