



U.S. Department of Defense

Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense (Public Affairs)

News Transcript

On the Web:

<http://www.defenselink.mil/cgi-bin/dlprint.cgi?http://www.defenselink.mil/transcripts/2005/tr20050412-secdef2482.html>

Media contact: +1 (703) 697-5131

Public contact:

<http://www.dod.mil/faq/comment.html>

or +1 (703) 428-0711

Presenter: Secretary of Defense Donald H. Rumsfeld and Dr. Jaafari

Tuesday, April 12, 2005

Secretary Rumsfeld Press Availability with Dr. Jaafari

RUMSFELD: Thank you very much, Dr. Jaafari.

I am very pleased to be back in Iraq, to have an opportunity to meet with the U.S. and coalition forces who are doing such a wonderful job here to assist the Iraqi security forces in their development and their assumption of responsibility for security in the country. I was pleased to be able to meet with Dr. Jaafari and to congratulate him on his position. We had a good discussion about the political process that's taking place. It is, I know, something that is being watched not just in this country and not just in this region, but it's having an affect in the region and the world. We are pleased to see what's taken place and certainly wish them well in their further considerations of the development of this important Iraqi transition government, and then moving towards the development of a constitution and then the election under that constitution of a fully-developed Iraqi government.

Thank you.

PRESS: Dr. Jaafari, I wonder if I might ask you a question, please sir. We are the traveling press, we're traveling with the Secretary. He's expressed some concern about possible political turbulence in the months ahead and the United States worries that there might be corruption or that perhaps people might be appointed to ministries based on political ties and not ability. Have you assured the Secretary that you will fight corruption and any appointments base on political ties, to include [inaudible] ties?

In English if you could please, sir.

JAAFARI: I don't deny there is [inaudible], but I am sure we are going to form a [inaudible], all of them have good backgrounds, they are very efficient, from different backgrounds. They are Sunni, Shias, [inaudible]. So I think we can cooperate proper to all of us, cooperation going through [inaudible]. I hope so.

PRESS: So you will fight corruption --

JAAFARI: Yes, yes.

PRESS: [Unintelligible]?

RUMSFELD: The goal of the United States and the coalition is to work with the Iraqi security forces to help to build them, increase their size, improve their equipment, and increase their capability in command and control, and increasingly transfer responsibility to the Iraqi security forces, and that process has been going forward now for a year and a half or two years. Good progress is being made. I think anyone who watched the elections on January 30th has to recognize the significant contribution made by Iraqi security forces to the success of that election.

Our goal is to be able to transfer full responsibility to the Iraqi security forces as soon as they're capable of taking over that responsibility at which point, obviously, the coalition forces would be able to reduce their presence in the country which is the goal of the coalition countries.

PRESS: Thank you very much.

RUMSFELD: Thank you.

JAAFARI: Thank you.

<http://www.defenselink.mil/transcripts/2005/tr20050412-secdef2482.html>