

2006 ambassador speeches

Joint Statement By U.S. Ambassador To Iraq Zalmay Khalilzad And Commander, Mnf-I, General George Casey

Baghdad, Iraq
July 19, 2006

We condemn in the strongest possible language the recent attacks by terrorists and death squads against innocent Iraqi civilians in Kufa and Mahmoudiya. We express our heartfelt condolences to all the family members who lost a loved one in these vicious attacks, and for all the Iraqi people who suffer at the hands of these criminals.

The Kufa bombing was carried out by terrorists who seek to exploit Iraq's ethnic and sectarian fault lines, and to provoke an all out civil war through attacks against Iraqi civilians and holy sites such as the al Askariya mosque in February. The Iraqi government and its Coalition partners will continue to hunt down and bring these murderers to justice as we did with Abu Musab al-Zarqawi and Abu Abdul Rahman al-Afghani.

The Mahmoudiya attack was carried out by death squads who, like the terrorists responsible for the Kufa bombing, seek to murder and oppress the Iraqi people in pursuit of their agenda. Iraqis participating in these criminal endeavors should not be misled by those who claim they are defending Iraq through these attacks. In reality, these false leaders are using them as pawns for their own narrow sectarian designs.

Like people everywhere, Iraqis seek peace, stability, and prosperity, and to live according to democratic principles which respect the rights of all Iraqi citizens. We recognize that Iraqis' patience with these murderers has expired. We call on the Iraqi people to unite against the terrorists and death squads, and to support the Iraqi security forces by providing information about their activities. We call on Iraqi leaders to take responsibility and pursue reconciliation not just in words, but through deeds as well. And we call on Iraqi government officials to begin to build upon Prime Minister Maliki's bold reconciliation proposal, and to enact a plan to disarm, demobilize, and reintegrate all unauthorized military formations in Iraq.

We mourn the loss of every Iraqi and are determined to help the Iraqi government bring peace to all Iraqis and to restore dignity and security to this great nation. We therefore pledge to work with the Iraqi government and security forces to treat the death squads as the same critical threat to Iraqi security as the terrorists who target Iraqi civilians, and to deal with them in the same manner.

God bless the people of Iraq.