



U.S. DEPARTMENT of STATE

KEYWORD SEARCH

[Subject Index](#)

+ BOOKMARK ...

[Home](#)[Issues & Press](#)[Travel & Business](#)[Countries](#)[Youth & Education](#)[Careers](#)[About State](#)

You are in: [Under Secretary for Political Affairs](#) > [Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs](#) > [Releases From the Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs](#) > [Remarks About Near Eastern Affairs](#) > [2007 Remarks About Near Eastern Affairs](#) > [March](#)

Remarks by U.S. Ambassador to Iraq Ryan C. Crocker at His Swearing-In Ceremony

Remarks from U.S. Ambassador to Iraq
Baghdad, Iraq
March 29, 2007



Thank you. Thank you very much -- Ambassador Speckhard for that introduction.

General Petraeus, fellow members of the U.S. Mission, members of the Multi-National Coalition, third-country staff and especially Iraqi staff - it's an honor to be back in Baghdad. As Judes noted, for us in the diplomatic service it is customary to be sworn in Washington. It was very important to me to have this ceremony here, not just in the interest of time, but because here in Iraq America faces it's most critical foreign policy challenge.

It was also important to me to be here among you to take this oath -- all of you engaged in this important campaign. I asked Tina Tran to administer the oath. It's normally done by the Secretary of State. Tina volunteered for Pakistan on her first Foreign Service assignment, and that's where we served together on that critical front in this long war. She then volunteered for Iraq. Tina and so many like her who have stepped up to the fight post 9/11 in the Foreign Service, the military services and other civilian agencies represent America's newest greatest generation.

Most of you here have been away from your families for significant amounts of time. In the past few days, all have been reminded of the dangers we face serving here. The losses to our community sadden us, but they also must renew our commitment to this mission. The sacrifices you are making for our country's most critical foreign policy mission is a tribute to your loyalty and patriotism.

And for our locally-employed staff, thank you -- thank you for believing in this mission, and in a free Iraq. I recognize the challenges you face just in coming to work every morning. And as we work side by side in helping the Iraqi people, I am inspired by your dedication and am honored to work alongside all of you. Intu abtal al watan fikul maa'na al-kalima.

I also recognize our brave military colleagues who risk their lives each day to secure a better tomorrow for the Iraqi people, thereby serving the interests of us all. I look forward to working with General Petraeus and all of you in the months ahead. And General I promise you a full unity of effort.

I look forward to sharing a cooperative and productive working relationship with America's coalition partners and international friends, including the United Nations. Your efforts are helping Iraq achieve lasting peace, stability and reconciliation.

We have a historic challenge ahead of us. Terrorists, insurgents and militias continue to threaten security in Baghdad and around the country. Security is without question the central issue. In a very real sense it has been for at least the last four decades. I was here in the late 1970s. There was no security. Iraqis is every where lived in terror of the midnight knock on the door. Neighbors were afraid to talk to neighbors. It truly was the republic of fear. Then came the savage Iran/Iraq war, Saddam Hussein's brutality to his own people, Desert Storm, and finally his overthrow in 2003.

Now the security challenge is of a different nature. President Bush's policy is the right one. There has been progress; there is also much more to be done.

Security is not only physical. Political and economic security are also critical again, much has been done. Iraqis have demonstrated throughout their long history intelligence, imagination, creativity and toughness.

In 2005, Iraqis overcame their differences to make full participation in the political process a priority. This understanding enabled Iraqi leaders to ratify a sound and enlightened constitution that secures the rights of all Iraqis. This achievement was followed by a successful national election.

In mid-2006, Iraqis again put aside their differences to form a national unity government. This government, under the leadership of Prime Minister Maliki, must continue to take the necessary steps to unify this country, and to deliver tangible improvements to the lives of all Iraqis.

Likewise, the Council of Representatives has successfully passed key pieces of legislation, such as the regions formation law, fuel import liberalization law, and Iraqi higher electoral commission law and this year's budget law.

Once again, much remains to be done. New democratic institutions require strengthening as does the rule of law. Iraqis must create mechanisms for amending the constitution, holding provincial elections, resolving the status of Kirkuk, finalizing fair de-Baathification and putting in place comprehensive hydrocarbon laws. Above all, security must be established. These challenges will demand a strong commitment and broad performance from the Iraqi government and the international community.

I look forward to working with Prime Minister Maliki, his cabinet, and the Council of Representatives leadership to accelerate progress already made, to see passage of other essential pieces of legislation vital to national reconciliation and to establishing the rule of law.

The Iraqi people themselves face a historic test -- one rooted in a shared view of common humanity as the grounds on which to base sometimes very difficult compromises. Turning the tide from oppression to freedom does not come overnight.

It does not come without high costs. We must stand by the Maliki government and all Iraqi's who seek a better future and remain committed to their success. We must do the utmost to help Iraqis use their considerable resources to benefit all.

All of this will be very hard. But if I thought it impossible I would not be standing here today. I pledge my full support to this mission and to the people of Iraq, and I know you will do the same. Our community -- of Americans, coalition members, brave Iraqi colleagues -- must work with a common vision and a common goal. And through these efforts, we will move closer to that which we all strive for: helping bring about an Iraq where representative government is truly of, by and for all its people. And as we carry this campaign forward, I could ask for no finer, braver or more committed comrades and colleagues than you.

Thank you for your service. Thank you for being here today.

Released on March 29, 2007



[Updates](#) | [Frequent Questions](#) | [Contact Us](#) | [Email this Page](#) | [Subject Index](#) | [Search](#)

The Office of Electronic Information, Bureau of Public Affairs, manages this site as a portal for information from the U.S. State Department. External links to other Internet sites should not be construed as an endorsement of the views or privacy policies contained therein.

[About state.gov](#) | [Privacy Notice](#) | [FOIA](#) | [Copyright Information](#) | [Other U.S. Government Information](#)