

SUBCOMMITTEE ON NATIONAL SECURITY, EMERGING THREATS,  
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October 6, 2006

The Honorable Donald H. Rumsfeld  
Secretary of Defense  
1000 Defense Pentagon  
Washington, DC 20301-1000

Dear Secretary Rumsfeld:

I received your Department's response to my letter of September 21, 2006. I do not agree the conditions-based formula described in the letter will achieve United States strategic goals in Iraq.

Instead of merely responding to conditions, we should drive the agenda and demand results. I propose four steps:

- Begin negotiations immediately on a set of firm timelines with the Government of Iraq that will lead to the drawdown of US forces. This timeline should be based on a worst-case scenario, so we are prepared to respond to unforeseen exigencies yet have a predictable timetable to achieve our objectives. Once agreement is reached, develop a realistic Campaign Plan incorporating these timelines.
- Convene a meeting of the key Shia, Sunni and Kurdish decision-makers and inform them that they must meet in continuous session until they reach agreement on all issues in Prime Minister Al-Maliki's national reconciliation program.
- Convene a conference of Iraq's neighbors – Syria, Turkey, Iran, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, and Jordan – to engage directly on measures that will create security and stability in Iraq.

- Upon the conclusion of these three steps, hold a plebiscite among the Iraqi people to ratify the timelines for disengagement agreed to in the negotiations in step one. Unless two-thirds of Iraqi voters endorse these timelines, we should accelerate the pace of our withdrawal.

These steps will require Iraqi leaders to make the political decisions they have avoided, bring Iraq's neighbors to the table to advance regional stability, and let Iraqi citizens decide the future they want for their country.

I renew my request to meet with the Director, J3, Joint Staff. As Chairman of the Subcommittee on National Security, Emerging Threats and International Relations, I have a constitutional obligation to pursue these issues.

If you have any questions or require additional information, please contact Dr. R. Nicholas Palarino, Staff Director, or Mr. Robert Kelley, Chief Counsel, at (202) 225-2548.

Sincerely,

Christopher Shays  
Chairman

cc: Rep. Tom Davis  
Rep. Henry Waxman  
Rep. Kenny Marchant  
Rep. Dennis Kucinich