



PRESS RELEASE

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The Second Border Security Working Group of the Expanded Neighbors Process

November 23, 2008

The United States is pleased to participate as an observer in the second Border Security Working Group of the Expanded Neighbors Process. Charge d' Affaires Maura Connelly led the U.S. delegation and delivered the following remarks to the media:

“The United States strongly supports the Expanded Neighbors of Iraq Process and the Border Security Working Group. Regional Cooperation is the best method to resolve problems that are of mutual concern to Iraq and its neighbors. The security challenges that the Government and people of Iraq confront are not unique to Iraq. Militant extremists and illegal armed groups threaten the peace and stability of the entire region and the international community.

Terrorist facilitation networks operating throughout the region remain a threat to the stability of Iraq despite notable successes achieved by Coalition and Iraqi Security Forces against foreign terrorists and illegal armed groups. Militant groups that were driven out of Iraq continue to receive weapons, training, funding and guidance from abroad. We encourage neighbors to refrain from tolerating these groups as they pose a threat not only to Iraq, but also to their own country.

We hope that with this meeting, all parties will renew their commitment to stop the flow of terrorists, and the weapons and funds that they use in Iraq and throughout the region -- and make that commitment meaningful with real action. Given the nature of the challenges confronting us, we encourage participants to bolster cooperation by initiating joint training exercises to improve information sharing and coordination, and increase overall effectiveness.

As an observer at this working group, the United States is particularly interested to hear from the participants how we might better assist in Iraq's efforts to enhance border security.”

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