

organizations. In my area alone we have recruited over 5,000 Iraqi Civil Defense Corps soldiers, 18,000 police officers and 2,000 border police. These forces are conducting joint patrols with coalition forces as well as independent operations to defeat anti-coalition elements. Many of these men have given their lives defending the prosperous future Iraqis are building.

We're still conducting combat operations. We continue to focus on extensive civil-military operations. Over the past 10 months we have completed nearly 2,000 improvement projects valued at \$41 million throughout our area of operations. Today we have another 700 projects worth almost \$42 million in progress. We have another -- we have refurbished over 600 schools, 70 mosques, 75 medical facilities, improved over 500 miles of roads, completed hundreds of other projects for children, such as soccer fields and youth centers. These projects have created over 60,000 jobs and have been a major boost to local economies.

To decide which projects we fund, we confer with the Iraqi leaders in the towns, communities and provinces. Every day we meet with civic, religious and tribal leaders, political parties and local government bodies. These people are clearly our partners, advisors and consultants as we seek a balance between combat operations against those who do not want Iraq to succeed and rebuilding Iraq with the majority of Iraqis who want to move forward.

I'm very proud of our soldiers who are able to balance these two contrasting missions and remain focused on our mission after 10 challenging months. Soon we will transition operations to the 1st Infantry Division. We have been working for months to ensure there's no degradation to mission. In fact, just a few hours ago, Major General John Batiste, the commander of the 1st Infantry Division, and I completed a rehearsal with commanders and staff working the details of the seamless transfer that will mark the beginning of our redeployment.

We look forward to our reunion with our families, but will not let up our diligence until the mission is complete and we are safely home. Our soldiers' morale remains high and their focus hasn't wavered. We will continue to conduct precise surgical raids to capture remaining enemy forces and to protect the successes we've enjoyed so far in this campaign.

And finally, I cannot close without thanking our incredible families back home. Their strength and steadfast support has been inspirational to us all.

With that, I'll take questions from you at this time.

Q: Specifically, what has caused the insurgency to, as you put it, to be brought to its knees? The capture of Saddam? Other factors? How much fight is left in the insurgency and do you have any feel for how many armed fighters you're facing?

Odierno: I don't. I think the threat has changed and it continues to be evolution. And I think the threat is moving toward somewhat of a nationalistic threat and away from a former regime threat. And I think there's still some reorganization going on because of how much we fractured them in the last -- specifically the last 60 to 90 days.

So, I'm not sure how many are out there, but what I do know; the attacks have decreased significantly. They are -- it's clear that they have financial problems, and I believe that what they're trying to do now is either attacks that are criminally related or are trying to forge their way to establish their place in the future government and where each one of the factions will be in a certain government -- i.e. the Sunnis, where will their role be in the future government. And I think that's where a lot of these attacks -- why these attacks are occurring, along with the fact that they always would like to see coalition forces leave so they could have more of an influence on the future of Iraq. And I think the attacks are more to deter our will, which is just not going to happen.

Staff: Yes, sir?