

be an overall Iraqi commander. That Iraqi commander will have two deputies, one for each side of the river. They will then have authority over the nine districts of the city. In each district there will be an Iraqi commander. That Iraqi commander will have authority over all Iraqi army units, Iraqi national police, and local police in that district. They will operate in a coordinated way.

They will operate out of police stations in the district, and their job will be to go out in the community, to patrol, to do any necessary checkpoints, and to go door-to-door, not to kick the door in, but to talk to the residents and make it clear that they understand that Iraqi forces are now providing security in the country.

The U.S. role will be to support that effort and help the Iraqis provide population security in Baghdad. To help that, in each district, there will be a U.S. army battalion -- that's 400 to 600 folks -- working in and closely with the Iraqi forces. Those forces, of course -- our forces will remain under U.S. command, but they will work with and in support of the Iraqi forces.

They will do it in several ways. One, there will be U.S. forces embedded with Iraqi units, and one of the things resulting from the strategy review is an expansion of our embedding. That is a good way to supplement the training we've been doing, training that gets the force up and into the field. It is embedding that will help that force, the Iraqi force, be effective in bringing security, but it's also -- think of it as an on-the-job training, a way to ensure that the Iraqis are better and more effective, both in their job and develop more effectiveness over time.

So our forces will do some embedding. They will be there to counsel the Iraqi forces, and, of course, if the Iraqi forces get into trouble, they will be there to help them in extremis. But my point overall is this is an Iraqi plan with an Iraqi lead that we believe will fix the problems that have plagued earlier efforts, and our forces will be in support.

There are other features of this. One of the things is that the President will say very clearly that it is time for the Iraqis to step forward; that there is no indefinite commitment to U.S. presence in Iraq; that our presence is there to enable the Iraqis, but that works only if the Iraqis step forward and step up. And he's made it very clear that if the Iraqis do not do that, they will lose the support of the American people. And the Iraqi people are making it clear that they will also lose the support of the Iraqi people, because the Iraqi people have made very clear they're sick of the violence in Baghdad and they want their government to provide security.

The purpose of all this is to get the violence in Baghdad down, get control of the situation and the sectarian violence, because now, without it, the reconciliation that everybody knows in the long-term is the key to getting security in the country, the reconciliation will not happen. The Sunnis do not know whether -- and do not have confidence this government is going to survive in the long-term, and the Shia are skeptical of the government because it is not providing them protection. So the President's judgment is the first step of a successful strategy in Iraq has to be helping the Iraqis bring security to Baghdad.

As that occurs, we have made very clear that the Iraqi government needs to meet the benchmarks it has set in order to do the things on which a broader reconciliation are required. And you all know them.