



For Immediate Release  
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## Fact Sheet: Iraqis Take Responsibility for Security in Anbar Province

*Once Considered A Province Lost To Al Qaeda, Today Anbar Becomes The 11th Out Of 18 Provinces To Return To Provincial Iraqi Control*

 [Statement by the President on Transfer of Security to Iraqi Forces in Anbar Province](#)

 [White House News](#)

 [In Focus: Iraq](#)

**Today, Iraqi authorities took the lead in all security operations for Anbar province.** From this day forward, the people of Anbar will be in charge of their own security. American troops will leave the major cities and return to bases where they will stand ready to assist their Iraqi counterparts if needed. This achievement in Anbar province is a credit to the courage of our troops and the many brave Iraqis who fought alongside our forces against Al Qaeda.

### Al Qaeda Has Suffered A Military And Ideological Defeat In Anbar

**In the fall of 2006, Anbar was the most violent province in Iraq, and Al Qaeda threatened almost every major population center.** As part of the surge, last year President Bush sent 4,000 additional Marines to Anbar to assist local citizens who had already begun to stand up to Al Qaeda. Today, Anbar has been transformed.

- **As security has improved, reconciliation is taking place across the province.** Together, local citizens, Iraqi forces, and American troops systematically dismantled Al Qaeda across the province. In Anbar, the surge provided a security umbrella and thereby demonstrated American commitment to Iraqis already standing up to terrorists – encouraging expansion of the Anbar Awakening and Sons of Iraq. Tribal leaders openly cooperate with us and support Iraqi police recruitment drives. Local citizens who previously shunned contact with Coalition Forces today openly socialize with them.
- **Once a Sunni terrorist stronghold, Anbar has been transformed and reclaimed by the Iraqi people.** This achievement is a credit to the courage of our troops, the Iraqi Security Forces, and the brave Sunni tribes and civilians who work alongside them.
- **Today, there are 24,000 police on the rolls.** The number of police recruits exceeds the available training slots, and every city and town has a functioning police force. The Provincial Council took its traditional seat of power in Ramadi last summer, and today, virtually every city and town in Anbar has a mayor and a functioning municipal council.