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Presenter: Commander of Multinational Division-North and 1st Armored Division, Maj. Gen. Mark Hertling

**August 11,
2008**

DoD News Briefing with Maj.Gen. Hertling from the Pentagon

(Note: The general appears via teleconference from Iraq.)

BRYAN WHITMAN (deputy assistant secretary of Defense for Public Affairs): Well, good morning and welcome.

Let me just make sure that General Hertling can hear us okay. It's Bryan Whitman at the Pentagon. Can you hear me, General?

GEN. HERTLING: I can, Bryan. Can you hear me okay?

MR. WHITMAN: Yeah, we hear you very good in the briefing room.

Well, thank you again for joining us, General Hertling. This is General -- Major General Mark Hertling, who is the commander of Multinational Division-North, as well as the 1st Armored Division. He's become well-known to us in this format. This is his fifth time that he has briefed us since assuming his responsibility -- responsibilities in October in Iraq. And I think the last time was just about two months ago, in June.

Today he is speaking from Contingency Operating Base Speicher, which is just outside of Tikrit. And as he has done in the past, he's going to give us a brief operational update in terms of what the division's been doing and then take some of your questions. So, General, again, thank you for spending some time with us this afternoon.

GEN. HERTLING: Okay. Well, thanks, Bryan. And I would like to read some opening statement, and maybe that'll get some of the folks in the briefing warmed up a little bit.

Good morning to you all. Good afternoon here from beautiful COB Speicher. Thanks for coming.

Last time, as Bryan said, I talked to this group was 9th of June, and that was about a month after we started operations in Ninewa and Mosul, Operation Umm al-Rabiain, or Mother of Two Springs.

Since that time there have been several interesting developments in the northern -- four northern provinces,