

back to you, to see if there was anything you'd like to close with, or if any of the discussion here has stimulated some other thoughts, that perhaps you wanted to share with us, before we bring it to an end.

GEN. AUSTIN: I'd just like to say thanks to everyone for joining us today, and I appreciate your questions. I'd like to close by saying it is clear to me that there is a sense of normalcy that -- normalcy that's returning to Iraq, and it's returning because of the sustained low levels of attacks. And it's clear that the Iraqis have chosen to reject al Qaeda and the special groups criminals, and the Iraqi security forces are continuing to improve. I'm confident that we'll continue to make progress. And I think everyone knows that Iraq is a challenging and continuously changing environment, but I'm very optimistic about the future of this country.

I'd also like to say that our men and women in uniform, as well as our civilian counterparts, are doing tremendous work here seven days a week.

If I could, I'd also like to say thank you to the family members who remain at home. We appreciate your sacrifices. And thank you for being here, and I look forward to talking to everyone again in the future. Again, thanks.

MR. WHITMAN: Well, thank you, general and -- for your time today but, just as importantly, for your support of having your subordinate commanders join us in this forum and give us the type of context that only commanders on the ground are able to do. So we appreciate your support with your division commanders and your brigade combat team commanders, and we hope to have you back here very soon too.

GEN. AUSTIN: Thanks a lot, Bryan. We'll see you next time.

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