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Subject: FW: DoD Talking Points



TP 05-04-04 Abu
Ghraib troop d...

Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Caveats: NONE

Latest DoD Talking Points on Abu Ghraib.

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> From: Willcox Chris SES OASD-PA
> Sent: Tuesday, May 04, 2004 5:55:33 PM
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> Subject: DoD Talking Points

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Secretary Rumsfeld and Gen. Peter Pace, vice chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, briefed the Pentagon press corps today on allegations of abuse by U.S. soldiers at Abu Ghraib and troop deployment. Following the secretary and vice chairman's briefing, Gen. George Casey, vice chief of staff of the Army, spoke about the situation at Abu Ghraib. Highlights from his comments are also included.

Abu Ghraib

* The images shown in the media of the U.S. soldiers and prisoners at the Baghdad Correctional Facility at Abu Ghraib are deeply disturbing.

* The photographs depict actions that are fundamentally unacceptable.

* These actions do not in anyway represent the values of the United States or the Armed Forces, the vast majority of whom serve with honor.

* The Secretary and the Department of Defense are taking the charges and allegations seriously.

* On Jan. 14, one day after allegations first came to light, a criminal investigation was initiated to examine the charges. On Jan. 16, CENTCOM issued a press release, and Brig. Gen. Mark Kimmitt briefed that an investigation had been initiated into reported incidents of detainee abuse.

* On Jan. 31, Maj. Gen. Antonio Taguba, at the request of Lt. Gen. Ricardo Sanchez, was appointed to conduct an administrative investigation of procedures at Abu Ghraib.

* In February, the acting Secretary of the Army directed the Army Inspector General to conduct an assessment of doctrine and training associated with detention operations throughout the U.S. Central Command area of responsibility.

* In February, the Army's Chief of Reserve Affairs initiated an assessment of Army Reserve training with an emphasis on military police and military intelligence activities related to prisoners.

* On April 23, at Gen. Sanchez's request, the head of Army

intelligence provided an investigating officer to investigate military intelligence practices in Iraq.

* Early this month, the U.S. Navy Inspector General was asked to assess the detainee operations at Guantanamo Bay and at Charleston Naval Station Brig.

* The Department will continue to take whatever steps are necessary to hold accountable those who may have violated the code of military conduct.

* Such violations betray the trust of the American people and the men and women in uniform who serve honorably each day.

* Thus far, from these investigations, six individuals have been identified for Article 32 criminal hearings. At least six other individuals have been given letters of reprimand, and two of these six were relieved of their responsibilities.

* As Gen. Casey emphasized in his opening statement to the press, the Army is extremely disappointed that anyone would engage in the mistreatment and humiliation of detainees or take such pictures.

* The U.S. Army is a values-based organization that respects the International Law of Armed Conflict and human dignity. More than 300,000 Army soldiers are deployed around the world, defending the United States and its values.

* The behavior that led to the images is clearly unacceptable. It does not reflect Army training or values, and is a complete breakdown in discipline.

* The Army is committed to treating all persons with dignity, respect and humanity.

* U.S. soldiers recognize they have a moral and legal obligation to provide humane treatment to the personnel in their custody.

* Commanders will continue to investigate all allegations of detainee mistreatment and take appropriate action. Commanders will continue to set appropriate climate and standards with regard to humane treatment of detainees.

* The Army has taken action in Iraq to address the allegations of prisoner abuse.

* There is new unit leadership at Abu Ghraib, and close coordination between the military intelligence brigade commander and the military police brigade commander.

* There is now one single person responsible for all the detainee activities. On April 15, Maj. Gen. Jeff Miller took charge of all the detainee operations in Iraq.

* Additional training on the Geneva Convention and the rules of engagement has been given to all of the new units that have gone into these facilities.

* A mobile training team of corrections and legal experts is on the ground working at the detention facilities and helping train soldiers to improve operations at the facilities.

* A lessons-learned process is ongoing and recommended changes are being incorporated into the Army's schools, doctrine and combat training centers.

Secretary Rumsfeld also announced some additional troop deployments during the press briefing.

Troop Deployment

* Gen. John Abizaid, commander of U.S. Central Command, has indicated a desire to retain the current level of forces at approximately 135,000.

* Recently, 20,000 troops had their deployments extended by up to 90 days to keep force levels at 135,000.

* These troops will not have their deployments extended further. Instead, Secretary Rumsfeld has approved the deployment of approximately 10,000 replacement personnel.

For more information, please see the news release posted on www.defenselink.mil
<<http://www.defenselink.mil>> (link to release
<<http://www.defenselink.mil/releases/2004/nr20040504-0701.html>>).