

## U.S. Army Europe and 7th Army

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### **1st Armored Division, Iraqi army leaders discuss security cooperation in Mada'in Qada region**

**By Pfc. Evan Loyd**

2nd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Armored Division

**FORWARD OPERATING BASE HAMMER, Iraq --** Leaders from the 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Armored Division, and local Iraqi security forces officials met here Oct. 23 to assess security of the Mada'in Qada region of Iraq.

Participants focused on a number of issues in the Mada'in Qada, including cooperation between the security forces and the security of the provincial elections in January. The transition of the Sons of Iraq to an Iraqi government-controlled security force was another key point discussed.



PFC EVAN LOYD

Staff Maj. Gen. Jassem Nazal Qassim, commanding general of the 9th Iraqi Army Division, and Col. Pat White, commander of the 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Armored Division, discuss security in Iraq's Mada'in Qada region during a meeting at Forward Operating Base Hammer, Iraq, Oct. 23.

“Previously Sons of Iraq didn't trust the government of Iraq. They feared that when coalition forces left they would be left on the street without any money and jobless,” said Staff Maj. Gen. Jassem Nazal Qassim, commander of the 9th Iraqi Army Division. “The government of Iraq recognized the sacrifices of the Sons of Iraq, and has accepted them into the Iraqi security forces and will be paying them.”

The security council also discussed cooperation between the brigade's 2nd Battalion, 6th Infantry and the 2nd Battalion, 35th Iraqi Army Brigade to disrupt improvised explosive device activity throughout the Salman Pak area.

Qassim praised the 2nd BCT for helping to improve safety in the area.

“Since the Iron Brigade’ and the 35th Iraqi Army Brigade began operations, the area has made a complete one-eighty-degree turn,” said Qassim. “Eight months ago, (Iraqi citizens) were displaced and afraid to come back. Now that the area is safer, many of them are coming home.”

The 2nd BCT is a U.S. Army Europe unit based in Baumholder, Germany.



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