

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

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RELEASE #2007-11-06-01

Nov. 6, 2007

### U.S. ARMY EUROPE STRYKER SOLDIERS JOIN WITH IRAQI POLICE, GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS FOR SCHOOLS UPGRADES

By Sgt. Mike Pryor

2nd Brigade Combat Team, 82nd Airborne Division Public Affairs Office

**BAGHDAD, Iraq** -- Shala Mikla was supposed to be teaching her students about biology Oct. 31. Instead, the class got a lesson in cooperation.

That was what was on display when U.S. Army Europe Soldiers and Iraqi National Police officers visited Mikla's classroom at the Al-Andalus Girl's School in Baghdad's Sadr City neighborhood to view recently completed renovations.

The renovations were part of a joint effort by the Ministry of Education, local neighborhood councils, school officials, the Iraqi National Police and USAREUR's 1<sup>st</sup> Squadron, 2nd Stryker Cavalry Regiment.



SGT MIKE PRYOR

Lt. Col. Dan Barnett, commander of U.S. Army Europe's 1st Squadron, 2nd Stryker Cavalry Regiment and Brig. Gen. Ali Ibrahim Daboun (background), commander of the 8th Brigade, 2nd Iraqi National Police Division, hand out backpacks to students at the Al Andalus Girl's School in Baghdad's Sadr City neighborhood during an Oct. 31

The students got to see that partnership in action as the Soldiers and police officers, led by Iraqi Brig. Gen. Ali Ibrahim Daboun, commander of the 8th Brigade, 2nd Iraqi National Police Division, and Lt. Col. Dan Barnett, commander of the 1-2<sup>nd</sup> SCR, went from classroom to classroom to talk with the children and hand out free backpacks.

“Gen. Ali is a great partner. We have a very strong relationship,” said Barnett.

The units' relationship has helped the national police and the 1-2nd SCR complete a project to improve nine schools in the Sadr City area. At the Al-Andalus school, the renovations included a new roof, a new gate, repairs to cracks in the pavement and stairs, and a paint job, said Capt. Alex Carter, a civil affairs team chief who helped oversee the project. All told, contractors put \$200,000 worth of work into fixing up the school, Carter said.

The students in Mikla's class showed their appreciation by giving Barnett a big "Thank you!" in English when he stopped by the classroom.

"We are very grateful," Mikla said. "For the children, every little bit helps."



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