



REPLY TO  
ATTENTION OF

**HEADQUARTERS**  
MULTI-NATIONAL FORCE - IRAQ  
BAGHDAD, IRAQ  
APO AE 09342-1400

July 23, 2009

Office of the Commanding General

Honorable Christine Gregoire  
Governor of Washington  
Office of the Governor  
PO Box 40002  
Olympia, Washington 98504-0002

Dear Governor Gregoire:

As the deployment of the 81st Brigade Combat Team draws to a close, I would like to thank you for their superb service over the past nine months. Their performance has been extraordinary. I deeply appreciate and admire their bravery and selfless dedication to the mission, the people of Iraq, and the United States of America.

The men and women of the 81st BCT diligently supported stability by providing security to bases and transportation routes across Baghdad and western Iraq. At Camp Ramadi, COS Marez and Q-West, they enabled resident and transient units to conduct the full range of operations to secure the populace and train the Iraqi Security Forces for enduring success. Outside the wire, these Citizen-Soldiers conducted convoy security operations and combat logistics patrols across MND-N, MND-B and MNF-W clocking over six million miles, clearing logistics routes of IEDs and bringing essential warfighting materiel to your comrades-in-arms. At Camp Prosperity in the International Zone, the 81st BCT worked with the State Department to secure the nation building efforts of the Baghdad Provincial Reconstruction Team, the missions of officers from nine federal agencies and the United Nations Assistance Mission Iraq. Their hard work has brought Iraq closer to enduring stability and self-reliance.

This work has not been easy, or without cost. I extend my deepest condolences for the loss of one of the 81st BCT's Soldiers. This sacrifice have not been in vain. Through their courage and unwavering determination, they have helped quiet the turmoil that consumed this nation, and the people of Iraq today are buoyed by a growing hope in a bright and prosperous future. The Soldiers of the 81st BCT have brought a measure of stability to a people plagued by conflict, and have given the people of Washington reason to be proud.

It is the greatest privilege to soldier with the men and women of Washington National Guard. For over forty years, the Citizen-Soldiers of the 81 HBCT have answered America's call. Please extend my thanks to them and the people of Washington for a job well done.

Sincerely,

Raymond T. Odierno  
General, U.S. Army  
Commanding