

SENATOR MCCAIN WELCOMES NOMINATION OF GENERALS PETRAEUS AND ODIERNO

WASHINGTON, D.C. - U.S. Senator John McCain (R-Ariz.) today released the following statement:

"After having spoken with Secretary Gates, I welcome today's announcement from the Department of Defense that the President intends to nominate General David Petraeus as the new commander of U.S. Central Command (CENTCOM) and General Ray Odierno as the new commander of Multinational Forces-Iraq (MNF-I). Both of these great generals have served our country with skill and distinction, and I am pleased that they will continue to do so in positions of high responsibility.

"As I have stated on many occasions, I believe that General Petraeus is one of the great generals in American history. During his 15 month tenure as commander in Iraq, he oversaw the implementation of a counterinsurgency strategy, the so-called "surge," that has demonstrated dramatic successes. While there are many challenges remaining, a good measure of the progress Iraq has seen over the past year is due to his strategic vision. At the helm of CENTCOM, he will be in position to further consolidate the gains our troops have made in Iraq and bring his unique skills to bear in furthering American interests throughout the region.

"General Odierno, who recently returned from his service in Iraq, demonstrates his selfless patriotism by agreeing to take up command in Baghdad. General Odierno deserves great respect for the central role he played in operational leadership in Iraq over the last year. I believe he will be the ideal successor to General Petraeus as commander of MNF-I, a leader who couples his fidelity to America with experience, boldness, and strategic vision that will make success in Iraq more likely.

"I am pleased that these two remarkable fighting men, General Petraeus and General Odierno, will take up these new duties. I look forward to working with them in their new roles. In view of the importance of success in Iraq to our national security, I hope the Senate will move to confirm these two generals as soon as possible to their new positions."