

**Headquarters (Multi National Division) South East
British Forces Post Office 641**

PRESS INFORMATION CENTRE

Telephone: 00870 600 322 756
00870 763 665 814

Mobile: 00965 9113350

E-mail: picbasrah@defencemediaops.co.uk

Ser No: 9/11

Date of Release: 27 Nov 03

PRESS RELEASE

ARMY HOSTS EID CELEBRATIONS IN BASRAH

The British Army in Basrah last night entertained local community and religious leaders at a celebration to mark the Muslim festival of Eid.

Welcoming the guests, British commander Brigadier David Rutherford-Jones said Coalition Forces were working in a partnership with the local community.

“We have to work together, and because we have worked together we have achieved a great deal,” he said. “I last came here in August and I got a sense then that there were very real problems here in southern Iraq.

“To come back now and find the degree of stability that has been gained here is a very reassuring thing indeed. There is, I think, a very positive feel about the people.

“I sense a real determination to develop the liberties they have now got, and to make this place a far better country than it has been for the last 30 years or so.”

Brig Rutherford-Jones said that even after power was handed over to the Iraqi people, the Coalition Forces would continue to help them.

“I sense there is a lot to do to build on the success we have achieved so far,” he added.

And he vowed the “small minority” who sought to undermine that success would never succeed.

“We will work hard with your security forces to ensure that the terrorists and organised criminals do not achieve what they are trying to do,” he said.

“All of us should be in no doubt that they will not win.”

ENDS