

**RELEASE
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From: Abedin, Huma <AbedinH@state.gov>
Sent: Wednesday, December 2, 2009 12:21 PM
To: H
Subject: Rasmussen press conf

Here is rasmussen statement at press conf today:

On behalf of NATO, I warmly welcome President Obama's announcement on the new US approach and commitment to the mission in Afghanistan. President Obama's decision to substantially increase the numbers of US forces in the NATO-led operation is proof of his resolve; the overall approach he laid out is a broader political strategy for success. The United States' contribution to the NATO-led mission has always been substantial; it is now even more important. But this is not a US mission alone: America's Allies in NATO have shared the risks, costs and burdens of this mission from the beginning. As the US increases its commitment, I am confident that the other Allies, as well as our Partners in the mission, will also make a substantial increase in their contribution. Taken together, the new force contributions from across the Alliance, as well as the new approach agreed by all the ISAF countries, will help create a new momentum in the mission in 2010.