

THE HOUSE POLICY COMMITTEE

CHRISTOPHER COX, CHAIRMAN

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Leader of Iraqi Democratic Opposition Meets U.S. Congressional Leadership

*National Congress Founder, Human Rights
Defender Returns to U.S. Congress*

WASHINGTON (Wednesday, December 5, 2001)—Dr. Ahmed Chalabi, founder of the Iraqi National Congress (INC), Iraq’s legislature in exile, will meet with U.S. Congressional leaders at 9 a.m. Thursday, December 6, in the U.S. Capitol.

Dr. Chalabi leads INC’s seven-member executive committee and will continue discussions started with the House Policy Committee Leadership in 1998 on ending Saddam Hussein’s dictatorship in Iraq.

“A thoughtful policy toward Iraq involves an active effort to deal with the root of the problem—despotism and the lack of a legitimate government,” said House Policy Chairman Christopher Cox (R-CA).

Thursday’s meeting between Dr. Chalabi, a former professor of mathematics at the American University in Beirut who has taken substantial risk to support democracy in Iraq, and the House Policy Committee, the policy-making arm of the House of Representatives, is the second in the U.S. Capitol. The first was February 25, 1998.

The Policy Committee first issued a white paper on Iraq in October, 1996, noting the Clinton administration’s failure to enforce the terms Saddam’s 1991 surrender, its waiver of sanctions on Iraqi oil sales, and its failure to provide effective support for the Iraqi opposition. These lapses emboldened Saddam and led to the disintegration of the Gulf War coalition. President Bush reversed the failed policy in the first few days of his Administration and funded the INC.

“The Policy Committee is anxious to hear a leading voice for freedom as we work to build a better policy toward Iraq,” Chairman Cox said. “Freedom and human rights must always be the touchstone of our foreign policy.”

The Policy Committee and Chairman Cox have hosted several freedom fighters over the years, including the first President of the newly-free Lithuania, Vytautas Landsbergis; the first President of the newly-free Czech Republic, Václav Havel; the first President of the newly-free Poland, Lech Walesa; the woman who restored democracy to Nicaragua with her election as President, Violetta Chamorro; and the leading voice for democracy in China, Wei Jingsheng.