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Guilty Plea Entered at General Court-Martial in Haditha Investigation

CAMP PENDLETON, Calif. (January 23, 2012) – SSgt Frank G. Wuterich appeared before the military judge here today and pleaded guilty to one count of negligent dereliction of duty for his involvement in the death of Iraqi civilians in Haditha, Iraq on Nov. 19, 2005. Wuterich was assigned to 3rd Battalion, 1st Marine Regiment, 1st Marine Division at the time of the incident.

The military judge will now determine the sentencing for SSgt Wuterich. The military judge's sentencing will then go to LtGen Thomas Waldhauser, Commander, Marine Corps Forces Central Command for final adjudication. The military judge for the proceeding is Lt. Col. David Jones.

Defense and trial counsel initiated a discussion to resolve the case. That discussion resulted in SSgt Wuterich and his attorneys submitting a stipulation of fact and pre-trial agreement in which SSgt Wuterich agreed and admitted that he was derelict in the performance of his duty. The pre-trial agreement was signed once the plea entered by SSgt Wuterich clearly showed that SSgt Wuterich accepted responsibility for his actions and will now be held accountable for those actions by the UCMJ process.

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