

Coalition Bulletin

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The New Afghan National Army

Coalition efforts pay off as ANA numbers grow

Black Wolves Prowl Afghanistan

Romanian soldiers prove themselves in latest deployment



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QUOTE OF THE MONTH

“The ANA is not an army of Pashtuns or Tajiks, or an army of a political party or faction; it is an army of the people of Afghanistan. It is our job to develop, lead, and retain disciplined, professional soldiers.”

Major General Moeen,
ANA Central Corps Commander.



Afghanistan must have security. It must be able to encourage and enforce stability. It must be able to melt regional divides into a common, national understanding. It must be able to stand on its own. It must have an army.

The Coalition is helping it build one. The United States has taken the lead shaping the new Afghan National Army, providing it with resources, construction, organization, training and promise.

In the best traditions of the Coalition, many nations are helping. France trains the ANA's new officers, the UK and New Zealand her NCOs. Bulgaria, Germany, Mongolia, Canada work alongside the U.S. training her soldiers. New NATO countries such as Poland,

Romania and Hungary are providing weapons and ammunition.

The scope of the project is remarkable. This year's budget for the ANA is more than US \$560 million, nearly half of which will go to infrastructure alone.

The challenges that lie ahead are not insignificant, but set against them lies the combined might of 65 nations, each with a common vision, each understanding the importance of nationhood. The Coalition possesses the skills and staying power to help provide Afghanistan the stability and security it deserves. When the history books are written, when Afghanistan reflects upon its hard-won nationhood, the work we are doing now will not be forgotten. Indeed, I believe the development of the ANA will be one of the Coalition's greatest legacies.

In this, the tenth issue of the Coalition Bulletin, you'll read about the Afghan National Army and a host of other Coalition initiatives and accomplishments on Operation Enduring Freedom. Twelve pages aren't enough to cover the work of the Coalition, but our story must start somewhere.

I look forward to your feedback. Tell us what you think of the Bulletin, and how it can better serve you. You can reach us anytime at:

oefpublicaffairs@yahoo.com.

Cheers.

John Vryenhoek
Brigadier-General, New Zealand
Chairman
Public Awareness Working Group

Back to School

France lends a hand as ANA opens new Command and General Staff College

The next pillar in the construction of the Afghan National Army has been set firmly in Afghan soil with the opening of the ANA's new Command and General Staff College February 14 in Kabul.

Representatives from France, the Afghan Transitional Authority and the United States attended the opening of the \$750,000 facility. The event showcased the high level of understanding and cooperation between all three nations.

Patterned on the French model, the CGSC was set up by the French military in a reconstructed building on the edge of

Kabul. It will train senior officers to become the ANA's future military leaders.

The College is the first of its kind in Afghanistan and the latest step in the international effort to create a new army for the country. A renewed ANA is considered vital if Afghanistan is to achieve the stability required to allow reform and reconstruction.

The first 11-week CGSC course started February 7 with 60 senior officer students. When they graduate, they will add to the more than 550 ANA officers France has trained so far and to the seven ANA battalions already operational.

Following a reading from the Koran, representatives stood for the Afghan national anthem, the first time it had been played at an official ceremony. Afghanistan's Vice-Minister of Defence, Mr. Abdul Rahim Wardack and the Afghan Joint Chief of





Defence, Gen. Bismullah Kahn, then rose to thank the Coalition for its efforts, singling out France for the quality of the training it provides to Afghan officers. Both men stressed the importance of continuing the ANA's development beyond the Bonn calendar, in order to ensure the continuing coherence of the process.

The Afghans were followed by Maj.-Gen. Maurice Amarger, commander of the General Staff School in Compiègne, France. Amarger underlined the importance of the college's success to his country, saying he was there "on behalf of the French JCS who wanted to mark his absolute devotion to this project."

"He has selected his most experienced officer in teaching to prepare and lead the faculty," Amarger continued, "a faculty formed by hardened, trained staff officers drawn from battalion, brigade and division level staffs of the French Army."

Sharing the stage with Amarger was the U.S. commander of the Office for Military Cooperation (Afghanistan), Maj.-Gen. Craig P. Weston, and Col. Philippe Morel, commander of the French Contingent deployed in Kabul.

Hungary equips Afghan military

Hungary has come to the aid of the Afghan National Army, supplying it from its stockpiles of Soviet-era equipment.

"The Hungarian military has been significantly restructured as a result of its membership in NATO," said Col. Jozsef Tokovicz, the Hungarian Senior National Representative to USCENTCOM. "Although much of our former eastern block equipment is in excellent condition, it's now no longer required. Hungary is happy to see it be used by the ANA."

The success story of the Hungarian donation is an example of the effective coordination between the liaison teams headquartered in Tampa. Officers working in Eagle Village organised the transportation and distribution of 400 metric tons of clothing, small arms, personal gear and ammunition.



Underlining the significance of the donation, several dignitaries oversaw loading of the equipment for transport to Afghanistan, among them the US ambassador to Hungary and General Barno, then Commander of the Iraqi Opposition Training Facility.

"Hungary is well aware what the ANA means for Afghanistan's future security," said Tokovicz. "This is an initiative we want to support."



Basic Training, Giant Task

Donation conference another sign of hope for emerging Afghan Army

Commander Mike Dionian likes to think of it as a hand up, not a handout.

On March 30, representatives from the Afghan government will host a meeting of Coalition nations in Berlin. Their goal will be to solicit donations to fuel the steady pace of improvement all over Afghanistan. Dionian, a planner in the Coalition's U.S.-led initiative to create a new, 70,000-strong Afghan National Army hopes participants will be feeling generous.

"We are optimistic that nations will step forward and agree to take on some of the ANA projects," Dionian says. "We'll be looking for tools, supplies, training, equipment, even construction of the basic military infrastructure. Assisting the Afghans in building their army is a huge task."

Despite the many competing requests for Coalition resources Dionian expects to hear at the conference – humanitarian aid, education, health, to name but a few – he says his optimism for continued international support to the ANA stems from one simple truth. "Security is the lynchpin to Afghanistan's future," says Dionian.

"You simply can't have reconstruction, or a stable government, or guarantee long-term humanitarian aid without it. Security allows rebuilding, and rebuilding betters the quality of life, which in turn further enhances security."

After a year of development, the ANA is nearly 7,500 soldiers strong. The

new army is being built around principles set out at the Bonn II conference of 2002, which called for a professional force subordinate to the command of legitimate civilian authority.

To make that force a reality, an 800-member unit known as Task Force Phoenix has been training volunteers from across Afghanistan in a 10-week basic training course. Some recruits have never seen military service before; others are veterans.

The aim is to create an ethnically balanced army with a national outlook, an army that will one day replace the various militias and regional forces that still threaten to divide the country.

The new ANA currently consists of three brigades. Two are infantry brigades; the third is a more robust 'Quick Reaction Force' consisting of armoured and mechanized units.





The Coalition's influence is subtly visible throughout both the brigades and the ANA's headquarters. Afghan soldiers will use Soviet-style weapons, contributions of new NATO countries such as Poland, Romania, Bulgaria and Hungary. The familiar weapons are intended to ease the soldiers' transition to the new force.

While they may carry AK-47s, however, the ANA is built on a Western defence model. The Afghan Ministry of Defence has been reorganized to reflect a more functional structure. The structure is also emphasized in the training, with France teaching Afghan officers, and the United Kingdom and New Zealand teaching Afghan NCOs.



In the field, the U.S., Romania, Bulgaria, Germany and Mongolia run Mobile Training Teams, intended to take training directly to fielded soldiers. In addition to U.S. embedded trainers, Canada runs an Embedded Training Team, which operates inside a unit to reinforce the learning Afghan recruits received during basic training.



The scope of the rebuilding effort explains Dionian's hope that countries will donate as much as possible at the March conference. Of the ANA's US \$569 million 2004 budget, nearly half is earmarked for military infrastructure. A quarter century of warfare has left the country without military schools, technical colleges, or even recruiting stations. They all need rebuilding or major reconstruction work.

Balancing the reality of Afghanistan with the many skills and resources of the Coalition is a delicate matter. "We want to help build a progressive, civilian-run organization in Afghanistan," Dionian says. "But we must also help build a military that is right for Afghans, both in size and capability. We don't want to build something up that can't be sustained."

Despite the many challenges that lie ahead, Dionian says the ANA is well on its way to success. "I think everyone recognizes that there is no quick solution to this, it's an evolutionary process," he says. "But history has shown that a country's military can be a unifying force. It's an essential step toward nationhood."

Black Wolves Prowl Afghanistan

by Captain Florin Sperlea

The experience of supporting Operation Enduring Freedom has been a truly formative one for Romanian soldiers. In Kandahar, Captain Florin Sperlea had the opportunity to meet the “Black Wolves” – Romania’s 151st Infantry Battalion or “Razboieni”. Their deployment to Afghanistan followed missions in Angola, Bosnia and Kosovo.

One of the unique missions I found myself on in Kandahar was the “Village Team” – an attempt to forge closer links between local communities and military personnel, either Americans or Romanians. The mission was carried out by a platoon led by Lt. Vasile Mironescu.

After a final briefing, we set off in a column of Romanian armored personnel carriers. Leaving the camp, the soldiers arm their weapons, ready for anything. Near the villa of a local leader, our guide, Sadik, and our interpreter, Akhbar, join us.

Before reaching the village of Myanjoy, the column stops. The “Wolves” quickly organize themselves for the approach to the village. They remain vigilant throughout our time in the village as we talk with the leader of the local community.

Maj. Shana Paine, a specialist in *Civil Affairs* and one of our American partners, offers the village leader the humanitarian aid packages we have brought with us. The parcels and packages are rapidly untied and the wrappers thrown everywhere. Then it is time to go. Unnoticed, the troops have readied the column of armored vehicles to move.

On our departure, the soldiers employ the same security tactics used on our arrival. The column sets off covered by thick clouds of dust – a strange beige fog that rises between our troops and the villagers from Myanjoy.



Back in our camp, the soldiers debrief the Village Team mission with Maj Dan Simion. The input is important: this is a chance for all to learn from the experience. "Village Team missions allow Coalition forces to make their presence felt in the theater of operations," he says. "It's about getting in touch with local leaders, in order to be able to help communities with the basic necessities of life. We also offer them radios and written material, in which we urge people to surrender their weapons and indicate the minefields."

Civil Affairs specialist Maj. Paine echoes the comments. "We hope to win the hearts and minds of the people we meet," she says. "We want to know from the local leaders what we can do. They need food, clothes, medicines. We want to help them."

At the start of another day in Kandahar, Romanian soldiers are up early, checking over a group of civilian drivers and their trucks. The drivers – Afghans, Uzbeks and Tajiks – bring tons of equipment, food and fuel each day to the camp's main gate. Should a terrorist manage to get behind the wheel of one of the vehicles, especially one laden with fuel, the results would be deadly.

Lt. Mihai Crasmaru watches as his men secure the vehicles. As several soldiers verify and search the drivers, a

team from the Logistics Company prepares to examine the trucks.

Before they start, however, a huge German Shepard from a U.S. Military Police unit moves among the vehicles. From time to time, the dog stops, lifts his nose, sniffs, rears calmly on his hind legs and sniffs again. He covers every inch on the trucks – gas tanks, spare wheels, even toolboxes.

After the dog finishes, soldiers search the cab. Though the task is nothing new to Sgt.-Maj. Lucian Dorneanu, he remains focused on the search. His vigilance may mean the life of a colleague or the security of the base. Patience, care and thoroughness are the keys to accomplishing his mission.

Just before Christmas Eve, the commander of U.S. Central Command, General John Abizaid, visits the Romanians in Kandahar. As a token

of thanks, the Romanians present him with a history of the 151 Infantry Battalion "Razboieni", including details of their accomplishments over the last six months in theater.

General Abizaid is effusive in his praise of the Romanian detachment, thanking them for their contribution to Operation Enduring Freedom. Struck by their friendliness, he makes them a promise. As soon as possible, he will visit Romania.



Small UK Unit Runs Huge PRT

Capt Tom Barker, 2RGR

The United Kingdom's Provincial Reconstruction Team in Mazar-e-Sharif is one of nine PRT's operating in Afghanistan.

Unlike other PRT's in the southeast of the country, where anti-coalition forces are still numerous, the area of operations for the Mazar-e-Sharif PRT includes the five northern provinces, the first areas to be cleared of Taliban and Al Qaida by Northern Alliance and US forces in late 2001. The Northern Provinces cover an area the size of Scotland, comprising two main types of terrain: the wide open deserts of the Northern Plains and the impossibly steep mountain passes and valleys of the Hindu Kush.

Mazar-e-Sharif, the provincial capital, sits atop the Afghan ring road and is the last major city before one reaches the borders of Turkmenistan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan. It is an ethnically diverse area. Unlike the rest of Afghanistan, the Pashtuns do not make up the majority. Most of those in the north are split between the ethnic Uzbek Afghanis and the Tajiki Afghanis.

Politically, the North has two dominant rival leaders/warlords: General Dostum, the head of the Jombesh party, a predominantly Uzbek faction, and Gen Atta, the senior representative in the area of the rival Jamiat party, a predominantly Tajiki faction.

Gen Dostum and Gen Atta have been bitter rivals since the Soviet era. Dostum was trained by the Soviets, whereas Atta joined the Mujahideen and served under the now legendary Masud. The two Commanders fought together for the Northern Alliance. Once they returned to the North, however, their historic animosity drove them to clash on a large scale on a reported 14 occasions since 2001.

The UK PRT was established in July 03, with a unique command structure; a British Colonel holds ultimate command and is supported by key advisors from the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO), the US Department of State (USDOS), the Department for



Foreign Investment and Development (DFID) and United States Aid (USAID). Together, they form an executive committee in command of a mere 50 light role infantry troops, currently from the 2nd Battalion the Royal Gurkha Rifles.

The military provide security for the compound and the command team members as well as a providing a number of six man Military Observation Teams (MOT teams). These deploy to their own sub areas around the Northern Provinces, in order to provide the Command team with an accurate observation and reporting capability. This allows the PRT to support

extended deployments to areas days away from its headquarters.

The MOTs monitor security, identify potential reconstruction projects for funding by either USAID or DFID and mediate in any disputes. The PRT's executive body has links with every conceivable organisation: diplomatic, provincial, military or factional within the area.

In just nine short months, the UK PRT has prevented the escalation of a large scale factional conflict between Jombesh and Jamiat forces, that involved upwards of 4,000 militia forces and close to 100 tanks, armoured vehicles and heavy artillery.

On occasions during this period of heightened factional tension, MOT teams deployed into the battle areas to act as mediators or observers and to report on the ebb and flow of the battle.

Acting with the Afghan Interior Minister, the PRT has: secured a ceasefire that has held more or less intact for the past four months; negotiated the handing over of all heavy weapons from both factions; and, ensured that all checkpoints around the town of Mazar-e-Sharif are



guarded by an independent, national police force, thereby hampering the smuggling of weapons and narcotics into



or out of the key city on the northern segment of the Afghan Ring Road.

The PRT has also funded a number of reconstruction projects that have enhanced the stabilisation of the area. Foremost among these is a joint US/UK project to establish a Police Training College in Mazar-e-Sharif. Indeed, the success of January's Loya Jirga and in the DDR process were in part due to the conditions put in place by the PRT.

The situation in the North is by no means perfect. However, it bears only a passing resemblance to the situation the PRT found on its arrival in July. The combination of accurate information, reported in a timely manner from all four corners of the AO, along with a politically well informed and experienced command team, has enabled the PRT to operate and respond to events with remarkable speed.

As the emphasis in the north switches from Security Sector Reform to all out reconstruction, substantial progress will be made to stabilising an area that has been in a period of conflict for more than a quarter century.

Canadian General Takes ISAF Helm



Lt.-Gen. Rick Hillier assumed command of ISAF, the N A T O - l e d International Security Assistance Force, February 9 in Kabul, Afghanistan. He succeeds German Army Lt.-Gen. Götz Gliemeroth. Lt.-Gen. Hillier will command

the force of more than 5,500 soldiers from 33 nations for the next six months.

His considerable experience, which includes command of a multinational division in Bosnia and command of the Canadian Army, makes him an ideal choice for the leader of this very important international mission.

The mission of NATO's International Security Assistance Force is to assist the Afghan Transitional Authority in providing stability and security in Afghanistan. NATO assumed leadership of the ISAF mission on August 11, 2003. It is the Alliance's first ever mission outside the Euro-Atlantic area.

Canada's military contribution to ISAF is called Operation ATHENA and consists of two six-month rotations of about 2,000 CF personnel. Although it is scheduled to end in August 2004, Canada is considering retaining a smaller follow-on contingent.

Here to Help

Humanitarian Assistance Working Group (HAWG) continues work at Coalition HQ

Established in October 2001, the Humanitarian Assistance Working group (HAWG) is composed of representatives from all Coalition Partners represented in Eagle Village, the Coalition Coordination Centre and US Central Command.

The primary emphasis of the HAWG is placed on Humanitarian Assistance to the people of Afghanistan and the Horn of Africa (HOA). Special emphasis is placed on identifying countries able to donate humanitarian relief supplies as well as those able to provide transportation.

To date, the HAWG has overseen the delivery of an enormous amount of food, clothing, shelter and other HA materials to the people of Afghanistan and HOA.

Apart from its core functions, the members of the HAWG are active in a variety of social functions aimed at enhancing cohesion, improving cultural awareness and fostering cooperation among members.

ACHIEVEMENTS - FEB 2004

Articles/equipment to Bagram:

- 500 wool blankets**
- infant clothes**
- preschool/elementary tool-kits for sports teams**