

COALITION



COALITION BULLETIN

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Volume 53

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Editor's Note

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Cover photo: Iraqi army soldier hugging his daughter after returning home from operation.

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**ALWAYS
VIGILANT**

EDITORIAL

Coalition efforts against terrorism are bearing positive results and marked improvement is visible in Iraq. Iraqi security forces



are slowly asserting themselves, conducting independent operations and successfully taking control of new areas. Central to the strategy of gaining stability was the realization that military alone cannot achieve lasting peace. It is a combination of all elements, political being the foremost.

Coalition's greatest challenge, however, remains in Afghanistan where violence level has gone up in the last few months. A nation, suffering for last four decades, should not lose hope of a better future. Recent events in Afghanistan not only have serious domestic security implications but also for the region and especially the neighbours. Resorting to blame game will raise tension that will eventually help only those who do not want to see Afghanistan stabilizing and moving towards lasting peace. Hostile forces are in full swing to undermine partners and drive a wedge in the coalition. They would like to harm the coalition. Coalition partners should resort to political discourse to remove apprehensions and resolve issues, understand other's perspectives and assist each other in overcoming their difficulties. Clash of interests will harm the coalition in long term. Unity of effort, dialogue with the reconcilable elements and developmental activities should continuously be pursued to alleviate the sufferings of poor and improve their quality of life.

This issue of the Bulletin covers visit by senior US leadership to different countries, conduct of operation by Iraqi forces, ISAF's anti narcotics drive and provision of humanitarian aid in Afghanistan.

New Chief of Defense for Canadian Forces

Prime Minister Stephen Harper announced that Lieutenant-General Walter J. Natynczyk, currently Vice Chief of the Defence Staff, has been appointed Chief of the Defence Staff, and promoted to the rank of General.

"Lieutenant-General Walter J. Natynczyk brings strong leadership and unparalleled experience to his new position," said Prime Minister Harper. "His service record includes a broad range of achievement at home and abroad. The Canadian Forces are a vital institution making a tremendous contribution to our country. Walter Natynczyk is the ideal person to lead the Canadian Forces forward."



Canadian Lieutenant-General Walter J. Natynczyk, currently Vice Chief of the Defence Staff, has been appointed Chief of the Defence Staff, and promoted to the rank of General.

General Natynczyk assumed his current position as Vice Chief of the Defence Staff on June 28, 2006. He has extensive experience leading forces abroad and at home. He joined the military in 1975 and has held progressively more senior positions since that time, including the command of the Canadian Task Force in Bosnia and deputy command of the U.S. Army Corps in Fort Hood, Texas. This led him to a 15-month deployment in Iraq as Deputy Commanding General of the Multi-National Corps. He has served as the Chief Transformation Officer responsible for the implementation of Canadian Forces restructuring. General Natynczyk was born in Manitoba and attended Royal Roads Military College and Collège Militaire Royal, graduating with a degree in Business Administration.

The Prime Minister took the opportunity to thank General Rick Hillier for his leadership as the Chief of the Defence Staff since February 2005 and wished him all the best in his future endeavours.

*Story, Courtesy of
Corporal Bruno Turcotte, Canadian Forces*



General McKiernan Assumes

Story and pictures Courtesy of NATO Website



Islamic Republic of Afghanistan President, Hamid Karzai congratulates and welcomes incoming International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) Commander, David D. McKiernan as Commander of Joint Forces Command Brunssum, General Egon Ramms, and outgoing ISAF Commander, General Dan K. McNeill stand by at the ISAF Change of Command.

without missing a beat” he added.

President Karzai welcomed the new ISAF Commander. “Together with the Afghan officers, Ministry of Defense and the Chief of the Afghan Army you will work to promote the standards to the Afghan Army, you will equip them better and eventually enable them to serve and defend this country themselves” he stated.

The Commander of JFC Brunssum, General Ramms, who presided over the change of command, stressed: “Although I recognize insecurity cannot be overcome by military means alone, I believe ISAF is now better placed than ever to facilitate the necessary stability for

General McKiernan assumed Command of ISAF from US General Dan McNeill during a handover ceremony held on 3 June 2008 in Kabul. The President of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, Hamid Karzai, the Supreme Allied Commander Europe, General John Craddock and the Commander of the Joint Forces Command (JFC) Brunssum, General Egon Ramms, attended the event.

“I am honored to serve alongside our Afghan hosts and brothers to work toward a common comprehensive set of goals,” said General McKiernan.

“While today marks a transition in the commanders, the mission must continue



Command Sergeant Major Arthur L. Coleman, Jr. prepares to pass the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) colors to the outgoing ISAF Commander, General Daniel K. McNeill as General Egon Ramms, Commander of Joint Forces Command Brunssum and General David D. McKiernan, the incoming ISAF Commander stand by at the ISAF Change of Command Ceremony.

Command of ISAF In Afghanistan



Islamic Republic of Afghanistan President, Hamid Karzai stands alongside outgoing International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) Commander, General Dan K. McNeill, Commander of Joint Forces Command Brunssum, General Egon Ramms, and incoming ISAF Commander, General David D. McKiernan as they pay respect to both countries' national anthems at the ISAF Change of Command Ceremony.

economic and social development and to cooperate with the Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan and the UNAMA with an integrated approach.”

General McNeill relieves his command of the ISAF Headquarters after a 16 month

tour of duty. After 40 years of commissioning in the US Army, he is due to retire in July. “It has been my privilege to have the honor to serve in this alliance and to serve the people of Afghanistan,” he stated. “I offer the people of Afghanistan, many of whom are my friends, my gratitude for the generosity and hospitality that they have shown me. My gratitude also goes to the allied soldiers, sailors, airmen, Marines and civilians for what they have done and what they will continue to do for the people of Afghanistan.”

The new ISAF Commander, General McKiernan, has been in the US Army for 36 years and has served in every capacity from platoon leader to numbered Army commander in Europe, United States, Korea and Southwest Asia.



A formation is assembled for the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) Change of Command in ISAF Headquarters located at Kabul, Afghanistan.

Senior US Leadership Visits Pakistan

Mr. Eric S. Edelman, US Under Secretary of Defence (Policy) and Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, United States, Admiral Michael G. Mullen, called on General Tariq Majid, Chairman Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee (CJSC) during their visit to Pakistan.

Discussions focused on matters of mutual interest ranging from defence cooperation, Pak-US relations, bilateral military ties between two countries, the current regional security environment and GWOT. The

leaders also discussed ways to enhance capacity of Pakistan's Armed Forces and Civil Armed Forces to combat terrorism.

General Tariq expressed satisfaction over the ongoing defence cooperation between the two countries and discussed ways to further augment these ties in future. He also highlighted the efforts and sacrifices of Pakistan's Defence Forces in the fight against terror which must be duly recognised.



Mr Eric S. Edelman, US Under Secretary of Defence (Policy) called on General Tariq Majid, Chairman Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee, Pakistan.



Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, United States, Admiral Michael G. Mullen called on General Tariq Majid, Chairman Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee, Pakistan.

Iraqi Army and Police Conduct First All-ISF Search Mission



An Iraqi national policeman assigned to 8th Brigade, 2nd National Police Division, uses his rifle to search debris for weapons and explosive materials during a cordon and search operation in the Beladiyat area of eastern Baghdad, June 10. Along with Iraqi army soldiers, national police detained 23 suspects and confiscated illegal weapons, including 62 AK-47 rifles, six Simonov rifles, four pistols and two artillery shells prepared as improvised explosive devices in Muhalla 740.

For Iraqi national police officers and Iraqi army soldiers, conducting cordon and search missions is nothing new. When it comes to planning, coordinating and conducting such an operation without U.S. Soldiers leading the way however, it is history in the making.

And so it was June 10, when 10 companies of national policemen and Iraqi army soldiers conducted a combined search for militants and their weapons in the Beladiyat area of eastern Baghdad. Policemen from 1st and 2nd National Police Divisions and soldiers from 9th Iraqi army division confiscated scores of weapons and detained several suspects. Additionally, Iraqi police officers performed vehicle inspections and tag verifications to support the operation in Muhalla 740.

“This was the first Iraqi security forces-led joint operation in 9 Nissan that was fully planned and executed by the national police,” explained Maj. Chris Desasso, a Springfield, Mass. Native, who serves as team chief of 8th Brigade, 2nd Division National Police Transition Team. “Brig. Gen. Ali requested the task organization (units and troop strengths) and Maj. Gen. Abud approved it. (For us), this is tactical over watch in action.”

The operation netted 62 AK-47 rifles, six Simonov rifles, four pistols and two artillery rounds rigged to become improvised explosive devices. National Policemen detained 23 suspects, one of whom is a militant the Government of Iraq wanted for “crimes against the Iraqi people,” to include emplacing roadside bombs, murdering innocent Iraqis and conducting rocket and mortar attacks, explained Sgt. 1st Class John Kell, a Montgomery, Texas, native.

“This was (conducted) all on their own. No coalition forces found these items or did any searches,” emphasized Kell, the operations non-commissioned officer for 8th Bde., 2nd Div., NPTT, who claims Lima, Ohio, as home. “It was all Iraqi security forces, (and) it was very impressive.”

Kell explained the operation was “from beginning to end, absolutely” an all Iraqi security forces mission with no directions or directives from the Soldiers of 2nd Battalion, 30th Infantry Regiment or 4th Brigade Combat Team, 10th Mountain Division (Light), Multi-National Division – Baghdad. Individual national police battalions have entered muhallas to conduct limited searches before the history making operation but never for a joint operation without U.S. forces leading the way, he said.

The cordon and search mission was based solely on intelligence Iraqi security forces officials collected, said Capt. Bryce Halverson, an intelligence trainer from Hartselle, Ala. assigned to the 8th Bde., 2nd Div. NPTT. The national police developed a list of targets they wanted to detain, and they successfully completed that mission. Two of the targeted and captured militants were responsible for attacks on an Iraqi Army checkpoint resulting in five IA soldier deaths during a recent uprising.

“I think it went very well. It’s the first time (Iraqi national police) have gone on their own and put together a joint mission with the Iraqi army.”

Iraqi security forces are definitely on the right path for continued success, said Kell. He cited recent successful missions in Basra, Sadr City and numerous on going missions in 9 Nissan.

“For this one to be a totally independent mission, without any help from us whatsoever, is pretty impressive. I think if they keep going on this patch, there will be less need for coalition forces to back them up,” commented Kell. “It’s going to boost the confidence in the people and the Iraqi government.

“This is the endstate (end result), which we are here (to accomplish) as transition teams (and) trainers: ... to train them to be able to do what they have to do so they can do it all on their own.”

Both Halverson and Kell were deployed in Iraq during 2003 and 2004. The Iraqi national policemen and Iraqi army soldiers have a greater sense of pride now than they did then, said Kell. Seeing INPs continue to do their jobs even though their families have been threatened, or even killed in some cases, greatly impresses him.

“These guys, with very little pay, very little benefits, are still out there doing their job – and I’m pretty proud of that,” said Kell. “To see it now, it gives me hope that some day, we can possibly all go home, and Iraq can defend itself and take care of its own people.”

*Story Courtesy of Staff Sgt. Matt Meadows
4th Brigade Combat Team, 10th Mountain Division*

Azerbaijan Celebrates its Army Day

Story and pictures Courtesy of
Azerbaijan Office in US CENTCOM



Azerbaijani officers in Iraq, being awarded US Navy and Marine Corps Achievement medals.

On May 28, four officers of the Azerbaijani peacekeeping detachment in Iraq – Major Sadig Yahyazadeh, Captain Teyfour Rustamov, Captain Emin Novruzov and 1st Lieutenant Mehman Abdulrahmanov were awarded US Navy and Marine Corps Achievement Medal for their exemplary services.

Azerbaijani peacekeepers have been rewarded more than once by NATO and Multinational Forces Commands for their professionalism and can-do abilities. Nine Azerbaijani Officers have been rewarded with US Navy and Marine Corps Achievement Medals so far.

Peacekeepers are passing intensive training in the education center of the base and are sent to the peacekeeping missions after the six-month service. Azerbaijan has sent 150 peacekeepers to Iraq.

The Azerbaijani Defense Minister received a letter from the Commander of NATO's International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) in Afghanistan. U.S. General Dan McNeil, Commander

of NATO's International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) in Afghanistan has sent a letter to Minister of Defense General-colonel Safar Abiyev, Azerbaijani Defense Minister. Press Service of Defense Ministry informed the letter slates satisfaction with the service displayed by Azerbaijani peacekeepers in Afghanistan. The letter says: "Azerbaijani peacekeepers contribute to security everyday, irrespective of their places and they demonstrate heroism in the implantation of tasks. I consider it an honor that I am Commander of NATO's International Security Assistance Force in Afghanistan".



Now Azerbaijani Armed Forces prepare to military parade to be held for celebration of 90th anniversary of Armed Forces Day. Military parade is going to be held on June 26.

Further Success for Iraqi, UK Basra Security Operation



British and Iraqi officers confirm target locations during an operation in Basra.

BASRA — Operation Charge of the Knights, a joint operation involving UK Soldiers and the Iraqi Army, which aims to restore order and improve security in Basra, is making further progress.

The Iraqi Army continues to demonstrate its commitment to improving the security situation in the city, carrying out a number of vehicle check points in recent days. Inspections were carried out on a number of vehicles which were going in and out of the city.

In addition, numerous house searches were carried out, leading to multiple arrests of suspected militants. 140 rounds of 150mm High Explosive shells were also found in one area of Basra.

Operation Charge of the Knights, which began in March, is now into its 14th phase.

The operation has been one of the key drivers in bringing peace and stability to the streets of Basra in recent months. Elements of the Iraqi Army and Iraqi Police Service, with their US and UK Military Transition Teams (MiTTs), can now be seen working in the city.

The MiTTs are working closely with the Iraqi Security Forces and local contractors as pavements are replaced, sewers cleared and rubbish removed from the streets. In addition elements of the 26th of 7th Division and the 50th, 51st, and 52nd Brigades from the 14th Division Iraqi Army have conducted a number of arms finds and arrests, with teams planning the operations without UK assistance.

“Once again this operation was fully planned and executed by the Iraqi Army,” said Maj. Tom Holloway, spokesman for the Multi-National Division - South East. “These operations demonstrate their capability, professionalism and commitment to the residents of Al Basrah Province. It is enormously encouraging to see the progress made by the Iraqi Army in maintaining the security of the city and its residents.

“Iraqi confidence and capabilities are improving by the day with our help,” he continued. “The overall feeling here is upbeat and cautiously optimistic. We will continue to push for security of Basra by helping the Iraqi Army.”



ISAF Busts the World's Largest Narcotics Quantity

Story and pictures Courtesy of NATO Website



The entrance to one of the hidden caches was camouflaged by scrub brush and the desert terrain.

KABUL, Afghanistan - The commander of NATO forces in Afghanistan congratulated the country's Ministry of Interior today for finding and destroying a stockpile of about 236.8 metric tonnes of hashish.

"The Afghan National Police Special Task Force has made a huge step forward in proving its capability in curbing the tide of illegal drug trade in this country," said General David McKiernan, ISAF commander. "With this single find, they have seriously crippled the Taliban's ability to purchase weapons that threaten the safety and security of the Afghan people and the region."

The hashish found weighed about as much as 30 double-decker London buses and had an estimated regional wholesale value of \$400 million. ISAF officials estimate that the Taliban would have pocketed about \$14 million from the sale of the drugs. The Ministry of Interior's Afghan National Police Special Task Force received a tip in the morning of June 9 about a possible stockpile of drugs located about 40 kilometres from the Pakistan border in the Spin Buldak District of the Kandahar Province. The Special Task Force found the drugs hidden in multiple trenches, and by the evening, they had destroyed all 236.8 metric tonnes by setting fire to the trenches.

"We, here at the Ministry of Interior of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, note the continuing improvements and professionalism of our Afghanistan National Police," said Lieutenant General Ab-Hadi Khalid, Minister of Interior's



The second of three illegal drug caches as its contents is destroyed.

first deputy minister, during a press conference June 11. "It is due to the education and training they are receiving through the help of the international community."

General McKiernan said, "The international community will continue to support the Afghan forces with more of the same training and support that helped them achieve such success in this mission."

The Minister of Interior also reports that in a separate recent counter-narcotics operation in the Helmand Province, the Afghan National Police seized about 5,108 kilograms of opium, which has an estimated value of \$30 million, and arrested 13 drug dealers.

"The Afghan National Police have many reasons to be proud this day," General McKiernan added.



Marked bags of drugs found upon inspection of the hidden drugs caches. All drugs were subsequently destroyed.

ISAF's Romanian Soldiers Continue to Build Trust in Zabul

Story and pictures Courtesy of NATO Website

KABUL, Afghanistan - Romanian ISAF troops based in southern Zabul visited the remote village of Bosna in the Qalat District of Zabul, June 19 as they continue to build trust across the province by visiting isolated villages.

“The villagers were quite surprised by our presence; they don't see many ISAF troops over there,” said Lieutenant Ciprian Pislatiu, the Civil-Military Cooperation Officer in charge of this visit. “They were even more surprised when they realised that we were there to listen to their problems and to help them find practical solutions.”

In an open air shura (Afghan meeting), troops discussed with the local Mullah and leader about issues pertaining to local governance, village health, humanitarian aid, enemy presence and general activities around the village.

“The shura was very productive and beneficial to all. The villagers were friendly and demonstrated a totally open and positive attitude toward the presence of ISAF troops,” said Lt. Pislatiu.

During the visit, some villagers received medical care while others received food and small utility objects such as wheat bags, water cans, radios and flashlights.

Copies of the Koran were also given to the village Mullah, the only literate person in Bonsa, who will now be able to read parts of it to his fellow villagers after their prayers.



During the visit, Romanian troops provided humanitarian aid in the form of food and small utility objects such as wheat bags, water cans, radios and flashlights

Soldiers, Say Goodbye to Macedonian Friends

Story and photos Courtesy of Pfc. Lyndsey Davenport 2nd Stryker Brigade Combat Team 25th Infantry Division

The Soldiers of 2nd Stryker Brigade Combat Team “Warrior,” 25th Infantry Division, bade farewell to their Macedonian partners and welcomed two new Macedonian platoons during a Transfer of Authority Ceremony at the Sgt. John M. Schoolcraft III Pavilion June 23.

After six months of partnership with Multi-National Division – Baghdad’s 1st Battalion, 14th Infantry Regiment “Golden Dragons,” and 2nd Battalion, 11th Field Artillery Regiment, “On Time,” both from 2nd SBCT, 25th Inf. Div., the Macedonian soldiers from 2nd Battalion, 2nd Mechanized Infantry Brigade and a Ranger platoon, are going home.

They are replaced by Soldiers from the 1st Battalion, 2nd Mechanized Infantry Brigade and a new Ranger platoon.

The Macedonian Soldiers developed a partnership with the MND-B Soldiers by working side by side, fully integrated, conducting base defense security operations.

“Even though they have sent just two platoons, which doesn’t seem like much, it has had a significant impact for both of the units,” said Lt. Col. Joseph Gleichenhaus, a native of San Francisco, who is the commander of 2nd Bn. 11th FA Regt. “It has allowed us to take some of our units and do

many things which we would not have been able to do if the Macedonians had not been here.”

Gleichenhaus said the Macedonian Soldiers were instrumental when the Golden Dragons were sent to Sadr City for recent operations. When elements of the Golden Dragons left, the Macedonian Rangers expanded their platoons and increased the scope of their operations.

“Had it not been for them, the mission may not have been possible,” he said.

The MND-B Soldiers and the Macedonian Soldiers faced many obstacles when trying to develop their partnership. The largest was the language barrier.

It was daunting at first, but didn’t take long to overcome, said 2nd Lt. Robert Peeps, a native of Spring, Texas, and platoon leader with 1st Platoon, Battery C, 2-11 FA Regt. Once the barrier was broken, Peeps said he and his Soldiers learned a lot.

“As a whole, we learned a lot from each other,” he said. “Each platoon had something different to bring to the table, and it made for a strong effect.”

“These Soldiers will remember this for the rest of their lives,” said Gleichenhaus.

“Not everyone gets the opportunity to work side by side with international forces. They think different; they’re exposed to different ideas, and they exchange different tactics, techniques and procedures to work together. It’s a new mindset, and it’s great.”



Macedonian Army Soldiers from the 2nd Battalion, 2nd Mechanized Infantry Brigade, and a Ranger platoon stand at attention as they wait to hand over command to the incoming Macedonian unit during a Transfer of Authority ceremony at the Sgt. John M. Schoolcraft III Pavilion at Camp Taji, northwest of Bagdad, June 23.

“Red October” is Still Wandering Around

Story and pictures Courtesy of
NATO Website

Kabul, Afghanistan – A D-661 Chinook helicopter of the Royal Netherlands Air Force (RNLAF), nicknamed “Red October”, reached an historic milestone last week by logging more than 10,000 hours in support of ISAF.

The first Netherlands Chinook to reach this 10,000 hours milestone did so whilst on a resupply mission at Kandahar Airfield on June 17.

“The Chinook has been a proven work horse supporting forces all over the world and this aircraft has once again

demonstrated its outstanding versatility in this demanding operational theatre,” said Colonel Paul Mulder, Commander of the Air Task Force. “

“Red October” received her nickname during a training flight, many years ago, where a speedboat had to be picked up. During the flight, the crew experienced some computer difficulties and the Chinook came close to becoming a submarine. The name is in reference to a fictitious submarine in the Tom Clancy novel *The Hunt for Red October* and the film which followed.



The personnel from RNLAF who contributed to the 10,000 flying hours achievement gathered together in a short ceremony Saturday (June 17) to celebrate the milestone.

British and Iraqi Army Soldiers Build Camaraderie Through Soccer

BASRA — Members of the Royal Scots Dragoon Guards and members of the 4 Battalion, Royal Regiment of Scotland teamed up to take on Iraqi Soldiers from the 14th Iraqi Army Division in a friendly soccer game in Basra, Iraq, June 26.

The Soldiers spend most of their days sweating it out in vehicles or on checkpoints in various parts of Basra, but the game gave them a chance to sweat it out in a less stressful environment and have some fun together. The event drew a large crowd of spectators made up of officers and enlisted soldiers from both



British and Iraqi Soldiers pose for a group photo following a soccer match at the Basra Operations Center June 26. The two forces work together every day maintaining security in the streets of Basra, Iraq. Royal Navy photo by Leading Airman Jan Hartmann.

forces. The Iraqis won the match 3 to 0 on the field and were awarded a trophy for their efforts. Afterwards, the players from both teams were treated to a barbecue where British and Iraqi officers served the players.

The event gave British and Iraqi Soldiers a chance to get away from daily patrols and checkpoint operations as well as build a closer relationship through sports.

Story Courtesy of
Multi-National
Division South East
PAO

Coalition Village Corner

Italian National Day



Coalition and Pakistan Country Presentations to Carrollwood Kiwanis Club



Coalition Spouses Tea Morning



Coalition Presentation to MOAA



Albanian Country Presentation



Group of Foreign University Professors Visiting US CENTCOM



