

COALITION

Issue 65

Swedes in Afghanistan

*Interview with the new Chairman
of the Coalition at USCENTCOM*

*The chances for success in
Afghanistan are very good*



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Editor's Note

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Front Cover: Swedes in Afghanistan

(Photo by Sergeant Marco Nilsson)

Courtesy of: Försvarets Bildbyrå

Back Cover: Hungarian Provincial Team members pose with Afghan officials and citizens at the opening of a new school in the Yarne Ulya settlement of the Jelga district, Baghlan province, Feb. 4, 2010. The PRT provided funding to the Afghan Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development to complete the school.

Courtesy of: www.nato.int/isaf

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EDITORIAL



The editorial staff of Coalition, with the broad support of the U.S. Central Command's Public Affairs Office, brings to the readers on this issue stories from different partners of Coalition. We had the pleasure of interviewing the new chairman of the Coalition, Brigadier General Jens Praestegaard, who

even though was quite busy running different tasks at the same time, found the time to say a few words for our magazine. During the interview, Brig. Gen. Praestegaard spoke about his selection as the Chairman of the Coalition, listed some of the objectives and challenges expected while on this position and his opinion on the main ingredients of an action plan to fight against the terrorism. While going through the magazine you will read about the support that the Finnish Artillery School provided to the Multinational Operational Mentor and Liaison Team prior being deployed to Afghanistan. The Minister of Defense of Estonia, Jaak Aaviksoo, like other Coalition partners as well, is optimistic that the chances for success in Afghanistan are very good. "We need the Afghan people to assume their own responsibilities, and a foundation that is based on their society and culture on which to build the rest," was the conclusion of a meeting that he had with the Special Representative of United Kingdom to Afghanistan, Sir Sherard Cowper-Coles.

We bring in this issue, a story generated by our Media Engagement Officer, Maj. Ghazanfar Iqbal, on the recent visit of General Petraeus to Pakistan, where he praised what is being done by the Pakistani Army and highlighted the unity amongst the political leaders, citizens and clerics in recognition of the internal threat.

We also highlight in this issue, the contribution of Sweden to Afghanistan, in a story written by LTC Thomas Hagman, from the Swedish liaison team at U.S. Central Command. We have endeavored to incorporate all the contributions made by our Coalition partners in ongoing Fight against Terrorism.

Your continued support in providing us the stories highlighting your country's cooperation and contributions in different Coalition operations is strongly encouraged. CPAT looks forward to having continuous support and assistance from all the Coalition nations in generating a coherent and integrated response in fighting against this menace of terrorism throughout the world.

Captain Dritor Papa
Albanian Armed Forces
Senior Editor of Coalition

NEWS IN BRIEF

Turkish Team Inaugurates Children's Nursery

KABUL, Afghanistan - The Turkish Civilian Military Cooperation team inaugurated the Maywand Hospital children's nursery in Kabul city yesterday.

The restoration of the interior and exterior of the nursery made it cleaner and safer to ensure a healthy recovery for up to 35 children at a time.

nato.int/isaf

Development Projects Completed in Herat

KABUL, Afghanistan - Two development projects sponsored by the Herat Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT) were inaugurated this week.

The Herat Department of Education and the Herat PRT equipped 12 high schools, two universities, and a center for higher education for teachers, with new computer labs. The labs, equipped with personal computers, printers and scanners, costing more than €130,000. The governor of Herat, the head of the Herat Department of Education, the Regional Command West commander, senior university officials, educators, and students attended the inauguration ceremony for the project at the University of Herat's new lab. "This shows the commitment that ISAF, together with the institutions in the area continue to place on education," said RC-West Commander Brig. Gen. Alessandro Veltri. "This will help better prepare the future leaders of the country," he added.

nato.int/isaf

Hungarian PRT Funds Completion of Afghan School

KABUL, Afghanistan - The Hungarian Provincial Reconstruction Team helped fund the completion of a school recently in Baghlan Province.



The Afghan Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development started the National Solidarity Programme in 2003 and within the framework of this program started construction on a new school in 2009 at the Yarme Ulya settlement in the Jelga district, where hundreds of schoolchildren live.

Local Afghan leaders asked the HUN-PRT to help finish the project in October, and the PRT provided the funds to finish the school.

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Interview with Brigadier General Jens Praestegaard

Danish SNR and the new Coalition Chairman, USCENTCOM

*Interview by Captain Dritor Papa
Albanian Armed Forces
Senior Editor of Coalition*

Brigadier General Jens Praestegaard enlisted the Danish Armed Forces in 1973. He was promoted to Sergeant in 1974 and worked as Section Commander, Queens Life Regiment until 1975.

In 1975 he entered at the Military Academy from where he graduated in 1980 and upon graduation was the rank of 1st Lieutenant, Queens Life Regiment, serving initially as 2IC in an Armoured Infantry Company and finally as Company Commander.

From 1983 to 1984, he attended the Junior Staff Course and was promoted to Captain.

Starting 1984 until 1986, he worked as Staff Officer at the Army Material Command. He attended the General Staff Course from 1986 to 1987 and was promoted to Major.

From 1987 to 1991, he worked as Staff Officer, again at the Army Material Command to be followed as Staff Officer at the Army Operational Command until 1993. At this time he was promoted to Lieutenant Colonel and was assigned to work as Assistant of Chief of Staff/Plans and Ops/Army Material Command.

From 1996 to 1997, he worked as Battalion Commander at the Queens Life Regiment. In 1997 he was assigned to work as Chief of Staff of the Danish Battle Group/SFOR in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Following this assignment, he was assigned Commander of the Operation Center Branch, Current OPS at the Army Operational Command. From 1998 to 1999, he worked as Head of the Logistic Planning Branch at the Defense Command/Denmark.

In 1999, he was promoted to Colonel and after that he worked as Chief of Staff of Army Material Command until 2004.

In 2004, BG Praestegaard was assigned as Chief of Logistic Planning Branch, CC-LAND Heidelberg, Germany.

In 2005, he was sent to Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe (SHAPE) in Belgium, where he worked as Deputy Director of Staff, SHAPE. After promotion to Brigadier General in 2006 he became National Military Representative of Denmark to SHAPE until July 2009, where he was assigned to his current position as Senior National Representative of Denmark to US Central Command.

During his military career, he was awarded the medal of Commander of the Order of Dannebrog, Badge of Honor for Good Service in the Army and the NATO Medal for Service in Bosnia.

Brigadier General Praestegaard is married to Wanda and has one Son (Lars, 26) and a daughter (Anne-Mette, 22).



Brigadier General Jens Praestegaard,
Danish Senior National Representative and Coalition Chairman,
U.S. Central Command, Tampa

Sir, you have recently been appointed the Chairman of the Coalition at USCENTCOM. Can you tell us a few words about this new assignment?

When I first was approached with this idea, I was a little skeptical because we already are quite busy in our office, since we are involved in many areas and issues. On the other hand, I hope to stay here as the Danish SNR for at least three more years, so I have to take my part of our common tasks. Therefore, I of course accepted when I was asked to take over. I was optimistic that taking charge of the chairmanship was not going to be a difficult task due to the work and ability of my predecessor, Air Commodore Dick Newlands, things are going smoothly and in the right direction. I am sure that my experience as former Danish National Military Representative at SHAPE, where 28 NATO countries are represented, will be very useful and that the routines here are much similar to what I have experienced there. One of the differences is that here at the Coalition is that more than 50 nations are represented, but the daily work here is probably even easier as we have less “political” considerations to take, compared with NATO.

As a Chairman, have you set any objectives and what would they be?

I believe that we as representatives for our nations have three main tasks or roles.

The first is of course to be the liaison between our respective national authorities and US Central Command. That is why we are here, and we must maintain focus on that. In big, multinational environments the risk is always that focus drift away to something less important than our basic commitments.

We must always keep focus.

The second role is to cooperate and coordinate on bi- and multilateral basis within the Coalition. This is the only spot in the World, where all nations contributing to the operations in Afghanistan are represented. Not even in ISAF HQ is this the case. We therefore have a unique possibility to link up directly with our Coalition partners here.



The third is to facilitate and even improve our interaction with the civilian community in Tampa Bay area. For me this is very important. We have all experienced the engagement of and the support from the local community, their respect and hospitality. We can “pay back” a little by taking part in the different activities and functions to create a better understanding in the public on what we really are doing, why and how we can help each other in making this World a better place for all people. I really encourage the Senior National Representatives to give such activities priority and to coordinate through our community relations officer at the Coalition Public Affairs Team.

What would you say seems to be the biggest challenge during your assignment?

We are unique simply because we are here - together; and we are here for the same reason. So, the first challenge is to find the best way to use this uniqueness in order to optimize the common output for the benefit for all of us. Just one example: Within the representations, we have experienced people that have knowledge in many specific fields that can be of a great value to the Coalition. By engaging them in workgroups they can share with us their knowledge and experience.

In your opinion, what should be the main ingredients of an action plan to fight against terrorism?

The aim for all our efforts is to make terrorism and insur-

gency irrelevant.

This requires comprehensive military and civilian efforts and organizations. The military operations will create the security needed for the non-military organizations to proceed. Eighty percent of the Afghan population can't read nor write. We have to change that. How shall the Afghan government and the international establishment enforce law and order, if the population don't understand the basic “rules” of democracy, law and order?

Can you tell us a little about your interactions with other leaders at USCENTCOM Headquarters?

As the Chairman of the Coalition, normally most of the time I interact with the director of Coalition Coordination Center (CCC). But in common understanding with the CCC director, I will try to get more interaction with the leadership here, more precisely with the Chief of Staff and his crew in order to exchange information and facilitate our common support for the benefit for all of us.

If you had any one thing to say to the Coalition members, what would it be?

First, my door is always open and I am happy to see any of them approaching with their concerns and advice. We need to stick to our task. Keep focus. Be a professional liaison between the respective countries and US Central Command.



Photo above: Brigadier General Praestegaard speaking to a meeting at Coalition
This photo: The Danish Liaison Team. Photos by CPT Ehab El-Saheb

Finnish Artillery School Supports Multinational OMLT D30 Training

*By LTC Mikko Soikkeli, Commandant
Finnish Artillery School*

In 2008 Finland was asked to assist with bilateral cooperation in order to prepare United Kingdom artillery Operational Mentor and Liaison Team (OMLT) for a deployment to Afghanistan. This team was going to train Afghan National Army's (ANA) artillery in operating the 122 mm D30 howitzer. The D30 has been used by Finnish artillery since the 1960's and it is still in the inventory. With over 40 years of experience with the gun, the Finnish Artillery School is quite a logical choice for training.

The first OMLT training was organized in August 2008. A two week training period was conducted in the Niinisalo garrison and nearby Pohjankangas firing range. The second training period was organized also per a British initiative in January 2009. This time the training audience comprised mainly of UK personnel but also German, Canadian and Australian participants were present, the last one being an exchange warrant officer in the UK.

The 3rd OMLT training was organized in a quite tight timeframe in August 2009, this time purely for British personnel. This training demonstrated the flexibility of the Finnish organization, but also raised some thoughts on how to keep the training up to standard. After some thinking it was decided to fix the dates and publish them for the 2010 training in a NATO training calendar in order to make the D30 training a regular function of the Artillery School. At least so far the need for training seems to exist, which is confirmed by the next two quotations, both by OMLT4 members: "All in all, I along with all of us feel that the training which we have received this week is essential to a successful tour in Afghanistan" and "This training has also been used to build team cohesion within an OMLT which is about to deploy on operations. An excellent opportunity which should not be missed by future OMLTs."

After an evaluation of three training functions, some adjustments were made to the training program of OMLT4. The time was shortened to seven days out of which five days are full training. OMLT4 started on 17th JAN and included two days technical training and a three dayLIVEX phase. The multinational training audience comprised 21 British, four Norwegian and two German soldiers. The gun crews were formed so that three guns were manned by the British and the

fourth crew was multinational. The LIVEX comprised of both direct and indirect firing with low and high angles. All together 200 rounds, mainly high explosives, were fired, but also illumination rounds and time fuses were used.

For the hosts it seemed that it is not so easy to adapt manual procedures like laying the gun with sights and collimator, if you have been originally trained for a more sophisticated system. The trainees, like the UK OMLT commander, considered the gun itself quite easy to use: "The simplicity of the gun itself definitely surprised me. It is simple to use and robust. I was also impressed by the professional approach to training that the Finns had".

Almost the same basic training was given also to the Afghan personnel. When the Finnish Chief of Defence at the time, Ad-



OMLT Nr 3 firing in August 2009

miral Kaskeala, visited Afghanistan in 2008, he proposed that the ANA could participate in artillery training in Finland.

Based on this invitation, training for ANA artillery personnel was organized in the autumn of 2009.

From the Finnish Artillery School point of view, the OMLT training is not only providing the training. Instead it also gives us something, e.g. it is good profession related language training. Like the British command post officer said: "Apart from very cold, it was informative and helpful. The language barrier did not impede the training and the Finnish instructors should be congratulated for this".

The Chances For Success In Afghanistan Are Very Good

Story and Pictures Courtesy of the
Estonian MoD

At their meeting on Dec. 12 2009, the Estonian Minister of Defence Jaak Aaviksoo and the Special Representative of the United Kingdom to Afghanistan, Sir Sherard Cowper-Coles, concluded that, after the decision by the United States and other allies to increase their military presence in Afghanistan, we now have an excellent opportunity for long-term success there.

“It is clear that there is no purely military or purely non-military solution for Afghanistan that would bring long-term stability to the country,” Sir Sherard Cowper-Coles and Mr. Aaviksoo confirmed.

The Minister of Defence and Sir Sherard Cowper-Coles also concluded that the only way to secure stability in Afghanistan would be through means and principles chosen by the Afghan people themselves.

“We need the Afghan people to assume their own responsibilities, and a foundation that is based on their society and culture on which to build the rest,” the Minister of Defence explained, while emphasising that a sufficient military presence is needed to create an elementary level of stability and political dialogue.

Sir Sherard Cowper-Coles also met with the commander of the Estonian contingent, Captain Janno Märk, and with the commander of the infantry company ESTCOY-8, Captain Tarvo Luga, who have just returned from Afghanistan. They discussed the situation in the sphere of responsibility of the members of the Estonian Defence Forces in Helmand Province and co-operation between countries in the theatre of operation.

At the meeting, Sir Sherard Cowper-Coles stressed that every commander of the British contingent has said that Estonian soldiers are displaying great courage and professionalism in Afghanistan. “I thank all the members of the Estonian Defence Forces for all the work that has been done in Afghanistan so far,” Sir Sherard Cowper-Coles said.



In this photo, Estonian Soldier in Afghanistan
On the left, Group photo of the Estonian Minister of Defence Jaak Aaviksoo and the Special Representative of the UK to Afghanistan, Sir Sherard Cowper-Coles with the commander of the Estonian contingent, Captain Janno Märk, and with the commander of the infantry company ESTCOY-8, Captain Tarvo Luga



Special Operations Task Group Discusses Future with Afghan Elders

*Story and Picture, Courtesy of:
www.defence.gov.au*

The Australian Special Operations Task Group (SOTG) with their Afghan partner force have facilitated a major gathering (shura) of village elders and religious leaders in Chenartu, north-east of Tarin Kowt, as part of their current focus on reaching out to Afghan communities across Oruzgan province.

During the meeting, village leaders and representatives were consulted to gain an understanding from the community of their key needs and ideas for development proposals. With a force including Australian Defence Force (ADF) medics and coalition aid agency representatives (who work closely with AusAID staff in Oruzgan), the Special Operations Task Group explored all opportunities to engage the community.

The Commanding Officer of the SOTG, whose name can not be disclosed for security reasons, said: “We continue to reap the significant benefits of our combined operations with our Afghan partners, particularly when engaging the local population. Our partner force brings with them a unique understanding of local conditions. Conducting these operations in close cooperation with our partner force allows us greater clarity and understanding of the community’s needs.”

The Chief of Joint Operations, Lieutenant General Mark Evans, accompanied by the commander of Australian forces in the Middle East, Major General John Cantwell, witnessed first-hand the population centric operations conducted by the

SOTG soldiers. Both spoke with Chenartu locals participating in the shura, which was attended by 150 members of the community.

Lieutenant General Evans said the shura was a clear indication that there was strong support for the International Security Assistance Force. “The large number of leaders and religious representatives here is an important sign that community confidence is growing. They said to me they were committed to the defeat of the Taliban.”

Alongside the shura, a clinic run by the Special Forces medics provided treatment to over 200 people throughout the day. “These events are critical in gaining the trust of local communities,” the Commanding Officer of the SOTG said.

“To be able to sit among the people, to hear their problems and ideas for the future, to witness the community spirit and the confidence of the locals, is to really appreciate that there is significant progress being achieved in local communities having the confidence to take ownership of and address their current and future challenges.

“The work of the Australian forces continues to build strong relationships in Oruzgan and I am confident that we are on track with our mentoring work and security operations, operating within the community and protecting the people from the fear and intimidation of the Taliban,” Lieutenant General Mark Evans said at the end of the visit.



Lieutenant General Mark Evans, with soldiers from Australia’s Special Operations Task Group (SOTG) speaks with local Afghan community leaders during a Shura in Chenartu.

Commander US CENTCOM Visits Pakistan

Story by Maj Ghazanfar Iqbal
Media Engagement Officer

General David H. Petraeus, Commander of USCENTCOM, called on prime Minister of Pakistan, Syed Yousaf Raza Gilani and the Chief of Army Staff, General Ashfaq Parvez Kayani, during his visit to Pakistan.

Wide-ranging discussions focused on matters of mutual interest between the two countries and other avenues of military cooperation and professional interest. The military commanders also discussed various operational aspects related to recent US troops surge in Afghanistan.

General Petraeus praised Pakistan Armed forces' contributions and sacrifices made during the current operations against the terrorists. He said, he had told everyone including the U.S. leadership what a great job the Pakistan Army, Air Force and the Frontier Corps were doing to fight the militancy.

"I am greatly impressed by the Pakistan Army and it appears that something different has taken place in Pakistan. There is a unity amongst the political leaders, citizens and clerics in recognition of the internal threat. This is a huge development where the whole country has said 'no' (to ex-tremism)", pointed out Petraeus while talking to reporters after the meeting.

He said that in his meeting with General Kayani they dis-

cussed the operational aspects of the Afghan plan.

"We will coordinate very closely with the Pakistan military as we did when we went into Helmand. The Pakistan military is aware and prepared.

We also discussed the impressive progress of the Pakistan Army, Air Force in Swat, Malakand, Bajaur, Mohmand and now in South Waziristan Agency. These are tough struggles and require sustained commitment," he added. He said this was "Pakistan's fight" and the U.S. would support this impressive fight. General Petraeus said that besides military cooperation against the Taliban and Al Qaeda, the US was sharing with Pakistan details of the operational plans because it would have implications on either side of the border.

General Petraeus said besides the annual financial assistance of \$1.5 billion under Kerry Lugar Law, the U.S. had also been providing \$1.5 billion annually for security assistance to Pakistan.

Referring to permanent engagements between Pakistan and U.S. military, he said in this connection he has been visiting Pakistan after one and half months and there has been strong and effective communication between the two sides.



General David H. Petraeus, Commander US CENTCOM, called on General Ashfaq Parvez Kayani, the Chief of Army Staff.

U.S. Senators Visit Focal Point of New Strategy in Afghanistan

Story by Sergeant Stephen Decatur
Photos Courtesy of: www.dvidshub.net

KANDAHAR, Afghanistan- A delegation of U.S. Senators including former presidential candidate Sen. John McCain of Arizona, Homeland Security Committee chairman Sen. Joe Lieberman of Connecticut, visited the Operational Coordination Center- District in the South Arghandab river valley January 7 near Kandahar, Afghanistan. Also accompanying the group were Gen. Stanley McChrystal, commander, NATO International Security Assistance Force, U.S. Ambassador to Afghanistan Karl W. Eikenberry, U.S. Senator John Barrasso of Wyoming, and U.S. Senator John Thune of South Dakota.

LTC Frank Jenio, commander of the 82nd Airborne Division's 2nd Battalion, 508th Parachute Infantry Regiment, and others including Col. Baluch, commander of 3rd Kandak, 1st Brigade, 205th Corps, Afghan National Army briefed the group about the situation in the Arghandab and the purpose of the OCCD.

"If we're working together and planting roots in the population [the Taliban] are absolutely going to lose," Jenio said.

The OCC-D is a combined headquarters in the Arghandab where coalition and Afghan forces live and work together in order to synchronize counterinsurgency efforts and increase the level of cooperation between agencies. The OCC-D is located at the district centre and is an effort by coalition and Afghan forces to establish a permanent presence in Arghandab, which had previously been thinly guarded, and create stability in the districts surrounding Kandahar City. McChrystal's new strategy for Afghanistan hinges around the security of large population centers like Kandahar.

The OCC-D will not just serve as a headquarters for combat outposts throughout Arghandab where Afghan and coalition forces are working together to gain the trust of the people and clear out insurgents. ANA, Afghan National Police, U.S. Army, Canadian Army, Department of State and Department of Agriculture, the district government will also be located there to ensure better coordination and cooperation between agencies.



U.S. senators and International Security Assistance Force Commander Gen. Stanley McChrystal visit the Operational Coordination Center District, Arghandab River Valley, Afghanistan, Jan. 7, 2010. The OCCD is a combined operation center for U.S., Canadian and Afghan forces working together to establish security in southern Afghanistan.

Both Jenio and Baluch emphasized to the senators the importance of Afghan and coalition troops being physically in each other's presence and working together to accomplish their mission. Baluch said that because of their different strengths, Afghan Soldiers should lead the way in operations and coalition troops should follow behind to assist when necessary.

"Whenever there's a fight we go together," Baluch said. "Being Afghans, we are familiar with the terrain and the people. It's best for Afghans to lead operations and coalition forces to support with their technology and air power."

After their briefing, the delegation met with Arghandab district leader Hajji Abdul Jabar. Jabar explained to McCain and company that Arghandab is the gate to Kandahar City, and many great kings and leaders of nations from Alexander the Great to current Afghan president Hamid Karzai have passed through that gate.

"You may know that I ran for president and lost," McCain said. "I wish I had gone through that gate."

Lieberman, a former vice-presidential candidate was also intrigued.

"We thought we were supposed to start in New Hampshire," Lieberman said.

McCain told Jabar during the meeting that Americans

are most proud of their young men and women serving in the armed forces, and that those troops cannot succeed without the help of Afghans. When Lieberman asked Jabar why he chose to serve in the Afghan government when it would be easier and safer to stay at home, Jabar told him that it was because of the young people he sees coming from foreign nations to fight for Afghanistan's future.

"When I see young men and women of coalition forces from all over the world coming to serve and protect our nation, we as Afghans should feel ashamed and embarrassed, with a turban on our head, to just go sit in our homes and do nothing," Jabar said. "We should be the first to [serve] for the protection of our nation and our country."

The 2nd Battalion, 508th Parachute Infantry Regiment is part of Task Force Kandahar. Task Force Kandahar's Area of Responsibility (AOR) was recently re-focused on Kandahar City and its approaches. TFK's AOR consists of parts of the Zhari, Dand, Panjwaii and Daman districts and the southern Arghandab river valley.

The recent shift in the Canadian Forces' AOR is representative of TFK's focus on protecting the population in and around Kandahar City, where more than 75 percent of the province's population lives.



U.S. Army Lt. Col. Frank Jenio, commander of Task Force Kandahar's 2nd Battalion, 508th Parachute Infantry Regiment, native of Bridgeport, W.Va., speaks to International Security Assistance Force Commander Gen. Stanley McChrystal and U.S. Senators visiting the Operational Coordination Center District, Arghandab River Valley, Afghanistan, Jan. 7, 2010.

Swedes in Afghanistan

Story by Thomas Hagman

In 1948 Swedish officers were acting as UN observers in the Middle East and the first Swedish peacekeeping troops served in the Middle East in 1956. Since then, Sweden, today with a population of 9 million people, has provided more than 85,000 soldiers for various tasks around the world. The Swedish Armed Forces have contributed with troops to ISAF since the end of 2001. Initially the contribution was limited to an intelligence unit in Kabul which was followed by a CIMIC unit which in turn was ended in 2004.

In 2003 the UN-mandate changed and UN-resolution 1510 gave ISAF a new role. The UN-mandate applied to the entire country of Afghanistan and ISAF resolved to establish a number of PRTs. Sweden's initial contribution was personnel to

the British PRT in Mazar-i-Sharif in northern Afghanistan. Since early 2006 Sweden has been in command of the PRT in Mazar-i-Sharif. The area of responsibility covers the four provinces of Balkh, Samangan, Jowzjan and Sar-e-Pul. The local Afghan population in the area is predominantly Uzbeks, but there are also minorities of Turkmens, Hazaras along with pockets of Pashtuns. The Swedish-led PRT includes personnel from Sweden and Finland and it is based in the newly built Camp Northern Lights. The commander of the PRT is always from Sweden and his Second in Command is always from Finland.

The PRT consists of an HQ with an HQ company, a rifle company, three provincial offices and a number of Mobile Observer Teams. Due to the size of the PRT Area of Responsibility, Provincial Offices have been established in the provinces Samangan, Jowzjan and Sar-e-Pul. The Provincial Offices are the link between the PRT and the Province Governor and Chief of Police in the province, and they also coordinate the activities of the MOTs. The MOTs consists of six personnel. In all teams there is a nurse and in the Finnish teams there is a police. The MOTs are always operating in the same area to ensure that they are recognized and familiar with the local population. In the PRT HQ and in all of the Provincial Offices personnel from Sweden and Finland are mixed and working together. The MOTs however, always consists of personnel with the same nationality.

Apart from a variety of soft-skinned vehicles a Swedish version of the MRAP (Mine Resistant Ambush Protected) vehicle called RG-32M is used by the PRT. The RG-32M, often referred to as "the Boar", has undergone extensive modifications that makes it possible to use it in the heat in Afghanistan as well as in the sometimes extreme cold in northern Scandinavia. There are also a number of Swedish CV9040 deployed in the PRT which can be used by the rifle company if the situation makes it necessary.

The Swedish government has directed most of the financial aid to the national government in Kabul. The main idea is that the Afghan government should plan and conduct most of the projects by themselves. The Swedish donations to Afghanistan in 2008 was 450 million SEK (\$ 62,5 million) and the plan is to increase it annually until 2013 when it will be 550 million SEK (\$ 77 million). The Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA) is supporting the building of schools in areas in Afghanistan where it is most needed. SIDA also aids UNICEF who in turn supports the Afghan Ministry of Education in building schools, producing textbooks and providing training of teachers. 25% of the money donations from Sweden are, however, directed to development projects in PRT MES. The development projects in the PRT consist of a number of different efforts varying from training of carpenters to drilling of wells. The Development Advisors in the PRT HQ are constantly monitoring the needs in the region and also work closely together with the local Afghan authorities.

The number of Swedish military personnel in Afghanistan today is a little more than 500. That number includes not only



Photo by Steffanie Müller



Photo by Anja Edvardsson

brigade level in the 209th ANA Corps. The mentoring of Afghan units is planned to continue during 2010 as the Afghan National Army fields the 3rd brigade of its 209th Corps. Activities such as patrolling and participation in operations are done together with ANA who is taking an increasing amount of responsibility for planning and conducting the operations in the area. The goal is to make sure that ANA becomes capable of planning and conducting operations on their own, thereby being able to take full responsibility for the security in the area. When that is achieved there is no longer necessary for ISAF to provide security, and the reconstruction and development can be led and managed by civilian authorities and organizations.

Since December of 2009 the Life Guards from Stockholm are responsible for the 18th Swedish contingent in Afghanistan, called FS18. They are scheduled to do a six month tour in Afghanistan. This is, however, not the first time the Life Guards are deployed abroad. They have previously gained international experience as they have been deployed a number of times to KFOR in Kosovo.

the PRT but also the National Support Element, the National Intelligence Cell, officers serving in the RC-N and ISAF HQs and an Operational Mentoring and Liaison Team (OMLT). The OMLT is currently based at Camp Mike Spann, about 12 kilometres south west of Mazar-i-Sharif. They act as mentors to the Afghan army and are currently supporting commanding officers at corps and



Photo by Sgt Nicklas Gustafsson

Photo by Torbjörn F Gustafsson

Successful Security Operations Lead to Development in Arghandab River Valley

Story Courtesy:
22nd Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

KANDAHAR, Afghanistan - Six months ago, the Arghandab River Valley, home to approximately 70,000 Afghans, lacked the security needed for aid agencies to begin governance or development projects. But now, the determined, combined efforts of ISAF and Afghan national security forces are paying off for the people of the valley.

Soldiers from the U.S. 5th Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 2nd Infantry Division,

along with members of the Canadian Operational Mentor and Liaison Team, ANSF, Special Operations Forces, and ISAF air units, have collaborated in successful operations designed to protect Afghans from the insurgents.

“It has been a total team effort,” said Col. Harry Tunnell IV, commander of the 5th Stryker Brigade.

Despite frequent attacks by insurgents in the Arghandab Valley, troops from ANSF and ISAF pushed ahead with the “shape, clear, hold, build” approach to counter-insurgency operations. Ground and air units carried out operations to protect the population in the area and prevent further insurgent attempts to disrupt development within the region.

Tooryalai Wesa, the Governor of Kandahar province, held a shura on November 5 to announce the introduction of the Afghanistan Vouchers Production in Agriculture program in Arghandab District. The AVIPA program is designed to improve farming techniques, modernize agriculture equipment and deliver work projects that employ local citizens.

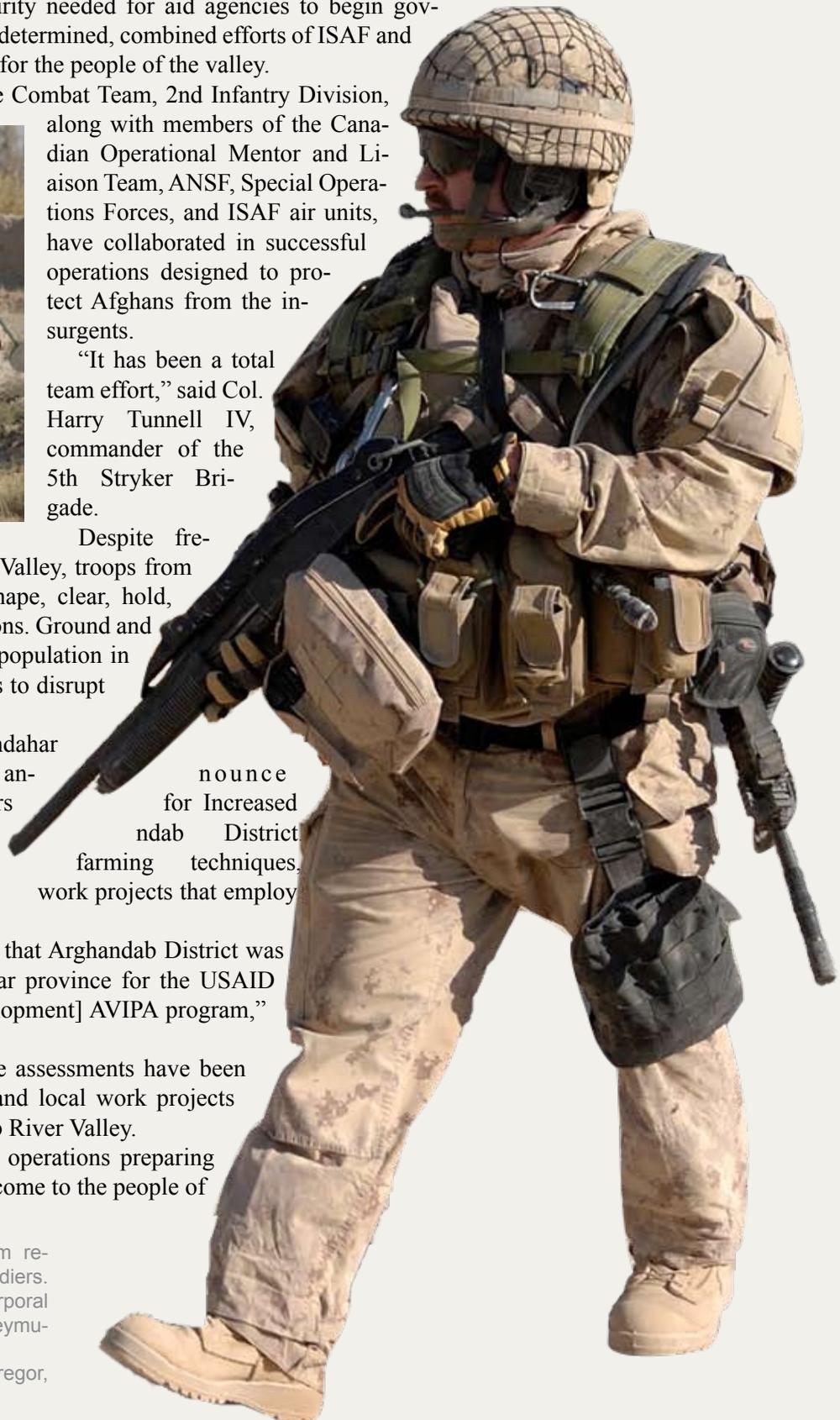
“The most apparent indicator of success is that Arghandab District was the first area that was announced in Kandahar province for the USAID [United States Agency for International Development] AVIPA program,” said Col. Tunnell.

Since the announcement, initial agriculture assessments have been made, training of local farmers has started, and local work projects have begun in the fertile area of the Arghandab River Valley.

With ISAF and ANSF counter-insurgency operations preparing the way for development, progress can safely come to the people of Arghandab District.

Photo above: An advance Bomb Detection Team returns after clearing the way for the infantry soldiers. On the right: Royal Canadian Dragoons Master Corporal Chris Harrison while patrolling into the village of Teymurian.

Photos courtesy of Master Corporal Matthew McGregor, Image Tech, Joint Task Force Afghanistan.



FACT SHEET

Courtesy of: www.nato.int/isaf

International Security Assistance Force and Afghan National Army strength & laydown

Troop Contributing Nations (TCN): The ISAF mission consists of the following 43 nations (the troop numbers are based on broad contribution and do not reflect the exact numbers on the ground at any one time).

	Albania	245		Georgia	175		Portugal	105
	Armenia	0		Germany	4280		Romania	900
	Australia	1550		Greece	15		Singapore	38
	Austria	3		Hungary	255		Slovakia	240
	Azerbaijan	90		Iceland	4		Slovenia	70
	Belgium	545		Ireland	7		Spain	1065
	Bosnia & Herzegovina	10		Italy	3150		Sweden	500
	Bulgaria	495		Jordan	0		The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia*	165
	Canada	2830		Latvia	175		Turkey	1755
	Croatia	295		Lithuania	155		Ukraine	10
	Czech Republic	370		Luxembourg	9		United Arab Emirates	0
	Denmark	740		Netherlands	1950		United Kingdom	9500
	Estonia	155		New Zealand	220		United States	45780
	Finland	90		Norway	500			
	France	3750		Poland	1955		Total	84150

* Turkey recognises the Republic of Macedonia with its constitutional name

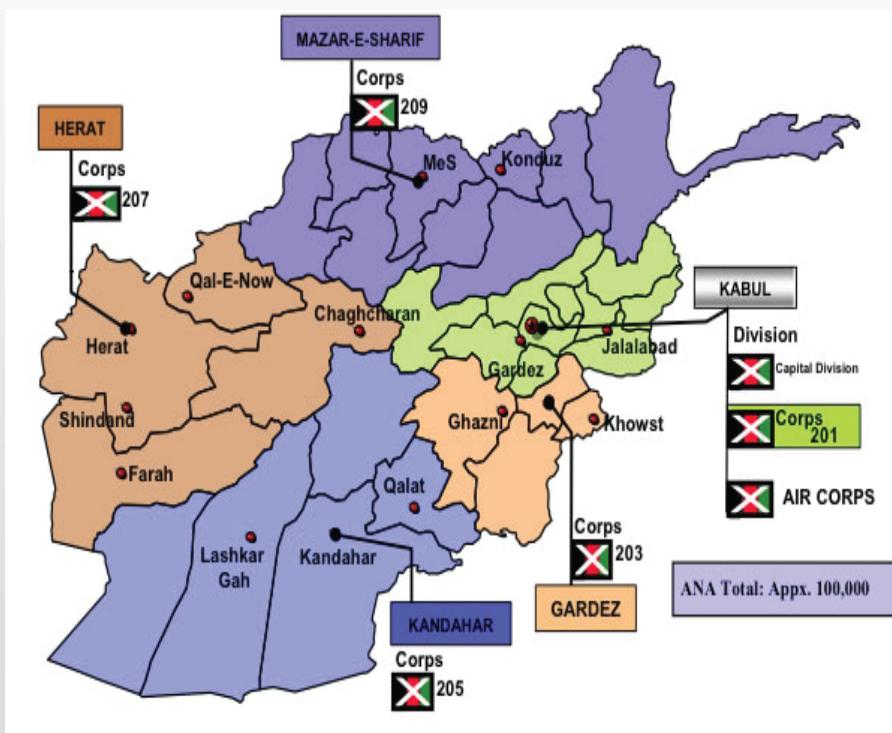
II. The Afghan National Army (ANA): Facts and Figures

As of 22 December 2009, the ANA has an actual strength of approximately 100,000 personnel. This represents 74% of the 134,000 approved strength which is scheduled to be reached by October 2010.

In September 2008, the Joint Commission and Monitoring Board, co-chaired by the Afghan government and the United Nations, agreed to increase the total strength of the ANA to 122,000 personnel with a 12,000 man training margin.

Operationally, the ANA is currently fielding 5 Corps Headquarters, a Capital Division responsible for the security of the Kabul area, and an ANA Air Corps providing the essential air support to the ANA brigades deployed throughout Afghanistan.

More than 90% of ISAF operations are conducted in conjunction with the ANA and the ANA leads 62% of joint operations.





Hungarian Provincial Team members pose with Afghan officials and citizens at the opening of a new school in the Yarme Ulya settlement of the Jelga district, Baghlan province, Feb. 4, 2010. The PRT provided funding to the Afghan Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development to complete the school.

Photo Courtesy of: www.nato.int/isaef