



# ISAF MIRROR

issue 24 January 2006

**1000 operational hours  
above Afghanistan**

**"Olympic Day" in  
Chagcharan**

**Spanish troops give hope**

**Belgian weekend at KAI**

**and more...**



## Contents

- 3: Continuing the challenge
- 4: Puerta del Sol in Herat
- 5: A smile is the best Christmas gift for French soldiers
- 6: “Olympic Day” in Chagcharan
- 8: Exercise “Minerva”
- 10: Belgian weekend at KAIA
- 14: 1000 operational hours above Afghanistan
- 15: Afghan Government closes illegal northern oil wells
- 16: ISAF helicopters deliver relief supplies
- 19: Spanish ISAF troops give hope to Afghan burn victim
- 20: Sweden investing in ISAF’s northern region
- 22: Dutch F-16 Detachment change of command

**HAVE YOU GOT A STORY? HAVE YOU GOT A CAMERA?** Then you could be one of the ISAF MIRROR journalist! Send your articles and photos about ISAF activities and, who knows, you could be on the next issue!

ISAF MIRROR is a Public Information Office product. Contents are edited and prepared by the PIO Staff using submissions sent by you. Opinions expressed are those of the writers and do not necessarily reflect official NATO, JFC HQ Brunssum or ISAF policy. Photo credits are given to the authors of the submission, unless otherwise stated. Submissions can be e-mailed to:

[pressoffice@isaf-hq.nato.int](mailto:pressoffice@isaf-hq.nato.int)

Articles should be in MS Word format (Arial), photos should be at least 7 X 4.5 cm and 300 dpi resolution.

ISAF MIRROR is published monthly and aims to be available by the first Friday of the month.

For more information please call the Editor on HQ ISAF ext. 1230.

The Editor reserves the right to adjust submissions.

If you want to download this magazine check the following address: [www.jfcbs.nato.int/ISAF](http://www.jfcbs.nato.int/ISAF)

## Staff



**Publisher:**  
LTC Riccardo Cristoni  
Chief Public Information Office



**Editor:**  
LT Riccardo Costa  
Chief Internal Information



**Branch Photographer:**  
WO 1 Francesco Civitelli  
Chief Photographer/Video



**Branch Photographer:**  
WO 1 Riccardo Maldera  
Photographer



# Continuing the challenge

On January 31<sup>st</sup> and 1<sup>st</sup> February 2006, a major international conference on Afghanistan, will be hosted in London: the “Afghanistan Compact” will layout the Government’s National Development Strategy, reaffirm the contributing nations’ commitment to developing Afghan government institutions, reconstructing its infrastructure and tackling the challenges of crime, narcotics and terrorism, so that the Afghan people can lead stable, peaceful and prosperous lives.

The Bonn Agreement of 2001 focused on the creation of Afghanistan’s essential institutions, initial security requirements and the delivery of relief to a post-conflict nation. Indeed, it was the Bonn process that defined the requirement for ISAF. With the completion of the National Assembly and Provincial Council Elections, the requirements of the Bonn Agreement have substantially been met.

The “Afghanistan Compact” – hosted by the UK Prime Minister Tony Blair, the Afghanistan President Hamid Karzai and the UN Secretary General Jaap de Hoop Scheffer and attended by at least 70 countries from around the world – will be the next step in improving security and accelerating development.

On 8<sup>th</sup> December, political consent was given for NATO implement Stage 3 of its expansion plan. NATO’s Secretary General, Jaap de Hoop Scheffer, recently stated: *“We are in the process of generating the forces for expansion of ISAF. ... ISAF is not just a nation-building operation. ISAF is creating security and stability. ... I would not like to see the spoilers of this process, Taliban, Al-Qaeda, win again in that country so that country becomes again an exporter of terrorism. So there’s a very basic reason for NATO to be there. And it’s a very basic and important reason for NATO to expand its operations. It’s a matter of solidarity”*.

ISAF’s troops continue to work to their mandate, looking to the future and making preparations for the expansion of responsibility to the south of Afghanistan.

This month’s issue contains articles reflecting recent ISAF operations and activity, which demonstrate our contribution to, and cooperation with, the Afghan people. In areas such as CIMIC, Counterintelligence, Engineer activities, as well as strategic and tactical operations, your articles continuously reaffirm the benefits of ISAF’s presence in support of the Government of Afghanistan.

I hope you enjoy reading about your colleagues’ contribution to NATO’s security assistance mission; I look forward to your future contributions.

LT. Riccardo Costa  
Chief Internal Information  
ISAF HQ PIO



# Puerta del Sol in Herat

**Capt. Javier Barrio Benavente**  
**FSB Secretary Chief - Herat**

**Question:** *Do you know where the most typical place to be in Spain is, on the 31st December?*

**Answer:** *Did you know, that most Spanish people switch on the TV and wait until it is 12:00am by the Clock Tower in "Puerta del Sol" (Sun Gate), Madrid?*

The Spanish tradition makes you to eat twelve grapes (one every second) as the bell of the clock sounds twelve times, as it changes from the old year to the New one. In FSB Herat, we were expected to keep up the tradition at 03:30 local time, due to time difference with Spain. With the help of a Spanish International TV channel, which always broadcasts "las campanadas" (on the stroke of 12.00am) from the Tower in Puerta del Sol, Madrid. Very few could imagine, that a couple of Spanish guys were challenged with the idea of bringing our country a little bit closer. Col Maestre, FSB Herat Commander, was the first to think about this and was enthusiastic with the idea. For several days, Javier Iglesias and Ramiro Cavero, both of them Cabo 1º (OR-5) worked extremely hard to make a reproduction, in wood of such a famous monument. When they finished, they had built amazing monument 6m (18ft) high, painted in several colours and included a "working clock" which, marked the minutes which remained to the New Year.

Twenty minutes before midnight, the "Flag Square" in FSB Herat was crowded with people looking forward to welcoming in the New Year. There was so much noise that the entertainers, even with loud-speakers, were unable to make themselves heard. Finally, at 12:00am, all of the Spaniards, and some Italians, Bulgarians, and Slovenians, ate the twelve grapes and continued with the party indoors - as the low temperatures that night were making the open-air celebration almost impossible.

In addition to this, somebody recorded some images and sent them via e-mail to all the Spanish TV-channels as soon as the act finished. The images were included in most of the news programmes in Spain on the 1<sup>st</sup> of January, showing our families how we had welcomed in, the New Year in Afghanistan.





*two french nurses are delivering primary health*

## ***A smile is the best Christmas gift for French soldiers***

***Capt. Denis Biojout***  
***French PIO***

Following the recommendations of a tactical CIMIC team, on Saturday 24 December 2005, a medical group of the French contingent delivered welcome medical aid and advice to the population of the Pashto village of Landakay (meaning 'very small' in the local dialect), located in the North East of the French Battle group AOR.

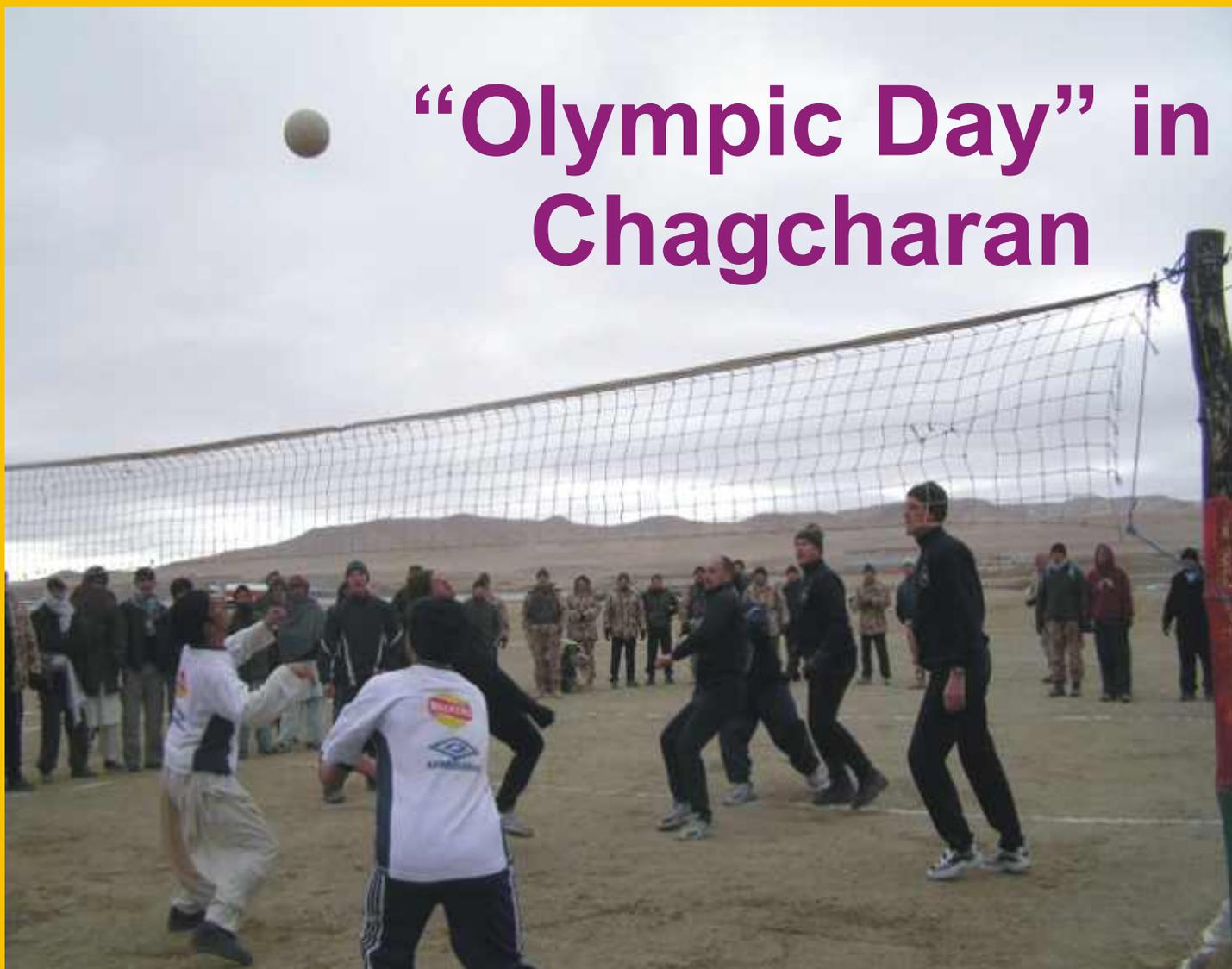
Twenty women and fifty children mainly girls were treated and received healthcare advice.

This was the first time a medical team had visited this isolated village, an hour on a dusty track from the city of Kabul. About twenty families live in the village, without water or electricity, eking a living from their harvest of grapes and flocks of sheep.

***“Such operations change the relations between the Afghans and the ISAF soldiers”*** said the commander of the platoon who regularly patrols in this area.

Smiles on the faces of the children and the warm thanks of the population were the most beautiful Christmas gift the French soldiers could ask for.

# “Olympic Day” in Chagcharan



## ***Maj. Albertas Dusevicius acting PIO***

On the last days of the outgoing year, PRT CHG servicemen met local national sportsmen in volleyball, tug-of-war and football.

One of the last days of 2005 saw crowds of sportsmen pouring into the large square field on the outskirts of Chagcharan. Even larger crowds of fans were moving in the same direction. Chagcharan's 'Olympic day' had started.

The lines of the volleyball pitch were marked chalk and both teams, led by their leaders -Capt. Arturas Gimzauskas of

the coalition team and Mr. Fazli Abdul Latif of the Chagcharan team- clashed in a friendly but competitive game.

Finally, the PRT volleyball team admitted defeat to the Afghans.

During a break between the two more inoble kinds of sport volleyball and football, a tug-of-war was held. The local Chagcharanians resisted fiercely, even getting help from their fans closely surrounding both teams and loudly cheering, but this time the PRT team, consisting of strongly built Lithuanians and Danes, showed their physical prowess and won.

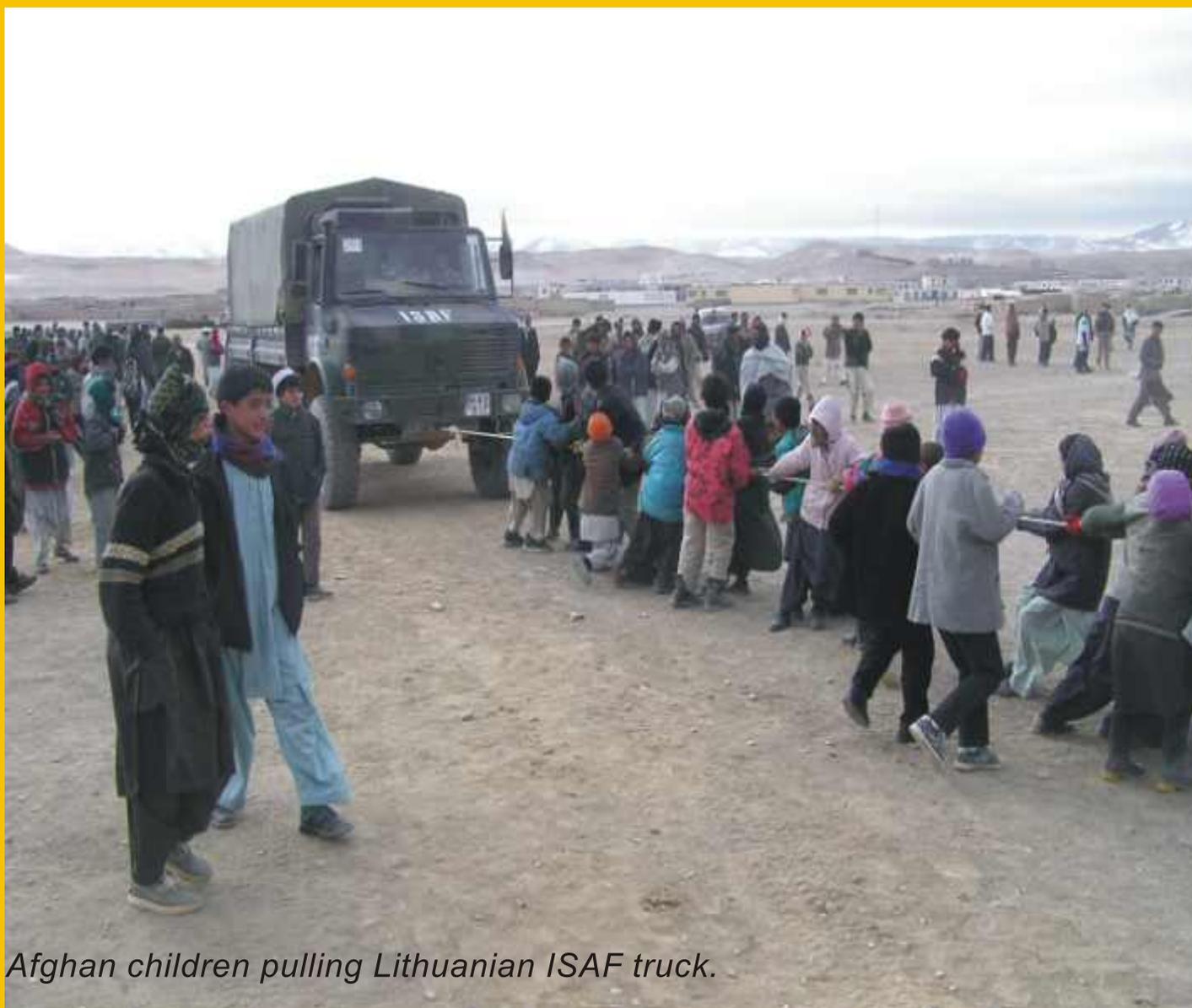
Football followed and this time the PRT

squad could only resist their opposition until half time.

The score was 2:1 to Chagcharan football team at the break, but the second half was a disaster the final score 8:1 to the local Chagcharanians.

Exhausted but smiling both Afghans and PRT players shook hands and received their *‘Olympic day’* certificates, presented by governor of Ghor province Shah Abdul Ahad Afzali and chief of staff PRT CHG Lt.Col. Gintaras Jurciukonis.

A day of sports was over, strong in the spirit of healthy competition and cooperation and reflecting the many achievements of the PRT in Chagcharan with the local community in their first year of support to the Province of Ghor.



*Afghan children pulling Lithuanian ISAF truck.*



# EXERCISE “MINERVA”

**ANP and ANA practise in casualty evacuation**

***Capt. Katja Oberg***  
***PRT Mazar e Sharif***

On Friday 13 January, the Afghan National Police and Army conducted an exercise with ISAF troops in Mazar-e-Sharif. The aim of the PRT exercise was to practice casualty evacuation and the exercise began outside Mazar-e-Sharif, moving into the city later in the afternoon.

For security reasons, a part of the city's Route Five had to be closed, although for less than an hour, and the exercise gave the police and military a chance to practice road traffic control and check points under real circumstances, allowing them to handle the traffic as professionals and, most importantly, rehearse informing passers-by and develop relations with the local population they are protecting.



*"We don't stop the cars but if someone stops to ask what's going on, we tell them that it's just an exercise, and this reassures them",* said police officers Beryalai Majboor and Mohammed Nebi.

The Security officers present said they enjoyed operating with ISAF and were quite interested in how the exercise was going themselves.

*"We always cooperate with PRT Forces"* they said.

The chance to exercise casualty evacuation ensures the PRT's effective response to crisis situations, for which the cooperation of the local population and Afghan Security forces is essential.



**...the Security officers present said they enjoyed operating with ISAF**



## Belgian weekend at KAIA

**Col. Johan ANDRIES**  
**DCOM KAIA Be SNR**

On January 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> 2006, a Belgian weekend was organized at KAIA. The main objective of this initiative was to set up a series of events, accessible for all 1500 residents at KAIA, and putting Belgium "on the map" from different perspectives.



**On the other hand, the timing was consciously chosen, in order to have the Belgian personnel actively involved in the setup, during their third month of deployment traditionally known as a**

psychologically tough period, especially after the Christmas and New Year celebrations, far away from their family.

On Saturday, between 1400-1600 hrs, a static display was set up in the NATO hangar.

Hundreds of KAIA residents and even some external visitors looked at the diverse Belgian military equipment deployed at KAIA, to support the missions: An F16, its engine, the F16 pilot survival kit tailored to this theatre, Night Vision Goggles (NVGs), a PANDUR APC (Armoured Personnel Carrier) as well as the specific force protection equipment.

Demonstrations by an Explosive Detection Dog and the Patrol Attack dogs were highly appreciated by the audience.



At night a “BBMS”-party was organised at the Belgian Bar: the Belgian Beer Music and Snacks allowed everybody to discover Belgium and its specific and famous well known gastronomic products. A permanent display with pictures explained that Belgium is more than Brussels and Bruges...

There is no better way to come to know each other and have informal discussions than around a delicious buffet prepared by Belgian volunteers. An “easy listening” session on Sunday night was the “happy end” to a very successful weekend.



*A Belgian Force Protection soldier with his Accuracy 7.62*

On Sunday morning, a typical Belgian brunch was offered to the KAIA leadership and the Detachment Commanders from the different SOR-units deployed at KAIA.

**We're looking forward to having similar initiatives in the near future at KAIA!**



*PANDUR APC*



*NVG used by F-16 pilots*



# 1000 OPERATIONAL HOURS ABOVE AFGHANISTAN

*Capt. Inge van Megen*  
*PIO NLD NCC HQ ISAF*

The Dutch F-16 fighters passed the 1000 hours operational flying above Afghanistan on Saturday 31st December 2005. Since their start in April last year the fighters of the Royal Netherlands Air Force flew hundreds of missions for ISAF.

In July 2005 a F-16 detachment of the Belgian Air Force integrated with the Dutch contingent at KAIA. That was the start of the 1st Dutch-Belgian European Participating Air Forces Expeditionary Air Wing F-16 Detachment ISAF (1 NL/BEL EEA F-16 DET ISAF).

The main task of the fighters is to support ISAF ground troops with Close Air Support. Besides that they can also support the Afghan governmental troops. The fighters are being used for reconnaissance and show of force as well.

Till the 10th of January 2006 Lt. Col Wido. van de Mast is the Detachment Commander.



*The first Dutch-Belgian European Participating Air Forces Expeditionary Air Wing F-16 Detachment ISAF*

# AFGHAN GOVERNMENT CLOSES ILLEGAL NORTHERN OIL WELLS

Government reigns in unauthorised oil extraction in Sar-e-Pol.

*Capt. Katia Oberg  
PRT Mazar-e-Sharif*

The Government of Afghanistan has closed oil wells in the country's Northern Region Province of Sâr-e-Pol to stop illegal extraction of oil. The extraction was being conducted for unauthorised illegal profit and was depriving Afghans of the future benefits from this natural resource.

The operations were also causing environmental pollution to the Sâr-e-Pol area. The evidence of this is clear; puddles of oil collect on the ground nearby and the road is covered in the crude. More worryingly, it is very likely that the oil would reach the water table and pollute it, making it unfit for use.

There have been recent reports that the illegal extraction had started again, and the Afghan National Police and Army are responsible for enforcing the wells' closure. ISAF's PRT in Mazar e Sharif supports the Government in its decision but will provide neither security to the oil wells nor be involved in their closure.



The oil wells will not remain closed forever. They will be re-opened as soon as the Government can be sure that the environment is protected, and that the revenues from extraction of the oil will be returned to the authorities for use in developing the country. In that way, the money will be given back to the Afghan people.

# ISAF helicopters deliver relief supplies to landslide-hit northern Afghan village



**Capt. Katia Oberg**  
**PRT Mazar-e-Sharif**

**On 17 January 2006, two German CH-53 helicopters, working with ISAF, delivered 500kg of relief supplies to**

**Guahl Dori village in the Northern Afghan Province of Sar-e-Pol, after a landslide had cut off the village.**

The supplies consisting of 100 blankets, 30 tents, 30 plastic sheeting, 30 kitchen sets, 30 food packages, 180 litres of oil and medicines, were provided by the Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development (MRRD), the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) and the Red Cross; they were delivered in two 250 kg airdrops. *"We will find out more about what's needed. All organisations are on stand-by to help"*, said Charlotte Cawen from UNAMA. News of the tragedy reached Provincial authorities on 15

January. Planning for assistance began immediately, though it soon became apparent that winter conditions and the landslide of rock and mud, which had killed 13 people and destroyed several houses in the village, had cut off the area.

German CH-53 helicopters, which are based in Termez, Uzbekistan, operate in support of the ISAF mission in the Northern Region of Afghanistan.



Last October 2005, they also provided support for the earthquake relief in Pakistan; the fleet flew a total of 92 hours, transporting 163 tonnes of equipment and 3383 injured and homeless civilians in their emergency relief effort.



*A German CH-53 helicopter*

# ***Finnish soldier in CIMIC activity***



photo by OR-8 Riccardo Maldera

**Capt. Javier Barrio Benavente**  
**FSB Secretary Chief - Herat**

On 06 January, ISAF's Spanish contingent arranged for a young Afghan woman from the Western Province of Herat to be transferred to Madrid for medical treatment, which should finally allow her to recover from burns sustained in an accident a year ago.

Benafesheh, a 19-year old from Herat, showed no progress during treatment received for the 3rd degree burns which she suffered in an accident early in 2005.

reconstruction teams in ISAF's Western Region. However, when possible, the medical staff treat as many local patients as they can, including attending a weekly clinic held in Herat hospital.

Spain contributes around 500 troops to the NATO-led ISAF mission, providing the lead for the military support base in Herat and a Provincial Reconstruction Team in Badghis.

## Spanish ISAF troops give hope to Afghan burn victim

Spanish medical teams, serving at ISAF's Forward Support Base in Herat, learned about her condition four months ago, attempted to treat her injuries every few days but noticed her condition was not improving.

After gaining Spanish Government approval, the ISAF medical teams arranged for Benafesheh to be moved

to Spain for specialised treatment and, on 05 January, she and her father departed for Madrid where she will be treated in a hospital and is expected to recover over a period of 2-3 months.

ISAF's Spanish-led hospital is primarily for the support of ISAF troops and provincial



*Benafesheh and her father, leaving Herat on an ISAF C-130 transport aeroplane, bound for Madrid.*

# Sweden investing in ISAF's northern region

**Capt. Katja Oberg**  
**PRT Mazar e Sharif**

There is a lot of construction in Mazar-e-Sharif at the moment. Both Sweden and Germany are building new bases, which have created jobs for over a thousand Afghans.

Sweden is expected to take the lead for the Provincial Reconstruction Team in Mazar-e-Sharif 15th of March 2006. The PRT is led by the United Kingdom and is located about three kilometers west of the City's famous Shrine.

In the future, the PRT will be in Dasht-e-Shadyen, the military area southeast of Mazar-e-Sharif. The land has been allocated to the PRT by Afghanistan and the construction is ongoing.

The change of command for the PRT will not affect the support the team gives to the Afghans. The PRT will continue to work, extending the influence of the Government and in support of the Afghan National Police and National Army, in Balkh, Jawzjan, Sare Pol and Samangan provinces as before.

The contact and support from the citizens of Mazar-e-Sharif is very important. Swedish soldiers have a good relationship with the people living in the area, the police and the school next to the new PRT; they were also invited to join in local Eid celebrations.

*“Since we are going to be neighbours in many years, it is important that we establish a good relationship early in the process”* says Staffan Jansson, responsible for security at the new camp. Sweden has also built a new soccer- and volleyballfield for the children.

The camp will be ready in February 2006 and will be the home for about 250 people from different countries all working for a secure Afghanistan.

10 kilometres from the new PRT there is another camp being built. In the south of Mazar-e-Sharif airfield, Germany is building a brand new multinational Forward Support Base “FSB” for the logistic support of all ISAF troops in Northern Afghanistan.



*citizen of MeS working at the new camp*

2 full square kilometers big, the camp will be the largest that Germany has built.

Up to 380000 m<sup>3</sup> of gravel, 320000 tons of concrete and 75000 tons of steel are needed for the construction; included are 8.5 km of new roads. The first phase of the construction will end in March 2006, three further phases will follow.

The two projects have given more than one thousand local people and companies work. Besides in construction, people are employed as translators, guards and service personnel.

Mohammad Azim, a 21-year old labourer in the German camp, said: *"its a really good*

*opportunity for our people that in addition of security, ISAF find jobs for us"*.

And he added that they should work as well as they are working for their own house.

Contracts have also been made with several local traders to deliver a lot of material that is needed for construction.

Ghulam Maruf, chief of construction at the Swedish camp and new PRT, is optimistic about the future of his country:

***"It's getting better and better each day. There is more work and better security"***.





# Dutch F-16 Detachment Change of Command

**Capt. Inge van Megen**  
**PIO NLD NCC**

On Tuesday evening, 10th January 2006 Lt. Col. Jos Leenders took over the command of the F-16 Detachment based at Kabul International Airport (KAIA) from Lt Col Wido van de Mast. The F-16 detachment from Leeuwarden Airbase was followed by a detachment from Volkel Airbase.

This change of command also marked the end of the 1<sup>st</sup> Dutch Belgian European Participating Air Forces Expeditionary Air Wing F-16 Detachment International Security Assistance Force (1 NLD/BEL EAW F-16 DET ISAF) and the start of a Dutch Norwegian cooperation (1 NLD/NOR EAW F16 DET ISAF).

The ceremony took place in the presence of Deputy Commander ISAF, Mjr Gen Jaap Willemse and the Deputy Commander of KAIA, Col Johan Andries.



**Lt. Col. Jos Leenders took over the command from Lt Col Wido van de Mast.**

Both Mjr Gen Willemse and the departing Detachment Commander, Lt Col van de Mast declared their gratitude and appreciation for the work and good results that were achieved during the past three months. The F16's from Leeuwarden Airbase, flew more than 350 hours in support of the ISAF mission. They undertook tasks such as, photo-reconnaissance, Close Air Support (CAS) and 'show of force / show of presence' flights. In addition, the F-16s expanded their role by taking on additional tasks including escorting convoys.

Last Sunday the Detachment Commander surprised some members of his detachment by presenting them with a commendation for their outstanding performance. This evening, it was he who received a commendation, not on behalf of his Commander this time, but on behalf of his detachment members!

Besides the F-16 detachment, there are two more Dutch detachments present at KAIA: the C-130 detachment and the National Support Element (NSE), who takes care of all of the logistic support for the Dutch in Afghanistan.

In particular, the pleasant atmosphere between the three Dutch detachments was mentioned in the speeches, as was the well-oiled cooperation with the Belgian F-16 detachment. This detachment will return to Belgium mid January and will be followed up by a Norwegian F-16 detachment mid February.

Airbase Volkel has been part of ISAF at KAIA once before from March to mid July 2005. The Volkel detachment consists out of 102 people and will stay in Afghanistan for a wintry - period of three months.

# Women`s Refuge Soap for Kathy, a kite for Charlie



(Names have been changed)

Dear ISAF colleagues,

**PLEASE think twice before throwing kit away (this includes you guys!) when you are packing to return to the comforts of your own home!  
A personal request for your help for a cause that has touched me deeply!**

Somewhere here in Kabul, is a house where 35 women and children live. Due to the abuse, which they have suffered, the women have fled. The location of the house has to remain a secret in order to ensure the safety of its inhabitants: the women, often mothers have been threatened with death by their own families.



I am referring to the **Women's Refuge** - a haven for women and children - (with some men under their protection too) run by the Ministry of Women's Affairs in Afghanistan.

**A British colleague visited the Refuge only a few days ago and took**

**these pictures.**

The stories told by the women and children, are beyond my imagination. For example, the story of **Kathy**, a nine-year old girl; at the age of six she was sold as a bride for less than the price of a cow. For a year, her fiancé's family used her as a house slave, until an international organisation freed her and placed her in the Women's Refuge. Now, two years on, she has grown into an intelligent girl who has won herself a scholarship to attend a local private school. But because of the lack of other options the Refuge will remain her 'home'. Although her past has made it difficult for her to laugh, it remains her wish to stay in Afghanistan and to make a difference to her country in the future.

Or the incredible story of **Charlie!** He is six years old now. Together with his younger brother he lives in the Refuge as well. They are orphans: their uncle stabbed their father and mother to death in front of Charlie's eyes and then shot him, leaving him for dead.

American and British Military Liaison Teams care for these women and children. But an official project with vision for the future takes time, money and coordination. **There is a rather easy and quick way to make the lives of these women and children a little bit more pleasant. For instance for the children, toys & pens and paper for their studies, for the women, toiletries.**

But besides this everything is welcome: what they don't use themselves, they can sell and with this money, they can keep the only heater in the house burning. And that is no luxury with the current wintry weather conditions! **If you have any items of clothing / toiletries (unused) – including men's toiletries - which you do not wish to take back with you, and which are in good condition then please donate them to the Women's Refuge! Thank you in advance for your help**

*Captain Inge van Megen  
Dutch Air Force Officer - ISAF, Kabul*

## Can you help?

**Please send/take your items to Capt Ken Zontek - US MLT at ISAF HQ**

Photo by OR-8 Riccardo Maldera

