



ISAF MIRROR

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Commander's Foreword General Richards



Operation OQAB, the first joint ANSF / ISAF country-wide security operation, is now in its 6th week. Its purpose is to improve security in order to create the conditions in which effective, noticeable reconstruction and development can take place. Already we are seeing positive effects. Offensive operations are denying insurgents their winter safe havens whilst ongoing framework operations are providing the improved security within which Afghans and internationals can go about their daily business. Indeed some aid agencies have now asked the UN to lift travel restrictions in areas previously thought too dangerous in which to go.

Within this improved security environment, reconstruction and development are underway, notably in the south in areas such as Panjwayi and Zhari. ISAF-initiated humanitarian aid continues, with many examples in this edition of the Mirror, and I am delighted that a number of these projects look towards providing help to local people during the harsh conditions of the winter ahead.

Other broader pieces of good news are that 2 new PRTs have opened in RC(E), in Nurestan and Wardak, and a recent report on education indicates that some 5 million Afghan children are now attending school, as compared to just over 3 million in 2003 and around one million in 2001.

Of course the insurgency continues and we cannot claim victory yet. But the hold that the insurgents have over the people diminishes daily, and the vision of a stable, secure, peaceful and prosperous Afghanistan grows ever stronger.

Meanwhile, outside Afghanistan, NATO held its summit in Riga at the end of November to consider the best way ahead for the Alliance and its mission in Afghanistan. The solution is not a military one alone but NATO has a key part to play. As others have said, "NATO is an entry strategy but it cannot be an exit strategy alone". I therefore very much welcome the renewed commitment that come out of Riga both from ISAF's contributing nations and from the many international organisations involved in the region.

As the new year approaches, I welcome those personnel who are newly arrived to ISAF. Some will be members of the future Headquarters of ISAF X, others will be taking over their responsibilities in regional commands and units - with many 'Reliefs in Place' currently ongoing. I welcome you all and ask that you build on the good work of your predecessors during your tour.

Finally let me wish all of you a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year, and a joyful Eid-ul-Adha.



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Children Without Freedom

Sgt Robert Lewis (GE-A)
PIO RC North

For a short time, the International Military Police (IMP) of Regional Command North have been supporting the inmates of the women's prison in Mazar-e Sharif. They have been working on a humanitarian project for the children in the prison.

Joyless and cold are the ordinary weekdays of eight-year-old Tara. She is one of 13 children who are eking out a miserable existence behind the strong walls of the women's prison in Mazar-e Sharif. She only knows from stories what it means to be free, to play ball with other children on a large meadow. The only thing that is left over for Tara and the other children are old coloured pencils with their colours already faded a long time ago.



As far as the prison conditions of the inmates and their children are concerned, they almost appear to be taken from a film set in Medieval times. A small room built with mud bricks with cracked windows serves as their accommodation. Just 30 square metres are available for the 18 women and 13 children. There is no heating - and the severe winter is imminent. A small inner courtyard with several muddy puddles is an ideal breeding ground of germs and bacteria. This year, two inmates have already fallen ill with malaria, says Maisha. The women have small plastics bucket filled with cold water to wash their clothing. They get just the bare essentials from their warders. In a country like Afghanistan, "bare essentials" means a bar of hard soap for personal hygiene and for the laundry.



The women in the prison in Mazar-e Sharif suffer quite a lot but especially the innocent children need our help. This is the motto of the IMP of Regional Command North. Despite their high mission workload they have a challenging goal: to have a female teacher give lessons to the children. "The first step has already been done," confirms Lt Col Enno Probst.

On the occasion of an indoor triathlon, comprising the categories biking, running and rowing, which the IMP organised in Camp Marmal, a total of almost 4,000 Euros were collected. The committed initiators received donations even from distant Kabul.

Following a long conversation between Probst and the prison governor, the Military Police were given the green light. A female teacher has been employed. "Done it!" the mission-experienced soldier is pleased. "Now we can finally offer a minimum of education to the children. But this is only a first step. In future we have to try to improve the general prison conditions of the children and their mothers," according to Probst. Further projects will be tackled.

As regards little Tara, she is madly looking forward to school and lessons including reading, writing and perhaps also arithmetics, which are all matters she will only come to know the importance of. It is still a long way to go until the situation in the women's prison in Mazar-e Sharif will be satisfactory but some small improvements are underway.

Photo : Lt Viktoria Door



ANA Regional Hospital Support

Lt Col Torner (SP-A)
Commander Sp Role 2 RC West

Spanish personnel from the Role 2 medical facility have deployed to the Forward Support Base (FSB) in Herat and have started to collaborate with the Afghan National Army (ANA) Regional Hospital recently opened there. In accordance with ISAF guidelines they are supporting the Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF). Their aim is to improve the working conditions, mitigate the lack of medical staff and increase the ability of the Afghan medical staff.

One of the first joint activities has been the presence of Spanish military doctors from the Role 2 in the ANA Hospital as advisors in diagnostics and treatment of different patients. The vicinity of these two medical facilities allows this support without disturbing the normal working activities of the Role 2.

An example of this close cooperation is the care provided to a 13 year-old Local National with a gunshot wounded to head. Once the Role 2 Medical Staff studied the case, and after informing

and coordinating with the ISAF HQ MEDAD, a MEDEVAC was organised to move the patient to Kabul. There after a CT Scan, neurosurgical care was needed. The multinational team involved in this MEDEVAC was composed of the Spanish Role 2 Commander Lt Col Torner, ANA 205 Corps MEDAD LCdr McKnight and ANA surgeon Dr Alam.

Another example of this cooperation between Spanish and Afghan Medical staff is the support and advice during the treatment of an ANA soldier who suffered a heart attack. Several visits were needed to establish the diagnostics basis and the treatment protocols for this kind of patient.

And lastly, on the 12th of October the first multinational joint surgery took place at the ANA Hospital, consisting of the reconstruction of the lower lip of an ANA soldier who had received a gunshot wound. The ANA hospital commander Col Alcozay, Lt Col Torner, LCdr McKnight, Dr Alam, Dr Ghani and ANA Hospital medical staff attended during the operation.



Op OQAB With PRT Farah

*Gina Gillespie
FMT PRT Farah*

Operation OQAB III wound down in the Bakwa and Delaram districts of Farah and Nimroz provinces. The multi-national, Afghan-led mission brought security forces across the country together as they took the fight to the insurgents, supported by ISAF forces. The multi-day mission included a Civil Affairs team, Key Leader Engagement, the recovery of ammunition and explosives by the ANP, as well as the arrest of six people suspected of cooperating with the Taliban.

“From the EOD side of the mission it was very productive,” says Staff Sergeant Patrick Saunders, an EOD specialist at PRT Farah. “We were able to recover 16 artillery rounds that had been confiscated by the local police. We found and recovered an IED that we were able to destroy so that it couldn’t be used against coalition or Afghan forces. We also destroyed a landmine that was found along one of the roads. That was mitigated so that it couldn’t hurt civilians or coalition forces.”

For the Civil Affairs team, Delaram was the key focus, located at the hub of three major areas, Helmand Province, Gulistan and Bakwa districts. Their mission included a follow-up on the 10 wells funded by the PRT dug in Bakwa. They engaged the locals in the shops, bought some food and drank some tea. “The biggest thing there is they need help, help, help, help,” says Captain Mark Bartels, a member of the Civil Affairs team. “They have 10,000 families, but only 1,000 wells. It’s not enough.” Despite the increasingly cold, damp weather as winter draws near, the team noticed the children were living without shoes or coats. While the length of the mission precluded carrying a lot of humanitarian assistance supplies, the CA team obtained contact numbers, and invited village elders to visit the PRT for assistance in the future.

Lt Afshin Afarin is a doctor at PRT Farah. He found that the clinics at Bakwa and Delaram occupied opposite ends of the spectrum. The clinic in Bakwa had been destroyed since the PRT’s last visit in August, including the well and the bathroom. Anything movable or useful was torn out, including the frames on the windows, and the doors. “They blame it on the Taliban, but I wouldn’t be surprised if it was just thugs,” he says. “Why would the Taliban want door frames?” But the destruction has left the citizens of Bakwa with no medical care. The people are now dying from routine, and easily treated ailments. “That really saddened me, that the people were getting hurt from this,” says Lt Afarin. In contrast, the health clinic in Delaram was a model of efficiency. A surgeon and his wife, who is also a physician, ran the clinic, and the local people were healthy and cared for.



The clinic is privately owned, since associating with an NGO invites attacks from unwanted criminal elements. “The people in Delaram were ecstatic. They wanted to talk. They wanted to do something [about security problems in the area], and I hope the Government and the Afghan National Army can facilitate that. It would be a shame to lose that momentum,” says Lt Afarin. “Delaram is a good jumping off point to come into Bakwa and Gulistan. If you can make that a good hub, I think it would benefit a lot of people in the surrounding area.”



Cooperation Between PRT Chaghcharan And The ANP

2Lt Skomantas Povilionis (LI-A)
PIO PRT Chaghcharan

On Thursday 19th of October representatives of the Lithuanian led Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT) witnessed the results of a successful anti-drug operation in Ghowr province. This was the most successful anti-drug operation ever held in the province with 2,651 kilo of opium seized as well as the narco-traffickers, who were arrested during an ambush conducted by Afghan National Police (ANP) in Do Leyneh district.

PRT commander Col Šatas, the political adviser of the PRT Bartas Trakymas, Lithuanian and US police representatives of the PRT were included in the observance group that witnessed all the ANP weigh and destroy the narcotics in Chaghcharan.

The Governor of Ghowr province Mr Shah Abdul Ahad Afzali, the Chief of Ghowr police General Shah Jahan Naserullah Noori, the Chief of the National Directorate of Security General Mohammad Naeem and heads of local administration observed the procedures.

It took almost five hours to completely destroy the 2.6 tons of opium, which was burned and turned over with soil. Five mini vans, which were used for trafficking of narcotics, were also confiscated during the operation.

This event was one more demonstration of the widescale cooperation between the PRT and local structures responsible for the security environment in Ghowr province. This

cooperation between ISAF and the ANP in Ghowr also includes different types of training, support for various bits of equipment and joint activities like patrolling and establishment of control posts.

A few days earlier preparation for the establishment of the Provincial Coordination Centre (PCC) was finished with training conducted by ISAF soldiers of the operation section of the PRT. The training was focused on information management and assessment, as well as, confirming information and work with maps. Officers of the first two planned rotations of the PCC participated in the training. The establishment of the PCC is planned for the near future.

Members of the PRT also conducted several new training packages for the Afghan National Police (ANP) during the last month. A pistol shooting training course was conducted by the US police mentor team and a representative from the Lithuanian police, in order to prepare ANP middle ranking officers to use service weapons. A two-phased course comprised of a theoretical part and practical shooting under supervision of PRT soldiers. The course lasted three days. Twelve ANP officers participated in the course and service weapon will be issued to 7 of them.

During pay-day, one more training package was conducted by the US police mentors of the PRT and supported by soldiers of the Mobile Liaison and Observance Teams (MLOT). ANP officers learned to secure the environment of the bank and vicinity while the money was distributed to the people of Chaghcharan.



PCC Established In Ghowr

2Lt Skomantas Povilionis (LI-A)
PIO PRT Chaghcharan

On Thursday 9th of November a Provincial Coordination Centre (PCC) was declared open in Ghowr province. The opening ceremony was attended by Col Vilmas Šatas together with the Governor of Ghowr province, the Chief of Ghowr police, the Chief of the National Department of Security, the deputy head of PRT's civil Lithuanian Special Mission, Lithuanian police representatives as well as US police mentors serving in the PRT.

The main aim of the establishment of the PCC is to combine all the institutions responsible for security like the Afghan National Police, National Department of Security, Afghan National Army (if necessary) into a joint command and control structure.

The establishment of the PCC marks the beginning of the integrated work of all of these institutions – one more step in widescale cooperation in the security field in Ghowr province.

The PRT provided operational maps, furniture for the PCC and a reorganised communications section. The PRT intends to cooperate with and support the PCC in the future by assisting and training personnel.

During the opening ceremony a truck loaded with 200 blankets entered the police compound in Chaghcharan. They will be used in the police check points and police barracks because during winter time the weather conditions are very hard in Ghowr province.



Qalat Trade School Trains Experts For The Future

Olli-Pekka Nissinen
FMT PRT Qalat

Carpenter, nurse, car mechanic, electrician, plumber or computer wizard. What do you want to be in the future? Study and make a living for your family. The trade school in ISAF's Qalat Provincial Reconstruction Team has trained over 1,500 local residents during one year. Many of the graduates have found a job or started their own business as a skilled craftsman.

A joint venture of Zabul's Provincial Government and PRT started in November 2005 and it has been popular. Continuously there are more applicants coming in to professional courses and people have to wait their turn. "We have nine courses going on at the same time and each can take a maximum 15 students at time. Vocational courses take 12 weeks, except the nursing class which takes a whole year", says the principal of Qalat Trade School, Technical Sergeant Scott Smith from the US Air Force and PRT Qalat. "Nurses have clinical training in the provincial hospital and they have to learn a lot of human anatomy."

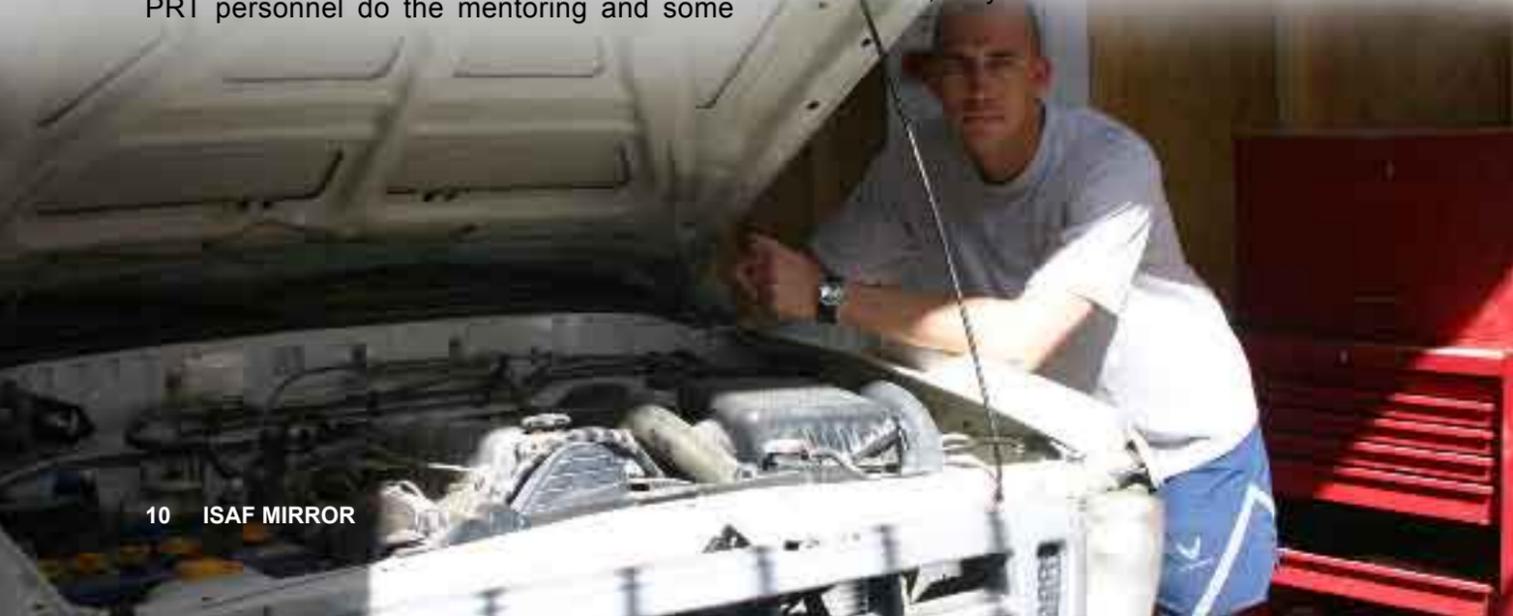
The car mechanics can also practice their skills with real vehicles. The trade school has Ford pick-ups and one normal Toyota for the students to practise on. The teachers of the trade school are experienced Afghans. The PRT personnel do the mentoring and some

additional classes depending on subject. Beside the occupations listed so far there is also a welding and construction course. According to Smith computer classes have been very crowded. There are different levels in ADP classes depending on a student's previous skill. "The same goes for the electrician courses. Qalat's on-going electrification boosts the economy and creates jobs for skilled electricians, plumbers and constructors. People have noticed the need for trained specialists," adds Smith. Trained nurses also have very good possibilities in finding a job since Qalat Provincial Hospital needs staff and students can have their foot in the door during their clinical training.

One of the aims of the trade school is to encourage students to start their own businesses after graduation. According to Smith most of the students are 16 to 19 years old and very motivated to study. After the graduation students in "handyman" courses like carpentry receive a modern tool kit provided by the PRT.

But how do the locals apply to the trade school?

"The applicant should contact first the Provincial Department of Education here in Qalat and indicate what course he or she wishes to attend. The Department of Education then fixes the paperwork and places students to courses," says Smith.



Medical Care In Uruzgan

Maj Peter Grotens (NL-A)
PIO Task Force Uruzgan

ISAF troops provided medical care for the people of Kerii, a village some eight kilometres southeast of Tarin Kowt. Providing medical care is one of the means to win the trust of the people in Uruzgan.

By coincidence a combined unit of the Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT), medical personnel and others halted in the village. The weight of their Patria armoured vehicle proved too much for the road and destroyed part of it. The unit decided to stay and get into contact with the local people and subsequently offer basic medical assistance.



The ISAF vehicles drew quite a crowd in the village of about a thousand inhabitants. The village elder welcomed the offer of medical help for the villagers, except for the women. Some 150 had then gathered around the ISAF troops and watched every move of the troops in a relaxed and festive atmosphere.



In a tent between two vehicles medical personnel treated almost 50 patients. The most common complaints were headaches, stomachache and diarrhoea. Children especially suffered much from the last. After treatment they were given a toy.

The villagers also spoke of irrigation problems. Specialists of the PRT will study how they can aid in solving these problems. The troops also agreed to have the road repaired. ISAF will provide the materials and the money; local men will take care of the actual repair.

Before the ISAF troops returned to their base near Tarin Kowt they left blankets and winter clothes for the villagers. Abdul Kayum, the village elder, showed his appreciation for the help offered. "You should come around more and destroy our road", he said with a smile. That's not the troop's intention. However, they will pay more visits to the village and see what else they can do.

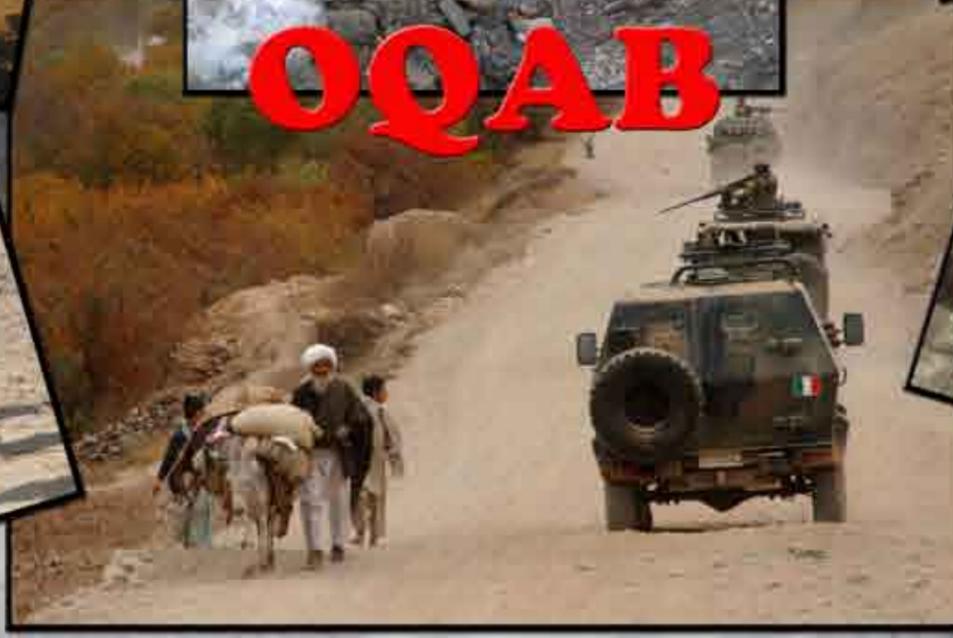




OP



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Aid For Shaheed Abdul Ahad Kham Orphanage

*Cpt Dave Muralt (CA-AF)
PIO PRT Kandahar*

Ordinary Canadians from coast to coast assisted the children of the Shaheed Abdul Ahad Kham Orphanage in Kandahar through their generous donations to the Assistance to Afghanistan (ATA) Fund.

The first delivery of more than CA\$12,000 worth of aid was unloaded by members of the Kandahar Provincial Reconstruction Team and orphanage workers and included mattresses, blankets, pillows and gaslights for the dining hall, so that the children won't have to eat in the dark.

The children also received pencils and candy as individual gifts from the PRT's Military Police platoon. Military Police Leading Seaman Tanya Gazzellone joked that "We have to leave soon, otherwise we'll be taking some of the kids home with us."

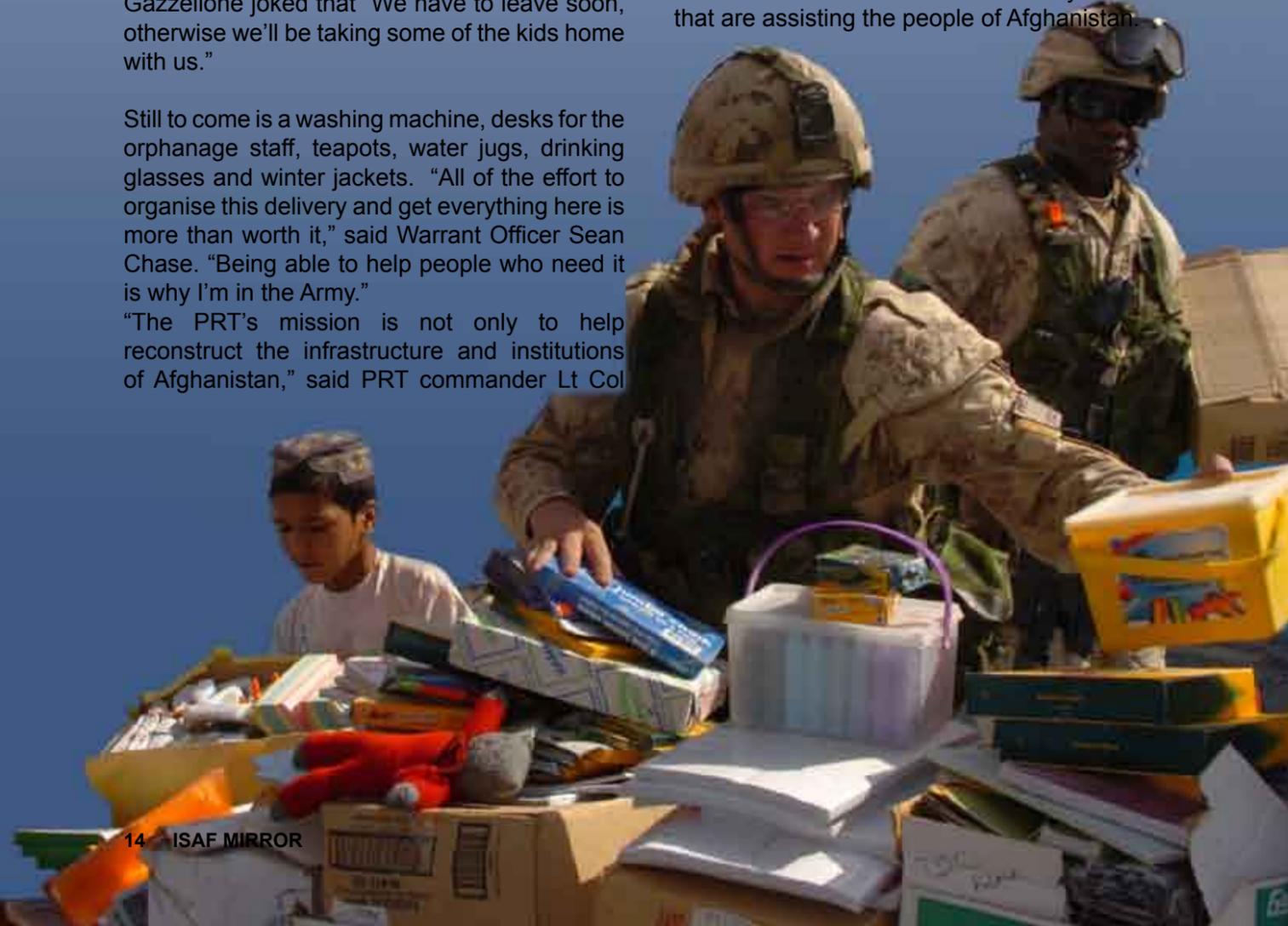
Still to come is a washing machine, desks for the orphanage staff, teapots, water jugs, drinking glasses and winter jackets. "All of the effort to organise this delivery and get everything here is more than worth it," said Warrant Officer Sean Chase. "Being able to help people who need it is why I'm in the Army."

"The PRT's mission is not only to help reconstruct the infrastructure and institutions of Afghanistan," said PRT commander Lt Col

Simon Hetherington. "Facilitating donations from the ATA Fund is one simple way we here can show the people of Kandahar that Canadians as a whole are concerned for them."

The PRT provided school supplies, candy and stuffed toys to the children at the orphanage during an earlier visit on the 26th of October.

The Assistance to Afghanistan Fund is a military non-public fund that was started following a large private donation through the CDS' office by Mr John Race. The ATA Fund allows Canadians to make cash contributions to assist the people of Afghanistan. The money is used to make local purchases of culturally appropriate items to aid those in need and to stimulate the Afghan economy. Canadians are asked not to attempt to mail or ship aid items to Canadian Forces units or personnel in Afghanistan, but rather to make a cash donation to one of many charities that are assisting the people of Afghanistan.



Camp For 4,000 ANA Troops In Qalat

*Olli-Pekka Nissinen
FMT PRT Qalat*

Neat barracks standing in straight rows, a massive power plant with five generators producing six megawatts of electricity, and a paved road surrounding the outer perimeter of the camp: ANA 205 Corps, Second Brigade is going to have a really modern garrison for 4,000 soldiers in Qalat, the capital of southern Zabul province.

The US\$64 million construction project is almost finished and ANA troops will be able to move in at the beginning of next year at the latest. "The new garrison is really important for us. We can provide better security for the whole province and we can expand our patrolling," delights ANA Brigadier General Abdul Raziq, the commander of ANA in Zabul.

The Qalat garrison area is approximately one square kilometer in size. "Building started in January 2005 and it created a lot of jobs for locals. During the busiest period there were 1,500 workers working under contractors, 60-70 percent of them were Afghans," says Captain William Watson from US Army Corps of Engineering, the project leader on behalf of ISAF and US Forces.

Beside the houses for battalions it includes a headquarter, power plant, four large maintenance buildings, warehouses, a dining facility that can feed 2,000 soldiers per hour, a modern military hospital and a water supply system with its own well.

Since the Qalat airstrip is already finished and operating just on the other side of the garrison fence, logistical circumstances are perfect for the big garrison. Even big cargo aircraft can operate on the new runway.

ANA General Raziq and US Army Colonel Martin Leppert, who is the senior ANA mentor of the Qalat Embedded Training Team, are really happy about the development for ANA troops. "We have had 4 years of co-operation now. Coalition Forces and ISAF have helped the ANA to get back on its feet. Training Teams have worked side by side with us and we really appreciate that," said General Raziq after the Ramadan Eid luncheon in Qalat's ancient castle. "We are a real team here. I feel like I'm one of the ANA officers," continued Colonel Leppert.

General Raziq also pointed out some future tasks. One of the most important is to secure Highway One, which runs through Zabul. ANA and ISAF Forces will also keep up their presence in remote districts of the province. "I feel that the people in Zabul really want peace and they really like their own ANA troops providing it," says Raziq.





Village Medical Outreach To Shinkay And Shamulzai

*Cpt Kevin G Tuttle (US-AF)
PIO PRT Qalat*

Members of PRT Qalat, along with an Afghan doctor from the Zabul Provincial Hospital in Qalat, provided medical care to the southeastern villages of Shinkay and Shamulzai on 13th-14th of October.

In the Village Medical Outreach (VMO) programme, medical professionals, including two US doctors and a physician's assistant; one Romanian doctor, nurse and dentist; and an Afghan doctor gave medical care to approximately 150 patients in each village. "The goal of the VMO was to supplement the district clinics with things they don't already have, such as female caretakers and a dentist," said Lt Col Jon Woods, PRT Qalat's senior medical officer.

"Culturally, women won't move down here," Woods said in discussing why the clinic doesn't have a female doctor to see women patients. "Women can still come to the clinic, but they won't without women caretakers."

Dentists are also not readily available at the clinics explained Woods. "They don't have dentistry, so we're supplying them with toothbrushes and toothpaste on top of the dentist checking people out."

The Shinkay VMO took place at the newly-refurbished clinic, which reopened on the 30th of August after the United States Agency for International Development made US\$50,000 of improvements to the facility. Clinic chief, Dr Rahmatullah Yaqubi, said since the improvements have been made they see more patients. "We see about 40-45 patients per day," Yaqubi said. "In September alone, we saw 810 people here. There has been about a 10-20 percent increase in the number of patients we can see since the refurbishment a couple of months ago."

Yaqubi said he was pleased with the VMO efforts and added that more VMOs in the future would be beneficial, especially in villages farther away from the clinic, where people may not have access to any medical care.

The following day's VMO in Shamulzai was located in a boy's school courtyard. In addition to providing medical care, school supplies, clothes, shoes and toys to children of all ages were donated, as well as over 80 pairs of glasses to adults.

During the two VMOs, the dentist performed 45 fillings, 7 tooth extractions and 4 gingivitis cleanings; while the women's portion of the event had over 40 women patients. Dr Hekmat,



the Afghan doctor from the Zabul Provincial Hospital and native of Zabul Province, gave medical care to over 100 patients during the two days, referring some patients to Zabul Public Hospital and to Kabul for further care. Most patients' complaints were headaches, abdomen pain and joint pain.

There were some issues found that could be improved upon in future operations, however. "Some of the observations made by Cpt King, our physician's assistant, found that many of the women had questions about nursing, wondering why their breast milk had dried up," said Lt Col Christopher Scharenbrock, Qalat PRT chief medical officer. "She thinks it's related to nutrition and plans on adding a nutrition class to future VMOs."

Other observations included local doctors being unaware of a World Health Organisation-sponsored re-feeding programme in Qalat to help with the numerous cases of infant malnourishment. Scharenbrock hopes that with more notice for future VMOs, people in the outlying villages will get the message and have the chance to come for medical help.

Overall, the team was happy with the outcome of the VMOs. "We were pretty well stocked on the medications and all the doctors were happy with our supplies," Scharenbrock, said. "I think it was a big success. There was interaction between local Afghans from the provincial level, local doctors, Romanian doctors and female medical providers. We provided a broad spectrum of health care to people who demonstrated a real level of need."





Agha Jon School Re-Opens

*Sgt 1st Class Michael Pintagro (US-A)
PIO TF Spartan*

Officials from the Gelan District of Ghazni Province, Afghan National Policemen and key Coalition leaders joined around 300 enthusiastic children, elders and area villagers for the re-opening of a school in the town of Agha Jon on Tuesday 19th of October.

The school re-opening came around seven months after Taliban militants set fire to the building and terrorised students, parents and teachers. Mir Ahmad, the Gelan District sub-Governor, addressed elders, townsmen, teachers and students in the courtyard of the school. "Islam is about knowledge," Ahmad said. "Islam isn't about destroying schools and preventing teachers from teaching. It isn't true Islam the enemy is protecting. Islam is a religion of peace."

Lt Col Frank Sturek, commander of Task Force Warrior, and a key figure in regional security, economic development and education, attended the school opening alongside other leading project participants from Task Force Vigilant Archer. "This marks the beginning of a new day for Gelan and a bright new future for the children of Gelan," Sturek said, adding that the establishment of security and infrastructure in the district will permit additional funding and additional regional construction projects.

American Soldiers and Afghan policemen distributed backpacks to young students after the speeches. School officials said around 1,400 boys and young men will attend classes at the refurbished facility. Children as young as 7 and men as old as 25 will learn Pashtu, mathematics, science, history and geography as well as Islamic subjects at the new facility. Around 25 teachers will conduct morning sessions for teenagers and young men and afternoon classes for younger children during the spring, summer and fall. Most Afghan schools close during the winter months.

Maj Rob Fugere, the commander of Task Force Vigilant Archer, described the school opening as an important step in regional development and a victory for the people of the district over militants who frequently intimidated them in the past. "Every time they get a school up and running, the Taliban comes in and burns down the school and threatens the teachers," Fugere said. "But since we've been here conducting patrols and maintaining a presence, the Taliban have fled and the people have been able to live their lives normally without fear. Part of that is being able to send their kids to school."

Young and old ceremony participants alike expressed enthusiasm for the new facility. "Our children will get education," said Abdul Hamid, a village elder from Agha Jon. "We will have educated people in our district serving their families and the community."



Ramadan Food Distribution

*Senior Airman JG Buzanowski (US-AF)
PIO CJTF-76*

A joint team of soldiers and airmen from PRT Bagram met with several Afghan leaders for the first time on the 18th of October to cement their working relationship. As part of the introduction, PRT representatives handed out more than 5,000 pounds of rice, beans and other food supplies, along with 300 prayer mats, as part of the "Meals for Mullahs" programme in preparation for the end of Ramadan.

"Meals for Mullahs" is an initiative to show support and respect for Afghan culture and spiritual needs. "Meeting with the provincial leaders is always a step in the right direction," said Maj Don Johnson, commander PRT Bagram. "One of our missions is to promote good governance in the region, and this is a true democracy in action so we definitely want to support that."

Johnson and several members of his staff discussed with the provincial leaders the issues they face and how the PRT can help. The Afghan leaders were eager to open communication channels with the team, discussing issues such as transportation, security and economics.

"We want to make sure we're working with the people to have a mutually beneficial relationship," Johnson explained. "The shura describe themselves as the bridge between the

people and the Government and the people and the foreign forces. Helping the people promotes security in the area, so it makes sense to do anything we can to work hand-in-hand with their leaders."

Johnson said one of the meeting's biggest successes was setting up future meetings between the shura and PRT representatives, enabling continued communication regarding rebuilding efforts to keep potential conflicts to a minimum.

After speaking with shura members, Johnson's team met with a local mullah, distributing food and ingredients for the traditional holiday meal for the end of Ramadan. "One of the five pillars of Islam is charity, and with this food the mullah will be able to ensure needy families can celebrate," Johnson said.

Senior Airman Melanie Weaver, a medic with the PRT, helped unload the two-and-a-half tons of food. "Helping to provide the people with food to help celebrate one of their holidays is a small way we can show them that we're here to help and support them," she said. "We want to work with them and help them rebuild their country."



Joint Helicopter MEDEVAC Training

Snr Airman J G Buzanowski (US-AF)
PIO CJTF-76

Acrobats have safety nets. Skydivers have secondary chutes. Coalition servicemembers have aeromedical evacuation teams. "We give people the confidence that they can do their job and if they should get hurt, we'll be there to pick them up," explained Sgt Shane St. Lawrence.

St. Lawrence is a flight medic with the air ambulance soldiers of the 159th Medical Company. The unit, which traces its aviation roots back to 1963, flies the UH-60 Blackhawk specially configured to hold up to five patients at once.

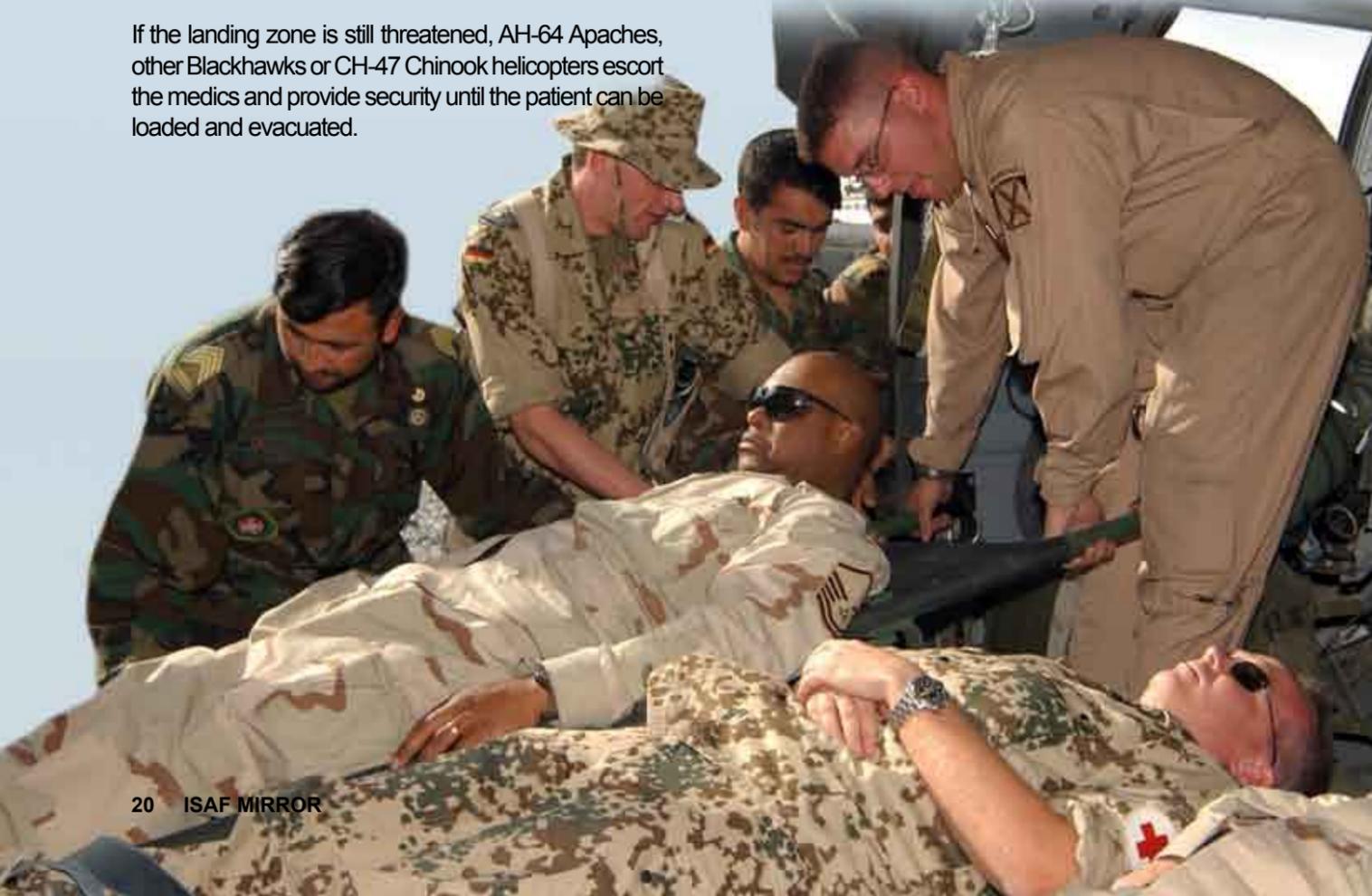
Should a call come in from anywhere in the country that someone has been hurt, an aeromedical evacuation team is dispatched to pick them up and get them to a medical treatment facility as soon as possible. The flight medic on board keeps the patient stable until then. And it's a whole lot faster than travelling by land, St. Lawrence said.

If the landing zone is still threatened, AH-64 Apaches, other Blackhawks or CH-47 Chinook helicopters escort the medics and provide security until the patient can be loaded and evacuated.

On the 16th of October, St. Lawrence and his crew had the opportunity to share the passion for their job and their expertise at Camp Warehouse, Kabul with military medics from Germany, Great Britain and France, as well as a team from the Afghan National Army.

"We invited the crew to come down and tour the facilities here and share their competency with others," said Col Donald Thompson, the command surgeon for Combined Forces Command–Afghanistan. "We're not just bringing casualties to American medical centres, so we need to be on the same page with our allies. The French, who run one of the best hospitals here, asked for the training with our aeromedical teams. People want to get it right and get what they're doing perfect."

St. Lawrence spent a couple of hours training about 20 medical personnel how to load and unload patients from the Blackhawk – first with the helicopter shut down, then with the rotors spinning. "It helps us all get on the same sheet of music," St. Lawrence said. "When we're loading patients, it doesn't matter where they're from, just that we're working together to save someone's life."



Computers For Kids

Cpl Iain Cumming (UK-AF)
IMP KAIA

Computers For Kids is just one of the worthy causes that ISAF personnel are working towards establishing and developing as part of the ISAF mission in Afghanistan.

On Monday 23rd of October, four members of the KAIA International Military Police (IMP) took part in a 12-hour bike-a-thon to raise money for an IT Learning Centre that is being set up in Kabul. The centre, named Computers For Kids, is a new initiative that is being jointly financed by the KAIA IMP and the Afghan company World Wide Technologies whose director, Mr Noorullah Azimy, hopes to involve the Afghan Government in expanding the scheme throughout other provinces in the country.

The fundraiser began at 6.00 am, which was an early start for the KAIA IMP, with Flt Sgt Paul Edwards first in the saddle, followed by Cpl Steve Stott, Cpl Iain Cumming, all of the Royal Air Force Police and Cpl Chief Andy Dejonghe of the Belgian Army Military Police. All four continued hourly until 6.00 pm where, with sore legs and 364 kilometres behind them, the bike-a-thon came to a very welcome end.

The event took place using an exercise bike, kindly lent by KAIA MWA, outside the IMP Station where music played all day for motivational purposes; of course, to motivate the participants and donors to stop and enjoy the atmosphere. Thanks must go to the Dutch NSE for the loan



of this sound system. Throughout the day, many people stopped by to give encouragement and donations and thanks also to Supreme for their light refreshments.

The support received from the KAIA community (and those passing through) was outstanding, with particular thanks going to the DSPX, DCS KAIA PX, Ciano's Pizza Restaurant and the Lai Thai Restaurant for their donations. There were also sizeable donations given by MWA, AFCAP and ATCO that were most gratefully received.

Overall, more than US\$6,000 was raised, including US\$2,000 that was raised by auctioning two teddy bears, donated by Flt Sgt Edwards' daughters in the UK. The money will go towards providing 40 complete computer packages and tables and chairs for the mainly female students at the centre. An official opening will take place once the building has been furnished with the equipment and the computer networking is in place.

Once again the KAIA IMP wish to express their thanks and appreciation for all the support they have received during this venture. Any further donations may be dropped into the IMP stations on KAIA or in HQ.



Fifth Kabul Entry Point Opening

Cpt Alex Montagna (FR-A)
PIO RC Capital

On the 23rd of November the opening ceremony of the fifth Kabul Entry Point (KEP) took place near the village of Tarakhel Tarnaw. The Mayor of Kabul, Mr Rohullah Aman and the Regional Command (Capital) (RC(C)) commander, Brigadier General Frank Le Bot jointly opened the KEP during the ceremony. The Deputy Chief of Police, General Samimi, was also in attendance, representing Kabul City Police.

KEPs are important points on the Main Supply Routes (MSRs) into Kabul. They will be used to check vehicles randomly in order to fight against crime and terrorism.

The construction of the fifth KEP was a combined project involving an RC(C) engineer team, soldiers from the Multinational Engineer

Group, an Afghan National Army engineer and local civilian contractors.

Following the ceremony a joint exercise was carried out by personnel from the Kabul City Police and RC(C)'s dog unit to highlight the importance of the entry points in maintaining the security around the city and to demonstrate the close cooperation between the Kabul City Police and ISAF soldiers.

During the subsequent press conference, General Le Bot declared that by "working in close cooperation with Afghan National Security Forces and RC(C) forces, we are increasing the security in Kabul and its province."



Football Represents Team Spirit

1Lt Amanda Straub (US-A)
PIO TF Phoenix

On the 20th of October, a group of young Afghan girls enjoyed a friendly game of football with a team of American soldiers. The good-natured game may seem trivial, but it was representative of progress and freedom in Afghanistan for common citizens.

Klaus Stärk, from Germany, and Ali Asker Lali, an Afghan who moved to Germany during the Soviet occupation, had an idea to introduce football in Afghanistan as an organised sport to show Afghans a better way of life and give them something to hope for. The German Football Project is going strong supporting 14 teams in Afghanistan. "The main goal is to use sports, football, to give the people fun," Stärk said. "We want to take away from the pain and sorrow of the day. Give them a sense of life."

In addition, the programme teaches Afghans discipline, teamwork and training through organised sports and provides health benefits through regular exercise. The German Football Project supports Afghan teams with equipment and coaching. Stärk and Lali find Afghans who are able and willing to coach and then train them to be coaches. They link the coaches up with players from around the country. They sponsor

the Afghan national team, which competes with other Asian countries, as well as teams for youth.

The coaching is paying off. The young Afghan women's team, composed of girls between the ages of 14 and 19, wiped out the American team 2-0. The Afghan girls showed promise by deftly manipulating the ball and running circles around the older Americans. The Americans have never played together as a team and blamed their lack of practice and coaching for the loss, but both sides had fun and appreciated the opportunity to build relationships with women from another country. "It was a very good game," said 14-year-old Yasamin from the Afghan team. "This was my first time playing with an international team and I hope to do it again." "It was a hard game for us," 2Lt Hannah Coombe, an American medical officer, said. "We have never played together before, but it was a lot of fun."

The game was well attended by both sides with roughly 60 family members and friends of the Afghan girls and a steady stream of soldiers from all different countries stopping by. The game represented more than relationship building and fun. For the Afghans, it represented freedom. Five years ago Afghans could not enjoy something as simple as a football game in peace and security. The young Afghan girls who played in this game would not have left their houses, much less played football.



