

Official Magazine of ISAF



# ISAF MIRROR

International Security Assistance Force

• Issue 50 September 2008 •

## New Kajaki Dam turbine delivery a success

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## Images from Afghanistan

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# COMISAF Intent

In full partnership with the growing institutions of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, and within the means allocated by NATO and the many nations supporting the mission, ISAF demonstrates NATO's commitment to the **security, reconstruction** and the extension of **governance** in Afghanistan. Further, ISAF demonstrates both the will and capacity to apply irresistible force by, through, and in support of Afghan National

Security Forces against the insurgents' strategy and others who forcibly oppose the progress of this campaign. We will assist in demonstrating the growing capacity of ANSF to meet the GIROA's security challenges, and will operate in such a way as to demonstrate respect for the Afghan people and their culture in order to effect their direct support of our endeavor.



## ISAF Mission



Conduct military operations in the assigned area of operations to assist the Government of Afghanistan in the establishment and maintenance of a safe and secure environment with full engagement of Afghan National Security Forces, in order to extend government authority and influence, thereby facilitating Afghanistan's reconstruction and contributing to regional stability.

Gen. David D. McKiernan  
Commander, ISAF

ISAF operations are divided among five regional commands:

**Regional Command Capital** (approx strength 5,900)

- HQ ISAF in Kabul (Composite)
- HQ RC-C in Kabul (FRA)

**Regional Command South** (approx strength 23,800)

- HQ RC-S in Kandahar (CAN)

**Regional Command West** (approx strength 2,500)

- HQ RC-W in Herat (ITA)

**Regional Command North** (approx strength 4,300)

- HQ RC-N in Mazar-e-Sharif (DEU)

**Regional Command East** (approx strength 16,400)

- HQ RC-E in Bagram (USA)

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#### **Front Page:**

Australian soldier stand guard in Tarin Kowt.  
Photo by: PO1 John Collins



#### **Back Page:**

Afghan girl steps out of her home in Kandahar.  
Photo by: PO1 John Collins

# ISAF MIRROR

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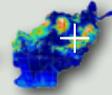
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ISAF Mirror is a Headquarters International Security Assistance Force Public Affairs product intended for the information and entertainment of ISAF and associated personnel. Though articles have been edited, opinions expressed are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the policies of NATO, Joint Forces Command Headquarters Brunssum or ISAF.

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# RC - CAPITAL CHANGE OF COMMAND



*Story courtesy of Camp Warehouse*

**K**abul - On August 5th, Regional Command Capital's (RC-C) change of command ceremony took place at Camp Warehouse between Italian Brigadier General Federico Bonato, commanding RC-C since December 2007 and French General Michel Stollsteiner.

During his speech, General Bonato wanted to thank all the soldiers of the RC-C and summarized the activities of the last eight months.

"I am really proud to have been your commander," he said to all the troops, "we carried out a lot of activities for the population, we increased the confidence among the locals, the GiROA

and ISAF." He also stressed the close cooperation between RC-C and ANSF improving security in Kabul area.

RC-C troops engaged local population constantly and comprehensively, providing medical and veterinary activities in remote villages; realizing several projects like schools, clinics and hospitals; increasing agriculture and preventing famine in rural areas.

At the end of ceremony, General David McKiernan thanked the former Commander of RC-C underlining how much he appreciated his commitment to achieving a difficult mission and also wished success to the new Commander. ■





# 20 Afghan Students Visit Turkey for First Time

Story courtesy of Camp Warehouse

**T**urkish Battle Group Civil-Military Co-Operation Team arranged a ten day Turkey visit for 20 Afghan students in early August. It was arranged by the coordination between Turkish Battle Group CIMIC Team and Turkish Armed Forces General Staff Command. During the visit an Afghan interpreter and Afghan instructor escorted the students. The students were chosen among the attendees at the Turkish Language course, which is one of the courses that TU BG is conducting in Kabul area. These were the most successful students in the course.

After arriving in Turkey, they began their visit from the capital Ankara. They visited the mausoleum of Mustafa Kemal ATATURK, founder of the modern Turkish Republic Turkey, other historical places and also the Turkish Great National Assembly. Af-

ter that, they went to Istanbul, which is one of the most beautiful cities in the World. In Istanbul, they visited many historical places like Dolmabahce Palace, Topkapi Palace and the Blue Mosque. They also had the chance to make a tour to the Istanbul Bosphorus. In Istanbul, they visited Kuleli Military High School from which many of the Turkish officers studied before the War Academy. After Istanbul they went on their tour in Cankale, an important place in Turkish Military history for the battle of 1915. In Canakkale, they visited the theatre of World War I and historical Truva.

Despite visiting just a small part of Turkey they were very pleased. They also made a good practice of their new language (Turkish) during the visit.

The visit was just ten days but Afghan students will never forget it. This kind of visit was a dream for many

of them: seeing another country and another culture, learning the world outside Afghanistan. They were very pleased with the Turkish Nation's hospitality.

TU BG CIMIC Team commander Capt. Murat METE (TUR ARMY) said that a dream became reality for the 20 Afghan students and TU BG CIMIC Teams would participate in this kind of tour in the future.

TU BG is helping Afghan people not only in security but also in other fields like craft courses, Turkish language course, computer science, sewing, embroidery and carpentry.

Nearly 500 Afghans are participating in these courses. These courses are very useful for improving the economic situation of the Afghan population. ■



## Afghan Commandos, Coalition Forces Disrupt Taliban Stronghold in Zeriko Valley

*Story courtesy of Gardez PRT*

**B**AGRAM AIR FIELD, Afghanistan — A team of Afghan National Army Commandos, advised by US Special Operations Forces, attacked a Taliban sanctuary in western Afghanistan's Zeriko Valley recently.

The combined forces sought to liberate locals in the stronghold established by a Taliban commander, who is coordinating both the acquisition and movement of weapons and supplies, and the movement and employment of Taliban fighters within Farah province.

The Commandos and their SOF advisors landed in the village of Parmakan July 16.

"Our intent was to put them into a dilemma where they could either come out and fight like men or run away and yield a position of significance while losing face among both the Taliban and the locals," said a Marine SOF team leader, whose identity was withheld for security purposes. "On the first day we went in with the Commandos, some of the Taliban fought and some ran away, but it didn't take long for all of them to leave town. The entire operation was a huge slap in the face to the Taliban."

Several Taliban leaders were the first to scurry away from the village, reinforcing the fact that they did not lead the first-rate fighting force they

claimed. After routing the enemy, the Commandos freed 16 local men held captive in the leader's compound and destroyed several Taliban weapons caches.

"We wanted to gauge the Taliban's fighting abilities, their weapons systems and their chain-of-command effectiveness within the Zeriko Valley," said a US SOF team sergeant. "Their failure to defend themselves only proved how inferior they really are as fighters."

With increased Commando operations and diminishing Taliban presence, the people living in the Zeriko Valley can lead safer lives.

"We have people from the Zeriko coming to talk to the Commando leadership to thank the government for going into the valley," said a Marine SOF team sergeant. "They are extremely happy that the Commandos got rid of the tyranny they've been living with."

The successful disruption of the Taliban in the Zeriko Valley can be directly attributed to the elite-warrior capabilities and unwavering professionalism of the Commandos and the US troops who advise them.

"The Commandos performed flawlessly in the Zeriko Valley," said the US SOF team leader. "The operation was a testament to their hard work and dedication to this country. We couldn't have reached this level of effective-

ness without the Combined Joint Task Force-101's Task Force Eagle air assets landing us right on top of the Taliban. The element of surprise took the wind out of their sails before the fight even started."

The Marine SOF team leader said he believes the operation sends an important message to both the Taliban and the people of Afghanistan.

"The Taliban can go anywhere in this country and attempt to establish a sanctuary and we'll be one step behind to drive them out," the team leader said. "There will be no safe haven for Taliban fighters in this country. You can be sure of that." ■





# Zabul PRT Assists Kuchi Village

**K**ABUL, Afghanistan - The nomadic Pashtun Kuchi tribe of Southern Afghanistan has been labeled as one of the largest and most vulnerable populations in the country. The Kuchi livelihood depends on the maintenance and grazing of large herds sheep and goats.

The Zabul Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT) in conjunction with the Provincial Government of Zabul has created a plan to improve conditions for the Kuchi tribesmen in the vicinity of Qalat City. Specialist Don DeBardelaben is working in close coordination with Kuchi Tribal Leaders and Qalat City authorities to bring this three-phased plan to life.

The plan began with three Veterinarians Civil Assistance Patrols (VETCAPs) held in Qalat City on August 18, 19 and 20. In order to conduct the activity three US military specialists were brought in from Bagram Airfield including a veterinarian technician – US Army Sergeant Kenneth Cole, a medical entomologist – Lieutenant-Commander Michael Zyzak, and a veterinarian – Major Bill Bosworth. This specialized crew brought in medicines to treat the animals of the local Kuchi tribesmen. The treatments, mainly concentrated on de-worming, should

be conducted twice a year and will improve the overall health of the herds of sheep and goats. If the animals are not treated the effects of worms unchecked in these animals can be quite severe and can result in death of the animals or infection of humans. Over the three days, Maj Bosworth and his team were able to treat many sheep, goats and cattle.

The Provincial Government of Zabul was extremely excited about the benefits that this project will bring to the Kuchi people. Governor Arman said, “It is extremely important to help the Kuchi people with their animals as herding represents their main livelihood. We have to support them to ensure that their livelihoods are maintained during these hard times.”

These three small VETCAPs, held on August 19, 20 and 21 have allowed the PRT to make more contacts with, and gain the trust of, the Kuchi Tribal leadership. The PRT is committed to supporting the Provincial Government to improve conditions for the Kuchis. These VETCAPs have shown the Kuchis concrete examples of the government’s commitment to provide for them in the future.

The next phase of this project will be to conduct VETCAPs for the large

Kuchi herds out in the districts. Before the winter months the veterinarians will work through the Kuchi Tribal Elders to treat as many animals as possible.

The last phase of this project will see the construction of a Kuchi animal market in Qalat City. This project will be one of the highlights of Specialist Don DeBardeladen’s tour. He’s had the chance to work with Governor Arman, Deputy Governor Gulab Shah, and the Mayor of Qalat City, Jaanet Gul. The animal market will consist of upgraded facilities for the Kuchis and their animals including a veterinarian centre, pens for 1000 animals, and access to potable water. The construction of this centralized facility will see the Kuchis becoming increasingly integrated into the trading economy of Zabul province.

This project is one of many currently being conducted by the US-led Zabul PRT in Qalat City. The approximate dollar value of this project will be 43,000 USD but the impact will extend much further within the Kuchi community as it will create a centralized trading hub for the Kuchi tribesmen. ■

## Afghans, Germans start first joint scientific research project

**K**ABUL, Afghanistan — Afghans and Germans began the first joint scientific research project recently when ISAF soldiers delivered a laptop and digital camera to the Balkh Leishmaniasis Centre in Mazar-e-Sharif.

During the next three years, Afghan doctors at the centre will use the laptop

and camera to archive data on Leishmaniasis patients. That information and deep-frozen blood samples from infected patients will then be sent to the Tropical Institute in Hamburg, Germany, for further study.

Leishmaniasis is a disease that causes skin sores and often enlarges the spleen, among other consequences. In

Afghanistan, the disease is commonly passed to humans through the bite of infected sand flies.

The German doctors at the Federal Armed Forces Hospital hope the joint effort with Afghan doctors will further the study and treatment of the disease, specifically in regards to the human body's defences against it. ■



## Ground Combat Support Group Teaches Afghan Class

**M**azar-e Sharif – The sun is shining in Mazar-e Sharif, Northern Afghanistan, and the inhabitants of the villages around Camp Marmal, the base of the German ISAF soldiers, meanwhile have placed special confidence in the Germans. This is the reason why Master Sergeant Marc André P. will give lessons in the village school of Qali-N Bafan.

The 36-year-old Master Sergeant of the Ground Combat Support Group is the Village NCO of this village comprising 77 families. He is visiting the village at least once a week so that he knows the matters of the population's concern. The fact that he is in permanent contact and on friendly terms with the population of the 11 commu-

nities located in the Area of Operation (AOO), 480 meters in size, around Camp Marmal is an essential key in the security concept of the Ground Combat Support Group of the Air Wing Mazar-e Sharif. Within the capabilities of ISAF and in close cooperation with CIMIC the relevant Village NCOs are initiating various projects, such as school improvement, well digging, road construction and other infrastructural measures. The close link with the villages is an important base for overt intelligence collection and for permanent consolidation of the operational picture.

Right after the mayor's friendly welcome the German soldiers are surrounded by three dozens of children. Marc André unceremoniously decides

to hold the lesson outdoors since he found the classroom not equipped with tables and chairs. He introduces himself to the children as the head of a family with two children hinting at one boy who seems to be the same age as his son. Later on, Marc André shows them the location of Germany and Afghanistan on the map of the world. "The German soldiers and the ISAF soldiers are here to create confidence and establish safety and security," he explains to the children. The linguist has quite a lot to do to make this easily understandable in their language.

While Marc André is talking, more and more adults are gathering around. They sit down on the clay ground and also follow closely to what the German soldier is telling. Marc André



# Images from the North

meets with bright eyes and beaming faces when he produces some photographs from his pocket which he had taken on the occasion of his last visit and fixes them to the clay hut.

“You remember that I took these photographs during my last visit,” he says grinning, “now I hand them out to you for your classroom.” The children are surprised since they never saw their faces on a photograph before. They are laughing, fooling around and are very happy. “In this country you can push forward great things with little things”, says a Corporal in the background.

Chudai Borde, Malek and mayor, is that moved that he spontaneously invites the Master Sergeant and two of his men to have a tea. “It would be

unfriendly and impolite to reject such an invitation,” explains the Master Sergeant.

He accepts the invitation together with two of his men. The soldiers now have a half-an-hour talk with the mayor. “Even if we do not have anything, you are always welcome,” says the Malek. They are getting closer while having flat bread and tea, so that the Malik finally asks the Master Sergeant whether it is possible to get two footballs for the children. Marc Andrè does not hesitate a second in promising the balls under the following condition: “Then we have to have a football match, and you will not be the winners.”

They all start laughing after the linguist’s translation. Their confidence is

obvious, and they are grateful that the German soldiers are always willing to listen to them. One week earlier, several village inhabitants received medical treatment by German physicians so that it is easy for Marc Andrè to win more confidence among the population.

On his way back, the 36-year-old grins saying: “What a successful day. I would like each and every day in theatre to be like that.” In fact, the soldiers had the impression to be really welcome and that their mission actually makes sense. This was a day in theatre like many others, but nevertheless a very special day in Mazar-e Sharif. ■

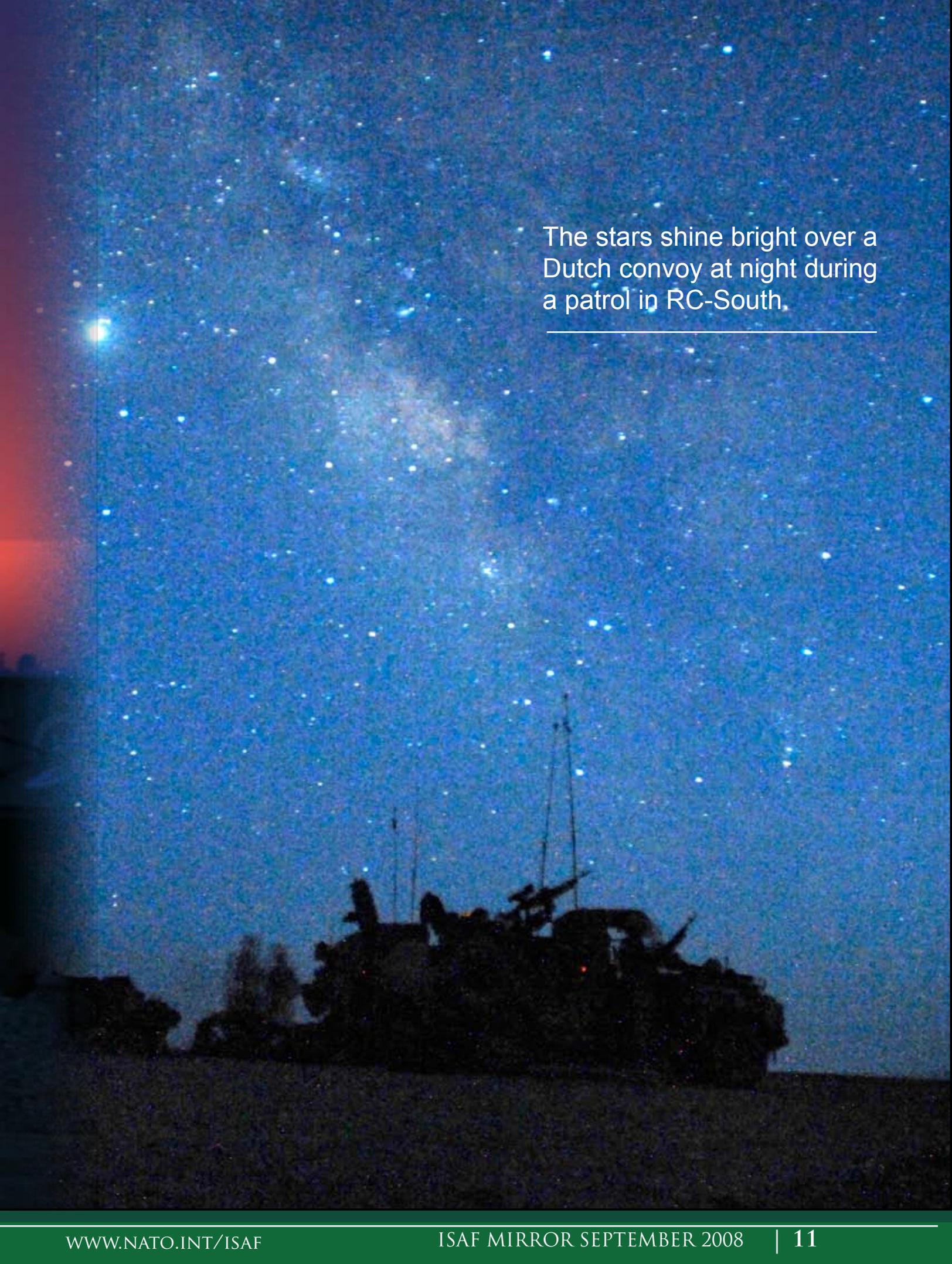
# IMAGES FROM AFGHANISTAN

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Sunset in RC-North HQ.

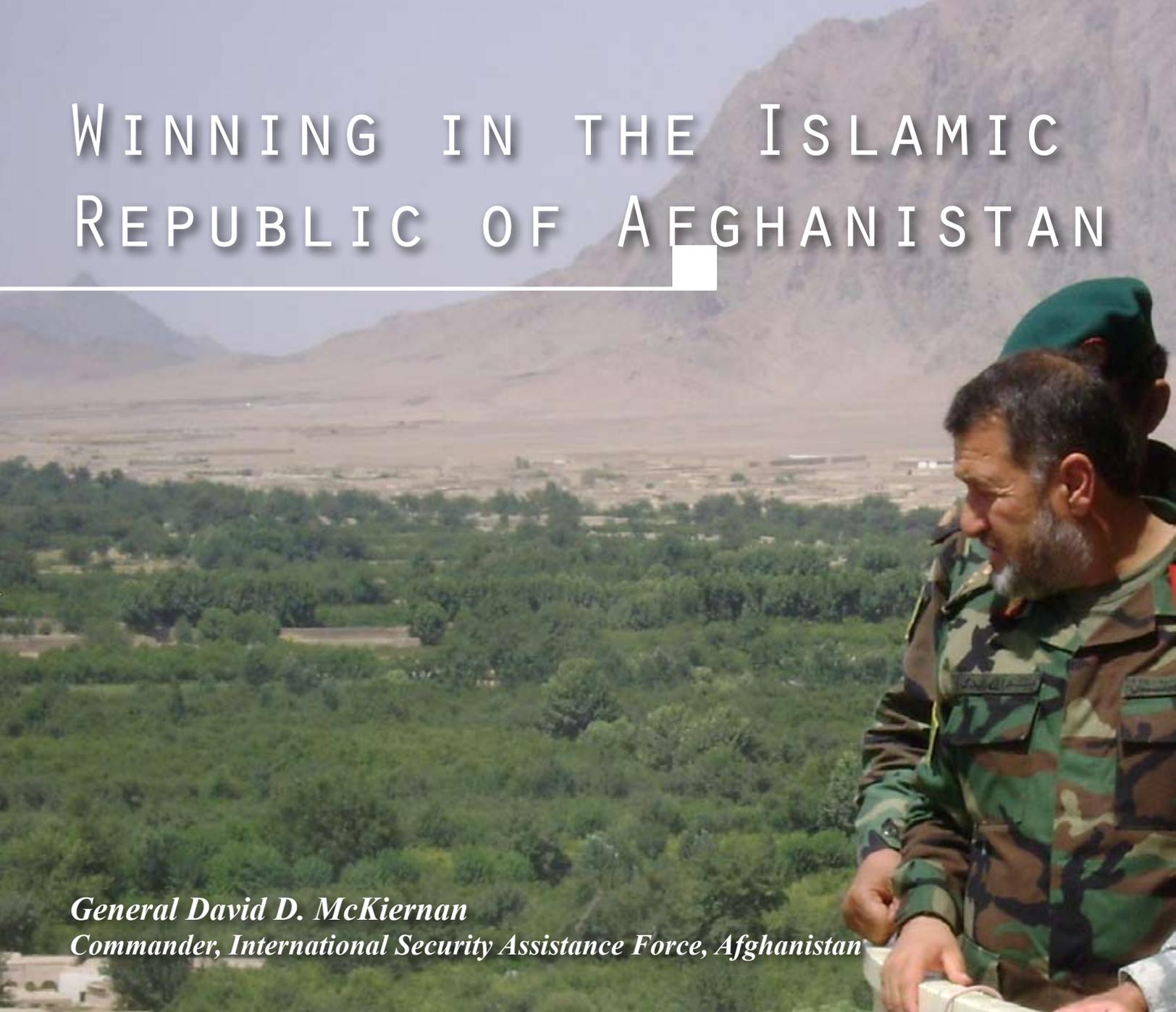
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A night sky filled with stars and the Milky Way galaxy, with the silhouette of a Dutch convoy in the foreground.

The stars shine bright over a Dutch convoy at night during a patrol in RC-South.

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# WINNING IN THE ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF AFGHANISTAN



*General David D. McKiernan  
Commander, International Security Assistance Force, Afghanistan*

**T**he International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) is in Afghanistan to win. Winning is about building a better future for Afghanistan, viewed in Afghan capacity – achieving a real sense of security, a viable government with capable and competent institutions, sustained development, and improved economic opportunity. Winning matters to our national security and to the security of our international partners who are here fighting with us and the Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF). This endeavor will take time and a long term commitment. Ultimately, as history has proven in counter-insur-

gencies, the solution will be a political one, not a military one. This is why we are focused on a comprehensive approach along three lines of effort – security, governance, and reconstruction and development. ISAF’s main contribution is in security. UN and NATO mandates make us the lead for the international community. With respect to governance and development efforts we support others, namely the Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan (GIROA) and the United Nations Assistance Mission Afghanistan (UNAMA). In all these efforts we take an integrated approach, working in close cooperation with UNA-

MA, other organizations and members of the International Community -- all in support of the legitimately elected GIROA.

We are fighting a counterinsurgency campaign based on a SHAPE, CLEAR, HOLD, and BUILD strategy. We SHAPE the conditions of the security environment, CLEAR areas of insurgents, HOLD with enduring presence of ANSF, and set the conditions to BUILD through enabling the expansion of viable governance and development. Our focus must be the Afghan people and their priorities – security, basic needs and services. Therefore, we emphasize support to the popula-



tions most threatened and focus on the key infrastructure needed to ensure security, enable basic governance and services, and promote development. All of these efforts must be achieved in the cultural, religious and environmental context of Afghanistan.

Are we winning? The short answer is that progress is uneven – yes in some areas, not yet in others. More importantly, the insurgency is not winning and cannot win. The Afghan people do not want the Taliban back or any other substitute espousing extremist ideology. The tactics of the Taliban, Al Qaeda, and others in this “nexus of insurgency” are recognized as coun-

ter to Afghan culture and illegitimate. The insurgents are over-matched in every fight with the Afghan National Army (ANA) and coalition forces. That said, the insurgency is not short on manpower. It recruits across the border; it cooperates with criminals and narcotics traffickers, and it can influence or intimidate those without practical alternatives, education or income.

The insurgency we are fighting in Afghanistan is a loosely syndicated network of groups with different objectives and diverse motivations. Objectives range from government overthrow to weakening local authority in

order to facilitate criminal or power-broker aims. Motivations are diverse, ranging from extremist ideology, lack of alternative employment, fear, and a historical aversion to foreign presence to a culture of violence inherent from decades of warfare. It is neither unified nor coherent in action, but does manage to cooperate at times in certain regions.

Violence is up this year for several reasons. First, insurgents have deliberately changed to more asymmetric tactics -- smaller in scale, more vulnerable targets, and shorter in duration. These tactics require less sophisticated command and control and

*continued from page 13*

result in less direct contact (and less attrition). Larger scale attacks continue, but at a lower rate. Second, insurgent freedom of action to recruit, stage, train and sustain across the border has improved due to the lack of an effective counterinsurgency capability and strategy in the Pakistan tribal areas. A porous border exacerbates this situation. Finally, ISAF and ANSF are operating in areas they have not been before. Increased coalition force contributions and a growing ANSF, in both capacity and capability, mean more operations to disrupt insurgents in their safe havens or support zones.

Despite the freedom of action insurgents enjoy in Pakistan, the insurgency is not spreading inside Afghanistan. The insurgency remains concentrated in Pashtun tribal areas in the South and East. Less than 7% of the Afghan people experience insurgent related violence on a frequent basis in their district. Insurgent activity has increased in the East with respect to last year, but elsewhere the increase in ANSF and ISAF offensive operations accounts for the rise in contacts. The Afghan people, however, do not feel secure from the insurgency, crime, or corruption in many areas of the country.

Progress is wide-spread but uneven. A million more children are attending school than two years ago. The

majority of Afghans have access to healthcare. Mortality rates are dropping. More Afghans have access to water and electricity. Hundreds of kilometers of new roads have been built which link communities and enable commerce. The gross national product is growing 10% annually. However, many Afghans still do not have access to basic services and formidable challenges remain such as illiteracy, unemployment, drought, narcotics trade, and addiction.

The real question is, what will it take to win? We must acknowledge that an enduring peace in Afghanistan requires addressing militant sanctuaries in Pakistan and improving governance at all levels within Afghanistan – national, provincial, district, municipal, and village. The former is a matter for the governments of the United States and key international partners to work with Pakistan. Regional stability and the success of global counter-terrorism are at stake. For ISAF's part, we are aggressively working to improve coordination and effective cooperation between ANSF, ISAF and the Pakistan military. Improving governance is a focus of our integrated approach at all levels to build human capacity and improve services for and accountability to the Afghan people. ISAF is engaged in daily direct dialogue with key Afghan ministries and staff partners



with the Ministry of Defense to improve effectiveness and connect the government to the Afghan people. Regional and subordinate Commanders, together with Provincial Reconstruction Teams partner with Provincial

Governors, District Sub-Governors, appointed village representatives, tribal elders, as well as District Development Assemblies and Community Development Councils. The two greatest limitations to faster progress in governance are lack of trained human capital and endemic corruption. Wide-spread illiteracy and an under developed education system are generational challenges to overcome through a long term commitment. The scourge of corruption erodes public support and confidence. Although corruption is the object of great international pressure as the coalition works to identify, expose and eliminate its sources, this challenge will require our continued persistence and patience.

Winning also requires increased forces (ANSF and ISAF) and security capability over a sustained period. The Afghan Soldier and growth of the ANA is a definite success story, but the Army must continue to grow and develop. The US-led Combined Security Transition Command – Afghanistan (CSTC-A) is largely responsible for this success. Since the start of 2008 the first seven Kandaks (battalions) have been declared capable of independent operations with ANA units leading the majority of their operations. ANA strength is on glide path to grow to 80,000 by 2010 with further increase to 134,000 by 2014. ANA leadership at all levels is good, and in-place leader development programs will only make it better. Soldier commitment, and war fighting spirit are strong. They are reliable in combat and a formidable foe to their adversaries. They have gained the confidence and support of the Afghan people. The emerging Afghan National Army Air Corps already consists of 17 MI-17 Assault Helicopters, four An-34 and two An-26 Transport Aircraft and executes the majority of air movements required by the ANSF. The ANA executed their first independent air movement operations in July. Additionally, the Commando Brigade, trained by the US-led Combined Joint Special

Operations Task Force –Afghanistan (CJSOTF-A), are highly skilled, elite infantry Soldiers for each of the ANA Corps. Commando Kandaks with CJSOTF-A advisors are the most effective counterinsurgency force in the ANA and operate with great effect.

The Afghan National Police (ANP) is progressing at a slower pace, but ISAF and CSTC-A have partnered to set the conditions for steady improvement. Pay reform, grade reform, elimination of private governor militias, Police Mentor Teams and the training of a highly capable Afghan National Civil Order Police (ANCOP) are CSTC-A initiatives that are comprehensively improving ANP competence and capability. The ANCOP battalions are the key enabler to Focus District Development (FDD). FDD is a program to reform police and improve rule of law at the grass roots level. District police are temporarily replaced by ANCOP battalions while vetting, recruiting and re-training occurs. Districts are selected jointly by ISAF and GIRoA. Construction or improvement of key district infrastructure is synchronized. ANCOP battalions take over policing and then are relieved eight weeks later by the newly trained district ANP. The program has been successful in improving ANP skills and effectiveness, reducing civilian casualties (as ANP ability to protect and defend improves), and i

public confidence.

Additional forces are required for two reasons – ANSF mentoring and partnership, and counterinsurgency (COIN) operations. The ANA increase and the need to develop ANP require more international forces to train, mentor, and partner. More forces can also accelerate ANSF force generation. The second reason more forces are

needed is to conduct COIN operations where we are not present today or cannot sustain our presence. In order to get to “BUILD” in our COIN strategy, we must be able to first “HOLD.” A lack of forces – maneuver and enablers -- to date has resulted in repeat operations to CLEAR areas we have been before, but could not remain in or “HOLD” due to other demands.

To address this force requirement, President Bush has authorized an additional American troop contribution for Afghanistan. In September the President announced an additional Army combat brigade will deploy to Afghanistan in January. We are confident other NATO leaders are working to resource our force requirements as other global commitments evolve.

The recent US initiative to establish US Forces – Afghanistan (USFOR-A) is a great step forward in improving unity of effort and effectiveness in Afghanistan. The Department of Defense’s decision streamlines command and control, identifies one US commander for the conventional forces in theater, and creates synergy among the two different ISAF and Operation Enduring Freedom mandates.

What lies ahead? The next two

years will be decisive for the future of Afghanistan. We must translate our successes into further stability so that we maintain these positive returns. Afghans will conduct Voter Registration from October 2008 to March 2009 in preparation for Presidential and Provincial Elections in September – October 2009. ANSF will assume lead security responsibility for the Province of Kabul and eventually other provinces as the right conditions are set. The ANA will continue to grow in size and capability. The ANP will make real strides in professionalism and COIN capability. ISAF will grow in capability, and together with ANSF, take the fight relentlessly to the enemies of Afghanistan. UNAMA, ISAF and others of the International Community will improve cooperation and development aid effectiveness in support of the Government of Afghanistan. The insurgency will react and external challenges will remain. Our great Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen and Marines will not fail us. The rate of progress will depend on factors we only indirectly influence, but our resolve must not falter. The Afghan people and international security depend on us to prevail. ■



# Interview with Command Sergeant Major Iuniasolua T. Savusa

## International Security Assistance Force, Afghanistan

***You left American Samoa at 17 years old, joined the US Army in 1975 and now find yourself the most senior enlisted servicemember in ISAF. Where did the story begin?***

I joined the army directly after high school and headed to basic training through Fort Polk, LA. It was a culture shock coming from American Samoa to Louisiana. After basic training, my first duty station was Ft. Lewis Washington where I joined the Rangers.

I wanted to join the army for economic reasons. Back home there were not many jobs available to a young man and the Army offered an opportunity. I found the Army as a way of life that suited me at the time. The discipline of the Army mirrors the system we have back home called the Matai system. That system basically resembles the chain of command in our military. It

was easy for me to adapt to the Army because of the system I grew up in. It was easy for me to follow orders as well as understand how to give them.

American Samoa, in the Pacific basin, is the most pro-US Island in the region. American Samoa has sustained a high casualty rate per capita in this war. With that, there is still tremendous support from the community. I have been back for a few of the funerals. I assisted with the first and it was very humbling. I took one of my own back to the Island. Today, as we speak, I have nieces and nephews in this theatre. They are out in the FOBs, where the “rubber meets the road” in what we are doing here- fighting the insurgency. I am very, very proud of them.

***How would you describe our mission at ISAF?***

It is always a privilege to serve at all levels of leadership and with soldiers. They have made me who I am today. When I was with 101st we were the first brigade deployed after 9/11. We participated in operations that we believe broke the Taliban and Al Qaeda and sent them limping across the border to Pakistan.

I am fortunate to have this opportunity. This is the third time I’ve deployed in this theatre. I have served as a Brigade Sergeant Major at the ground level where the fighting is at. I’ve had the privilege to move to higher level of commands to the four star level. This is a coalition, and a different type of command working with NATO and the international community to bring security to Afghanistan.

In this type of command there is one goal: we want to ensure we bring security which is the mandates of ISAF. We want to provide security and stability with good governance down to the village level. Help them with reconstruction and development of the country not only here in the capital but throughout the country. We are doing a lot of that with this multinational force. We certainly need more troops



to provide the security we need here. Whether those troops come from the US, international community or from within Afghanistan by training and better equipping the Afghan National Army or Police- to bring this level of force. We need to provide the right level of security for this country before we get to the election next year- the most strategic event for this country and ISAF next year. It is important for Afghanistan to elect their leader and see they have a voice in this system and that the process works. We did this with the presidential elections in 2004 which elected President Karzai and in 2005 for the parliamentary elections. This time we have a standing ANSF: a larger ANA and a huge-size ANP along with the border police. More of the NATO Forces is part of this mission today and by the time this election occurs we will have more troops here to enable the process. It is important to provide the security to get the people to the polling sites.

***What do you think leaders should stress to troops out on the front lines? What do you see for the future of ISAF?***

Perception. In most cases, perception is equated to reality. The actions of the servicemembers could have strategic impact on this mission. I believe the flag we all wear on our uniform is a sign of hope for people. It is a sign that we will help to bring security

and stability to this country. Every servicemember carries their nation's credibility and their conduct speaks loud. Servicemembers must understand their roles and responsibilities and respect the culture and people of this nation.

There is no doubt about it, this is a shooting war. This is the place where Al Qaeda and the Taliban staged the attacks of 9/11. We came here in 2002 and pushed them out, but since then, they have recuperated and now they

**“I believe this is a good and the right fight.”**

are coming back to fight. We need to partner with the ANSF fight the enemies of their country.

This is a NATO-run organization. That will not change. We are here for the long haul and we are here to win. This headquarters will remain as command and control of operations in Afghanistan. We will soon stand up U.S. Forces Afghanistan where General McKiernan will become commander of all US Forces and this will help with the unity of effort for the US Forces and our ISAF units in Afghanistan. It will also bring in more capabilities which is severely needed

and will help not only US forces, but forces throughout the country.

***What advice would you like to pass on to the soldiers, sailors, airmen and Marines of ISAF?***

Our troops must be prepared to operate in all points of the spectrum, from security, stability, and support operations to up close, brutal, and intense combat. Each individual must be self confident and aggressive-in-execution of their combat drills and task, yet demonstrate compassion, sensitivity and respect for the regional culture. Be curious, know how to recognize enemy patterns and, more importantly, how to exploit them. Like wise not let the enemy develop patterns of our operations. Continue to live by our joint-coalition values and honorably represent your country and your Armed Forces.

***Any closing comments?***

I believe this is a good and the right fight. This is where it all started with Al Qaeda and the Taliban. We need the international community to stay engaged. I am truly humbled to be your Command Sergeant Major.





# NRDC - TURKEY BEGINS DUTY IN ISAF HQ

*Story by First Lieutenant Yuksel Kilic,  
Turkish Army  
ISAF HQ PAO*

In accordance with the ISAF Standing HQ rotation plan, Core Staff Element (CSE) from NATO Rapid Deployable Corps- Turkey (NRDC-T) took over the responsibility from JFC-Naples at the beginning of August 2008.

NRDC-T provides support with 91 Turkish and 24 Allied personnel under the command of BG Levent Colak for the success of the ISAF mission until

February 2009.

NRDC-T developed a challenging and coherent training program, and conducted a number of pre-deployment training activities such as Key Leader Training (KLT) and Mission Specific Training (MST). In order to be familiar with the ISAF battle rhythm and the acquisitions from previous training activities, CSE also conducted a Mission Rehearsal

Exercise at the Joint Warfare Center in Stavanger, NORWAY June 18-27.

This is the second rotation of NRDC-T in Afghanistan. The previous term was between January 13 and August 4, 2005. During that term, NRDC-T took over the command responsibility of ISAF forces and carried out the mission of providing security and assistance to its area of operation. ■



# Reagan supports coalition forces in Afghanistan

A photograph of a fighter jet, likely an F/A-18 Hornet, on the deck of an aircraft carrier. The jet is viewed from a rear-quarter perspective, showing its two engines with bright orange afterburners. The tail number '400' is visible on the right wing. The background shows the ocean and a hazy sky. The image is framed by a white circular border.

*Story by Lieutenant Ron Flanders, US Navy  
USS Ronald Reagan Public Affairs*

**A**BOARD USS RONALD REAGAN IN THE GULF OF OMAN - Carrier Strike Group (CSG) 7, the USS Ronald Reagan (CVN 76) Carrier Strike Group, assumed the duties as Commander, Task Force (CTF) 50 from the USS Abraham Lincoln (CVN 72) Carrier Strike Group August 28, launching its first sorties into Afghanistan in support of Operation Enduring Freedom.

Since August 28, USS Ronald Reagan has flown 400 sorties, delivered 50 weapons and conducted 30 strafing runs in support of coalition ground forces.

Aircraft from Carrier Air Wing (CVW) 14 departed the decks of the strike group's flagship, the aircraft carrier USS Ronald Reagan bound for Afghanistan to support coalition ground forces.

"This is the mission we've been training for almost a year to carry out," said Rear Adm. Phil Wisecup, the strike group commander. "Every Sailor in this strike group has tremendous focus

right now; our pilots and maintenance crews are extremely sharp- they are in contact with coalition forces every day. We're talking to them, and providing them support. The USS Ronald Reagan Carrier Strike group is doing our part to help coalition troops and foster security in Afghanistan."

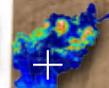
Other CSG-7 ships are supporting maritime security operations (MSO) in the 5th Fleet area of operations; the guided-missile destroyer USS Decatur (DDG 73) and guided-missile frigate USS Thach (FFG 43) have joined CTF 152 to provide security to maritime infrastructure in the Arabian Gulf, and the guided-missile destroyers USS Howard (DDG 83) and USS Gridley (DDG 101) have joined CTF 150 to help provide lawful maritime order and deter illicit activities in the Arabian Sea, Gulf of Oman and Gulf of Aden.

USS Ronald Reagan is joined by the guided-missile cruiser USS Chancellorsville (CG 62) and relieved USS Abraham Lincoln on station.

The Abraham Lincoln Carrier Strike Group performed the CTF 50 mission for just over four months.

"Abraham Lincoln and her Sailors performed incredibly well," said Capt. Kenneth Norton, Ronald Reagan's commanding officer. "We received an outstanding turnover from Lincoln, and we're here to provide the same high level of support to our coalition troops."

The squadrons of CVW-14 include the "Redcocks" of Strike Fighter Squadron (VFA) 22, the "Fist of the Fleet" of VFA-25, the "Stingers" of VFA-113, the "Eagles" of VFA-115, the "Black Eagles" of Airborne Early Warning Squadron (VAW) 113, the "Cougars" of Tactical Electronic Warfare Squadron (VAQ) 139, and the "Black Knights" of Helicopter Anti-Submarine Squadron (HS) 4. The Ronald Reagan Carrier Strike Group is on a routine deployment to the 5th and 7th Fleet areas of operations to promote maritime security and stability. ■



# ANSF and ISAF successfully deliver a new turbine to Kajaki Dam



**K**abul, Afghanistan – In the early morning hours of September 2, ANSF and ISAF successfully delivered a new turbine to Kajaki Dam in Helmand province. The result of the operation will be a much needed increase in capacity to generate electrical power, which will create a better quality of life for Afghan people in southern Afghanistan.

The multi-national convoy, travelled 180km over road and desert tracks to reach its destination. 4,000 ANSF and ISAF troops were involved in the operation, including UK, US, Canada, Denmark and Australia, providing security to the convoy and dominating the ground around it.

The GIRoA supported project is one part of the international community's effort towards redevelopment in the Southern region, and has been funded by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). This demonstrates the determination to support development and growth in southern Afghanistan and demonstrates GIRoA's and ISAF's long term

commitment to the people of Afghanistan.

“Even though this operation was just one step in a much wider and more long-term reconstruction project, this operation clearly demonstrated ANSF and ISAF commitment to the reconstruction effort in Afghanistan,” said Major General Lessard, Commander of Regional Command South. “ANSF and ISAF believe that the population of Afghanistan are entitled to live in honour and dignity and will stay the course to help them to have a normal life,” he added.

“Despite the disruptive effort from the insurgents, we achieved our goal and delivered the new turbine to Kajaki Dam,” Major General Lessard stated, “the insurgents efforts have not been successful. They will not win and are not winning in the southern region.”

GIRoA, assisted by their own forces and ISAF, will rebuild the South and this operation is an excellent example of the government strategy of work. ■



## TF URUZGAN TEACH LOCAL SHOPOWNERS SUCCESSFUL BUSINESS TECHNIQUES

**K**ABUL, Afghanistan - Twelve local shopowners successfully graduated from the course 'start to improve your business' which took place in the Deh Rawod PRT.

During the course, which is conducted by Taskforce Uruzgan, the shopowners learned how to present and offer their merchandise and how to adjust the supply of their products

to the market.

After the completion of their training Major Paul, Commander of Mission Team 3 of the PRT, presented the certificates to the shopowners. He stated that education is a main investment in the future and that the local businessmen learned important skills which they will use in the future. One of the shopowners said that he has

learned that it is important to have just as much of a product that you can sell, if you offer more product than is being asked by the market than you will not be able to sell all your products, or even worse, get a lower price for it.

More than 40 Afghans shopowners will attend the next training course. ■



## The Kandahar Tourniquet: Keeping it simple

**K**abul, Afghanistan – A recent incident involving ANA caused the OMLT medical staff to take action to revise their first aid refresher training program. The first priority was to improve soldiers' chances of surviving serious injuries with massive hemorrhage, so the OMLT also developed a comprehensive plan to promote the use of tourniquets in the 1st Brigade.

A tourniquet is a simple, easily applied device, and it doesn't take long to teach soldiers how to use it effectively. After reviewing what was available to ISAF in Kandahar and consulting a materials technician and a parachute rigger, the OMLT medics decided to design a simple tourniquet that local manufacturers could produce from readily available materials,

incidentally providing employment for women in Kandahar Province.

The result is the Kandahar Tourniquet: a length of nylon webbing with two loops sewn into it. Wrap it around the limb above the wound, insert a section of C-7 rifle cleaning rod through the loops and twist.

The initial production run of 100 tourniquets was introduced into the first aid training program and was completed by the next infantry kandak prepared for deployment. By mid-July, manufacturers had produced 5,000 tourniquets with complementary instructional fact sheets and posters, and 1,800 tourniquets had been issued in ANA and ANP units with ISAF mentors.

In September, 85 percent of the target recipients — 1st Brigade's of-

ficers and senior non-commissioned members — will have received a Kandahar Tourniquet during their operational first aid refresher course.

Another batch of 1,800 tourniquets has been delivered to the 3rd Brigade, 205 Corps, where the mentors are British, with 2,000 more on order funded by Regional Command South. The Mentoring Team at the ANA Training Command Lessons Learned Centre has plans to extend the tourniquet project throughout the ANA.

The revised operational first aid training program now includes managing the scene of an incident, establishing a casualty collection point (CCP), triage of casualties, and selection and security of helicopter landing sites. ■



## Joint Afghan/American Surgery removes abdomen tumour

**T**ourpekai is alive today because of a joint Afghan/American surgery at PRT Farah.

United States Army Captain Patrick McGraw, a surgeon with the Forward Surgical Team at PRT Farah, removed a tumour weighing close to 10 pounds from the 10-year-old girl's abdomen. He was assisted in this surgery by Dr. Hamid Rahmani and Aref, an anesthesiologist, both from Farah Hospital.

"That tumour weighed 10 percent of the girl's body weight," said Captain McGraw.

Tourpekai's family grew desperate when their daughter stopped eating or drinking, and cried out in constant pain. "When the tumour was small she could walk, talk and eat. But when the tumour enlarged the symptoms increased: pain, trouble walking, trouble sleeping. She could not roll on one side, she could not bend over. She was in severe pain. I had to hold her on my shoulder. As soon as I laid her down she would start crying because the tumour was too big," said Tourpekai's mother. The family began to search

for help. They went to hospitals in Herat, and in Shindand, but met with no success. When they turned up at the gates to PRT Farah, Captain McGraw knew he was their final chance. "If we didn't do something to help her out she would have died

in a few weeks from starvation and malnutrition," he said. Dr. McGraw and Dr. Rahmani took x-rays and gave Tourpekai an ultrasound, which showed a solid mass in her abdomen. They knew they had to either de-bulk the tumour, or remove it entirely, since it had filled all available abdominal space, and was constricting blood flow through her aorta. "Luckily, we were able to completely remove it," says Captain McGraw.

Following her lengthy surgery, Tourpekai began eating and drinking, and is recovering very well at the PRT medical centre. Her family rises at 3 am each morning to begin the long trip to the PRT to see their daughter. "I was compelled to bring her to PRT Farah to see what they could do for her. Now she is quite fine. Now she is getting healthy," said Tourpekai's mother.

The tumour has been sent to Landstuhl Regional Medical Center in Germany for further studies. ■



# ISAF kicks off first United Through Reading Program

Story by Petty Officer 1st Class David Hamilton, US Navy  
ISAF HQ PAO

**K**ABUL, AFGHANISTAN — ISAF servicemembers from the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF), were eager to kick off the “United Through Reading” (UTR) program Aug. 29 to allow deployed parents and children to stay connected in a meaningful way.

UTR is a non-profit public benefit organization. The vision of the program is to allow all children to feel the security of caring family relationships and develop a love of reading through the read-aloud experience.

Sponsored by the Family Literacy Foundation, UTR allows deployed servicemembers to read books to their children on videotape or DVD, and mail them home. The program is a “win win” situation for both parents and children, boosting family morale and reinforcing parental support felt by the spouse at home. The servicemembers are videotaped reading the books and then the DVD is sent back home so the children can follow along.

U.S. Air Force Master Sergeant

Steve Mullens father of four read “Rudolph the Red Nosed Reindeer” along with a few other reading selections in case he was not going to be home for the holidays. “My children are going to be so surprised when they get this,” said Mullens. “Hearing my voice and especially seeing me reassures them that I am safe over here.”

UTR has given Mullens and his family an opportunity to stay connected while being deployed. “My wife and I understand the significance of reading to our children,” said Mullens. “We have been reading to our children since infancy.”

According to U.S. Navy Storekeeper 1st Class Lamont Littles, UTR coordinator, the program is off to a productive start.

“My role as the coordinator of UTR is to ensure all deployed members are given the opportunity to reconnect with their families back home and what better way to do that than through reading to a loved one.”

Founded in 1989, Founder and Pres-

ident Betty J. Mohlenbrock, M.Ed. stated, “UTR has served over 346,000 people through four community outreach programs with student and adult volunteers contributing over 224,000 hours from the corporate, social service, and educational sectors.”

Little and the many volunteers that help run the program understand the limited amount of time servicemembers have and the importance of being flexible when it comes to setting up reading sessions. “We have sessions four days a week,” said Littles. “Servicemembers can either schedule an appointment or walk in.”

U.S. Air Force Sergeant Andy Best read a story familiar to his three daughters, “Good Night Sweet Butterfly.” Just as he does at home, Best read with expression, animating the bus and insect characters in the story as he was being video taped.

“I love reading to my children, adding all the expressions from the story,” said Best. “It makes reading fun and not a chore. When they get the DVD at home, they will be able to see me, hear me and hopefully it will feel as though daddy is right there in the room with them.”

When away from family for three, six, or twelve months, it is often hard for soldiers to connect or stay involved with their loved ones. Through UTR, fears about the parent’s absence are eased.

I email and talk on the phone with my family a few times a week, but it is not the same as physically being there,” said Best. “UTR is the next best thing, allowing me even more of an opportunity to actively stay involved with my family.”

This is ISAF’s first official UTR program in Afghanistan. ■



