

Getting a flavour of ISAF Mission

By LtC R. CRISTONI, Chief PIO

NRDC-IT reconnoiters visited Afghanistan

As part of preparation for the mission the Key leaders of ISAF VIII rotation conducted a detailed reconnaissance of the Afghan theatre to better inform its preparation and training.

The visit comes at a crucial time for NATO, as the Alliance prepares for expansion and a greater role in rebuilding the country, and Afghanistan as it gears up for crucial regional elections in September.

The recce began with a series of staff talks at the NATO's controlling Headquarters for the operation, Joint Force Command Brunssum in the Netherlands.

Here the key leaders of HQ NRDC-IT met with their counterparts in the higher Headquarters, discussing the long term planning for the mission, expansion of NATO's role and the approach to the crucial regional elections in September.

Then the team, under Lt Gen Del Vecchio, travelled to Kabul for a week of "Key Leader Training",



ISAF HQ main building

with the aim "to prepare ISAF VIII Key Leaders for their responsibilities in the ISAF mission and contribute to its success, including...preparatory training".

The deployment was conducted through the NATO air bridge moving from Cologne, Germany, to Termez, Uzbekistan, and finally to Kabul.

The team was composed by the member of NRDC-IT Command group and was also joined by ISAF VIII designated Deputy Commander, Major General Jaap S. Willemse, current Deputy Commander CAOC 2 in Kalkar and by Brigadier General LUSNI, who will be ISAF Air Task force Commander.

In theatre they received the latest information on the security and tactical situations from the current ISAF VII Commander, Turkish Army Lieutenant General

Ethem Erdagi, Kabul Multinational Brigade (KMNB) and Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRT).



The training then continued with a lot of meetings and visits with the main agencies involved in assisting the Government of Afghanistan, from the US-led Coalition Force Command –Afghanistan (CFC-A) Commander, Lt Gen David W. Barno, to the United Nations Assistance Mission Afghanistan (UNAMA).

Lt Gen Del Vecchio paid a visit to the Combined Joint Task Force -76 Hq in Baghram, that is provided by SETAF – Vicenza for one year tour of duty; during the visit he was briefed about the US led Provincial reconstruction Team organization and the challenges for the future expansion of the mission in the southern part of the country.

Gen Del Vecchio and his team had also the chance to meet HE Ettore Francesco Sequi, Italian Ambassador to Afghanistan and General Bismullah Khan, Afghanistan Chief of Army General Staff.

In order to ensure all the issues identified were correctly addressed for future planning the team returned to JFC Brunssum for an ISAF seminar. In addition the key leaders will use this experience and the info gathered to conduct the major training exercises, Eagle Action and Eagle Thunder in May and June in the most appropriate way.

