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BACKGROUNDER

NATO TRAINING MISSION – AFGHANISTAN (NTM-A)

At the Strasbourg-Kehl Summit in April 2009, NATO Heads of State and Government decided to create NTM-A to oversee higher-level training for the Afghan National Army (ANA), and training and mentoring for the Afghan National Police (ANP). In June 2009 NATO Defence Ministers endorsed a gradual implementation of NTM-A tasks. The key elements include a phased provision of additional Operational Mentoring and Liaison Teams (OMLTs), Police OMLTs (POMLTs) and support to the Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF) institutional training base.

NTM-A draws together enhanced NATO and national efforts to train Afghan Army and Police, to increase coherence and effectiveness. The intent is to maintain the present momentum with the ANA, while adding focus to ANP development.

Previously, NATO's assistance to the ANSF focused primarily on building the capability and reach of the ANA through the fielding of OMLTs. The International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) nations also provided over 300 million USD worth of equipment donations to the ANA, and contributions and pledges to the NATO ANA Trust Fund have reached 245 mil Euro.

Prior to the NTM-A initiative, ISAF helped to coordinate ANP activities with the ANA and ISAF. ISAF Provincial Reconstruction Teams supported the ANP by conducting a wide array of activities, including the supervision of existing training programmes, providing security and logistical support to European Union Police Mission (EUPOL) mentors, and providing basic skills training to ANP personnel. Many ISAF nations have provided support to the ANSF on a bilateral basis.

NTM-A efforts to support the police will focus on reform at the district level and below to increase operational capabilities and survivability. The ANP needs more robust training and mentoring, as well as equipment. EUPOL will maintain its current focus on conventional policing and higher level police management and standards. NATO and EUPOL coordination will be achieved through the Joint Coordination and Monitoring Board (JCMB) and International Police Coordination Board (IPCB).

The NTM-A mission will also support the development of self-sustaining institutions which will allow the ANA and ANP to train and professionally educate security forces to enforce laws and protect Afghans in the future. The Afghan Defence University, Branch Schools, and ANA and ANP training facilities are the cornerstones of this development.

Sustaining the ANSF is an important aspect of the overall effort of building these forces. NATO's ANA Trust Fund will be the main conduit for the International Community to support the long-term sustainment of the ANA, while the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) Law and Order Trust Fund for Afghanistan remains the primary vehicle for supporting the sustainment of the ANP.

NTM-A COMMAND RELATIONSHIPS

NTM-A will be commanded by a three-star General, who, together with the three-star Commander of the ISAF Joint Command (IJC), will report to the four-star Commander of ISAF. Commander NTM-A will focus on the strategic level coordination and preparation of OMLTs and POMLTs, while the IJC Commander will take operational control of all ANA and ANP mentoring teams and have responsibility for developing fielded ANSF. Maintaining the same chain of command for manoeuvre and mentoring forces reduces overall risk as ISAF forces can more effectively respond to emergency situations involving mentoring teams and ANSF.

NTM-A will also focus on ANSF institutional training, education, and professional development activities. Development of the Afghan Ministries of Defence and Interior will remain under direct mentorship of CSTC-A.

Both IJC and NTM-A were established in October 2009.