

COALITION

Issue 75

January 2012



International Night 2011



Chairman

BG Jens Praestegaard, Denmark



Director of Coalition Public Affairs

COL Mamdoh Al-Ameri, Jordan



Senior Editor

MAJ Abdul-Rahman Khawaldah , Jordan



Editorial Staff

LTC Michel C. Escudie, USA



COL Jaber Al-Marri , Qatar



MAJ Shahid Rizwan, Pakistan



MAJ Shawkat Osman , Bangladesh



Reach us on facebook

Coalition Forces at US. CENTCOM



Editor's Note

By the generous permission of our NATO partners, the Coalition is pleased to bring you stories covering the activities of the International Security Assistance Force. As ISAF and the Coalition are separate entities, ISAF stories will be denoted by the NATO logo at the top of each page when they appear .h

The views expressed in the Coalition Bulletin cannot be attributed to any one nation. They are items considered newsworthy by the volunteers from various nations that make up the Public Awareness Working Group (PAWG). Contributions from all Coalition countries are encouraged. All contributors to the Coalition Bulletin are responsible for adhering to PAWG policy pertaining to the accuracy and copyright laws in the content they provide.h For questions concerning PAWG policy, contact the Coalition Bulletin editor at +1 (813) 827-1728, or write to us at Shawkatosman2001@yahoo.com. For an electronic copy of the Coalition Bulletin, visit: www.centcom.mil

IN THIS ISSUE

- 4 Rebuilding the foundation: Academy builds confidence, skills of Iraqi NCOs
- 7 U.S. Navy rescues Iranian fishing vessel from pirates in Arabian Sea
- 8 Afghan, American students build relationships via video teleconference
- 9 Afghan Air Force medic takes to the skies for his first mission
- 10 International night 2011
- 12 The annual Counter Improvised Explosive Devices (C-IED) Conference 2011
- 13 OPERATION "ON GROUND" ON QADESH
- 14 Coalition and Community celebrate Thanksgiving
- 15 Coalition Social Events at a Glance



Cover Pages

Front Cover

International Night 2011



Back Cover

Afghan Air Force rescuing people from rapidly rising flood waters at Kabul and Laghman Rivers (Archiving)



EDITORIAL

Success through communication and collaboration

A new year gives us an opportunity to reflect on the year that was to examine our achievements and also brings with it the expectations of the future vision, mission, and values.

We look forward to 2012 with great hopes for the future of the Coalition. We will continue working and developing an efficient, effective and accountable plan for the New Year.

The Public Affairs Office is committed to presenting information in a thoughtful, clear, honest and strategic way to support the Coalition nation represented in Coalition Village (CV3) with the aim of creating safe, stable environment and to improve relations among nations.

Almost sixty countries are represented in the (CV3) working together to defeat terrorism. In particular, the role of detachments is to ensure a responsive liaison between their respective HQs and the Commander of USCENTCOM, and in turn to provide the best possible support to troops on the ground. The presence of so many different nationalities is unique and valuable for a strategic command. Many meetings and exchanges of views that punctuate the daily life of the coalition, lead to a better understanding of the problems of each country, and particularly those in the AOR.

We take this opportunity to thank all the reviewers, editorial members, advisers, and above all our readers a very happy and successful year. We cannot conclude without a thought for all our comrades who are in combat, far from home.

We Wish All Our Readers a Very Happy and Prosperous New Year

Col. Mamdoh Al-Ameri, Jordan
Director, Coalition Public Affairs



NEWS IN BRIEF

By CENTCOM Public Affairs



Panetta, Dempsey to mark end of Iraq mission

BAGHDAD, Iraq (Dec. 15, 2011) — Defense Secretary Leon E. Panetta arrived to join Army Gen. Martin E. Dempsey, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, in ceremonies marking the end of the U.S. military mission in Iraq.

The secretary and chairman, along with Army Gen. Lloyd Austin, commander of U.S. Forces Iraq, and Ambassador James Jeffrey, will lead the U.S. delegation at the ceremony.



Jordanian soldiers discuss battle tactic while a U.S. Soldier, left, stands by in case an interpreter is needed during a situational training exercise Nov. 24, 2011, near Amman, Jordan, during Operation Flexible Saif, a joint training exercise to improve future security operations.



Afghan National Army soldiers from the second all-female officer candidate school class march to their graduation ceremony at the Kabul Military Training Center in Kabul, Afghanistan, Nov. 24, 2011. (DoD photo by Mass Communication 1st Class Elizabeth Thompson, U.S. Navy)

Rebuilding the foundation: Academy builds confidence, skills of Iraqi Noncommissioned Officers (NCOs)

By Sgt. 1st Class Raymond Piper

Building a strong and effective noncommissioned officer corps that lives up to the title of “backbone” takes time. Iraq lost experienced NCOs through attrition during the Iraq-Iran War and years of sanctions, as well as the invasion in 2003 and subsequent dissolution of the old Iraqi army.

Lieutenant Gen. Riyadh Jalal Tawfig, Iraqi Ground Forces Command deputy commander, compared the Iraqi NCOs to the foundation that the old army was built on, and he said it is one that has taken time to rebuild.

“When we started reorganizing the Iraqi army we didn’t have the old army enlisted joining. It was rare to have a former enlisted soldier rejoin. This created a challenge to develop NCOs,” Riyadh said.

It’s a challenge that the U.S. Army faced in the past as well and one that Retired Command Sgt. Maj. Vincent Meyers experienced in his 33 years of service. His knowledge in training U.S., Ukrainian and Ethiopian soldiers was leveraged to aid in further developing the Camp Taji NCO Academy.

“What I tell people is that the Iraqi army today is a lot like the American army from 1970s. The American Army had to rebuild the NCO corps after 10 years of conflict in Vietnam

where a large number of NCOs were either killed in action or got out,” Meyers said. “It’s the same here; you can’t take hundreds of people and try to say ‘mass produce NCOs.’ It’s not going to happen.”

U.S. and coalition forces have trained Iraqi forces throughout Operations Iraqi Freedom and New Dawn to help prepare them to take over the security of their nation. NCOs were not left behind in this training, but it wasn’t until November 2008 that a pilot program began to establish a formalized NCO education system. The program was finalized in October 2010, providing a standard to train NCOs through the partnered efforts of U.S. Forces-Iraq, NATO Training Mission-Iraq and the Iraqi Ministry of Defense.

“Even though there were many obstacles, we started with the basic steps and there has been definite improvement and it continues today,” Riyadh said, comparing the training that U.S. forces provided to the Iraqi army throughout OIF to planting a seed.

“As they trained Iraqi soldiers, they trained trainers that will continue to train the Iraqi forces,” Riyadh continued. “Just like the U.S. forces that continue to train when they return home,



Iraqi Sgt. Mustafa watches as instructors from the Camp Taji Noncommissioned Officer Academy fire while qualifying with M-16 Rifles. U.S. trainers worked to build the skills and confidence of the cadre of the academy by making them experts on both the M-16 and AK-47 rifles

the Iraqi army is going to continue training.”

The successful transition of training Iraqi soldiers rests in NCOs not only knowing the skills, but being confident in teaching them.

“What we want is to get the Iraqi noncommissioned officer instructors to be able to teach their own soldiers. That way they get prestige,” Meyers said. “It’s great to have an American sergeant teach them, but where is the enduring part of that?”

The Camp Taji NCO Academy is one such training facility where some Iraqi soldiers arrive with little knowledge, but leave the academy better prepared to lead and train. The facility creates an enduring environment where the academy grows NCOs at all levels. The long-term intent is that as new Iraqi NCOs come through the ranks they will go through each level, much like the U.S. Army NCO education system.

The academy hosts three senior-leader courses a year, two junior-leader courses and multiple weapons training and unit trainer courses. The junior and senior leader courses focus on building the skills they will need to train soldiers, such as leadership, map reading, marksmanship and weapons maintenance, training, tactics and counterinsurgency.

Each student works from a laptop and are connected to each other through a local network that allows them to share information and course material. The classes also focus on basic computer skills.

“Soldiers coming from units that have never conducted this type of training are able to learn it here and gain leadership skills by leading others in the tasks, so they can become better

NCOs,” said Iraqi Lt. Col. Abbas Fadel, academy executive officer.

The hallways and classrooms walls reflect the purpose of the academy with posters designed to continue the Iraqi NCO’s learning even when they aren’t sitting in class. The goal is that even on break or walking through the halls the students are able to learn.

Learning never stops, but it doesn’t just revolve around the soldier skills the Iraqi noncommissioned officers develop at the academy. The ultimate goal is to develop leaders, who are confident and able to teach soldiers when they return to their units.

To create that confidence, the classes focus on 80 percent hands-on training where the students perform tasks and learn from each other. Twenty percent of the training is given by the instructors to ensure the students understand the lesson then the task, condition and standard is given to the students, then they have to execute. The instructors guide the students and provide them with a grade following the exercise.

When the students first arrive, they are unsure what to expect as they begin to learn and teach each other, Meyers said. As the course goes on, their confidence increases with their abilities to successfully complete the classes.

“When they get up there and get it right, and someone -- not an American instructor, an Iraqi instructor -- says, ‘Hey you did a good job,’ you begin to see a real transformation at about the 30-day mark.”

“Some of the students have never read a map or used a com-



Iraqi soldiers at the Camp Taji NCO Academy check their targets after qualification firing. The confidence that the Iraqi NCOs gain from attending the academy has encouraged Iraqi commanders to send more of their NCOs to the offered courses.

puter, so they are very motivated and become more focused as they go through the courses,” Abbas said. The academy started with 20 seats, but has increased its capacity to 50 students per class. At the end of each course, the students are given a CD to bring back to their unit with all of the training material, giving them tools to train soldiers with.

“Now more than ever the Iraqi Army needs good NCOs attending the courses that will go back to their units and teach and mentor soldiers,” said Iraqi Sgt. 1st Class Ali, an instructor at the academy since 2005.

One of the ways used to instill confidence in the instructors was to develop a cadre of Iraqi NCOs to be experts and then share that expertise with the students. To reach that goal, Meyers subscribed to the example set by Baron von Steuben more than 200 years ago. Steuben is credited with being one of the fathers of the Continental Army, and teaching them the essentials of military drills, tactics, and disciplines. He wrote the Revolutionary War Drill Manual, known as “The Blue Book,” which served as the standard United States drill manual until the War of 1812. “He didn’t take a thousand guys,” Meyers said. “He asked for the hundred best guys and trained them and built up their confidence, so they could train everyone else. That’s what we did.”

Meyers said it was important to find something that was important to the Iraqi military and for the Iraqi army it was marksmanship. The U.S. trainers took 10 instructors from the academy, dubbed them the “Iraqi Rifles” and drilled them with the goal of making them experts on the M-16 Rifle and the AK-47 assault rifle. The Iraqi army fields both rifles within its units, so it was crucial for the cadre to be confident with both weapons. Each time the students were on the range, a different NCO would be in charge to help them understand that when they were in charge, they were responsible for the training and the range.

“The range and marksmanship were the tools we used to build their confidence as noncommissioned officers,” Meyers said. “We weren’t so much worried about them being able to shoot as we were in allowing them to get out there and be leaders.”

During a tour of the facility, the range was hot and Iraqi Sgt. Mustafa was the range NCOIC. The first step was for the Iraqi soldiers to zero their weapons then qualify on the 100-meter range using paper targets. When they finished firing, the soldiers were eager to move down range and see how they had done. Several senior leaders from the academy, senior U.S. NCOs and Command Sgt. Maj. Earl L. Rice, command sergeant major to the deputy commanding general for operations, U.S. Forces-Iraq, were also observing the training. When the last shot rang out, Mustafa ensured that everyone had cleared their rifles before allowing anyone to move and examine the targets.

“He had no problem stopping all these senior people because he was taught that when you are in charge, you are responsible,” Meyers said. “He was responsible for that

range that day.”

Another Iraqi soldier had a weapons malfunction and had to fire an unzeroed weapon, knowing that he would probably be off target. His goal wasn’t to hit targets, but to evaluate his shot group and adjust the rifle based on his previous zero. After firing, he immediately went back to his rifle and made his adjustments.

“That is the type of stuff that gives instant credibility to Iraqi sergeants, when you have a noncommissioned officer that is confident and knows exactly what he is doing,” Meyers said. “When you know something it builds confidence. When you have confidence, you can be a leader.”

The other side to building the cadre of instructors was to have the U.S. Soldiers be hands off once the instructors were trained and ready to lead to create an enduring Iraqi-led training program.

“We have built an enduring process and that should be with everything we are doing,” Meyers said. “I think we have gotten to a point they can build their own NCO corps. There is not much more we can do other than showing their leadership how our NCO courses are set up, so they can help them determine the assets they need to set up courses.”

Demonstrating what the NCO academy can do for the professionalism of the Iraqi army is something that Rice highlighted to Iraqi division command sergeants major and the Iraqi Ground Forces Command after his first visit to the academy.

“After Command Sgt. Maj. Rice’s visit, he asked the IGFC command to visit and tour the facility,” Abbas said. “The word really got out after their visit and the IGFC and the Iraqi Army has a better view on how the NCO academy changes soldiers into leaders.

They see that their NCOs are more confident and how much they learn at the academy.”

The accomplishments of the academy led them to receive more resources and equipment following each class, aiding them in training better NCOs.

“The graduates, people who are educated, benefit from the knowledge that they learn and then can apply it to their unit,” Abbas said.

“The view of the NCO academy is changing and all of the Iraqi army will benefit from the training.”



Iraqi Sgt. Saif Majid, a Camp Taji NCO Academy instructor, adjusts the front post sight of his rifle. One of the goals of the academy was to make the instructors proficient and confident

U.S. Navy rescues Iranian fishing vessel from pirates in Arabian Sea

By US Naval Forces Central Command

Arabian Sea (January 6, 2012) — , Forces assigned to the John C. Stennis Carrier Strike Group rescued an Iranian fishing vessel from pirates in the northern Arabian Sea. At approximately 12:30 p.m., an SH-60S Seahawk from the guided-missile destroyer USS Kidd (DDG 100) detected a suspected pirate skiff alongside the Iranian-flagged fishing dhow Al Molai. Simultaneously, a distress call was received from the master of the Al Molai claiming he was being held captive by pirates.

A Visit, Board, Search and Seizure team from the Kidd boarded the Al Molai and detained 15 suspected pirates who had been holding a 13-member Iranian crew hostage for several weeks. The Al Molai had been pirated and used as a “mother ship” for pirate operations throughout the Persian Gulf, according to members of the Iranian vessel’s crew.

The pirates did not resist the boarding and surrendered quickly.

“The Al Molai had been taken over by pirates for roughly the last 40-45 days,” said Josh Schminky, a Navy Criminal Investigative Service agent aboard the Kidd. “They were held hostage, with limited rations, and we believe were forced against their will to assist the pirates with other piracy operations.”

According to members of the Kidd boarding party, the Iranian crew said they were forced by the pirates to live in harsh conditions, under the threat of violence with limited supplies and medical aid.

“When we boarded, we gave them food, water, and medical care,” said Schminky. “They had been through a lot. We went out of our way to treat the fishing crew with kindness and respect.

“After securing the ship and ensuring the safety of all persons on board, we began distributing food and water to both the crew and the suspected criminals as is our standard practice in Counter-Piracy operations.”

The pirates were detained on the Al Molai by the Kidd board-

ing party until the next morning when they could be transferred to the USS John C. Stennis, where the matter will be reviewed for prosecution. The pirates currently remain on the Stennis.

“The Captain of the Al Molai expressed his sincere gratitude that we came to assist them. He was afraid that without our help, they could have been there for months,” said Schminky.

Piracy is an international problem requiring an international solution and is a threat to all mariners. The presence of U.S. Navy ships in this region promotes freedom of navigation and protects the safety of those who transit the sea.



The John C. Stennis Carrier Strike Group is conducting maritime security operations in the U.S. 5th Fleet area of operations while supporting Operation Enduring Freedom.



Afghan, American students build relationships via video teleconference

By Cpl. Reece Lodder, Regimental Combat Team 5

<http://www.centcom.mil>

HAZAR JOFT, Helmand province, Afghanistan (Dec10, 2011) — For the second time in Garmsir district this year, Afghan and American high-school students interacted over a video teleconference, Dec. 8.

The VTC, held at the Garmsir Agricultural High School, was hosted by the non-profit organization Spirit of America in coordination with Marines from 3rd Battalion, 3rd Marine Regiment, currently serving in the Garmsir.

In April, the Los Angeles-based organization partnered with 2nd Battalion, 1st Marine Regiment to host a VTC for Afghan and American students at the Kadalo Drab School further south in Koshtay.

“The VTCs are an extension of our mission — connecting the American people to the coalition mission on the ground in Afghanistan,” said Matt Valkovic, the manager of Spirit of America’s commander support program. “They provide students on opposite sides of the world an unfiltered cultural exchange.”

The organization responds to needs identified by deployed service members, and has helped provide humanitarian assistance in Afghanistan, Africa and Iraq, Volkovic said.

Since arriving in Helmand province in 2010, Spirit of America has helped supply blankets and winter coats for local children, and shovels and boots for farmers. It has also supported a school refurbishment in the neighboring Marjah district.

“The youth are the future of Afghanistan,” Volkovic said. “Giving them a small window into the outside world shows them American kids are similar to them, despite some cultural differences. The common factor is that the kids on both sides are at school to better their lives and improve their future.”

Seated in front of a laptop, the Afghan students spoke with counterparts from Lejeune High School on Marine Corps Base Camp Lejeune, N.C. Through a translator, they gave the American students a glimpse into their school lives, families, hobbies and culture. As the translator described the American students’ response, the group of approximately 40 Afghan students smiled and talked amongst themselves.

“There are a lot of differences between our classes and schools, but I appreciate being able to learn new things from the American students,” said 16-year-old student Mohammad Zakaria.

Zakaria proudly read the Afghan national anthem to familiarize the American students with Afghan culture, while another classmate shared an important part of his life by reciting verses from the Qu’ran.

The Afghan students shared excitement for their studies with their far-away counterparts, crediting the students’ military parents for helping the Afghan government bring educational opportunities to Garmsir.

“Since the Marines have helped us build a school, we’re able to learn about agriculture and progress in our studies,” said 16-year-old student Mohammad Fared. “We want to become educated so we can help

build our country. Today, everything is done with knowledge. There will be no fighting in the future if we are educated.”

Though insurgent activity is now infrequent in Garmsir, the local government is working with coalition forces to repair years of damage to district schools and infrastructure. The improvement in educational opportunities will strengthen their country’s future, said Mohammad Nasir, the district education director.

“For many years, Afghanistan has been at war,” Nasir said. “Everything we used to have was demolished, including our schools. Without them, many people remained uneducated for a long time. But we are fortunate the international community has come to help us. Today, we have schools, students and the opportunity to talk to you because of your help and support.”

Major Gen. John Toolan, Jr., the commanding general of Regional Command (Southwest) and II Marine Expeditionary Force (Forward), thanked the Camp Lejeune High School students for helping further the Afghan-American relationship.

In his closing remarks, the district education director heartily echoed Toolan’s thanks.

“I’m very happy about this opportunity for our students to talk together,” Nasir said. “We have an environment to engage with one another today because of the Marines. Now, we’re building a great relationship between Afghan and American students.”

“In Afghanistan, we are a very hospitable people,” he continued. “When we create relationships with other people, we keep these relationships forever.”

Editor’s note: Third Battalion, 3rd Marine Regiment, is currently assigned to Regimental Combat Team 5, 2nd Marine Division (Forward), which heads Task Force Leatherneck. The task force serves as the ground combat element of Regional Command (Southwest) and works in partnership with the Afghan National Security Forces and the Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan to conduct counterinsurgency operations. The unit is dedicated to securing the Afghan people, defeating insurgent forces, and enabling the ANSF assumption of security responsibilities within its operations in order to support the expansion of stability, development and legitimate governance.



Afghan Air Force medic takes to the skies for his first mission

Story by: Tech. Sgt. Jeremy Larlee 438th Air Expeditionary Wing Public Affairs

<http://www.isaf.nato.int>

KABUL, Afghanistan (Dec. 14) — It was an eventful first day on the job for an Afghan flight medic, as he was called on to care for an Afghan child who suffered injuries from an improvised explosive device, a partial amputation of the right leg, and burns to his lower extremities and face.

After months of training, Afghan Air Force flight medic Kamran Nasrullah participated in his first CAT-A MEDEVAC mission Nov. 29.

Kamran diligently secured the tourniquet; assessed the child's airway, breathing, circulation; and administered oxygen. The child survived the injuries.

The medic received Basic Flight Medic Training from Kabul and Advanced Flight Medic Training at Kandahar Airfield.

Army Staff Sgt. Roderick Evans, a medic adviser, said he was very proud of his Afghan student.

“The only thought that I had, along with the feeling of adviser's pride, was I wished that the other advisers and his own AAF flight medic brothers could have been there to watch him work and share in that feeling of accomplishment,” said Evans. “Watching him work and knowing that his interventions were key in life saving and sustainment was a great experience.”



COALITION

International Night 2011

AT USCENTCOM

by Ltc .Thomas Emig/Chair of Planning Team
Germany Air Force

Immediately following the 9/11 terrorist attacks against the United States of America, more than 60 nations sent their representatives to the United States Central Command to fight terrorism within the CENTCOM Area of Responsibility (AOR). The US-CECOM Coalition consists of approximately 250 personnel, many of them with families and children also living in Tampa.

As a token of the Coalition’s appreciation for the support given by the US military, HQ USCENTCOM and MacDill AFB, the 7th “Coalition International Night” was held on the Dec.8, 2011, in Hangar One, MacDill Air Force Base.

“On this evening, the representatives from 43 Coalition nations and their families displayed and discussed their native customs while presenting traditional cuisine. Again, this was not a formal occasion. Just great fun, camaraderie, food and a chance to visit and learn from each other.”

Several months prior to this great event, the coalition nations compiled their invitation lists and in November. More than 800 invitations were mailed to VIP’s on MacDill and supporters of the coalition within the greater Tampa Bay Area.

Preparing an aircraft hangar used to shelter the 6th AMW,s KC-135 tanker aircraft, was a challenge for



everybody. Nations with only one liaison officer demonstrated the highest level of motivation to make this International Night the most memorable.

Positioned at the entrance to the hangar, a British double-decker bus and hospitality table greeted our guests before they moved on to almost 200 tables of delicious food and drinks.

While catering cars and trucks delivered food and drinks into the hangar well after 5 o'clock, guests were already lining up patiently in front of the hangar entrance, until the gate opened at 5:45pm.

In the meantime, cars lined up on South Dale Mabry to get access to the base and couldn't wait to finally join the party.

Right on time and as planned, USCENT-COM Chief of Staff, MG Karl Horst, and the Chairman of the Coalition, BG Jens Praestegaard, commenced the cake cutting ceremony and wished everybody a festive night.

The hangar quickly filled up with guests and it is estimated, that at least 1500 people have joined the Coalition for this years event.

After 3 hours of talking, eating and drinking, the Coalition International Night ended and the guests slowly cleared the hangar. However, nobody left that night without asking about next years International Night. Some even suggested having at least 2 international events per year at MacDill AFB. Last, but not least, it is worthwhile to mention, that no security incident, accident or DUI occurred.

We also like to say thank you to the 6th AMW for their outstanding support before, during and after this year's event.

While International Night 2011 is over, we are already looking ahead to International Night 2012 and writing down our lessons identified for the benefit of our successors. If you have ideas or recommended areas for improvement, please forward your suggestions to the Coalition Chairman.



The annual Counter Improvised Explosive Devices (C-IED) Conference 2011

Maj Tyler Bailey, USAFR

As most readers of the Coalition magazine probably are well aware, a Coalition C-IED Conference was hosted here in Tampa recently. The conference attracted a lot of positive effect for the Coalition. From most attendees and also from the organizers it is considered a very positive and forward-looking arrangement.

The Coalition Counter-IED Working Group, in cooperation with US CENTCOM Counter-Branch hosted the 3rd Annual Counter-IED Conference. For the last three years, these conferences have focused on critical elements in the fight against Improvised Explosive Devices such as: Defeating the Device, Attacking the IED Networks, and Training the Forces who fight them.

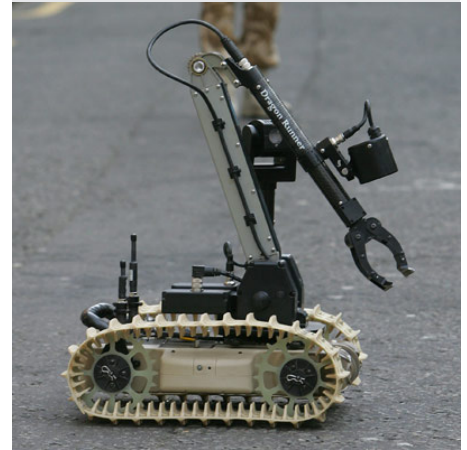
This year's four day conference focused on Training the Forces. It consisted of briefings from several (but not all) key international force contributors and working groups that brought together expertise from all attending nations. These working groups discussed the most valuable C-IED Training Initiates, Training Equipment, Joint Training Opportunities and Information Sharing.

Over 180 guests attended the conference from over 30 nations and 45 organizations. The information and expertise of those who contributed allowed our nations

to identify seams and work toward correcting gaps in training of those who are contributing to the C-IED fight. It also allowed us to evaluate each other's training cycles and identify potential courses which can be offered to nations who do not have training covering that specific area.

All conference participants had the opportunity to go through and evaluate a Mobile Counter IED Interactive Training station which had been brought in by JIEDDO (Joint IED Defeat Organization) for this specific purpose. This training gave a wonderful example of the technology and thought that is being given to training those troops who are deploying to areas where IEDs are being utilized against Coalition Forces. The fact that this training aid is mobile and currently available in both U.S. and European theaters makes it all the more valuable to the world-wide counter IED effort.

dragon runner anti-IED robot



OPERATION “ON GROUND” ON QADESH

LtC. José María Rivera Moreno
SP ARMY PIO
Regional Command-West Public Affairs

isaf.nato.int

Qala-i-Naw, Afghanistan (Dec. 30, 2011) — Different teams belonging to the Spanish Provincial Reconstruction Team, (PRT) based on the PSB “Ruy Gonzalez de Clavijo”, Qala-i-Naw city, participated yesterday in an operation “ON GROUND” on Qadesh city, one of the district capitals in Badghis province.

This kind of operations have several objectives among which distribution of humanitarian aid, contact with the civilian population to get their views on ISAF operations, detection of potential small works of Quick Impact Project (QIP) budget, major works to improve infrastructure in the area – These last in charge of the Spanish Agency for International Cooperation (AECI) - and to maintain contact with civilian and police authorities in the district.

Among the participating PRT Units in the operation are included Civilian and Military Cooperation

(CIMIC) Teams, Psychological Operations (PSYOPS) Unit, Police Mentoring and Liaison Team (POMLT), composed by the Spanish Guardia Civil, and Force Protection and Security Unit (UPS).

Impromptu meetings were held in the main street of the town; male and female schools were visited, where students were provided with school and hygiene supplies, humanitarian aid supplies were surrendered to Civilian Authorities – rice and flour sacks, sunflower oil, biscuits and blankets- and medical supplies for the local hospital.

Qadesh is one of the six districts that constitutes Badghis province; above all of them, Spanish PRT exercises governance and development activities and in five of them exercises security duties - in the Bala Murghab district security duties are carried out by an Italian Task Force





Coalition and Community **Celebrate** Thanksgiving

Rob Rowen, Unofficial member of the Coalition



Thanksgiving Coalition 2011 was a great success. The program which places our Coalition Families in American homes to experience a traditional Thanksgiving Dinner was in great demand and we had to turn away several American Families this time. We had members from the Coalition from Mongolia, Ukraine, Georgia, Japan, Finland, Sweden, Germany, France, the Netherlands, Hungary, Denmark, Lithuania, and Italy in homes from St. Petersburg to Trinity in the North.

The experience of the Coalition to this truly American tradition is quite remarkable and it is sometimes seen best in simple stories. It is interesting for me to place members of some of the countries as I think there is a bit of magic in how it works out. Case in point I would like to share the placing of our Mongolian SNR, LTC Tumurkhuyag Sanjimiyyatav and his family with Mimi Buderus, a member of the South Tampa Chamber and a participant in this program from the beginning. Mimi's reaction at first really surprised me, she was overjoyed at having a Mongolian family as her brother in law James had spent some wonderful time in that country with the State Department of the United States. Mimi then says, "We were privileged to host the

Mongolian family from the Coalition forces this year. They have 3 boys, 11, 13, & 5 and we have no kids and no toys in our home! The 5 year old was captivated by an old family rocking chair and I was amazed when he sat and rocked and giggled and laughed for at least 20 minutes in the rocker! That would not entertain most American 5 year olds!

Later, though, I saw his mother, Gana, tentatively rocking herself and I asked her if they had rockers in Mongolia and she said no. I explained that every family in America probably has one because that's how we rock our babies and a little while later, I saw her rocking her 5 year old. I was reminded again about what we take for granted and so touched by this common piece of furniture bringing joy to a family from around the globe. Although this is a family heirloom, I gave it to Tom and his family to take home to Mongolia and maybe start a "rocker" craze in their home country. Thanks, STCOC, for setting up these Thanksgiving visits with our Coalition partners! They are the highlight of my family Thanksgivings here in Tampa."

This is just one story from many where the magic of sharing cultures brings a sharing and understanding that we are all the same down deep inside and yet our differences don't have to separate us but perhaps brings us closer together.

Coalition Social Events at a Glance

A good number of delegations visit USCENTCOM regularly. The visitors get an idea of CENTCOM's activities. Visitors get the opportunity to exchange views with the command, staff and coalition members who are working at USCENTCOM. There are opportunities to meet civil communities and media personnels also. Some of the important events are there in the pictures below. Photos taken by Maj Shawkat Osman ,Coalition Public Affairs Team(CPAT)



General Mattis addressing the Coalition Members at USCENTCOM



Afghan delegation visit Coalition Village (CV3) at USCENTCOM

Lithuania community of USA sending Christmas Presents to the troops at Afghanistan





Afghan Air Force rescuing people from rapidly rising flood waters at
Kabul and Laghman Rivers (Archiving)

Courtesy photo by Maj. Kazim, Afghan Air Force.