

Transition to Afghan lead: *Inteqal*

Inteqal - the Dari and Pashtu word for *Transition* – is the process by which security responsibility for Afghanistan is gradually transitioned from NATO/ISAF to Afghan leadership.

Key dates:

- 28 August 2008: Lead security responsibility for Kabul city transferred to Afghan Forces
- 19 November 2009: President Karzai, having won a second Presidential term, expresses his ambition to see the Afghan National Security Forces take the lead security responsibility across Afghanistan by the end of 2014
- 20 July 2010: Kabul Conference. The Joint Afghan-NATO Inteqal Board (JANIB) is established as the mechanism to assess districts and provinces for transition
- 20 November 2010: NATO Lisbon Summit. The Inteqal process is agreed between the Afghan Government and NATO
- 22 March 2011: Afghan New Year. President Karzai announces the first set of Afghan districts and provinces to start the Transition process
- 17 July 2011: First Transition ceremony takes place, in Bamyan province
- October 2011: Afghan Government to announce the second tranche of Transition



Bamyan Provincial Governor Dr. Sarabi addresses attendees during the Transition ceremony in Bamyan Province.

“Afghanistan’s future is clear: a country led by Afghans, defended by Afghans and working for the benefit of Afghans.”

NATO Secretary General Anders Fogh Rasmussen

Statement 18 July 2011

Transition Tranche 1

On 22 March 2011, President Karzai announced the first set of Afghan districts and provinces to start Transition. This decision drew on the assessment and recommendations of the Afghan Government and NATO/ISAF through the Joint Afghan-NATO Inteqal Board (JANIB).

Based upon operational, political and economic considerations, the following areas were identified for inclusion in the first ‘tranche’ of Transition: Bamyan province (all districts), Panjshir province (all districts), Kabul province (all districts except Surobi), as well as the municipalities of Mazar-e-Sharif (Balkh province), Herat (Herat province), Lashkar Gah (Helmand province) and Mehtar Lam (Laghman province). These first areas account for between 20 and 25 percent of the population of Afghanistan.





Dr Ghani, chairman of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan Transition Coordination Commission, Minister of Defence Wardak, (left), and Minister of Interior Mohammadi, (right), answer questions following a two-day Transition conference, June 2011.

Transition Process explained

Transition is a conditions-based – not calendar-driven – process. It draws on the JANIB’s recommendations, which are based on a thorough assessment of the security, governance and development situation on the ground.

The main criteria for transition of any given area are:

- Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF) are capable of shouldering additional security tasks with less assistance from ISAF;
- Security is at a level that allows the population to pursue routine daily activities;
- Local governance is sufficiently developed so that security will not be undermined as ISAF assistance is reduced;
- ISAF is postured properly to thin out as ANSF capabilities increase and threat levels diminish.

For Transition to be successful, the Afghan National Security Forces, under effective Afghan civilian control, need to assume their security responsibility on a sustainable and irreversible basis – albeit with some level of continued support from ISAF.

The Transition implementation process is expected to take between 12 and 18 months for each area, depending on conditions on the ground.

In October 2011 the JANIB will recommend and the Afghan Government will decide and announce which geographical areas will transition next.

ISAF Principles for Transition

At the NATO Lisbon Summit, ISAF Heads of State and Government agreed a list of principles which guide ISAF’s gradual shift from a combat to an increasingly supporting role.

Those principles, which have since been fully incorporated in the Transition implementation process, include:

- Ensuring a better alignment of NATO/ISAF assistance with Afghan national priority programmes;
- Working through increasingly capable Afghan institutions;
- Adjusting ISAF’s troop profile and configuration by reinvesting some of the Transition dividend, where appropriate, to meet critical security, training and mentoring needs;
- Further strengthening Afghan National Security Forces capacity; and
- Supporting the evolution of the international civilian effort, including that of the ISAF Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRTs), to enable greater Afghan capacity and leadership.

Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT) Evolution

In June 2011, Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT) Nations¹ agreed a set of principles for the evolution and ultimate dissolution of their PRTs. As agreed, PRTs will support Transition implementation by identifying gaps in governance and development that could threaten the durability of Transition, and by addressing those gaps as appropriate. Many PRTs are already evolving, shifting their efforts from direct delivery to providing technical assistance and building the capacity of provincial and district governments to provide essential services to the Afghan people. By the time each province with a PRT completes Transition, the PRT will have handed over its functions to the Afghan Government, traditional development actors, non-governmental organisations and the private sector, and will have phased out. PRT Nations have agreed to share their individual PRT evolution plans with one another, facilitated by the NATO Senior Civilian Representative in Afghanistan and the Afghan Government, in order to ensure more coherent and coordinated planning and execution.

NATO’s Enduring Commitment to Afghanistan:

As Transition is implemented, NATO’s engagement in Afghanistan will not end. NATO will continue to provide training to the ANSF, even as they are the primary providers of security for their country and people. Post-2014, NATO’s commitment to Afghanistan will go beyond the current combat mission, defined by the Afghanistan / NATO Enduring Partnership signed at the Lisbon Summit in November 2010. NATO will remain long after its combat effort is over with a long-term supporting and political role.

¹ Nations either leading or contributing to PRTs, directly or indirectly: Australia, Croatia, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Germany, Hungary, Italy, Japan, Latvia, Lithuania, Malaysia, Mongolia, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Poland, Republic of Korea, Spain, Sweden, Turkey, United Kingdom, United States. France does not participate in any PRT but does have a civilian “Pôle de Stabilité” serving Kapisa Province and the Sarobi district of Kabul Province.

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Public Diplomacy Division (PDD) - Press & Media Section Media Operations Centre (MOC)

Tel.: +32(0)2 707 1010/1002

E-mail: mailbox.moc@hq.nato.int

www.isaf.nato.int

“We are building a stable security platform on which the Afghans themselves have to build their own future.”

NATO Senior Civilian Representative Ambassador Sir Simon Gass

Interview with BBC Radio Five, 20 July 2011