

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE BLOGGERS ROUNDTABLE WITH MAJOR GENERAL MIKE WARD,  
CANADIAN FORCES, DEPUTY COMMANDER-POLICE, NATO TRAINING MISSION-  
AFGHANISTAN VIA TELECONFERENCE TIME: 8:31 A.M. EDT DATE: THURSDAY, JUNE  
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LIEUTENANT JENNIFER CRAGG (U.S. Navy, Office of the Secretary of  
Defense for Public Affairs): I'd like to welcome you all to the  
Department of Defense's Bloggers Roundtable for Thursday, June 3rd, 2010.  
My name is Lieutenant Jennifer Cragg with the Office of the Secretary of  
Defense for Public Affairs.

And I'd note to the bloggers on the line, please remember to  
clearly state your name and the organization you're with prior to asking  
your questions. And if possible, please also place your phone on mute  
when other people are talking, so we can make sure we hear what everyone  
is saying and asking.

With that, I'd like to welcome our guest speaker today. His  
name is Major General Mike Ward. He's the deputy commander-Police, NATO  
Training Mission-Afghanistan. And he's going to be talking about the  
progress of the Afghan national police.

So before I turn it over to you, sir, I'd like to welcome -- who  
just joined us, please? Can I get your name?

Q This is John Doyle, 4G War blog.

LT. CRAGG: Thank you, John. You're right after Paul. You're  
number five. I've already welcomed Major General Ward on the call. And  
he's going to start with his opening statement.

Sir, the floor is yours.

GEN. WARD: Thanks very much, Jennifer.

Good afternoon, everybody, or good morning. I'm Mike Ward. I'm  
a Canadian Army officer. And I've been working here at NATO Training  
Mission-Afghanistan for about the last eight months.

It's been a very dynamic time. And we've just completed a 180- day assessment, or a 180-day report, rather, under General Caldwell to try and define where we think we've made progress and where we still see challenges ahead. I would offer that as really a start point for our dialogue this afternoon.

I would say that I believe we've really put in place some programs that will begin to make a difference, and that, as we had briefed General McChrystal as recently as last week, we're beginning to see some change in the metrics that will vastly increase the amount of leadership development that will take place; that will increase the number of young patrolmen who will be recruited, trained and then assigned to the various districts around the country; and that would be additional introduction of things like recruiting and training commands that will be maturing the institution of the Ministry of the Interior so that it can begin to take on more of a role in its own planning, management and execution.

So I think across the board, while we still continue to see challenges in police development and police training, at least we see a number of the balls beginning to roll in the right direction.

How about if I just leave that there and offer to you the opportunity to raise questions, and then we'll stimulate the dialogue from there.

Over.

LT. CRAGG: Thank you, sir.

Let's go to David. David was first. Please go ahead.

Q Sir, hi. It's David Axe with warisboring.com. Thank you for taking the time to speak to us.

GEN. WARD: My pleasure, David.

Q Great. Can you give me an assessment of the state of leadership in the Afghan National Police? I understand that General Caldwell has pointed to leadership as one of the sort of ongoing challenges. I believe he's mentioned NCOs and officers being big weaknesses of the ANP.

So can you give me your assessment of where the ANP stands in regards to leadership and what the -- and give me some -- give us some more details on what the plan is to improve ANP leadership?

GEN. WARD: Well, thank you. Gosh, where to start? Well, first of all, the institution of the Afghan National Police are quite a bit behind the army in terms of developing those aspects of professional education and professionalization that we've come to accept as the norm in military forces. But the models are not so different. If you take the Afghan experience, they've had an Afghan national police academy in place for the last 75 years, and they partnered very early with police

forces from Germany who, in fact, to this day continue to maintain a partnership and a very significant relationship to develop that first level of initial leadership from an officer candidate school perspective to first commissioned assignment. That's the good news.

But really, as we look across the landscape, that's about the only key leadership development done for officer class or officer ranks at this point in time. The Afghans have not had a police staff college in about 40 years, and therefore the model of police professional education has stopped -- started and stopped at the academy. And officers get very mixed experiential development as they proceed further into careers.

Now, the officer ranks are pretty stable across the Afghan National Police, so people stay with you a long time. Theoretically, that would allow you the opportunity to really program professional development at key stages in career, such as at command qualification points -- company command, kandak command, district chief of police, provincial chief of police, et cetera.

But those programs of instructions and those courses have been absent.

This year, we've sat down with the ministry and with the European Union Police, and we've begun to design an Afghan National Police staff college that reintroduces key elements of core professional development beyond the junior officer level. That more than anything else is going to transform the institution of the police.

With General Caldwell, we've assigned leadership development as priority number one. And as we look forward to transition, which is to gradually pass the reins to the Afghans for their own security, the impact of additional leaders out there, who know what their missions are, who know how to lead troops, who know about key elements of law enforcement at progressively higher levels will be that element which really does pick up and accelerate the professionalization and the reform of the Afghan National Police.

If I could, we have a similar challenge at the NCO-rank level. NCOs do receive an element of training at their first assignment, but there again, afterwards, it's pretty spotty. So there'd be a professional-development framework introduced also for noncommissioned officers so that you then really have a -- an enrollment-to-retirement spectrum from which you can then progress a variety of different models of development.

We've just gone through the Afghan National Civil Order Police an exercise where we've identified and selected from their NCO ranks 50 potential officers, and put them through a six-month training program to then become officers in the civil order police. And this is very much based on a lot of Western models, but typically what the Gendarmerie and the Carabinieri use in order to progress, because in those countries you start off as a patrolmen and you can go all the way to the national chief

of police. Rarely do you actually have officers being integrated in at the middle grades.

That's the same model we use in Canada as well. Everybody starts off as a constable. Nobody starts off as an officer appointment.

So leadership is certainly key. We believe that that's the best way to force-multiply, if you will, in the shortest space of time, to get the Afghan National Police on their feet.

Over.

Q Thank you very much.

LT. CRAGG: Thank you, sir. Thank you, David.

Dale, you were next. Please go ahead.

Q Good afternoon, sir. This is Dale Kissinger from MilitaryAvenue.com. I recently participated in another roundtable with some gentlemen at -- attending the Army Command and General Staff College, and their naval logistics officer described moving a SEAL team from one location in Afghanistan to another, and their trucks, being driven by Afghan drivers, were pulled over by the national police and were being allowed to be taken, the equipment and supplies out of those trucks, to give to the local villagers, obviously a sign of corruption. What are we doing to prevent those kind of corruptions within the national police?

GEN. WARD: Let me first start by saying that on the Transparency International scale, Afghanistan ranks second last of developed countries -- or countries that are developing, in terms of its corruption.

It's widely accepted that the Afghan National Police are the most corrupt institution in the Afghan government. So we're starting from a very, very low level of accountability and credibility.

We've done a number of things internally to try and limit or eliminate the causes of corruption or the sources of corruption. One of those gets to essentially making sure that they get paid a living wage. And so over this past six months we've introduced a level of pay parity between the police and the army, which -- you may have heard of that elsewhere -- that has at least increased the level of take-home pay for basic patrolmen.

That is a help. I would say one of the most immediate things that we've seen come out of that is a lot of interest in recruiting. And our recruiting has stayed very strong in the police. But that's really just one aspect of trying to target something which has always stimulated more corruption or more requirement for the police to find a livelihood outside of their pay packet.

Even more important is setting up the framework to eliminate corruption, which really starts top down. Recently President Karzai signed a decree that said that, you know, corruption was not to be tolerated and that those who were engaged in corruption would be prosecuted.

Similarly in other ministries of government, the Ministry of the Interior especially, there are policies that have been recently signed and are in the process of being enacted. We parallel all those efforts from ISAF into NTM-A and the Combined Security Transition Command Afghanistan to make sure that we're not condoning or tolerating corruption as in where we can -- we can find it and root it out.

My deputy is a carabinieri brigadier general who has spent over half of his career in southern Italy fighting the influence of corruption, criminality and mafias. And he's fond of saying that corruption like this is not just a police phenomenon. It's a social phenomenon. And therefore it has to be attacked top down. It has to be addressed by the government and the society. And it will only take probably a generation or two to begin to notice the change in that.

We all live in glass houses. Corruption is a greater or lesser influence in a variety of places. It just happens to be exacerbated here. The notion of police on checkpoints using their authorities to shake down the public is anathema to many Afghans.

It's a blow to pride, and it's changed them.

And when you begin to discuss the elements of honor that form the character of Pashtun tribes and others, it's a very strange dichotomy that in one sense they all engage in it, but in another sense they decry it. I think it's our biggest challenge in terms of prosecuting the counterinsurgency and at the same time trying to offer the government of Afghanistan models with which to increase its credibility with their publics, with their communities, and win their support to defeat the insurgents. If we don't beat corruption and if we don't fix corruption in the Afghan National Police, it might be impossible to win the counterinsurgency. Over.

Q Thank you very much, sir. Those were great comments. I appreciate it.

LT. CRAGG: Thank you, sir. Thank you, Dale.

Carl, you are next. Please go ahead.

Q Thank you. This is Carl Forsberg with the Institute for the Study of War. And thank you for your time this morning, General. Minister Atmar and the MOI seem to have taken the lead on a few issues outside of conventional policing, like -- programs like the APPF, the Afghan Public Protection Force, and the AP3 and some issues of private security regulation. So I wonder if you could talk briefly about how NTM-A has been -- or whether NTM-A has been working with the MOI, especially on issues like the Afghan Public Protection Force.

GEN. WARD: Yes, in fact we have. The Afghan public protection program was instituted last year under General McKiernan. It was one that we wound up supporting both through funding and equipping, but which Special Operations Command wound up partnering in Maidan-Wardak.

Largely speaking, it's been a very successful program, and it has helped to really suppress the influence of insurgents in communities in a province that is very, very close to and is a line of communication into Kabul, so extremely important in terms of addressing counterinsurgency, which threatens the government directly.

Recently Minister Atmar signed the National Police Strategy, which is the first five-year visionary document to lay out the road map for the future of the Afghan National Police. In the National Police Strategy -- and I don't know if you've had a chance to see a copy --

Q No, I haven't.

GEN. WARD: -- he lays out six pillars within the police. There's a uniformed civil-police capability. There's a civil-order police capability, border police, anti-crimes police; loosely speaking, ministerial enablers, which includes things like training commands, and lastly the notion of Afghan Public Protection Forces.

Afghan Public Protection Forces are not police. They don't have the ability to arrest. They do, however, have security training that allows them to be essentially first responders or deterrents at specific places either in communities, at vital points. We use them -- or I should say the minister of Interior uses them in cooperation with the United Nations. UNAMA guard some of their guesthouses in ways that we just don't have the density of police or other security forces to assist with.

The public protection force capability has a variety of different elements to it. The one that will continuously come back to discussion, I believe, is the one about the Maidan-Wardak experiment and how will it assist in perpetuating or at least sort of improving security conditions while we're concurrently trying to grow the Afghan national security forces, army and police as quickly as possible.

This has gained a lot of interest. I was in -- my last job was in policy development in the Canadian ministry of defense. And we were very much focused on AP3 and APPF and where this would go.

Most people are concerned about the potential for it to go wrong and to devolve into militias. And based on my understanding and my discussions with Minister Atmar and reviews of other key documents, the Afghans themselves are concerned about making sure that if we have to grow this much more, then it will not then be capable of being misdirected, put into the wrong hands, and therefore destabilizing as opposed to stabilizing communities around the nation.

It's one that I think will continue to be contentious but which for our purposes at this point in time is absolutely essential, because we just can't cover enough of Afghanistan with coalition army and police, to satisfy the threats that the people in the communities are receiving.

Over.

Q Thank you, General.

LT. CRAGG: Thank you, sir.

Thank you, Carl.

Did someone just join us? Or did someone drop off, please?

Q No. It was Paul. I dropped out of the call by accident.

LT. CRAGG: Okay, I'll make sure I send you the transcript, so you don't miss any of the discussion. So Paul, without further ado, you are next. Please go ahead.

Q (Audio break.) Paul McLeary from DTI. I have two questions. (Audio break.) Are these soldiers, a mix of soldiers and contractors?

And also I know in Bosnia and other places, the U.N. has actually brought local police forces -- to Canada, the United States, Germany -- to embed with Western police forces, to provide training there.

Is there any thought of doing that with the Afghans?

GEN. WARD: Yeah. In fact, there are a number of programs that Minister Atmar has proposed and sought our assistance over, in order to be able to conduct high-quality training outside the country. This has always been very popular with Afghans. And certainly as you'll recall in Iraq, there were programs that allowed Iraqi police forces and security forces to train in places like Jordan.

Now, I would place it all in context and in balance.

Our aim in NTM-A/CSTC-A is to create enduring institutions that will allow the Afghans to build a culture of professional development that can sustain itself over time. So training outside the country, in our view, should only be used sparingly and only where you can't find a capability or capacity to train skills within the country.

We do very much want to leave schools, academies and colleges in place that will self-generate and refresh the ranks of the security forces. We are, however, looking at programs potentially in Turkey. Recently the United Arab Emirates and France have twinned to offer some training in the Middle East. And all of these things will enable more people to be trained to higher standards than might otherwise be the case. Over.

Q Thank you.

LT. CRAGG: Thank you, sir. Thank you, Paul.

John, please go ahead.

Q Good morning. Good afternoon, General. John Doyle, 4G WAR blog. A quick two-part question. First, as I understand it, there are several nations -- Germany, Canada, the U.S -- that are training the Afghan police. And I know in the case of the Germans it's actual policemen or police officials.

Is this causing a problem, having so many different organizations training a single national entity? Are they getting mixed messages in procedure, in skill, and possibly even rule of law?

And I think, following on with that, the diversity of the Afghan people -- could you address the makeup of the Afghan National Police right now, how many are Pashtuns or Turkmen or whatever? And is there a problem there trying to get them all to read from the same page in enforcing the law? Thank you.

GEN. WARD: (Laughs.) Great questions.

Currently, in Afghanistan we've probably got, right now I'd venture to say, more than 30 countries who are engaged in training the national police. There are about 27 to 30 different training centers.

Now, we have direct input to about 11 of them, the regional training center framework and also the border police training framework. But there are many bilateral training sites out there. There's always been a problem with standardization, and it's been a challenge, I think, sometimes in terms of how you import your beliefs about models of policing, and then reconciling them with something which really needs to be Afghanized.

There's a -- as a colleague (in UPOL ?) said to me very recently, he said the type of policing that we need in Afghanistan is unique to Afghanistan. It's not the kind of policing you would necessarily see in the States or in Canada or Northern Europe. So we have to be sensitive to that.

Most of what the police do here at this point in time is really closer to constabulary policing, security-based, than it is to law enforcement policing. So, you know, the ratio of law enforcement -- you know, criminal investigation, special crimes, judicial security, things like that -- to the broad rank-and-file of those who provide community security and public protection would be maybe, I would say, maybe 10 percent to 90 percent, 90 percent doing the constabulary security role.

I think the way we approach this and way we're trying to adopt a unified approach is through a number of bodies. There's a senior police advisory group that links all of the most senior international police



together to debate the issues and look forward to how to unify approaches to policing that are sufficient for Afghan National Police.

There's an international police coordination board which talks with the minister about the higher-level policing and Ministry of the Interior issues.

When it gets right down to it, some countries will just never agree on certain types of policing. There are certain countries that don't have a model of civil order police like gendarmerie or carabinieri, and therefore they will not support those programs. You know, we dispose people where they have strengths that they can leverage. I think the key, though, is I think we all have to have our eyes on the Ministry of the Interior and what it wants or what it needs, what it will bless in terms of programs of instruction. And that's generally coming into alignment.

One of the things that we have to offer here in NTM-A and CSTC-A is a lot of institutional capacity and some tremendous resourcing. So our partnership with the Afghans is very strong. Our ability to influence and support what it is Afghans need to develop is also very positive. And so we're -- we progressively work much more closely with both the Afghans and the international community to progress that.

On the -- on the issue of diversity and ethnicity, this is certainly a very (emotive ?) issue in Afghanistan. It's always been a root cause of instability. And as you see the security forces develop -- and I would say more so in the army than the police -- they're very, very careful and self-regulating about ethnic balance. You know, leader selection requires a certain number of Pashtuns to Tajiks to Uzbeks to Hazara. That works well in the Army because the army's a national institution first and foremost. So all of the units are mixed.

The police model is just a little bit different. Most of the policing has been local. Most of the recruiting has been local. So it's less an issue of ethnic balance than I think it is about tribal balance.

And where we see some of the hottest parts of the insurgency, one of the contributing factors may be that some of the tribes are disenfranchised, from serving or from being able to participate in local governance, local security, local economy.

And therefore, you know, for their own livelihoods and their own survival, they have to choose to side with the insurgency. It doesn't mean they are ideologically disposed that way. It does mean that they very much have to look out for their welfare and their future.

So what I try to understand much, much better is how in each province or in each district, the police need to reflect the fabric of the community and therefore be effective in being accountable to themselves.

It's an interesting notion. At the higher levels of the MOI and the ANP, the leadership is much more balanced, to make sure that you've

got the right ratio of participation. And they're pretty careful about that.

But I think if you were to consider that the police or the success or failure of the police carries the highest consequences for the future of the government and the future of this model, in the midst of the insurgency, getting the police balance and confidence in and of themselves right is a critical piece.

Over.

Q Thank you very much, sir.

LT. CRAGG: Thank you, sir.

And thank you, John.

And we're drawing close to the end of the roundtable. So if anyone has any follow-on questions that they weren't able to ask, please send them my way, and I'll forward them. But at this time, we have about six minutes left. And I want to make sure I turn it back over to the general.

Sir, if you'd like to end with any closing thoughts for today. The floor is yours again.

GEN. WARD: Jennifer, thanks very much. If I could just relay back to you all, thanks very much for your ongoing interest and the support that you provide us. We very much want to be able to communicate with and dialogue with others who have had similar experiences, in the past, and commit to following up in any nature of questions you may have.

If I could summarize where I think we are at this point in time, we have been at this with the police for many, many years. But we have been incremental I think in our international community approach.

But I'm sensing that we now do have a critical mass focused on the police. And there's a priority placed on the police that I think will generate much better outcomes in the near term.

It's certainly our number-one priority in NATO Training Mission-Afghanistan. And the way we link to Afghan senior leaders and the way we really partner with them, up and down the chain of command, is beginning to have I think positive outcomes.

The issue, I think, is making sure that we can give them space to learn and space to demonstrate that they understand how they will prosecute police operations here. And they're doing better and better. And I think there is cause for optimism there.

So you know, we see our role very much as being in support and being sensitive to what Afghan culture requires and being there to assist as and where they need us.

I wish you luck. I hope we'll have a chance to meet on future roundtables. Over.

LT. CRAGG: Thank you so much, sir.

I just want to remind everybody, I will send via e-mail and also post the transcript to [www.dodlive.mil](http://www.dodlive.mil). If you click on Bloggers Roundtable, you'll find a post about today's roundtable. And also we'll have a link to the audio podcast, if you want to refer to that as well.

You've been listening to Major General Mike Ward. He's the deputy commander-Police, NATO Training Mission-Afghanistan. Thank you so much, sir, for participating today. And thank you for everyone who called in.

Feel free to disconnect at any time. This ends today's roundtable. Thank you so much.

GEN. WARD: Thank you all. Bye-bye.

END.