



**HOUSE OF COMMONS
CANADA**

**REPORT ON CANADA'S PRIORITY NUMBER ONE
IN AFGHANISTAN:
HELPING TO ENHANCE THE AFGHAN NATIONAL
SECURITY FORCES**

**Report of the Special Committee on
the Canadian Mission in Afghanistan**

**Rick Casson, M.P.
Chair**

JUNE 2009

40th PARLIAMENT, 2nd SESSION



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THE SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON THE CANADIAN MISSION IN AFGHANISTAN

has the honour to present its

SECOND REPORT

Pursuant to its mandate under the motion adopted by the House of Commons on Tuesday, February 10, 2009, the Committee has studied Canada's involvement in helping to enhance the Afghan National Security Forces and has agreed to report the following:

**HOUSE OF COMMONS SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON
CANADA'S MISSION IN AFGHANISTAN**

**REPORT ON CANADA'S PRIORITY NUMBER ONE IN AFGHANISTAN
HELPING TO ENHANCE THE AFGHAN NATIONAL SECURITY FORCES**

INTRODUCTION

In accordance with a motion passed in the House of Commons on March 13, 2008, the Government must present quarterly reports to Parliament on the progress being made by Canada's mission in Afghanistan. The Cabinet Committee on Afghanistan published reports covering quarters that ended in June, September and December of 2008; and for the quarter ending March 31, 2009.

The mandate of the Special Committee on Canada's Mission in Afghanistan requires it to meet regularly with relevant Ministers and other senior officials, so the Committee can make frequent recommendations on the conduct and progress of Canadian efforts in Afghanistan.

Canada has a specific interest in helping the Afghan National Army (ANA) and Afghan National Police (ANP) in Kandahar Province to become capable of operating on their own, prior to the withdrawal of Canadian military forces in 2011. In this report, the Committee focuses on the Government's first priority in Afghanistan; enabling the Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF) to sustain a more secure environment and promote law and order.¹

AIMS

The aims of this report are to review Canada's effort in helping to develop the ANSF in Kandahar Province and provide relevant recommendations to Government. We focus on the Government's first priority in Afghanistan – enabling the Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF) to sustain a more secure environment and promote law and order. Our comments relate to information contained in the Government's March 2009 report, complemented by evidence presented to us by witnesses who have appeared before us, since then.²

¹ Cabinet Committee on Afghanistan. *Report*, March 2009, at <http://www.afghanistan.gc.ca/canada-afghanistan/documents/qr-rt.aspx>. Issued June 3, 2009.

² See the Special Committee on the Canadian Mission in Afghanistan website, and the links to meetings and evidence at <http://www2.parl.gc.ca/CommitteeBusiness/CommitteeHome.aspx?Cmte=AFGH&Language=E&Mode=1&Parl=40&Ses=2>.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation 1

If quarterly reports cannot be published in a more timely manner, the Government should publicly brief the Special Committee on the Canadian Mission in Afghanistan on progress being made, as soon as possible after the end of a reporting quarter, in advance of the quarterly report.

Recommendation 2

Government quarterly reports should offer textual and graphic descriptions of all ANA brigade headquarters and kandaks supported by Canadian Forces units and OMLTs in Kandahar Province, so the Special Committee can gain a more complete understanding of the status of associated benchmarks.

Recommendation 3

Government quarterly reports should identify the overall trend of progress indicators across quarters and specifically explain measures being taken to mitigate or remedy any lack of progress or retrograde development.

Recommendation 4

Government quarterly reports should include a textual and graphic description of the training level achieved by all ANP units supported by the Canadian Forces and Canadian CIVPOL in Kandahar Province, so the Special Committee can gain a more complete understanding of the status of associated benchmarks.

GOVERNMENT QUARTERLY REPORTS

We find value in the quarterly Government reports, but information contained in them is dated. The reports were not available until about three months after the end of a quarter. The December 2008 report was published in March 2009. The March 2009 report was published on June 3, 2009. We note therefore, that although reports are indeed coming forward quarterly, they present information that is, at best, three months old.

Recommendation 1 – If quarterly reports cannot be published in a more timely manner, Government should publicly brief the Special Committee on the Canadian Mission in Afghanistan on progress being made, as soon as possible after the end of a reporting quarter, in advance of the quarterly report.

BACKGROUND

It is widely accepted by the United Nations (UN), by members of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and their partners in the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF), and across Afghan society that a secure environment is the primary requirement for Afghans. To achieve a degree of security that allows Afghan governance and development to flourish, the international community is working to develop the ANSF – composed of the ANA and the ANP – so they can effectively assume lead responsibility for the national security of Afghanistan on their own, as soon as possible.

ISAF forces and ANSF have endeavoured to follow a ‘clear, hold, build’ strategy in southern Afghanistan; where ISAF and ANA military forces ‘clear’ insurgents from a selected area, to be followed by ANP deployments to protect the local population, which, in turn, is intended to pave the way and protect subsequent reconstruction and development activity by provincial reconstruction teams (PRT) and international development aid agencies. Studies indicate that military operations in the ‘clear’ phase are usually successful, but that policing efforts have been inadequate in the ‘hold’ and ‘development’ phases.³

Canada contributes to the development of the ANA and ANP by providing advice at the national level and by mentoring and training ANA and ANP units in the field. In the capital Kabul, Canadian Forces and civilian police (CIVPOL – led by the Royal Canadian Mounted Police) personnel participate in the US-led coalition training organization based in Kabul.⁴ In Kandahar Province, Canadian military personnel mentor ANA units in counter-insurgency operations and provide liaison between the ANA and supporting ISAF combat capabilities such as artillery and close air support. Canadian CIVPOL participates in mentoring duties too, with ANP detachments in the field, in addition to providing police instructors as part of the Canadian-led Kandahar Provincial Reconstruction Team (KPRT) in Kandahar City. Finally, Canadian military combat units cooperate with and support ANA units in counter-insurgency combat operations throughout Kandahar Province.

Throughout the summer of 2009, 17,000 additional US troops will be deployed throughout southern Afghanistan, in both combat and training roles. All are expected to be in place by the August 20, 2009 Presidential election. About 7,000 US Army troops will be sent to Kandahar Province. Nearly 3,500 are already on the ground. The remainder will arrive in July

³ See two recent major reports. Cordesman, Anthony H., Adam Mausner and David Kasten. *Winning in Afghanistan: Creating Effective Afghan Security Forces*, Washington, D.C.: Center for Strategic and International Studies, May 27, 2009, at http://www.csis.org/component/option,com_csis_pubs/task,view/id,5496/type,1, also Younossi, Obaid, Peter Dahl Thruelsen, Jonathan Vaccaro, Jerry M. Sollinger and Brian Grady. *The Long March: Building an Afghan Army*. Santa Monica, CA: RAND National Defense Institute, May 2009, at http://www.rand.org/pubs/monographs/2009/RAND_MG845.pdf. Both are available in English only.

⁴ The Combined Security Transition Command-Afghanistan (CSTC-A) is the US-led coalition organization responsible for the development of the ANSF, in cooperation with the Government of Afghanistan. A number of countries participate in the CSTC-A programme. See the CSTC-A website at <http://www.cstc-a.com/>

2009. The US Army is also deploying 4,000 personnel in the training role throughout southern Afghanistan, more than half of whom will train and mentor ANA units.⁵

In Kandahar Province, the professional effectiveness of the ANA has shown promising progress. The ANP has enjoyed considerably less success. At this point, it appears that most of the ANA in Kandahar Province could become capable of near-autonomous operations in Kandahar Province by 2011. The ANP, on the other hand, will not.

AFGHAN NATIONAL ARMY

In November 2008, following a request by the Afghan Government to increase the size of their security forces, the Joint Coordination and Monitoring Board agreed to expand the ANA to 122,000 personnel, with an additional 12,000 set aside for training and transient personnel, by 2011. Across Afghanistan today, the ANA has 95 units that field nearly 83,000 personnel of the authorized ceiling of 134,000.⁶ The ANA is composed of five ground manoeuvre corps and the Afghan National Army Air Corps (ANAAC). The manoeuvre corps headquarters are located throughout Afghanistan and act as regional headquarters. The Headquarters of the 205th Corps is located in Kandahar. The 1st Brigade of the 205th Corps operates in Kandahar Province, with Canadian Forces support.

Overall, the ANA now participates in 80% of ISAF operations and leads 62% of joint operations. Twenty-five ANA Kandaks (battalions) and 11 Headquarters (two Corps and nine Brigades) are capable of conducting independent operations at battalion level. While, these units will still receive ISAF support in the areas of close air support, casualty and medical evacuation, there has been enough progress to allow ISAF to begin to gradually hand over security responsibility to the ANSF.⁷

The ANAAC increases the ANA's capability to operate semi-autonomously. The ANAAC shares ISAF's air support burden by flying 90% of ANA air support missions in 2009 (as opposed to 10% in early 2008). The ANAAC is now moving an average of 5,000 passengers and 50,000 kg of cargo monthly.

Although growing and improving, the ANA continues to be faced with significant personnel issues. Obstacles include the challenge of achieving ethnic balance, particularly given the difficulty of recruiting among some ethnic groups across southern Afghanistan; finding a source of funding to pay the salaries of additional soldiers; and funding necessary infrastructure. Unauthorized absences remain a problem.

⁵ Motevalli, Golnar. "Extra US Troops In Afghanistan by Mid-July", *Reuters*, May 31, 2009.

⁶ From a US Combined Security Transition Command-Afghanistan factsheet on the ANA, as of March 15, 2009, at: <http://www.cstc-a.com/mission/AfghanistanArmyFacts.html>.

⁷ NATO Factsheet. *Progress with the Development of Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF)*, March 2009, at http://www.nato.int/isaf/topics/factsheets/factsheet_progress_ansf.pdf

Despite these difficulties, training is improving. The capacity of the Kabul Military Training Center (KMTC), coupled with that of the regional training centers, appears to be adequate to meet the needs. The programs of instruction are appropriate for the type of force being developed.

The most glaring training shortfall is the shortage of Operational Mentor Liaison Teams (OMLT) staffed by NATO countries. Only about half of the NATO OMLTs are currently filled and active. ISAF estimates that approximately 168 combined OMLTs are needed by December 2013.

Judgments about operational proficiency are problematic. Evidence suggests that the ANA is improving substantially, but any assumption of primary responsibility for national security is still a long way off. Special units, such as the commando battalions, appear to show a relatively high level of proficiency and some line infantry units appear capable. On the other hand, the logistic capability of the ANA is universally seen as falling short. Arguably, developing a logistic capability is more complicated and difficult than gaining combat proficiency, so this could well be a long-term challenge.

AFGHAN NATIONAL POLICE

The Ministry of the Interior oversees the ANP, which has more than 80,350 officers on paper. However, recent studies show that perhaps no more than about 35,000 to 57,000 are deployed in the field.⁸

Development of the ANP has been decidedly less successful than that of the ANA, for a variety of reasons, among which are the facts that early efforts to rebuild the ANP grossly underestimated the requirement and the current security situation demands the ANP be employed more as a para-military gendarmerie rather than in traditional law enforcement duties. Mr. Yves Brodeur, the Assistant Deputy Minister, Afghanistan Task Force in the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade, told the Committee that the ANP also faces critical challenges such as a lack of sufficient training, equipment, and pay.⁹ Illiteracy, corruption, and reported substance abuse further erode their credibility and effectiveness. Moreover, the ANP's casualty rates far outstrip those of the military. In Kandahar Province generally, there is an insufficient number of police officers to ensure law and order, and the Ministry of Interior currently lacks the capacity to ensure strategic oversight and logistical support. This is the scope and context of the challenge.

Canada participates in the larger international effort – led by the US – to support the development of the ANP along three main lines of support: national level advice; mentoring and training in the field; and infrastructure and equipment, and salary. A Canadian police officer is

⁸ International Crisis Group. “Policing in Afghanistan: Still Searching for a Strategy Update Briefing”, *Asia Briefing*, No. 85. Kabul/Brussels, December 18, 2008. pp. 2-3.

⁹ Brodeur, Mr. Yves, *Evidence*, Special Committee on the Canadian Mission in Afghanistan, Meeting No. 4, April 30, 2009.

embedded within the Ministry of Interior to advise the Minister on police reform and gender issues and to mentor his staff on policy research.

In June 2007, the European Union (EU) launched the EU police (EUPOL) mission in Afghanistan, which is mandated to provide up to 400 police officers to mentor and advise the Ministry of Interior and senior policy officers at national, regional, and provincial headquarters. Currently, the mission has deployed approximately 300 mentors to Afghanistan. A senior Canadian police officer works in the EUPOL policy development staff.

Canada is a member of the International Police Coordination Board, established in October 2006, an EU-led multilateral mechanism by which the Ministry of Interior and the international community can coordinate ANP training, mentoring, and infrastructure development throughout Afghanistan. Canada will be represented by an RCMP Assistant Commissioner, recently appointed to be the principal police advisor to the Ambassador of Canada in Kabul and to command all Canadian CIVPOL in Afghanistan.

Among principal training programmes is the Focused District Development (FDD) program, in which the entire complement of ANP in a district station are taken away to undergo a concentrated eight-week training course and are then returned to their district as a trained unit.¹⁰ To date, across Afghanistan, the FDD has been completed in 52 of 365 districts.

Mentoring and training is provided to the ANP in Kandahar through 30 civilian and approximately 40 military police mentors. Military police are part of the Canadian Forces-led Police Operational Mentor Liaison Teams (POMLT) – a combination of military police and infantry who mentor ANP at police substations, particularly in remote areas, to provide them with essential survivability skills. Canada's civilian police train and mentor the ANP in a range of civilian policing skills that promote law and order and effective force management. As of March 2009, 1151 – approximately 77% – ANP officers in key districts across Kandahar Province – had completed basic training, and one unit was assessed as nearly capable of near-autonomous operations.

To increase the impact of Canada's ongoing support to training, the Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT) police training centre is expanding. This training centre has been officially accredited by the Ministry of the Interior and will allow Canadian trainers to provide advanced training to the ANP, completing the basic training provided through the US-led FDD program. The expanded training centre will open in the fall of 2009.

More Canadian civilian police are being deployed to Afghanistan, to reach a total of 50 by the autumn of 2009. These officers will be placed in strategic mentoring and advisor positions in Kabul and Kandahar, including within the US Combined Security Transition Command, EUPOL and the UN. This will allow Canada to maximize our impact on ANP development and enhance coordination with partner countries and multilateral organizations.

¹⁰ See a recent edition (April 2009) of *The Ledger*, the monthly newsletter of the US Combined Security Transition Command-Afghanistan at <http://www.cstc-a.com/News/enduring%20ledgers/2009endledger/ApriEL.pdf>. It is available in English only.

Finally, a Canadian police commander, in the rank of Assistant Commissioner, has recently been appointed to the Canadian embassy in Kabul and will represent Canada on the International Police Coordination Board.

PRIORITY NUMBER 1 – DEVELOPING EFFECTIVE ANSF IN KANDAHAR PROVINCE

In its first report of June 2008, the Cabinet Committee on Afghanistan identified six priorities and three signature projects to guide the work of the Canadian mission. The first priority was to enable the ANSF in Kandahar to sustain a more secure environment and promote law and order.¹¹ We examine it in detail here.

The Government has identified six benchmarks dealing with the ANA and ANP, each of which has a baseline condition, established in June 2008, from which progress can be measured. Moreover, an objective to be reached by 2011 is identified for each benchmark. Finally, each benchmark has one or more progress indicators. There are eight separate progress indicators relating to the ANA and ANP. We note that some of these progress indicators are beyond direct Canadian control and can therefore only reflect an indirect assessment of the effect of Canadian efforts.

In the latest Government report on the quarter ending March 2009, four of the eight progress indicators showed improvement over the June 2008 baseline condition. One progress indicator has had no change since June 2008 and three progress indicators deteriorated over the period.

Benchmark 1: Increase the number of ANA kandaks in Kandahar capable of conducting near-autonomous security operations, and increase the capability of their brigade headquarters.

- **Progress Indicator:** The number of ANA kandaks (and their brigade headquarters) capable of planning, executing and sustaining near-autonomous operations.
- **Baseline:** One of the five ANA kandaks is fully capable of planning, executing and sustaining near-autonomous operations (June 2008).
- **2011 Target:** To have four of the five ANA kandaks (and their brigade headquarters) fully capable of planning, executing and sustaining near-autonomous operations.
- **Result as of March 2009:** The ANA brigade headquarters and one of the five kandaks are capable of near-autonomous operations.

¹¹ All Cabinet Committee on Afghanistan reports to Parliament can be found on-line at <http://www.afghanistan.gc.ca/canada-afghanistan/documents/qr-rt.aspx>.

- ***Our Committee Comment:*** This is a slight improvement over the baseline condition in that the brigade headquarters has become operationally effective. This will be of considerable help in bringing the remaining four kandaks to the same level of competency. Another important improvement since the last quarter came in the establishment of ANA artillery, military engineering and logistic elements. Regrettably, apart from information on the brigade headquarters and the one capable kandak, the Government's quarterly report offers no information on the status of the other four (or more) kandaks.

Recommendation 2 – Government quarterly reports should offer textual and graphic descriptions of all ANA brigade headquarters and kandaks supported by Canadian Forces units and OMLTs in Kandahar Province, so the Special Committee can gain a more complete understanding of the status of associated benchmarks.

Benchmark 2: Increase and/or maintain the effective strength (troops trained, ready and available for operations) of Kandahar-based ANA kandaks and their brigade headquarters.

- ***Progress Indicator:*** The effective strength of the Kandahar-based ANA kandaks (and *their brigade headquarters*).
- ***Baseline:*** One of the five ANA kandaks has an effective strength of 67% and the remainder currently has an effective strength of over 80%. The ANA brigade headquarters has an effective strength of 77% (June 2008).
- ***2011 Target:*** To sustain the level of effective strength of the Kandahar-based ANA kandaks (and their brigade headquarters) at 70% or higher.
- ***Results as of March 2009:*** The ANA brigade headquarters and four of the five kandaks have an effective strength over 70%. The fifth kandak was on leave as of March 31, 2009, so its temporary strength was at 13% of authorized levels.
- ***Our Committee Comment:*** These levels are lower than the baseline condition established in June 2008, but the Government's report gives no indication why effective strength has deteriorated. This particular progress indicator is also an example of only indirect Canadian impact because Canada does not directly control ANA personnel functions.

Recommendation 3 – Government quarterly reports should identify the overall trend of progress indicators across quarters and specifically explain measures being taken to mitigate or remedy any lack of progress or retrograde development.

Benchmark 3: ANA responsible for security in more of the six key districts of Kandahar.

- **Progress Indicator:** A progressive increase in the number of key districts in which the ANA is responsible for security, with fewer supporting ISAF troops.
- **Baseline:** The ANA is responsible for security in one of the six key districts (June 2008).
- **2011 Target:** To have the ANA responsible for security in three of the six key districts.
- **Results as of March 2009:** There are no key districts for which the ANA is responsible for security.
- **Our Committee Comment:** This indicator has deteriorated since June 2008 and remains the same as the last quarter. The Government's report does not address reasons why the ANA is not being given responsibility for security in key districts or when they are likely to achieve it. We suspect it is principally because ANA units simply are not capable of doing so at the present time. See Recommendations 2 and 3.

Benchmark 4: To increase the number of key districts where ANA are perceived by the majority of the population to be a professional and effective force that contributes to their well being in key districts of Kandahar province.

- **Progress Indicator:** The number of key districts where the ANA has an approval rating of 85% or more.
- **2011 Target:** To maintain and/or increase the number of key districts where the ANA has an 85% approval rating.
- **Baseline:** In four of the six key districts the ANA has an approval rating of 85% or more (June 2008).
- **Results as of March 2009:** The ANA has an approval rating of 85% or more in three of six key districts.
- **Our Committee Comment:** This indicator has deteriorated since June 2008. The Government's report does not address why this is so. It is also another example of a progress indicator that is not under Canada's direct control. See recommendation 3.

Benchmark 5: Increase in the number of key districts of Kandahar province where there is a perceived improvement in security conditions.

- **Progress Indicator:** The number of key districts where the majority of Kandaharis perceive security as improving.
- **Baseline:** In zero of the six key districts, a majority of Kandaharis perceiving an improvement in security (June 2008).

- **2011 Target:** The majority of Kandaharis in all six of the key districts perceive security as improving.
- **Results as of March 2009:** There are no key districts where Kandaharis perceive security to be improving.
- **Our Committee Comment:** This is no change from June 2008 and, as described in the Government's report, is unlikely to change for the better anytime soon. Security remains a paramount concern. Here again, Kandahari perceptions of the ANA are beyond Canada's direct control and influence.

Benchmark 6: Increased ANP capacity to provide effective police services in key districts of Kandahar.

- **Progress Indicator 6a:** The number of ANP trained in Kandahar.
- **Baseline:** 25% of the ANP in key districts have completed Focused District Development (FDD) training (August 2008).¹²
- **2011 Target:** 80% of key district ANP forces will have completed Focused District Development (FDD) training.
- **Results as of March 2009:** Seventy-seven percent of the ANP in key districts have completed Focused District Development (FDD) training.
- **Our Committee Comment:** This is a significant improvement, but the challenge will be to sustain the number of trained ANP in the face of staff changes, desertion and casualties, all of which are beyond Canada's control. The arrival of additional US police trainers will help.
- **Progress Indicator 6b:** The number of ANP forces in key districts capable of planning, executing and sustaining near-autonomous operations.
- **Baseline:** 0% of ANP forces in key districts are capable of planning, executing and sustaining near-autonomous operations (August 2008).
- **2011 Target:** 80% of ANP forces in key districts are capable of planning, executing and sustaining near-autonomous operations.

¹² Focused District Development (FDD) is a six-phase police reform program that involves retraining, equipping and mentoring district police forces as consolidated units, over six to eight months. See more information at TBC.

- **Results as of March 2009:** There is slight improvement here. Although no ANP units are capable of near-autonomous operations in Kandahar Province, one of 17 ANP units has reached a capability level one training step away from being able to operate near-autonomously.
- **Our Committee Comments:** This slight improvement represents one year of work with the ANP in Kandahar Province. Enhanced Canadian and ISAF efforts over the next year will hopefully bring an increasing rate of improvement in the ANP. No information on the status of the other 16 ANP units in Kandahar is provided in the Government's March 2009 report.

Recommendation 4 – Government quarterly reports should include a textual and graphic description of the training level achieved by all ANP units supported by the Canadian Forces and Canadian CIVPOL in Kandahar Province, so the Special Committee can gain a more complete understanding of the status of associated benchmarks.

- **Progress Indicator 6c:** The number of ANP infrastructure and equipment projects completed in Kandahar.
- **Baseline:** Five permanent substations have been constructed and equipped in key districts (August 2008).
- **2011 Target:** Fifteen new infrastructure projects, such as construction of substations or checkpoints, and 15 upgrades to existing ANP facilities are completed in key districts in Kandahar province. All 15 new facilities built by Canada in Kandahar province are provided with basic equipment required to run a functioning police unit.
- **Results as of March 2009:** Four new infrastructure projects have been completed in this quarter and 10 ANP facilities upgraded.
- **Our Committee Comment:** This represents steady improvement over the baseline condition and improvement since the last quarter.

APPENDIX A LIST OF WITNESSES

| Organizations and Individuals | Date | Meeting |
|---|------------|---------|
| <p>Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade</p> <p>Yves Brodeur, Assistant Deputy Minister Afghanistan Task Force</p> <p>Gallit Dobner, Deputy Director, Governance, Rule of Law and Development Afghanistan Task Force</p> | 2009/04/30 | 4 |
| <p>Royal Canadian Mounted Police</p> <p>Raf Souccar, Deputy Commissioner Federal Policing</p> <p>Paul Young, Superintendent Program Manager, International Peace Operations Branch (Asia)</p> | | |
| <p>Department of National Defence</p> <p>Alan Howard, Brigadier-General</p> <p>Denis William Thompson, Brigadier-General</p> | 2009/05/14 | 6 |
| <p>Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade</p> <p>Yves Brodeur, Assistant Deputy Minister Afghanistan Task Force</p> <p>Elissa Golberg, Former Representative of Canada in Kandahar</p> | 2009/06/04 | 8 |
| <p>House of Commons</p> <p>Stockwell Day, Minister of International Trade</p> | 2009/06/11 | 9 |

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS

A copy of the relevant Minutes of Proceedings ([Meetings Nos.4, 6, 8 and 9](#)) is tabled.

Respectfully submitted,

Rick Casson, MP
Chair

REQUEST FOR GOVERNMENT RESPONSE

Pursuant to Standing Order 109, the Committee requests that the government table a comprehensive response to this Report and that the Government consider providing its response within 60 days considering the nature of the report.

A copy of the relevant Minutes of Proceedings ([Meetings Nos. 4, 6, 8 and 9](#)) is tabled.

Respectfully submitted,

Rick Casson, MP

Chair

SUPPLEMENTARY REPORT ON ANA/ANP TRAINING FROM CONSERVATIVE PARTY MEMBERS OF THE HOUSE OF COMMONS SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON CANADA'S MISSION IN AFGHANISTAN

The Special Committee on Canada's Mission in Afghanistan (SCOCMIA) has produced a succinct and observant report on the training of the Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF). The report notes accurately that Canadian Afghan National Army (ANA) training efforts in Kandahar have "shown promising progress" and that the ANA could be capable of autonomous operations by 2011.¹ The significance of ANA progress cannot be overstated and should be celebrated as a major Canadian and Allied achievement.

However, we note that the report does not take into account important information and testimony regarding: 1) Security benchmarks; 2) Significant nuance and information on the ANSF from Brigadier-Generals Alan Howard and Denis William Thompson and RCMP officers Deputy Commissioner Raf Souccar and Superintendent Paul Young; and 3) The reporting mechanism and quarterly report process of the Government, which is readily acknowledged as the most comprehensive in NATO/ISAF. We feel with this information the report would have better reflected the testimony we heard and the reality on-the-ground.

On points 1 and 3, the report at several points seems overly critical of not having more information to assess current benchmarks and also the timing of the reports. We feel these criticisms are largely unfair. Canada, as noted in recent testimony by Minister Stockwell Day, has the most aggressive and comprehensive reporting structure in NATO/ISAF. In fact, countries such as the United States are examining and moving towards our usage of benchmarks and progress indicators in Afghanistan. The committee is of course always free to request more comprehensive explanations provided operational and national security is respected.

The issue of timing and verbal briefings in the Report's Recommendation 1 is also highly suspect. The most recent quarterly report was produced in approximately 9 weeks (March 31, 2009 to June 3, 2009) from receiving the information, assessing it, and writing the document.² One can hardly describe this process and/or information as "dated" as the report does,³ considering the in-depth analysis and process in place. In fact, one would be hard-pressed in any organization to provide information from start to finish that quickly and to publicly comment on this information before it has gone through this process would be imprudent in the least.

As we mention, the report fails to mention significant portions of testimony, specifically and most importantly from Brigadier-Generals Alan Howard and Denis William Thompson. For instance, BGen Thompson spoke extensively regarding ANA benchmarks. The report's commentary on lack of information regarding fluctuations in ANA Kandak and headquarters' effectiveness (see commentary on Benchmark 1) does not address the reasonable and plausible explanations of BGen Thompson, who stated, "The important thing to take away here is that as with any army, it's not a linear path ... There is a plan in place that has 2011 as a target, at least in Kandahar province, and we will get there, but it won't be along a linear path; it will be a sinusoidal curve that grows from this point in time to that point in time."⁴ In fact, BGen Thompson's testimony can probably help explain other benchmark criticisms in the report, but

¹ SCOCMIA, *Report on Canada's Priority Number One in Afghanistan Helping to Enhance the Afghan National Security Forces*, Subsection: Background, Paragraph 10.

² Government of Canada, *Canada's Engagement in Afghanistan: March 2009*, Queen's Press: Ottawa, 3 June 2009.

³ SCOCMIA, *Report on Canada's Priority Number One in Afghanistan Helping to Enhance the Afghan National Security Forces*, Subsection: Government Quarterly Reports, Paragraph 5.

⁴ SCOCMIA, Meeting 6, 14 May 2009, testimony from Brigadier-General Denis William Thompson.

the report simply fails to even acknowledge, let alone engage, Brigadier-Generals Thompson's or Howard's testimony.

We also believe that while the analysis of ANP training was largely correct, once again the report could have more thoroughly engaged expert testimony from Deputy Commissioner Raf Souccar and Superintendent Paul Young on recent advances in ANP training.⁵ The report does acknowledge the expansion of the police training centre and police trainers. However, the report does not readily connect the significance of Canadian actions to correct previous inadequacies in the ISAF approach to ANP training. The report was also unable to examine the very recent announcement by Minister Cannon (June 12, 2009) that Canada will be increasing its contribution to ANP salaries by an additional \$12 million.⁶ These additional funds will aid the recruitment, retention, and training of an additional 1,000 Afghan National Police specifically in the Kandahar region. This is a significant announcement which should aid in furthering Canada's commitment to ANP training. We understand that because of timing issues it was too late to include an analysis of this announcement in the report but we feel it is important to relay the information in some fashion.

Overall, we appreciate the report's attention to these important matters. ANSF progress is one of the most significant Allied actions and work in Afghanistan. Coupled with diplomatic and governance efforts, effective security will allow Afghans to take control of their destiny. We thank the committee for its multi-partisan efforts and look forward to working together to better inform Canadians about our mission in Afghanistan on all fronts.

⁵ SCOCMIA, Meeting 4, 30 April 2009.

⁶"Canada Announces \$12 Million in Additional Support for Rule of Law in Canada," Government of Canada: Afghanistan Website, <http://www.afghanistan.gc.ca/canada-afghanistan/news-nouvelles/2009/2009_06_12.aspx?lang=eng>, 12 June 2009.

Supplementary Report

New Democratic Party of Canada

The protection and promotion of human rights in Afghanistan is a stated priority for our engagements in the country. Presentations by Canadian officials at the Special Committee on the Canadian Mission in Afghanistan, however, indicate a lack of focus on human rights.

The government has argued that Canada's commitment to human rights in Afghanistan is reflected in one of Canada's six priorities for Afghanistan: to help advance democratic governance by supporting effective, accountable public institutions.

As part of this priority Canada is helping to strengthen justice institutions by providing training to judges, education on legal aid, and direct support to the Ministry of Justice. Furthermore, one of Canada's most significant engagements in Afghanistan is in the area of training Afghan National Army (ANA) and Afghan National Police (ANP).

Canada also provides financial support to the Afghanistan Independent Human Rights Commission (AIHRC) to perform its important role of monitoring the respect for human rights in Afghanistan and promoting their advancement.

However, once the New Democrat member of the committee raised the findings of AIHRC's report titled "*The causes of torture by law enforcement agencies*", Canadian officials indicated that they had not read the report. Furthermore, it became apparent that Canada is not aware of the findings of the report and therefore has not taken any steps in addressing the concerns that were raised.

Of important findings in the AIHRC's report on the incidents of torture by the same law enforcement agencies that Canada supports and trains, the following should be noted:

- Torture and cruel, inhumane and belittling behaviour is widespread in majority of law enforcement agencies in Afghanistan.
- Majority of alleged incidents have taken place by the police.
- Only 17.4% of law enforcement officials are aware of the constitutional and human rights of the accused not to be tortured.
- Majority of judges do not inform the accused of their rights.

Therefore, the New Democratic Party supplements the recommendations of this with the following recommendations:

Recommendation 1: The Government of Canada must increase its support for the important work of the Afghanistan Independent Human Rights Commission, and put in

place mechanisms for the timely translation and distribution of the Commission's reports between Canadian officials so that immediate steps can be taken in addressing concerns raised by the Commission.

Recommendation 2: Canada's training of Afghan officials must include training on human rights, Afghan constitution and laws on the rights of the accused. Furthermore, in its quarterly reports to the parliament, the Government of Canada should include its most assessment of Afghanistan's human rights situation and explain Canadian efforts and results in addressing the human rights concerns in the country.