

Cables on Afghanistan

[News Archive](#) » [News Archive - February 2011](#)

2011-02-18: WikiLeaks in today's media: Cablegate coverage

Aftenposten: READOUT NORTH ATLANTIC COUNCIL MEETING FEBRUARY 11, 2009

"AFGHANISTAN: Discussion focused on scheduling strategic instructed dialogues prior to the Krakow Defense Ministers, meeting on the Afghan National Army Trust Fund, crafting an interim response to the Afghan-proposed military technical agreement, and Pakistani proposals for building closer cooperation with NATO. PermReps want to address discrepancies in ISAF and UNAMA counts of civilian casualties with visiting Special Representative of the UN Secretary General Kai Eide next week. Two topics related to NATO,s role in Afghan police development are stalemated in the Military Committee."

[Read cable](#)

Aftenposten: ICRC REPORT ON FARAH CIVCAS INCIDENT STATES 89 CIVILIANS WERE KILLED

"ICRC Head of Mission Reto Stocker met with Ambassador Eikenberry on June 13 and delivered a written report on the events associated with the battle in Bala Baluk, Farah Province, on May 4. The ICRC

concluded that the civilian death total was considerably higher than the number estimated by ISAF investigators. Nevertheless, Stocker praised the cooperation of ISAF and U.S. military officials in gathering information for the ICRC report on casualties that resulted from fighting between insurgents and ANSF/Coalition forces. The ICRC interviewed more than 50 villagers and came to the conclusion that 89 civilians were killed in bombings on the evening of May 4, with an additional 13 wounded. Although Stocker had seen an edited version of the aerial video from the B-1 bomber, he still believes that the last 2 bombs dropped hit civilians and not enemy fighters. The ICRC report was provided to assist Coalition authorities investigating the incident and will not be released publicly."

[Read cable](#)

Aftenposten: AFGHAN MOD WARDAK PUSHES ANA EXPANSION AT NAC REF: USNATO 00313

"Afghan Defense Minister Wardak briefed the NAC with ISAF contributors on September 4 on the current security situation in Afghanistan, the rationale for expanding the Afghan National Army (ANA) and methods to reduce civilian casualties. He portrayed the security situation as serious, with 2008 on a course to be the bloodiest year since 2003. He presented a well organized case to Allies and partners for expanding the ANA to 122,000 in the near future, which was generally supported by Allies. The issue of civilian casualties loomed large due to recent events, and Min Wardak proposed methods to enhance cooperation and limit civilian casualties. He also answered PermRep

questions, particularly on ISAF,s support to counter-narcotics. He proposed a joint Afghan/Pak/ISAF task force to enhance coordination and security along the border."

[Read cable](#)

Aftenposten: UNAMA HEAD KAI EIDE DISTANCES HIMSELF FROM NATO DURING BRIEF TO PERMREPS, 29 SEPTEMBER

"During a September 29 briefing to NATO Perm Reps, UN Special Representative for Afghanistan Kai Eide painted a gloomy picture of the deteriorating security situation in Afghanistan, which he said was detracting international attention away from development agenda. He criticized nations for focusing development aid on "their" provinces and urged greater focus on building police, and provincial governments. Eide also stressed the differences between the UN and ISAF and indicated that he wanted to keep his distance from ISAF, saying repeatedly that he did not see it as part of his job to coordinate between the UN and NATO. He rejected the idea of joint investigations into civilian casualty incidents, saying it would hurt the UN's "impartiality", indicated he did not want to use the new media center that is also used by ISAF, and stressed the importance of civilian agencies like the UN and NGOs not being confused in Afghan eyes with the military. When pressed by the U.S. and other Perm Reps at an informal lunch on the necessity of his fulfilling the coordination role as part of the comprehensive approach necessary in Afghanistan, Eide stuck to his earlier positions on the importance of maintaining UN impartiality."

[Read cable](#)

**Aftenposten: NORTH ATLANTIC COUNCIL
READOUT - JULY 9, 2008**

"Afghanistan: The Chairman of the Military Committee (CMC) provided an update of the EUPOL mission which currently has 166 personnel deployed to Afghanistan to assist the Afghan National Police. The SYG stated that there had been a number of additional civilian casualty incidents in the last week which have served to highlight the damaging effect this issue is having on NATO's credibility and strategic messaging. Referring to the recent report by UN U/SYG Holmes on civilian casualties in Afghanistan, the SYG said NATO must have up to date, accurate numbers readily available for release to the public and be prepared to explain the basis of these numbers and stand by them. U.S. Charge Olson stressed that NATO must resist the temptation to try to place blame for civilian casualties on partners, such as OEF. The Bulgarian PermRep announced plans to deploy 50 additional troops to Kandahar Airfield in August and then increase their Kabul contingent to approximately 500 troops with additional troops set to deploy in November."

[Read cable](#)

**Aftenposten: NORTH ATLANTIC COUNCIL
READOUT: AUGUST 13, 2008**

"Afghanistan: SHAPE reported the IED,s had become the weapon of choice of opposing militant forces (OMF) and ISAF had shifted focus to road security to ensure freedom of movement. The Deputy Chairman of the

Military Committee urged Allies to increase their contributions to the training of the Afghan National Army (ANA) to close the gap in requirements for Operational Mentoring and Liaison Teams (OMLTs). He said NATO Military Authorities would complete an assessment in September of the additional training and resource requirements involved in the proposed increase of the ANA to 122,000. He also urged Allies to donate to the depleted NATO Trust Fund for transporting equipment donations since numerous donations, including three Mi-24 helicopters from the Czech Republic, cannot be transported to Afghanistan due to lack of funds. Assistant Secretary (A/SYG) Howard reported on his meeting last week with UN OCHA Director John Holmes in which they agreed to disagree over civilian casualty figures in Afghanistan, but agreed ISAF and UNAMA should work out a common methodology for counting civilian casualties."

[Read cable](#)

Aftenposten: READOUT: SEPTEMBER 3 NORTH ATLANTIC COUNCIL MEETING

"AFGHANISTAN: The SYG reviewed his September 1 phone conversation with President Karzai, who said civilian casualties were now "beyond the tolerance and comprehension of the Afghan people." The SYG said he underscored that NATO is making every effort to avoid civilian casualties and he suggested that it was time for Afghan officials, UNAMA, and NATO military commanders to sit down and see how we could do better. SACEUR addressed the NAC on what he saw as major challenges facing ISAF and called for greater

international engagement with Pakistan, increasing ISAF latitude to fight narcotics, and better coordination on development. The new NATO Senior Civilian Representative (SCR) in Kabul, Ambassador Fernando Gentilini, joined the NAC via VTC and spoke briefly about the security perception among Afghans and the upcoming elections. PermReps expressed concerns about civilian casualties and the damage they inflict of Afghan perceptions of ISAF and their own domestic public support for ISAF. Several nations supported SACEURs call for greater authority to fight narcotics, but the French, German, Dutch and Italian Perm Reps aired reservations. In closing, SYG mentioned that SRSG Kai Eide would be available to address the NAC on his way back from the UNGA. He also stated that after the JCMB the NAC would discuss the United States, non-paper on a new ANA trust fund."

[Read cable](#)

Aftenposten: NORTH ATLANTIC COUNCIL READOUT - JULY 2, 2008

"Afghanistan: The SYG welcomed the new Chairman of the Military Committee (CMC) Admiral Giampaolo De Paola (Italy), and stated that the NAC would benefit from military advice from SHAPE on military preparations for the upcoming Afghanistan voter registration and elections. The SYG reported that he had received a letter from Afghan DefMin Wardak urging expansion of the ANA to 122K troops plus a training float of 12K, for a total force of 134K. CMC De Paola reported on ISAF support to ANA operations during the prison breakout and announced that consultations with nations on ANSF

plans to take responsibility for security in Kabul city will begin July 3. During the operational brief, Admiral Moreno reported on the Pakistan military operations against OMF in the Khyber area of FATA. In Afghanistan, the OMF are shifting to greater asymmetric attacks, while ISAF continues its focus in RC-South. Several PermReps challenged the report by UN U/SG John Holmes, which noted over 600 civilian deaths in Afghanistan, but expressed concern about the impact on public opinion."

[Read cable](#)

Aftenposten: NORTH ATLANTIC COUNCIL MEETING, MAY 13,2009

"AFGHANISTAN: Allies discussed the U.S. nomination of LTG Stanley McChrystal to be the new Commander of the NATO-led International Security Assistance Force in Afghanistan, with several stressing that they hoped McChrystal would be able to meet with the NAC as soon as possible. The U.S. and UK pushed back on Norwegian attempts to press NATO to move forward on Afghanistans request for a Military Technical Agreement. The Chairman of the NATO Military Committee said that NATO Chiefs of Defense (CHODs) had noted continuing problems with police training in Afghanistan, leading a number of Allies to press for quick movement on the establishment of a NATO Training Mission-Afghanistan. Estonia announced a 50,000 Euro contribution to the Afghan National Army Trust Fund. The Secretary General agreed to try to arrange a briefing from Kai Eide, the UN Secretary Generals Special Representative for Afghanistan. During the operational briefing, Major

General Wright noted that 80 percent of kinetic operations in Afghanistan took place in only 11 percent of its provinces and that kinetic activity in Kabul accounted for less than 1.5 percent of all activity in Afghanistan. He also noted, however, that kinetic activity in the country had increased 73 percent over a similar time period the previous year."

[Read cable](#)

Aftenposten: NORTH ATLANTIC COUNCIL READOUT MARCH 7, 2007

"Afghanistan: PermReps and SYG discussed apparent failure to pre-brief the NAC on Operation Achilles, launch with many parties expressing frustration and disappointment. SYG promised to take this issue of poor communication up with SACEUR. The SHAPE Operations Director MG Stein detailed Operation Achilles which is now COMISAF,s main tactical effort. A French CIMIC team will go south for Achilles; Spanish and Italian (RC-W) forces will help as well. The UK and U.S. announced a March 28 joint brief to the NAC on counternarcotics. Germany questions USAID absence from ISAF press conference on Achilles/Kajaki dam and Ambassador Nuland explained why USAID did not participate."

[Read cable](#)

Aftenposten: NORTH ATLANTIC COUNCIL MEETING, JULY 8,2009

"AFGHANISTAN: Allies were briefed on ISAFs revised tactical directive which emphasized the importance of

population security. The Deputy Secretary General and Allies expressed frustration at not being notified by military authorities in advance of the start of Operation Khanjari in Helmand province. The Director of the International Military Staff reported that a team had traveled to Kabul to discuss implementation plans for the NATO Training Mission-Afghanistan. A New Zealand army officer was awarded the NATO Meritorious Service Medal, the first for a non-NATO troop contributor."

[Read cable](#)

(Image Credit: Dali Rău)