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**FROM:** KOENIGS, UNAMA, KABUL

**DATE:** 10 April 2007

**NUMBER:**

**SUBJECT:** UNAMA Weekly Summary Report for the period  
2-9 April 2007

Herewith, please find the above-mentioned UNAMA weekly report

Best regards,

## **I. Security**

1. Last week, two international and three national INGO staff members were kidnapped by Taliban in Bakwa, Nimroz, South. This is the third high profile abduction in a month. President Karzai has publicly ruled out a prisoner swap. All security analysts agree that the initial swap of the Italian journalist Mastrogiacomo was bound to set a precedent for further abductions. Work to secure the unconditional release of the aid worker continues. Meanwhile, Afghan authorities have reportedly arrested the main Afghan negotiator in the release of the Italian journalist accusing him of links with the Taliban.
2. Two suicide- attacks were reported from the East and Kabul. On 6 April, a SVIED device detonated prematurely after a police chase in Kabul killing four civilians. On 8 April, a SVIED collided with a military convoy in Batikot, Nangahar.
3. The focus of military operations remained on Helmand province, with ISAF forces re-establishing government control over the district centre of Sangin. An ANA battalion was moved to the district to consolidate government control. Taliban and foreign fighters dispersed to Kandahar (Maiwand, Khakrez), Musa Qala district and other locations for the most part prior to the arrival of ISAF forces. Work continues on a strategy for reinforcing governance and political outreach in Helmand in the wake of these operations.
4. The lower rate of attacks in southeast Afghanistan was partly accounted for by heavy fighting in Waziristan between tribal militias and foreign militants. Over 250 people were killed in clashes that began on 19 March, with heavy losses continuing this week.

## **II. Political Developments**

5. On 3 April 2007, the formal launch of the National Front of Afghanistan took place in Kabul. Approximately 500 supporters were present for keynote addresses by Ustad Rabbani, Mustafa Zaher (King Zahir Shah's grandson) and other members of the Front calling for constitutional amendments to strengthen the role of parliament, elected governors and other measures. The atmosphere was relatively calm, with the Front insisting it has not entered opposition to President Karzai. First Vice President Ahmad Zia Masud did not attend the event but has associated himself with the Front. Energy and Water Minister Ismail Khan and Former Foreign Minister Abdullah attended the event.. The Front is disparate in composition – Northern Alliance/Shura-i-Nazar jihadis, former Najibullah regime members, Junbesh associates (Dostum did not attend) and even the Royal Family. It may prove unwieldy in its political action. Public reaction has been reportedly muted: the Front, which unites many former rivals and enemies, is seen as self-serving. The reaction of the palace has run from negative to hostile. It is important to note that Vice President Khalili, Ustad Sayyaf and Mohaqeq – key supporters of President Karzai – are not affiliated with the Front and may launch rival movements.
6. Work continued on Tier III selection as the next phase of Ministry of Interior reform. Once district police chiefs are confirmed for the four PAG provinces, the new assignments of colonels throughout the country will be ready for implementation. The Wolesi Jirga commission of internal security, headed by Zalmai Mojaeddi, has called for hearings on the police reform process this week: many members of the commission are concerned over their loss of influence over police appointments.

7. Afghanistan mourned the loss of Ajmal Naqshbandi, the journalist brutally murdered by Taliban extremists this week. The manifest injustice of exchanging five Taliban terrorists in return for the release of an Italian journalist, while leaving Naqshbandi to his fate, was not lost on Afghans.

8. President Karzai acknowledged this week the unsurprising fact that he has been in contact with some Taliban leaders, creating controversy in some quarters, particularly among National Front leaders, including Wolesi Jirga chair Qanooni. He also reviewed the successes of 1385 in a lengthy television presentation, which covered an impressive range of achievements. This interview included a ringing endorsement of the re-launched DIAG program.

9. On 4 April, Vice President Khalili chaired a meeting of Afghan ministers and members of the international community to finalize next steps under the DIAG Action Plan. Governors in ten provinces have now been instructed to implement voluntary DIAG in ten districts. Minister Stanekzai has been re-confirmed as the new deputy chair of the Demobilization and Reintegration Commission.

#### Human Rights

10. A mass grave was found Dasht-i-Qurogh (near Faizabad airfield) by a local construction company that was digging the foundations for a house. So far, they have discovered the remains of twelve persons, including one woman. Two secondary sites were discovered recently next to the main grave contained four and five bodies. It is believed that the victims may be people suspected of supporting the Jihad or civilian victims of reprisals. The grave is close to the former Soviet army camp in Faizabad. The AIHRC Badakhshan was requested to register the mass grave as part of their conflict - mapping project.

11. UNAMA participated in a meeting of thirty civil society organizations at the Afghan Civil Society Forum. The meeting sought to address concerns of civil society with regard to the Amnesty Law and Transitional Justice Action Plan.

### **III. Reconstruction**

#### Humanitarian

12. On 3 April, an earthquake of 6.2 magnitude occurred 64km south of Faizabad. The quake was at a depth of 210km. No casualties were reported

13. The flood situation is ongoing, with assistance being delivered to more than 16 provinces. UN Agencies are coordinating with the ANDMA, as well as NGOs, and ISAF to provide assessments and assistance. Helicopter missions to Bamyan and Daikundi took place with more planned for Faryab. The Government's role has been much improved, with assets being utilized to address the situation, and better coordination and leadership.

#### Civil-Military

14. The PRT Working Group met on 4 April. Topics included the presence of MoI liaison officers in the PRTs and coordination between the PRTs and the Ministry of Education.

## Gender

15. The Ministry of Women's Affairs, with technical support of the international advisors to the MoWA including UNAMA, is in the process of reviewing all ministry strategies submitted to the ANDS by various ministries and WGs of the ANDS. The review includes providing comments on the inclusion of relevant gender perspectives to the strategies papers, in line with the overall strategy of gender equality outlined in the Compact and the IANDS. Also, in the course of the CG meetings, the MoWA presented the progress made on vulnerable women under Social Protection CG and in the development of the National Action Plan for Women under the Governance, Rule of Law and Human Rights CG.

## Governance

16. From 2-5 April, six of the eight Consultative Groups were convened in Kabul. The last two CGs (Security and Health) will be held on 9-10 April. UNAMA attended all meetings, which generally saw good, high-level, participation from government ministries/agencies and the international community. The broader aim of the CG meetings was to discuss and review reports received from the Working Groups on the implementation of Afghanistan Compact benchmarks, the development of ministerial strategies and the formulation sector approaches. Common issues raised at all the CGs included a comparison of the 1385 and 1386 national budget, an update on the ANDS process, including the program for sub-national consultations, the integration of cross-cutting issues (counter-narcotics, capacity building, regional cooperation, environment and gender) into ministerial strategies, and a discussion on how to transform ministerial strategies into broader sector strategies. The CGs also referred a number of issues and decisions to the upcoming Afghanistan National Development Forum (ADF) on 29-30 April and the first annual reporting meeting of the Joint Coordination and Monitoring Board (JCMB) on 1 May. Whereas the focus of the ADF is to attain effective implementation of development projects and the presentation of government strategies (health, education and energy) as prepared through the CGs, the JCMB V meeting will be aimed at reviewing the achievements and challenges of implementing the Afghanistan Compact during its first year as well as the requirements of fulfilling the entire Compact over the next 4 years. Critical issues that have so far been raised by the CGs and other enabling coordination mechanisms for the JCMB include security, refugee and IDP returns, elections and anti-corruption.

17. On 3 April, the SRSB and his JCMB Co-Chair met to review preparations of the upcoming JCMB V and to discuss ways to strengthen the JCMB framework. The results of this session were further discussed at an informal donors group meeting convened by the SRSB on 8 April. Building on the Berlin consensus, there was general support for the JCMB to be the central coordinating body between the GoA and the international community. There is also growing support towards the suggestion of the outgoing ambassador to hold two out of four yearly JCMB meetings in donor capitals, one of which would be at the level of political directors as in Berlin, while the other could be a high level meeting in the JCMB format. Donors also highlighted the need to build upon the good Kabul-based working relationship between the GoA and the international community, by extending it to capitals.

## IV Regional Developments

### North

18. Meetings were held with the Jawzjan and Saripul provincial governors in order to push the DIAG 'low hanging fruit initiative'. Both governors responded positively to the urgent nature of target

district selection, however concerns were raised over the 100,000 USD development fund. The Saripul governor considered this an insignificant amount – only enough to build one high school – and insisted that for a successful outcome greater development funding would be needed. The governors are considering Mardyan (Jawzjan) and Sowzma Qala (Saripul) as 'LHF' districts, though a final decision will be made after consultations with the provincial security and development authorities.

19. UNAMA received a petition protesting the appointment of Amir Azizullah as the new district governor. Residents allege that Amir Azizullah maintains close links to the Taliban and was previously under the direct command of Mullah Dadullah. Locals are becoming increasingly concerned over this appointment and the resulting use of the district as a springboard for anti government activities in Samangan. Residents have also commented that internal displacement may occur should this appointment proceed. The petition was also given to the provincial governor.

#### North East

20. The police reform process continues in all four provinces. According to the list, in Badakhshan all 27 district COP will be changed; in Kunduz – 4 (out of seven), Takhar – 13 (out of 16) and Baghlan – 13 (out of 14). By 9 April, only 12 of them were introduced to their posts.

21. New *uluswals* (district administrators) were also put in place in two Baharak districts, one in Takhar and the other one in Badakhshan. The latter, Akhtar Mohammad, is from Baghlan with a Hezbe Islami background and close to Governor Majid. The appointment already sparked a reaction from Baharak commander Sardar Khan, who indicated he would protest the decision. In Takhar the reform process is complicated by the existence of a so-called list of nine (a parallel list with the names of COP to be appointed instead of those introduced in the main list).

#### West

22. Last week, the Regional Governance Working Group (R-GWG) was formed. Its aim is to enhance coordination and collaboration in the governance sector, improve effectiveness of the capacity building activities and to develop civil servants' skills and competencies in the region. Additionally, it hopes to contribute to strengthening the capacity of the public administration at sub-national level.

23. The R-CDMT and the P-CDMT continued to assist flood affected families in Herat and Badghis provinces. Following the coordination and dispatching of food and non-food assistance to Gulran district, Herat, a day joint mission of the government and UN agencies was dispatched to the district to monitor and speed up the distribution process. In the meantime, most of the trucks loaded with food and non-food assistance reached the affected districts in Badghis Province.

#### South

24. The security situation in Helmand has been complicated by the significant numbers of families that were displaced as a result of floods in Kajaki, Sangin Grishk and Lashkargah Districts.

25. On 6 April, a convoy transporting WFP assistance items for flood displaced families in Zaranj was ambushed in Daloram District (Nimroz). No casualties were reported and the convoy continued to its destination. In the second attack on 7 April, a WFP implementing partner transport convoy was attacked in Shah Joy (Zabul). One transport contractor employee was killed and three ANP were injured.

26. On 7 April, the five Provincial Governors of Southern Region, together with the Deputy Governor of Daikundi, attended a Governors Conference hosted by the Governor of Kandahar. The agenda, which had been drawn up by ISAF RC(S) and UNAMA in consultation with the respective Governors, covered Reconstruction and Development, Security, Political Engagement and Counter Narcotics. (see also CH)

#### South East

27. In a Regional Security Coordination meeting this week, all key regional security actors acknowledged the increase of AGE activities in the region. Insurgents are reportedly concentrating on spreading anti-government propaganda and encouraging the tribes to fight against the Government, or against each other, in order to destabilize the situation in the districts. The Provincial CoPs from Loya Paktya and Ghazni strongly criticized the existing coordination and cooperation mechanisms, particularly in remote areas where AGEs usually operate. In their view the decisions of the PCCs (Provincial Coordination Centre) are rarely followed in practice. CoPs also stressed that the inequity of resources and salaries of ANP and ANA have a negative effect on the morale of ANP soldiers. Some potential solutions to ANP grievances are; the payment of a hazard allowance to soldiers in medium-high risk areas, adequate equipment (heavy weapons for soldiers in medium-high risk areas) and improved communication and coordination between different security organs.

#### East

28. Fifteen poppy eradication operations were conducted throughout the region this week. While in most of the places, operations continued without major resistance from the community, there were heavy clashes between farmers and ANP in Chaparhar and Bati Kot Districts in Nangarhar. As a result one civilian was killed, whilst 16 other civilians and six ANP members were injured. Although the Governor of Nangarhar is attempting to currently de-escalate the situation through tribal elders , further clashes are expected.

29. On 3 April, reliable sources reported that a group of 100 AGEs under the leadership of Qadir Khen, commander Noorudin and commander Sharif are preparing to launch an anti CF/Gov operation in the western districts of Nuristan. Another report suggests that Qari Ahmad Shah, one of the AGEs commanders, active in Dari Noor district in Nangarhar is planning to launch operations on Zeri Baba check posts located in the middle of Nurgal district in Kunar and Khewa district of Nangarhar.

#### Central Highlands

30. The security and political situation in Gezab and Kijran districts was on the agenda of the southern governor conference. Reports from NDS, the Uruzgan PRT and the Governor of Uruzgan suggested that the situation in Gezab is becoming critical and must be addressed without delay. It was highlighted by NDS that there are roughly 200-300 AGE "roaming" around Gezab . Schools have been shut or were burnt down and many people have fled the district. AGE have established courts and have set up their own shadow administration. There is no government presence in the district apart from 35 "undercover" auxiliary police, dispatched from Daikundi, that are monitoring the situation in the northern Gezab areas including Tamazan (15 km from Nili centre). NATO/ISAF forces in Uruzgan currently do not have the manpower to patrol the district effectively given its logistical and geographical constraints

[Raschdorf -OSRSG]