



SECRETARY GENERAL
LE SECRÉTAIRE GÉNÉRAL
Anders Fogh Rasmussen

SG(2013)0340

24 October 2013

Dear Fabio Pompetti,

I am writing in response to your letter of 15 October 2013, in which you urge NATO to make every effort to support the development of human rights adherence within the Afghan National Security Forces.

NATO and our partners attach great importance to this issue. We are preparing the Afghan forces to take full responsibility for the security of their country. Their performance in carrying out their tasks will be critical, but the way they operate is equally important. Human rights considerations have now been mainstreamed into all Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF) training and ministerial-level capacity-building. There are three major areas of focus: the mitigation of civilian harm, and the implementation of both UN Security Council Resolution 1325 (and related resolutions) on Women, Peace and Security, and 1612 (and related resolutions) on Children and Armed Conflict.

The International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) has worked relentlessly to eliminate civilian casualties. We have made significant progress, as the UN Security Council has noted, and will continue to focus our efforts in this area. Now that the Afghans are leading all combat operations, ISAF is training our Afghan partners to do the same. ISAF is therefore working hard with the Afghan government, UNAMA and civil society actors to build up the necessary capabilities, structures and policy framework to avoid civilian harm, or to be able to fully and transparently investigate any incidents which may nevertheless occur, compensate affected families and communities, and internalize lessons learned so that future tragedies can be avoided.

Alongside the rest of the international community, NATO attaches great importance to protecting and empowering women and girls in Afghanistan. ISAF's recent priorities include training on gender issues for the ANSF, supporting the recruitment and retention of women in the security sector, and ensuring that there are sufficient numbers of female staff to support the ongoing election registration, as well as next year's polls. ISAF and the Office of the NATO Senior Civilian Representative engage with Afghan security ministries and local and international Non-Governmental Organizations to coordinate efforts aimed at women's empowerment. This year also saw the appointment of the first ISAF Gender Adviser of General

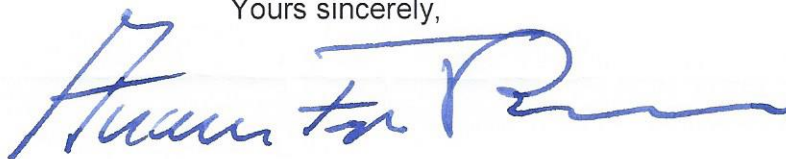
Officer rank, who will bring together all these strands of work and move this important agenda forward.

As NATO considers and prepares for a new train, advise and assist mission in Afghanistan after 2014, I can assure you that human rights training and capacity-building for the ANSF, and the ministries which oversee them, as well as support for mechanisms to ensure full accountability across the security sector, will be at the very core of our planning.

I would also note that NATO Heads of State and Government, at the 2012 NATO Chicago Summit, tasked a review on the Alliance's implementation of UNSCR 1325 in our operations and missions. The review has been completed and made public following the 23 October meeting of ISAF Defence Ministers. The recommendations of this review have been taken forward through an implementation plan endorsed by the ISAF Ministers. This Plan will make sure that gender perspective becomes a core part of NATO business by including it in Alliance doctrine, handbooks, directives and activities; makes training on the integration of gender considerations a mandatory requirement in all NATO-organized education and pre-deployment training, including for Commanders; and will ensure that gender advisers will be positioned in command groups at military headquarters, alongside those already working in Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe and the General Officer-ranked ISAF gender adviser. The NATO Military Authorities will report on a regular basis on the progress made.

I would like to add that the protection and empowerment of women in Afghanistan goes beyond Afghan National Security Forces and requires consistent international engagement. Your contribution in this regard will remain essential and I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for the excellent work that ENNA does to capture the perspectives and concerns of the many Non-Governmental Organizations that it represents. The continuous and open dialogue between my staff and yours is particularly fruitful and I hope it shall continue in the months and years ahead.

Yours sincerely,



Anders Fogh Rasmussen

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