



PUBLIC AFFAIRS

**ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF DEFENSE
1400 DEFENSE PENTAGON
WASHINGTON, DC 20301-1400**

July 2, 2010

**MEMORANDUM FOR SECRETARY OF DEFENSE
CHAIRMAN OF THE JOINT CHIEFS OF STAFF**

SUBJECT: Communicating US Policy Objectives in Afghanistan

This memorandum outlines consensus recommendations (OSD/PA, CJCS/PA, ISAF/PA) to supplement ongoing ISAF public affairs efforts between now and December to communicate US policy objectives; manage expectations; and put military and civilian initiatives in ongoing, regular, comprehensible and credible context for American and other ISAF partner nation publics and public opinion leaders, via press, broadcast, Internet and other communication channels.

Our recommendations are framed by the following:

- The Administration's policy goals
- The complex and difficult military and political environments in which we must try to achieve them
- The need for senior leaders at home and in the field to more frequently communicate the complexities and the metrics for defining progress
- The understanding that the "soda straws" through which US and partner nation publics and decision-makers assess situations are often based on zero-sum parameters and short timetables which are simultaneously difficult to overcome and difficult to reconcile with current conditions
- The understanding that key milestones – Kandahar, the December Administration Review and July 2011 – both in and of themselves and as reported by the press will also frame public and decision-maker perceptions
- Understanding that "win-lose" terms need to be supplanted by better metrics and measurements of progress

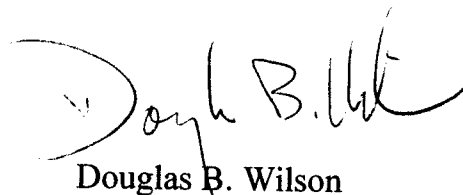
RECOMMENDATIONS:

- **WEEKLY DVTC BRIEFINGS FOR PENTAGON PRESS BY MILITARY LEADERS IN THE FIELD**
 - Patterned after OIF weekly briefings
 - Organized by OSD/PA and ISAF/PA
 - To include regular briefings by Combat Commanders from the following pool of participants



- Senior leadership including:
 - LTG Rodriguez on operations
 - LTG Caldwell on ANSF development
 - General officer-level leadership, including brigade and company commanders
 - PRT Commanders (O-5) working at grass-roots levels with communities and tribal leaders
 - Senior Joint Staff leaders, sometimes in tandem with relevant OSDP or State issue leaders (occasionally and on background only)
- **CONSISTENT MEDIA ENGAGEMENT BY OUR MOST CREDIBLE INTERLOCUTORS – SECDEF AND CJCS**
 - Organized by OSD/PA and CJCS/PA
 - Varied formats, from formal press briefings to targeted press one-on-ones to Sunday shows
- **REGULAR PENTAGON PRESS BRIEFINGS BY P4 (IN PERSON or VIA SVTC)**
 - Organized by OSD/PA, CENTCOM and ISAF/PA
 - Focusing on consistency of overall mission and goals; current developments in meeting those goals; management of expectations and reports of progress using agreed metrics
 - Every six weeks, unless events warrant additional briefing (s) to define goals and expectations before they are defined by others
- **IN-THEATER ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE BRIEFINGS FOR SELECT EMBEDDED PRESS**
 - Kabul briefings by senior leaders for select embedded press, both before (“Before You Go Out There”) and after (“Since You’ve Been Gone”) embeds, providing opportunity for them to immediate and local experiences and observations in larger context as well
 - ISAF/PA to monitor, with input from OSD/PA, CJCS/PA, CENTCOM PA and Service PAs as relevant
- **INCREASED USE OF REGIONAL MEDIA**
 - Recognition that increasing costs for print and broadcast media hampering overseas coverage
 - Ability to facilitate connection with and coverage of deployed US formations from across the US with select hometown media, particularly TV crews
 - Trips to Afghanistan organized by OSD/PA and ISAF/PA

- **BETTER COORDINATION BETWEEN STATE PUBLIC AFFAIRS/PRESS OFFICERS AND NATO HQ AND ISAF PRESS OFFICERS IN LONG-TERM DEALINGS WITH PRESS FROM KEY ISAF PARTNER NATIONS**
 - Need to more effectively explain and sustain public understanding of ISAF mission, goals, complexities and direct relevance to national security in key ISAF partner nations
 - Need to better communicate understanding of and links between US and ISAF partner goals
 - Initial discussions between OSD/PA, CJCS/PA and Undersecretary of State for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs to be followed by discussions between NATO HQ, US Mission NATO, ISAF PAs and US PAOs at embassies in key ISAF partner nations to improve coordination and long-term effectiveness



Douglas B. Wilson
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cc:
CJCS/PA