

# An Overview of Multi-National State Re-Building through the aegis of the ISAF

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**T**he International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) was a North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) led security mission established under United Nations supervision. The main aim behind its establishment was to build professional, independent and sustainable forces that were able to provide security to the Afghan people throughout the country. The ISAF was to train the Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF) and assist Afghan government in rebuilding key institutions. This work was carried out jointly by the NATO Training Mission-Afghanistan (NTM-A) and ISAF's Joint Command (IJC), together with the European Union Police Mission in Afghanistan (EUPOL Afghanistan). The takeover of UN mission in Afghanistan by NATO took place under Joint Dutch-German initiative in the wake of Iraq war 2003. The NATO required all member states to contribute to troops and development assistance force. The ISAF subsequently expanded its area of operations to all of Afghanistan by 2005. Different member states had deployed their forces in all of the Afghan provinces. The contributions by NATO states to ISAF had significantly affected because of the Iraq war, 2003.

**T**his paper takes three NATO member states: *Canada, Germany and Australia* into account to understand the pattern of state-building in Afghanistan.

***These NATO countries, through their contribution to ISAF, has made us ask the basic questions when the coalition is formed: why there are differences in the share of the burden among states, how they manifest in different approaches and how the performance of different members of the coalition ought to be assessed.***

Even the stated goals of the Afghanistan mission may be similarly formulated but there are great number of differences among member states on how to re-make a state.

## Canada



Source: Forces.gc.ca, 2013

Canada has always exhibited a history of aiding the conflict and war-torn region, especially when it comes to post-war reconstruction. Being a full-time member of NATO, Canada had played a major role during the US war on Afghanistan. It is widely known that Canada first deployed troops in Afghanistan in January 2002. This was done by Canada as it wanted to support its ally, United States of America, the most difficult in its history which was also part of the UN Resolution 1363. However, the first deployment came home in July 2002. After that, NATO took full command from the United Nations and expanded its area of operations to the whole country. In August 2003, in order to divert US pressure to commit forces in Iraq, Prime Minister Jean Chretien decided to deploy forces to NATO's UN and sanctioned the International Stabilization Assistance Force (ISAF). Soon after, Prime Minister Paul Martin increased the number of troops and redeployed it from Kabul to Kandahar where it assumed full command of the Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT). The main objective of the PRT was to foster local reconstruction efforts and promote redevelopment. It is argued that unlike most other NATO allies, Canada was (and still is) one of the few countries that did not attach operational restrictions.

**From 2007 to 2010, it had increased the troops from 2,363 to 257,756, over 21.3%, securing 4<sup>th</sup> largest NATO ally in ISAF placements.**

There was no widespread opposition in the parliament or among the public to the deployments. In the words of Benjamin Zyla, Canada wasn't a free rider but an ally that contributed more to public good than it received by way benefit.

## Australia



Source: NATO.int/isaf/media

Australia has been deploying its forces in Afghanistan since 1989. After the withdrawal of Soviet troops, Australian Defence Force (ADF) personnel were deployed to assist mine clearance operations under UN supervision. The deployment came to conclusion in 1993 with the closure of Mine Clearance Programme. The Prime Minister John Howard was in Washington D.C on 11<sup>th</sup> September 2001 and the government responded to the attacks by invoking the Australia, New Zealand and United States Security Treaty (ANZUS), 1951 supplying special forces to Afghanistan. For the US's war of terror, Australia deployed 120 Special Forces Troops in 2001 as part of Operation Enduring Freedom (However, they returned in the following year in the wake of Iraq war). The Australian troops made a grand comeback in Afghanistan in 2006 as Mentoring and Reconstruction Task Force. But it was only in 2010 when Australia became a part of ISAF-PRT in Uruzgan province. At present, it is well-estimated that there are 1,241 ADF soldiers serving in Uruzgan in different task forces. The ADF is working there with Dutch military to launch redevelopment programmes.

**The analysis by The Liaison Office of the Dutch involvement argues that “due to their more visible and hands on approach, going out to build a school or hospital, they are generally considered to be more serious and productive when it comes to security and development.”**

The current focus of ADP is to train the 4<sup>th</sup> Brigade of Afghan National Army with proper vertical integration. William Malley says that the Australian approach can be seen as an application of the ‘ink-spot theory, under which if one can do good in particular localities, that good may spread. Despite that, success in Uruzgan guarantees no success in Afghanistan as whole.

## Germany



Source: The Defence Post, 2017

**G**ermany is the third largest troop contributing nation among NATO's ISAF, highly instrumental in the reconstruction of Afghanistan. However, it has often appeared to be a reluctant SAF participant and has been criticized for not assuming a greater share of the war fighting burden. Germany is now considered to be a problem rather than a part of the solution. When it comes to developmental assistance, in 2002, Germany pledged to contribute 80 million Euros per year. Since then, Germany's annual commitment has steadily increased to 115 million Euros in 2007 to 252 million Euros in 2009. At London Conference, 2010, Germany doubled its commitment to 430 million Euros and by the end of 2012, Germany had invested 1.5 Billion Euros in Afghanistan's reconstruction programme. The main priority areas for these funds were education, health, clean water, sanitation, microcredit facility and good governance. Apart from the troops, Germany had also placed 240 civilian experts with 1100 aid workers. Germany also took the responsibility to train the Afghan National Police at the Petersburg Conference in 2001. The main reason to deposit Germany in Police training is that both German Democratic Republic and Federal Republic of Germany served police developmental assistance in Afghanistan in 1960s and 1970s. The integral part of Germany's contribution has been the two PRT in Kunduz and Faizabad and one Provincial Advisory Team (PAT) in Takhar. Germany's PRT techniques were based on networked security concept which advocates a close integration of civilian and military efforts in times of conflict.

**German government has also acted as the convener of two major international conferences on Afghanistan: Petersburg Conference, 2001 and Berlin Conference, 2004. Besides this, Germany was also a facilitator during Afghan Loyas Jigra of 2002 and 2004 that led to the adoption of the Afghan Constitution.**

Public opinion in Germany, earlier in 2005, called for quick withdrawal of German troops but today the population believes that Germany is participating in the ISAF mission on humanitarian.

## Conclusion

The ISAF's mission is based on a “*shape, clear, hold and build*” strategy. The coalition *shape* the conditions of the security environment, *clear* areas of insurgents, *hold* with the enduring presence of Afghan National Security Force and set the conditions to *build* through enabling the extension of viable governance and promoting development. To attain this, the strong coalition with proper checks and balances has become a necessity.

The variables determining the level of coalition contribution in terms of forces and assets generated for the mission holds relevance as far as Afghan strategy is concerned.

**The assessment of the individual country contributions is a superficial endeavour that does not result in an overall assessment of the Afghan mission.**

Through the above-mentioned case studies, it is clear that allies could also choose a behavioural option; allies countries attention is not really focused on Afghanistan but on wider alliance relations and the role of domestic factors and changing multi-polarity in international affairs cannot be undermined while deploying the troops.