



Victory Weekly



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telling the Camp Victory story

April 19, 2005

Coalition leaders hold conference at Victory

Sgt. Michael J. Carden
MNC-I PAO

More than 60 Coalition leaders representing 26 nations -- including Iraq -- gathered for a Senior National Representatives Conference April 15 and 16 at Al-Faw Palace on Camp Victory to discuss future transitioning and training efforts for Iraqi security forces in the Operation Iraqi Freedom theater.

Italian Maj. Gen. Antonio Satta, chief, Coalition operations, Multi-National Corps - Iraq, welcomed the group with a slide show of Coalition troops working with their Iraqi counterparts. He expressed his appreciation for the Coalition's participation and dedication in refurbishing the country and preparing the Iraqi people for self-governance.

"The Coalition has done a superb job training our Iraqi counterparts," Satta said. "A

capable Iraqi security force is the key to their success." Our main efforts have now shifted ... towards building the Iraqi government to conduct and defend (their own) counter-insurgency operations."

Satta also spoke of the importance that representatives from their respective countries maintain a viable presence in Iraq.

The national commander of the Australian contingent, Air Commodore Greg Evans, agreed. The Australian contingent currently has 400 troops. By the end of May, the contingent will be nearly 1,000 strong, Evans said.

Evans also said he was glad to meet his Japanese counterparts, because many of the arriving Australians have been tasked with providing security for the Japanese engineers in Southeastern Iraq near Basra.

"This conference is very important because it's much easier

to work with people you actually know rather than those who you've never met," Evans said. "I've just met my Japanese colleagues, who I will be working with when our new troops arrive."

Many of the additional Australians will be training Iraqi logistical units as well. They're in the process of beginning the Iraqi Army Service Support School in Taji, Iraq, just north of Baghdad. They plan to teach the Iraqis about the importance of combat service support. Although the Iraqis have a large number of infantry troops trained, they are very weak when it comes to the logistical aspects of a military, Evans said.

"This will be the nucleus of the Iraqi Army," Evans said. "We will be teaching them about maintenance, supplies, transportation

See **LEADERS**, Page 2



photo by Sgt. Michael J. Carden/MNC-I PAO

Italian Brig. Gen. Antonio Satta, chief, Coalition operations, Multi-National Corps - Iraq, gives a welcoming speech to more than 60 troops representing 26 Coalition nations during a Senior National Representatives Conference April 15 at Al-Faw Palace.

Donations from Americans improve Iraqi schools



photo by Sgt. David Foley/MNC-I PAO

Paula Curry, information management officer, resources and sustainment, Multi-National Force - Iraq, hooks up one of three computers that were donated to the Iraqi school system by concerned American citizens. More than 20 volunteers from Camp Victory took time to travel to the school and deliver the computers and hundreds of other school supplies March 23.

Sgt. David Foley
MNC-I PAO

An Iraqi Elementary School near Camp Victory got a surprise visit from a group of service members and civilian contractors March 23 that could cause major changes in their curriculum.

The group delivered hundreds of Beanie Babies, sweat suits and book bags filled with school supplies such as pencils, paper, erasers and glue. They also delivered and set up three Arabic computers loaded with educational software for the children to use in their studies.

"I know Saddam didn't allow computer education ... so I think we are going to set up the very first computer lab in (an Iraqi) school here today," said Matthew L. Johnson, civilian personnel advisor, Multi-

National Force - Iraq, who was the main coordinator for the project. "I think we're making history."

So many of the people stationed at Camp Victory wanted to be a part of the historical event that the five-vehicle convoy was unable to transport them all. However, one woman was guaranteed a seat.

Paula Curry, information management officer for Multi-National Force - Iraq Resource and Sustainment, was tasked with the job of setting up the computers and getting them operational, and said it was a labor of love.

"I'm just going to hook them up and go through them to make sure they have the software they need," Curry said. "This will help the Iraqi children really hone their skills and

See **DONATIONS**, Page 3

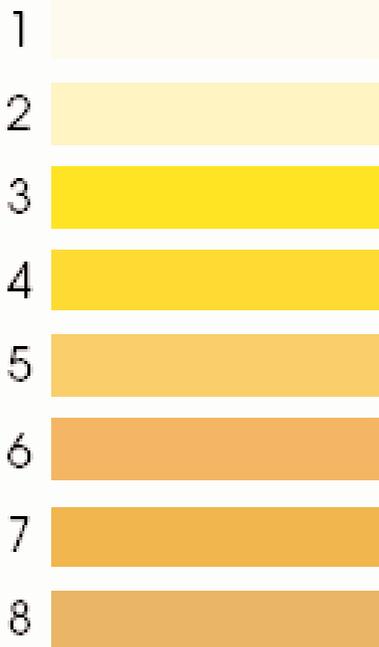
Preventive Points:

Tips from Multi-National Corps - Iraq's Force Health Protection

Urine Look-Out

- If the water in our bodies maintained a correct balance, our urine would be a pale straw color. However, when the loss of water exceeds the intake, our kidneys have to function harder to conserve water, making the urine much more concentrated with waste products, and therefore darker.
- It's important for us to monitor our hydration status by noting the color and volume of our urine. Darker urine is a sure indicator that we are dehydrated and that our fluid consumption must be increased. Our goal should be to produce urine no darker than color 3 on the urine color test chart below.
- Producing urine darker than color three on the chart indicates severe dehydration. It's important for us to make every effort to keep our bodies hydrated.
- Let's stop ourselves from becoming heat casualties. Make every effort to keep your body hydrated by drinking plenty of water, but not more than one quart of fluid per hour and not more than 12 quarts per day. Watch your urine; it will tell you how hydrated you are.

Urine Color Test



LEADERS

and all of the little things that make an army run."

Evans said that he is astonished at how far the Iraqi people have come over the last few months. He was especially proud to see how many Iraqis participated in the Jan. 30 elections.

"It gave me great heart to see how many Iraqis went out and voted on election day," Evans said. "Despite terrorist threats, entire families were marching down the street arm-in-arm going out to vote. There are still lots of battles ahead, but I think the Iraqis have finally realized that their destiny is in their own hands."

"We're very thankful for what the Coalition has done for our country," said Iraqi Maj. Gen. Nesayef Khudaier, senior Iraqi army liaison officer, MNF-I. "The Iraqi army has been very well trained and has been doing some missions on their own, such as protecting oil pipelines and conducting reconnaissance missions."

Khudaier said that although the Iraqis have shown improvements in many different areas of the country, conferences such as this one are a great opportunity for the senior Coalition leaders to learn from each other.

"This conference is good because it gives all of the Coalition a chance to put issues on the table so we can all be on the same page to make further improvements," Khudaier said. "We are on the right track, and as an Iraqi, I'm very

proud to be a part of the Coalition."

"It's a team effort and we have wonderful allies here," Evans said. "As I look around the room, all of the nations represented have a different approach to training, speak a different language and every one of them has given tremendous efforts to our cause here."

"We're all working towards the same goal and the same cause," Satta said. "Everyone brings with them their own different training techniques, but we're all professionals doing a superb job training and transitioning the security efforts of the Iraqi forces."



photo by Sgt. Michael J. Carden/ MNC-I PAO

A Japanese Army officer (right), as well as representatives from 25 other Coalition nations, watches a picture slide show April 15 during a Senior National Representatives Conference at Al-Faw Palace, Camp Victory. The pictures featured Coalition troops working together and training their Iraqi counterparts.



photo by Sgt. Michael J. Carden/ MNC-I PAO

More than 60 Coalition troops representing 26 Coalition nations gathered for a Senior National Representatives Conference April 15 at Al-Faw Palace, Camp Victory, to discuss transitions and training efforts for the Iraqi armed forces.

DONATIONS

make them competitive in the work force when they graduate.

"In practically any job you have when you leave school you will have a computer sitting in front of you, even if it is just for typing," she said. "When students graduate high school and don't have any computer skills, they are at a loss."

The process of getting computers for the children was not a quick one and was not made possible by one person. However, it was one man and his mother's church group who got it all started.

Johnson's mother's church group sent him a few dozen stuffed animals shortly after he deployed to Iraq from Hammonds Barracks, Germany, in September 2004, and he started looking for ways to get them to the children around Camp Victory.

"I asked the Chaplains' Office how to get the animals to the children, and they said they didn't really have a way to distribute them, but told me to check with the gate guards," Johnson said.

When Soldiers set up checkpoints, they sometimes ask the occupants of the car to step out, Johnson said. When children get out of a car and are told what to do by American Soldiers with guns, they get scared and sometimes cry.

Johnson gave the animals to the guards and they gave them to the kids who were crying when their parents' cars were being searched, making the children feel at ease.

"It ended up being such a positive thing, I sent pictures home with a request for more animals," Johnson said.

That request led to the delivery of more than 6,000 stuffed animals.

With such an abundant supply of stuffed animals, Johnson had to find a new way to distribute them.

He collaborated with Maj. Gen. Gerald Minetti's personal security team to deliver the animals to a local school.

Minetti is the MNF-I deputy chief of staff for logistics.

While making the delivery, Johnson received a request for school supplies because the school was not funded very well.

When he returned to post, he wrote another e-mail and asked for school supplies.

"People were so eager to help. We got thousands and thousands of school supplies," he said.

The team then returned to the school and filled the principal's office with enough school supplies to last throughout the next two years, Johnson said.

"They were very grateful for the supplies, but they said they wanted computers," he said. "I hadn't thought about that and wasn't making any promises, but since my other requests were so successful, I sent out another e-mail."

Johnson's first reply was from a retired Navy officer who pledged to send one computer to him. Then an



photo by Sgt. David Foley/MNC-I PAO

Service members and Department of the Army civilians talk with students while delivering hundreds of book bags, sweat suits, toys and three computers to a school near Camp Victory March 23. The school is too small to accommodate all of its students, so the girls have morning classes and the boys have afternoon classes.

Iraqi-born business executive, who now lives in America and works for a major cell phone company, vowed to support the cause as well. The executive, who wished to remain anonymous, said he would donate 10 computers, and is working on getting 50 more donated.

The three computers that were delivered March 23 were just the tip of the iceberg, Johnson said. He plans to set up computer labs in two schools in the near future and will branch out to other schools as more computers come in.

The computer lab is not the only thing Americans have done for the school.

"In Saddam's regime, we didn't have computers," said Nidahl, the

school's English teacher. "We didn't have air conditioning, or even chalk."

Nidahl said American Soldiers repaired the school and installed air-conditioning. Now the school has plenty of school supplies and the children have a nice place to learn, which has had a positive effect on them.

"At first they were frightened of the Soldiers," she said. "But after close contact, they learned that many of them are parents and have children their age. Now they run after them and want to learn about America."

To help promote the computer program, contact Johnson at Matthew.L.Johnson@us.army.mil.

Iraqi pilots to fly crop dust operations, preserve date palms

Sgt. Michael J. Carden
MNC-I PAO

In an attempt to preserve and restore one of Iraq's oldest and most well-known agricultural exports, Coalition forces are working with Iraq's Ministry of Agriculture on an aerial spraying operation set to begin at the beginning of May that will cover most of Central Iraq.

Prior to the 1950s, Iraq was the world's premier date provider, with more than 30 million date palms. But because of the country's sanctions and war-torn neglect under

three decades of rule by the Baath Party and Saddam Hussein's regime, that number has depreciated to around 4 million.

However, since Saddam's fall nearly two years ago, Coalition forces and the Iraqi Ministry of Agriculture have made great progress in their attempt to refurbish Iraq's date palm trees and the overall economic development of the now-sovereign country.

The scheduled operation is part of the second year of an overall five-year



courtesy photo

This CH-801 Huck light-piston-engine aircraft is similar to the aircraft the Iraqi pilots will be operating during their six-week crop dusting mission to preserve the date palm trees in central Iraq.

See **PALMS**, Page 4

Voices of Victory:

If you could change one thing about Camp Victory, what would it be?



"This is a great camp, but the troops drive too fast on post. They should drive a little slower."

Australian Royal Navy
Capt. Paul Kinghorne,
chief, logistical plans,
Resources and Sustainment,
Multi-National Force - Iraq



"I think the lavatory facilities should be closer to our living areas. I don't feel comfortable walking to the bathroom trailers late at night."

Susan Kabolati,
store manager,
AAFES



"I think I should be able to roll my sleeves up so I can work on my truck driver tan."

Sgt. 1st Class
Lawrence Sandlin,
staff NCO,
441st Chemical Detachment,
Wash. Army Reserve

Operating Hours

Coalition Cafe

Breakfast 5:30 - 8:30 a.m.
Lunch 11:30 a.m. - 2 p.m.
Dinner 5:30 - 8 p.m.
Midnight Dining 11:30 p.m. - 1 a.m.

Sports Oasis

Breakfast 5:30 - 8:30 a.m.
Lunch 11:30 a.m. - 2 p.m.
Dinner 5:30 - 9 p.m.

Shopette

Everyday 8 a.m. - 10 p.m.

Camp Liberty

Post Exchange

Everyday 8 a.m. - 10 p.m.

Fitness Center

Open 24 Hours

Chapel

Sunday:

Protestant Worship 7 a.m.
Protestant Worship 9 a.m.
Catholic Mass 10:30 a.m.
Gospel Service Noon
Mormon (LDS) 2 p.m.
Episcopal 4 p.m.
Full Life Service 6 p.m.

Saturday:

7th Day Adventist 11 a.m.
Catholic Mass 8 p.m.

PALMS

program to salvage the date palm trees in Iraq. Iraqi pilots will be flying Iraqi-owned fixed-wing aircraft for about six weeks, crop dusting date palms to rid them of pests, such as Dubas bugs and Lesser Date Moths. Both insects are capable of ruining entire orchards if they are not properly maintained.

Although the operation is being run and approved by Iraqi authorities, the operation will require close coordination with local civil authorities, to include Iraqi security forces and police. Coalition forces in their respective areas of operation will also be informed of crop duster daily operations, said Col. Marla Mann, chief, current operations, civil-military operations, Multi-National Corps - Iraq.

Mann explained that low-flying aircraft such as crop dusters may cause confusion among the ground troops patrolling an area because troops are not used to seeing that type of aircraft flying overhead.

"The troops on the ground may see the small plane flying by and think it's causing trouble," Mann said.

Not only do the pilots face the possibilities of friendly fire, the chance of being fired on by insurgent forces poses a threat too.

"These pilots have to be incredibly courageous to carry out this operation," Mann said.



courtesy photo

Date Palms, such as these along a Baghdad road, will be sprayed with insecticides by Iraqi crop dusters in an attempt to rid them of Dubas bugs and Lesser Date Moths.

Mann also said that although Coalition Forces have a vested interest in assisting the Iraqi government's efforts, the intention is not to assume responsibility of the operation. The Coalition will assist when necessary, but this is solely an Iraqi operation.

When the crop dusting has finished, more Iraqi jobs will be available. Farming, packaging and date industry jobs, as well as distribution of Iraqi dates on the global market, will produce a positive impact for Iraq's economy.

"This is just a step toward recognizing that the Iraqis are on their way to becoming self-sufficient," Mann said.

Victory MWR Events April 19 - 25

Today: Halo at 8 p.m. at Bldg. 124; Splinter Cell at 8 p.m. at Bldg. 51; Basketball coaches meeting at 12:30 p.m. at Bldg. 51; Classes at the Gym: Tae-Kwon-Do from 6 - 7 p.m.; Fencing from 7:30 - 9 p.m.

Wednesday: Chess at 8 p.m. at Bldg. 124; Mixed night at 7 p.m. at Bldg. 51; Classes at the Gym: Aerobics from 5 - 6:30 a.m. and from 6:30 - 7:30 p.m.; Boxing from 8 - 9 p.m.; Softball coaches meeting in the gym at 12:30 p.m.

Thursday: Hip-Hop night at 7 p.m. at Bldg. 124; Ping Pong at 8 p.m. at Bldg. 51; Classes at the Gym: Tae-Kwon-Do from 6 - 7 p.m.; Bench press, squat and dead lift at 8 p.m.

Friday: Latin night at 7 p.m. and Salsa lessons at 8 p.m. at Bldg. 51; Classes at the Gym: Aerobics from 5 - 6:30 a.m.

and from 6:30 - 7:30 p.m.; Fencing from 7:30 - 9 p.m.; Softball Tournament

Saturday: Reggae night at 7 p.m. at Bldg. 124; Dominos at 8 p.m. at Bldg. 51; Classes at the Gym: Aerobics from 6 - 7 a.m.; Tae-Kwon-Do from 6 - 7 p.m.; Boxing from 8 - 9 p.m.; Softball Tournament

Sunday: Ping Pong at 8 p.m. at Bldg. 124; Eight-Ball at 3 p.m. and Spades at 8 p.m. at Bldg. 51; Classes at the Gym: Fencing practice from 9 - 11 a.m.; Fencing from 7:30 - 9 p.m.; Softball Tournament

Monday: Dominos at 8 p.m. at Bldg. 124; Halo at 8 p.m. at Bldg. 51; Aerobics 5 - 6:30 a.m. and from 6:30 - 7:30 p.m.; Boxing from 8 - 9 p.m.

Hometown Greetings

If you have a soon-to-be high school graduate from the Fayetteville, N.C., area, this is your opportunity to congratulate your child. MNC-I PAO will be taping video messages at 6 p.m. Saturday at the South end of the Joint Visitor's Bureau (Bldg. 56). For more information, contact 1st Lt. Kevin Schultz at 318-822-2325, or at kevin.schultz@iraq.centcom.mil.

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Victory Weekly welcomes columns, commentaries, articles and letters from our readers. Send submissions or comments to michael.carden@iraq.centcom.mil, or drop by Trailer 40 behind Building O.

We reserve the right to edit for security, accuracy, propriety, policy, clarity and space.