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CSTC-A warriors learn about peace

by Petty Officer First Class
David M. Votroubek
CSTC-A Public Affairs

KABUL – Senior leaders with the Combined Security Transition Command Afghanistan recently attended a seminar Sept. 30 here to learn more about Afghanistan from the Centre for Conflict and Peace Studies (CAPS) experts.

CAPS began in July 2006 and promotes Afghan peace and stability through education.

Hekmet Karzai, CAPS' director, thinks that by using local experts, foreigners get an insider's perspective, which helps to reduce conflict and promotes stability.

Karzai began with Afghanistan's political history since 1979. He focused objectively on the major influences and forces in Afghan politics over the last 30 years, while other experts taught about Islam, Afghan culture and customs. Attendees also learned about the insurgency from an Afghan perspective.

Karzai believes that knowing and understanding the Afghan people will help the coalition appreciate that peace can only come to Afghanistan by political, not military means.

Eventually Karzai would like to see coalition forces get this training before deploying to Afghanistan.



photo by Marine Staff Sgt. Luis P. Valdespino Jr.

ANA soldiers turn a pick-up truck onto its wheels. The truck crashed near Farah in western Afghanistan injuring all six passengers.

ANA soldiers, coalition rescue crash victims

by Marine Staff Sgt. Luis P.
Valdespino Jr.
CSTC-A Public Affairs

FARAH – Afghan National Army and U.S. troops faced a medical emergency in late September, and without hesitation they responded.

ANA soldiers, along with U.S. soldiers and sailors, used their first aid skills when they came to the rescue of six ANA soldiers who were involved in a vehicle crash in western Afghanistan.

The ANA soldiers suffered injuries ranging from minor

abrasions and cuts to broken bones and serious head wounds.

"I thought we were going to have to go from patient to patient (to provide first aid care)," said Army Maj. Brian E. Brecht, the embedded training team chief for 5th Kandak, 1st Regiment, 207th ANA Corps, at Camp Stone, who provided first aid care to injured soldiers. "But the ANA medics had already started."

The ANA and U.S. soldiers were not merely treating superficial wounds, so their quick and decisive action was critical to

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photo by Petty Officer 1st Class Dave M. Votroubek

Line of sight

Master Sgt. Scott Carbee demonstrates proper rifle sighting technique to an Afghan National Army recruit during an exercise at Camp Shaheen. Carbee is the non-commissioned officer in charge of an embedded training team with the Combined Security Transition Command-Afghanistan.

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saving the Afghans' lives.

"I physically saw (a passenger) thrown out and landed on his head," said Army 1st Lt. Montgomery C. Prescod, a gunner for the leading U.S. Humvee.

Spc. Jarvis D. Spencer, the sole Army medic in the convoy, said he got out of his vehicle and looked to help the person who was most injured. An ANA soldier sustained the most serious injury

with severe head wounds.

With help from other ANA soldiers, Spencer bandaged the soldier's head and moved on to assist others. After rendering first aid, ANA soldiers and vehicles rushed the injured to Forward Operating Base Farah for further treatment.

The three with the most serious injuries were sent to a coalition trauma center, where they were treated before being sent by medevac to the ANA hospital in Mazar-e-Sharif. The others were cared for at the ANA clinic in

Farah.

Medical personnel at the trauma center in Farah said they were able to keep the patients stable, and that the first aid at the accident scene was effective.

Brecht said his combat lifesavers training and other "common task training" he received throughout his career helped him during the emergency situation. He also recommended that other soldiers be familiar with their first aid and combat lifesaver kits so that they can respond quickly to medical emergencies when necessary.



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CSTC-A News Editorial Staff

CSTC-A commander: Maj. Gen. Robert W. Cone

PAO: Lt. Col. David G. Johnson

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NCOIC: Petty Officer 1st Class Dave Votroubek

Editor: Tech. Sgt. Cortchie Welch

Writer: Marine Staff Sgt. Luis P. Valdespino Jr.

Writer: Petty Officer 2nd Class Brian Seymour

Mission Statement

The mission of the Combined Security Transition Command-Afghanistan, in partnership with the Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan and the international community, is to plan, program and implement structural, organizational, institutional and management reforms of the Afghanistan National Security Forces in order to develop a stable Afghanistan, strengthen the rule of law and deter and defeat terrorism within its borders.