

Joint Warfare Centre announces end of Iraqi Key Leader Training in Norway - Joint Warfare Centre

Written by Inci Kucukaksoy, JWC PAO
Wednesday, 19 October 2011 13:07



Since the first course in 2004, the Joint Warfare Centre has provided bi-annual Iraqi Key Leader Training at Ulsnes to assist Iraqi Security Forces in the restoration of sustainable security institutions and processes in order to establish, take over and maintain security in Iraq.

The Joint Warfare Centre (JWC) concluded its fifteenth and last Iraqi Key Leader Training (IKLT) course with the official closing ceremony held today at the JWC's Interim Training Facility at Ulsnes, Stavanger, Norway.

The JWC has delivered this training since it was selected to host NATO's first out-of-country course for Iraqi security leaders in November 2004 as part of the NATO Training Mission in Iraq (NTM-I).

The purpose of the IKLT is to train key Iraqi security officials in order to ensure the development of effective and accountable security institutions in Iraq and to strengthen the overall capability of the Iraqi Security Forces.

"This course has helped Iraqi Key Leaders operate more jointly and has given them an

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inspirational insight into international relations. We must remember that Iraq has been isolated from the outside world for many years. Here, we teach an extremely relevant multi-disciplinary training programme with top-notch security specialists from both within and outside NATO providing first-hand knowledge in the operational context and leadership disciplines,” said Norwegian Army Brigadier Gunnar E. Gustavsen, IKLT Director and Special Advisor to Commander JWC.



Sixteen key Iraqi security officials including two Major Generals, nine Brigadier Generals, three Colonels, one Lieutenant Colonel and one civilian coming from the Iraqi Prime Minister’s Office and Ministries of Defence and the Interior participated in the twelve-day course, scheduled from 8 to 20 October 2011, to gain competence in areas such as operational Command and Control, staff planning and decision-making, provision of effective and efficient inter-agency leadership, communication skills, practice of operational law and Security Sector Reform, management and use of information, as well as Strategic Communications in a counterinsurgency campaign. Also to note was a facilitated discussion on the topic of “Iraq: Beyond Counterinsurgency to Reconciliation.”

Major activities further included briefings to promote a greater understanding of NATO, its Member and Partner Nations and their armed forces, as well as practical workshops on interacting with the media.

During the course, students visited Stavanger Police Headquarters and the City Hall, where a

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briefing was conducted by Ms Bjorg Tysdal Moe, Deputy Mayor of Stavanger. They also had the opportunity to join in on an optional fjord tour by boat.

The last JWC-run IKLT is the culmination of a seven-year old training curriculum that has been assiduously developed using feedback from participants at all iterations of this training, which had simultaneous interpretation for both English to Arabic and Arabic to English.

“We take great pride here at the JWC in being recognized as NATO’s premier operational training centre. We take no less pride in the confidence that the Iraqi Government has placed in our ability to provide the same quality training to the Iraqi key leaders all the way since 2004,” Major General Jean Fred Berger, Commander JWC noted.

To date, the JWC has trained more than 200 key Iraqi officials at Ulsnes.

An Iraqi Army Major General who participated in the IKLT, said: “I found the course to be extremely relevant and successful. We received expert training and instruction on a broad range of topics, as well as an insight into the training, equipment and organizational structures of the armed forces of various NATO nations. The course also was a chance for us to engage with our counterparts across NATO Member and Partner Nations. I believe it is very important for the Iraqi military to establish contact with western militaries and participate in their training and exercises. The IKLT helps bring us up to the level of western militaries.”

Starting from 2012, the IKLT will be hosted and conducted by the NATO School in Oberammergau, Germany. The decision to this effect was made taking into account JWC’s Programme of Work, which aims to support current NATO operations as well as continue to provide NATO’s operational level training. In the future, the JWC is considering offering a similar training for key Afghan security personnel as part of the NATO Training Mission in Afghanistan (NTM-A).

BACKGROUND

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IKLT started out as part of the NTM-I, which has been running since 2004 when NATO Heads of State and Government agreed to support a request from the Iraqi Interim Government to help train Iraqi Security Forces in accordance with the UN Security Resolution 1546.

Since then, the NTM-I has offered specialized, strategic-level training inside and outside Iraq to selected members of the Iraqi Security Forces. Through its important mission, the NTM-I has made a tangible contribution not only to the rebuilding of military leadership in Iraq, but also to the development of the Iraqi Ministry of Defence and the Iraqi Security Forces. The NTM-I is financed via a trust fund, which is entirely funded by voluntary contributions provided by individual NATO Member and Partner Nations.

The NTM-I has since 2004 helped to build a strategic and enduring partnership between Iraq and NATO. Reflecting on the NTM-I's out-of-country training efforts for the Iraqi Security Forces, the former Commander NTM-I, U.S. Army Lieutenant General Michael Barbero said: "Out-of-country courses are important not just because of their content, but also because they provide an unparalleled opportunity to expose Iraqi security professionals to NATO best practices and allow Iraqi officers to network with NATO counterparts and develop lasting partnerships both on a personal and a professional level."