

Speech TOA
42 (NLD) BG Limburgse Jagers
1st Squadron 2nd Stryker Cavalry Regiment (1-2 SCR)
WAR EAGLES

General VD Heuvel, Mr De Mol, Col Creighton, Mr Philip,
Col Brust, men and women of 42nd BG, 1-2 SCR, distinguished guests.
Welcome at this Change of Command ceremony which illustrates the
Transfer of Authority between Commander 42 (NLD) BG Limburgse
Jagers and Commander 1st Squadron 2nd Stryker Cavalry Regiment
WAR EAGLE.

Ladies and gentleman,

Today is not only the formal end of the mission of 42 (NLD) BG
Limburgse Jagers but it is also one of the stepping stones towards
the end of 4 years Taskforce Uruzgan. 4 years of, as in a Dutch
proverb, blood – sweat and tears, but even more 4 years of progress.

Our mission was, together with the Afghan National Security Forces
and in close cooperation with PRT, MTF as well as other Coalition
Forces maintain and if possible enhance the level of security within
the Afghan Development Zones of Uruzgan. But we were also tasked
to prepare the way for our successors. And at this moment we, the
Battlegroup have ended both. Our successors and history will tell
how successful we have been.

It has been a mission that was preceded by a busy and intense
training schedule IOT to be ready and prepared.
The mission itself was tough and demanding but even more
rewarding. A lot of members from this BG have been here before.
Through the years we therefore can see changes. Mostly positive
changes. The difference is visible and tangible. Although always the
intent, at this moment in time, a more people-centric approach is
possible. The main effort has more and more drifted away from
kinetic towards mainly non-kinetic. And that's the way it is supposed
to be.

Looking in hindsight I believe the BG has done what was possible within its capabilities and the limited assets available. As much as possible we have conducted our operations as a Combined Team. Security wise as well as development wise. No development without security but also no security without development. The common goal within TF-U has been clear and has resulted in unity of effort in reaching that goal. We have been able to set steps forward but we are well aware it is still a very fragile situation that needs a unified effort of all partners.

During our mission all BG-units have been confronted with threats. Mainly IED-wise but also a more traditional threat and environmental threats. The INS-weapon of choice has been the IED. Direct engagements were limited. During all circumstances, you, men and women from the BG and the other TF-U partners were prepared to act and take split second decisions. You have proven to be able and I complement you with this. Together we have been able to make a difference. On all locations the companies have done what was possible and were able to go forward. But we would not have been able to stand where we stand now, without the support of the other units. By mentioning the support of the Engineers and the Role 2 I risk being accused of underestimating the effort of the other partners. But as always, even amongst equals there are always first amongst equals.

As we knew beforehand, this mission would not be without risk. If it would be, we as soldiers, would not be needed. And by choosing to be outside, to be where the people are, we accepted that risk. We tried to mitigate it by being experts in our profession but also by taking calculated risks. We hoped that those two elements, together with soldiers luck, would be enough to fulfil our task without casualties. But as we all know by now, history has proven otherwise.

Corporal *der Mariniers* Jeroen Houweling, Marine first class Marc Harders and Corporal first class Luc Janzen were killed in action. Several others were severely wounded. Others are scarred for life, physically but possibly also mentally. We will not forget them and what they stood and stand for. I promise, as a representative of the Dutch Army, to support them and their loved ones whenever possible. That's the very least we can do.

At this moment in time I request a moment of silence to commemorate our fallen comrades in arms, not only those of our mission but also those who have fallen in the line of duty during previous missions as well as the casualties from our Coalition Forces and ANSF-partners.

Maj, I request to sound the signal TAPTOE – INFANTERIE followed by 1 minute of silence.

Col Sims, Douglas.

We, American and Dutch share a lot of history. We have a lot of common ground. Although New Amsterdam became New York, I believe that we all should speak Dutch.

At this moment our taskings differ but we share the same mission. IOT create more stability and security, in Uruzgan as well as at home, we are to support the people of Uruzgan with achieving a better future. Security, Development as well as Governance need to be addressed IOT reach that goal. Your unit has one of the key tasks.

In the last couple of weeks I have come to know you and your soldiers as eager, willing and able. I'm sure 1st Squadron 2nd Stryker Cavalry Regiment WAR EAGLE is ready and capable for this demanding but even more rewarding mission. I hope that professional skills, calculated risks together with lots of soldiers luck will safeguard you and your fellowmen from harm. For the soldiers from the BG as well as other units, whose mission is not yet ended, I wish you all the luck for the remaining period.

Major, please present the Regimental Mars and

Major, please lower the BG-flag and change the unit-signs.

Col Sims, by lowering the flag and changing the unit-signs I hand over authority.

Good luck.

Niet beter, wel anders.