

22 OCTOBER 2011

Minister of Defence releases detainees report

Wayne Mapp

Defence

A report on the implications for the NZSAS when the Afghan National Police Crisis Response Unit (CRU) detains Afghan nationals was released today by Defence Minister Wayne Mapp.

The advice, from the Chief of Defence Force (CDF), was reviewed after the recent investigation into detainees undertaken by the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA).

CDF's report says New Zealand forces in Afghanistan have robust rules in place to ensure that they do not have to compromise the standards expected of them by New Zealand, the UN, NATO/ISAF and the Afghan Government.

New Zealand, along with other nations contributing to the International Security Assistance Force in Afghanistan (ISAF), ensures that the wellbeing of persons they have captured is monitored.

Dr Mapp said ISAF is already working to implement a six-phase plan to improve detention operations and establish safeguards to prevent mistreatment.

The New Zealand Defence Force legal officer posted to ISAF headquarters in Kabul is part of the ISAF legal team working on that plan.

"New Zealand and all the NATO/ISAF nations work under the UN mandate to support the sovereign Government of Afghanistan," said Dr Mapp.

"We are there to raise the capability of the Afghan government and help them improve the security of the country."

"We have made known to the Afghan authorities our expectations for respect for human rights," said Dr Mapp. "The UNAMA report said the contributing nations must continue to work with the Afghan authorities to lift them to internationally accepted standards of behaviour."

The sole person detained by the NZSAS since 2009 is held in a joint US/Afghan facility and monitored regularly by the New Zealand Defence Force.

Dr Mapp said the report of 31 August from CDF assured that "members of the New Zealand Defence Force in Afghanistan continue to display the highest standards of integrity and professionalism".

Related Documents

| | |
|--|-------------|
|  Detainee Treatment - Afghanistan | (205.46 KB) |
|  NZDF Operations - Afghanistan | (267.17 KB) |