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Analysis of the engagements in Afghanistan and Iraq

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I. Aim of the analysis

The intention of my analysis is, to improve the effectiveness of NATO and European Union engagements against the threats of terrorists, by pointing at mistakes that have been made in the past. My recommendations as military expert are mainly restricted to the military forces.

II. Information sources

My analysis is based on:

- available public information and information exchange with my allied friends,
- my special inside knowledge about NATO forces, up-dated since my retirement,
- my interest in military politics and strategies,
- talks with intellectual Afghans, having good inside knowledge about the developments and the actual situation in Afghanistan, living now in Germany.

III. Personal background:

I am a retired system analyst of the German Air Force with 34 years of national and international experience in NATO. As former member of the International Military Staff, responsible for the development of the NATO Interoperability Planning Document (NIPD) and former member of the staff of the German Military Representative to the Military Committee in NATO HG at Brussels, I became witness of the first war of the Western allies against Iraqi forces in Kuwait. Experience as staff officer in general staff service, responsible for studies to assist the German defence ministry in decisions, was helpful for the following analysis.

IV. Mistakes and recommendations:

After several engagements of the Western allies in foreign countries to counter the new type of threat by terrorist groups, it is about time for a short analysis.

There was only limited experience available, how to counter such type of threat and therefore it was inevitable that mistakes were made by the politics, the foreign aid and the military. Corrections of the following mistakes might help to improve the effectiveness of the present and future engagements.

My short analysis is covering:

- **the main political mistakes,**
- **the main foreign aid mistakes,**
- **the main military mistakes**

concerning the engagements in Iraq and Afghanistan from my point of view.

1. Main political mistakes:

a. International law does not allow to interfere in national inner affairs:

Under normal conditions, the international law does not allow the United Nations, NATO or any single nation to interfere in inner affairs of other nations. The fatal situations in countries like Zimbabwe, Chad or Sudan are examples, where the international community is witness of brutal crime acts against the population, tolerated or initiated by their own governments, without the international law does allow to interfere with military power from outside. Therefore we should remember. Before the Western allies started their engagements in Afghanistan and Iraq, both nations had not attacked any other nation and in both cases it was a matter of inner affairs. Though in the case of Afghanistan there existed a request of the Afghan people for military assistance against the Taliban regime, whereas such a request was not existing in the case of Iraq. The military engagement in Iraq was justified with the secret production of atomic, chemical und biological weapons by Saddam. To-day we know that wasn't the case. The director of the

international atomic inspection team, El Baradei, has never confirmed such a production or program. It was not the Iraq that had to prove there are no program and no such weapons existing. In case of suspicion the burden of proof was at the International Atomic Energy Organisation (IAEO). Nevertheless, the US insisted upon their assertion there are such weapons and took that as reason for the military engagement. Warning voices of the " Old Europe " and others were rejected. Therefore the reasons and the international law situations for both engagements of the West from outside are different. This was leading as well to different positions of the UN security council members.

b. Lost stability in the gulf region

The supply with oil from the gulf region is vital for the US and European economy. Therefore it is a strategic target for the West to save the oil supply. That leads to a special interest of the West in the development and keeping of the balance of power in the gulf region as guarantee for stability. Up to the time, Ayatolla Chomeni took over the power from the Shah of Persia in Iran, this country and its military power had represented the counterpole for the West against the 5th strongest conventional army in the world in Iraq, which stood under the political influence of the former USSR at that time. A balance of power was existing, resulting in stability in the gulf region. This balance of power changed, when the good relationships between the Iran and the US ended under the mullah regime at Teheran. As consequence the West lost most of his influence in the gulf region. Then the Iraq changed side and the West could take the position of the USSR. The balance of power was maintained and the influence of the West on the development in the gulf region could be regained. Now the West has not only destroyed his own counterpole Iraq against a more and more dominating Iran but has also contributed to an unbalance of power in the gulf region by his last military engagement in Iraq. Simultaneously the West has lost most of the influence in the development of the gulf region again and is looking now for a solution, how to guarantee an adequate influence and how to reach stability in the gulf region after giving up the military commitment in Iraq. To leave a weak Iraq behind will probably not be a good idea.

c. Different acceptance of the engagements by the people in Afghanistan and Iraq:

- ❖ With the Afghanistan engagement two aspects were of great importance:
 - The Allied Western Forces were welcomed by the majority of the Afghans (perhaps not so much by the Pashtuns in the south) from the very beginning. The population was feeling the foreign forces as an assistance in the fight of the Afghan people against the Taliban and not as an occupation army. That is very important, for

the Afghans are very proud people, who will not accept any foreign unwelcomed power in their country. This kind of habit is verified by the fights of the Afghans against the British and Russian occupation troops in the past. The results are known and are teaching us that the Afghans will always fight united against an occupation army until they defeat it or the foreign army withdraws. The simple reason is, they will never accept any foreign rule. That is what we can learn from history.

Therefore the following two advices apply to every military engagement in Afghanistan:

- 1. advice: Don't go to Afghanistan, when you are not invited.
- 2. advice: Don't behave like an occupation army, when you are in Afghanistan.

It seems to me that the second advice is not paid attention sufficiently by the US forces, as the high amount of innocent civilians is showing that are killed or wounded by US air and ground missions against the Taliban. Such civil casualties are reducing the friendly acceptance of all allied forces by the Afghan population and therefore have to be avoided by all means. I am coming back to the importance of this point in my analysis later on again.

- Another very important point is, there is an existing "parliament", the so-called "Jirka", representing the interests of the different regions, clans and religious sections with a president Hamid Karzai on top. This means, there was a responsible political Afghan partner available for the Western allies from the very beginning to address their demands and requests. The Western allies had not to replace a political power by another like in Iraq. But the "Jirka" can't be compared with a western democratic parliament. The power and influence of the government of the president Karzai in Afghanistan is very limited and in most regions the local war lords have the power.
- ❖ As we all know, the situation in Iraq is completely different from Afghanistan:
 - Iraq's president Saddam and his regime was ruling Iraq with an iron fist, like Tito did in the former Yugoslavia. And there was no request existing for assistance from outside. It might be already forgotten, but before the war Saddam played an important role for the stability in the region.
 - Saddam was the guarantor to hold the Shiites in the south, the Sunnites in the center and the Kurds in the north of Iraq together with an iron fist as a nation.

- In addition Saddam's regime was a counterpole of power for the West against the expanding Islamic mullah regime at Teheran.
- Saddam kept the Kurds in the frontier area to Turkey and Iran in the north of Iraq under control.

Taking away such a strong power and political clamp in Iraq without being able to replace it by an equivalent power will automatically result in an Iraq nation breaking into pieces, like we could watch a similar process in Yugoslavia.

Therefore Western politicians could have foreseen that:

- the Shiits, being by far the strongest section of Iraq's population, would not accept any longer to be oppressed by the Baath party, representing the Sunnites and would claim their right to get more political influence in Iraq.
- the Sunnites would not give up their accustomed privileges, they received under the regime of Saddam, without showing resistance.
- the Kurds in the north, believing their dreams of an own state Kurdistan might become true now, would start activities in that direction, touching the national interests of Turkey, Iran and Iraq.
- The mullah regime and the Shiit religious leaders of Iran would try to get political influence in Iraq through the religious leaderships of the Shiits in Iraq.

Looking at the present situation in Iraq one can see that this is what is happening.

- After the occupation of Iraq, the US have tried to replace the regime of Saddam. Since more than one year the Iraqi people can't find an agreement on a government in Iraq, representing the nation in a balanced power of all parties. When the US removed the power of the former leadership in Iraq, the US politicians had no equivalent strong leadership at hand for a replacement. This problem was not thought about enough in advance by the US politics and the consequences are to be seen now. Perhaps the US politicians have had the idea, they could find suitable personnel in Iraq, analogue to the situation in Germany and Japan after World war II. But this personnel is not available. It is a naive imagination to believe the dictator Saddam would have allowed the training and existence of illoyal administrative experts and would have allowed a competing power to exist in Iraq. Therefore we have a vacuum of political power in Iraq now and no power is in sight strong enough to hold the Shiits, the Sunnites and the Kurds together as a nation, when the allied

forces of the West will withdraw from Iraq one day. The break-out of a civil war in Iraq would be likely with all its negative consequences for the Iraq nation and the stability of the region.

d. US declaration of war against a terrorist group:

After the terrorist attacks of the 11th September 2001, the US nation and the US president Bush have felt to be at war and the US demanded from NATO to declare the defence status for the alliance, after one NATO member was attacked. The question was, to declare a war against whom? Up to now nations had declared a war only against other nations. But there was no nation that had attacked the USA, it was a terrorist group. So, for the first time in history, the US declared a war against a terrorist group, namely the Al Qaida of Usama Bin Laden. By doing this, they gave this terrorist group the world-wide public floor for the PR of Usama Bin Laden and showed everybody that a superpower was obviously anxious against the attacks of terrorists. From my point of view that was exactly, what Bin Laden was trying to achieve, namely, to be seen in public acting at the same level of a superpower and the US politics got caught in that trap. The Europeans did avoid that trap by not declaring war against Al Qaida in their European security concept but instead decided to treat the terrorists as criminals, what they are, mainly with police means, not excluding military power. Now, as the US have declared a war against Al Qaida, of course it must be the US intention to win that war. But that war can't be won by the US for several reasons:

- The terrorists are following a religious ideology that the US can't defeat with military means.
- The terrorist groups can strike worldwide against US facilities and US citizens at any time. The US can't intervene with military means in those foreign countries on which soil the attacks against them take place. The international law isn't allowing it. So the terrorists find safe havens in some countries that have no friendly relationships with the US (like Iran and Syria) or which have to consider religious or cultural aspects (like Pakistan).
- Terrorists are no visible combatants. They don't wear uniforms or show their weapons. You can't attack and defeat them in an open battle, like the military is used to. How can you ever then declare against terrorists that you have defeated them? You can't even count the numbers of active and passive terrorists in the different countries. Therefore the proof for a victory of the US over Al Qaida is not given. In case the US would declare such a victory, the next terror act of Al Qaida would show the world the US president is a liar. That is the next trap set up for the US to step in.

- The Al Qaida and Taliban terrorists are using suicide attacks and booby-traps. You can't deter these suicide terrorists with military power, showing them how high their risk is to lose life in case of an attack. It is exactly that what the suicide bombers are looking for, namely, to risk their life for a religious target and to become a martyr. The deterrence by risk of life doesn't work with them and will not prevent them from doing their deadly job.

Now the US politics have got the problem to end a declared war they rushed into unthinkingly and that they can't win, without losing face as a superpower. Meanwhile the Rand Corporation at Washington advises the US government not to use the expression " war against terrorists " anymore. The US are damned to get out of that conflict in a way the terrorists cannot claim as victory. That is as well in the interest of the European nations. Otherwise all the other terrorists in the world would be encouraged to follow the examples of Al Qaida and the Taliban that has proved to be successful against a superpower and that isn't really something the nations would like to see happen. This common interest is keeping the Europeans and Americans together. To reach an acceptable solution, the US politicians had to give up their unilateral view and acting and had to follow the advice of the Rand Corporation. It looks like president Obama has learned from the mistakes of the former president BUSH. He has changed the US strategy completely by appointing Mister Holbrooke as special emissary for AFPAK and by exchanging high rank commanders like Gen. Craddock as SACEUR and Gen. David D. McKiernan as ISAF Commander, representing the old strategy. Obama's new strategy is now more in line with the strategy, his European NATO partners preferred.

e. Treating Al Qaida terrorists as prisoners of war and not as criminals

The US had declared to be at war with the Al Qaida terrorist group of Usama Bin Laden and treated captured Al Qaida terrorists as prisoners of war and not as normal criminals. The civil US justice was not given the responsibility to courtmartial the terrorists but a war-time court. Analogue, the war-time law and respective treatment was applying for the terrorists. As consequence the terrorists lost their normal rights as citizens in prison. It became public that tortures and even murder of prisoners have happened in the US military jail of Abu Graib and the special US prison camp at Guantánamo. This is a clear offence against the treatment of prisoners, neither accepted by the European allies nor by the rest of the world and is weakening the moral position of the US politics in the free world, claiming to be a representative for the keeping of the human rights. The US are well advised to close these jails and prisoner camps as soon as possible and return to the basis of human rights to be in line with their claim to be the leading nation of the West, standing for freedom and human rights. The US military jail personnel, responsible for torture and murder of prisoners must be courtmartialled to demonstrate that this is not tolerated by the US. The new US president Barak Obama has promised to close these prisoner

camps as soon as possible and will not tolerate tortures of any kind.

f. Overshooting the target

Another main mistake has been made with the intention of the politicians not just to free the Iraqi people from the dictatorship of Saddam and the Afghan people from the Islamic terror regime of the Taliban, but in addition to replace old traditional, religious and cultural habits, authorities and structures by elements of a western democratic society. We can watch, how the former existing economic, health, education and social systems are replaced. But that isn't all. Replacements are taking place as well with the police force, the military force, the justice system, the jails and the public media. It is obvious that such a big change in the way of life and of the accustomed social system would be too much for the Iraqi and Afghans. It can be seen that this big change in their life was not requested from the people and is still not accepted by the majority of them. With other words that big change was imposed on them by the West. For the Americans and the Europeans such a change is affording an expensive and long engagement without there is a guarantee for success in sight.

g. Political decisions about military engagements need to be more in line with the military capacities and capabilities

When the politicians are deciding about military engagements, they should be better aware of the limits, concerning the capabilities and capacities of their own military forces and should consider them appropriately. That applies especially to:

- the required amount of fitting personnel, trained and equipped for the missions,
- the amount of suitable military equipment and armament for the missions,
- the required mobility of the military forces on the ground and in the air, to get along with the geographical and infrastructure conditions and the size of the country, where the military forces will be engaged,
- the amount of protected transport vehicles against mines and small arms fire, required to avoid own casualties,
- the required reconnaissance, communications, logistic and medical capacities,

- the necessary air transport capacity, to supply the military from home base in the field,
- the required budget frame for the military engagement.
- the intended period of the military engagement, to calculate the military requirements.

There should exist the following obligation for the governments:

“ Military forces will receive a directive for a military engagement from their governments only, when the military forces have or will be given the required capacities and capabilities. If that isn't the case, the directive should not be given. It is not acceptable to let the military forces suffer from severe shortfalls and put the success of the military engagement at risk. “

It should be a welfare obligation for the governments, to care for the best possible preparation and protection of the own military forces, sent into the engagement in a foreign country. The lives of the military personnel should not be put at risk without need. It would constitute a violation of this obligation to my mind, when the military personnel is sent in an engagement with a shortfall of armoured transport vehicles and reconnaissance means and therefore would not have enough protection and early warning against booby traps at the road side, suicide-bombers, landmines or rifle fire of snipers. As the experiences with the engagements in Afghanistan and Iraq are showing us, these obligations were violated by the national governments in some cases (f. e. In the beginning of the engagement in Afghanistan the German army had a shortfall in transport vehicles with required protection against mines and small arms fire that was putting the lives of the German military personnel at risk. That shortfall was known by the politicians before the engagement, but had to be accepted by the military.).

h. Problem of unbalanced representation of different political interests in Iraq

Under the regime of Saddam, his Baath party, representing the Sunnits, played the dominating role in Iraq. Shiits and Kurds were oppressed by the section of the Sunnites. In addition the Shiits and Sunnites have a different Islamic faith. During the time of Saddam the Shiits couldn't live their faith, although they were the strongest section of the population and suffered very much. And so the Kurds did in the north.

For a better understanding of the situation in Iraq, we should remember:

- the chemical attack by Saddam's special guards on the Kurds in the north, costing the lives of thousands of innocent civilians;

- the war of Saddam's special guards against the Shiits in the swamps of Euphrat and Tigris in the south, killing thousands of Shiits.

It could be expected by the politicians in the West that both sections of the population would take the opportunity to look for revanche on the Sunnits after the war. And it could be foreseen that the Kurds and Shiits wouldn't be willing to cooperate with the Sunnite Baath party and to accept their representatives as equal political partners in a government coalition.

On the other hand it could be expected that the Sunnites would not give up their former privileges without showing resistance. With other words that conflict was pre-programmed and a satisfactory solution for the Western allies is not in sight.

1. Main foreign aid mistakes:

a. The foreign aid concept of the West doesn't consider the old traditions and the culture in both countries sufficiently

The culture of Iraq and Afghanistan isn't paid attention in the necessary amount. Habits and values of both nations are based on thousands of years of experiences. These cultures have had great influence and have led to a specific traditional-religious behaviour. This religious tradition is determining the local relationships and the relations between the different tribes. Faith and tribe membership are playing a vital role in these countries. In addition it has to be considered that the national borderlines between Afghanistan and Pakistan, drawn by the former colonial power in a kind of despotic act, are ignoring completely the tribal memberships and family relationships of the people. But their interrelations have not stopped to exist and are still very close across the borderline. With other words, the borderline is felt as an artificial separation, not accepted by the people on both sides as a real separating national borderline and they are continuing to provide assistance to each other across the border when there is a need. The organic grown culture in Afghanistan may change but very slowly and it may take a whole generation for a real change. All that could have been foreseen. For the Afghanistan foreign aid concept of the West it would mean the intended change will take place very slowly and will afford a very long engagement of the Europeans and the Americans. What is happening right now in Afghanistan is the attempt of the West, to catapult a nation, living in parts like in middle age, into the 21st century within a few years. Such a big change will afford a lot of good will and understanding from the Afghan people to be accepted. There is a great risk that the Islamic people will not accept the imposed change by non-Islamic nations. It is therefore of vital importance that all political and religious leaders in Afghanistan are supporting the change. But that is not always the case, as we can see, especially not at the levels of villages and towns far away from Kabul.

The advice for the West is, not to replace old, traditional orders in Iraq and Afghanistan. In case there is a necessity for a change then these old orders should be slowly reformed but not totally replaced. Speed and kind of

change in their life should be determined by the Afghan and Iraqi people.

b. The foreign aid projects are too many and wasting money

The West has started too many projects at the same time. There should be given priority to foreign aid projects showing the following characteristics, as the financial means and other necessary resources are limited (f. e. required military protection for all projects against attacks of the Taliban or Al Qaida terrorists can't be provided due to lack of enough military forces):

- Projects with a high multiplier effect should be preferred to projects with little effects;
- Labour- intensive and cheap projects should be preferred to not labour-intensive but expensive projects;
- Projects with little energy consumption or using renewable energy to projects with a high energy consumption.
- The amount of foreign aid projects should be in line with the military protection capacity against terrorist attacks. A foreign aid project should always have a military protection.

The foreign aid program should try first, to finish as much of the unfinished projects before starting new ones and promises for help should always be kept. Otherwise the Afghans will loose their confidence in help. The motto should be: " Less is perhaps more " ! Also " nice to have " and " need to have " projects shouldn't be seen at the same priority level, if that is done. If necessary or possible " nice to have projects " should be abandoned.

c. Financial support doesn't arrive completely at the foreign aid projects

In countries like Iraq and Afghanistan the Western allies have always to expect that mismanagement, corruption, incompetence, wastefulness and a weak government and administration will restrict the foreign aid. Much of the financial aid does not arrive at the projects but is disappearing in various pockets. Another part is spent at expensive Western advisors and enterprises. The control of the use of financial foreign aid needs to be improved. As corruption, nepotism and lack of demand for account is a traditional " system " representing the living basis for many Afghans and Iraqi, the West has a real problem, he has to deal with in an effective way. The US newspaper " Economist " was giving advice, the West should demand from president Karzai to take legal proceedings against such a behaviour. That is a curious advice. What should the president do, set up a meeting with his ministers and ask them not to accept bribe and stop public spending at their local party members? Shall the president sack all of them and replace them – by whom? Many of the policemen, the judges, the prison officers, custom officers and the administration personnel are

accustomed to receive a monthly bribe. Most of them have a low education, don't have any professional qualification and are used to live on bribery. Many politicians and parts of former leadership, responsible for the destruction of the country, have returned into their posts and don't find the necessary confidence and support among the Afghans. It might be already forgotten but it wasn't the Russian occupation forces that have destroyed Kabul. It were the local Afghan warlords like Dostum and Hekmatyar. How can a president change this system based on tradition and culture in a short time, even been supported by the West? Why should the US be capable to reform the school system of Afghanistan, when they failed at home between Washington D. C. and Los Angeles? Why should the French get along with the Muslims in Afghanistan when they can't at home in the outskirts of Paris? And why should the Germans be able to bring the economy of the different local regions of Afghanistan ahead in a short period of time when they couldn't reach that aim at home, pumping one Billion Euro into East-Germany over the period of 18 years? And how can the European Union demand from president Karzai to stop the corruption when they fail with their demand in Romania and Albania. In Romania we have become witness in these days, how the political parties of the country have put the minister of justice Predoiu under pressure with success, to get rid of the director of the National Anticorruption Agency (DNA), chief prosecutor Daniel Morar. The reason is, they are all afraid of Morar's investigations in Romania. Therefore the advice for the West should be, to approach this traditional behaviour in Iraq and Afghanistan in a more realistic way and support mainly projects which allow the West an effective control of the flow of the financial means and the projects themselves.

d. Minimum guaranteed security for foreign aid projects was not achieved

To be successful with foreign aid projects in Iraq and Afghanistan there should exist a minimum of guaranteed security. The term " minimum guaranteed security " should express that it isn't necessary to cover all security risks but to keep them at a level the normal daily life of the population is not restricted and a commitment of resources is avoided that could be used more effectively at other places. When civil experts are afraid of terrorists then they will leave the foreign aid projects and start working somewhere else. It doesn't make sense to watch civil aid personnel are killed or taken as hostages and repaired pipelines are blown up again over night by terrorists. Therefore the foreign aid organisations should accept the military to protect their personnel and projects and accept as well that in questions of protection risks the military has the saying. Terrorists don't care less about the Geneva convention or other international conventions. They make their own choice to reach their targets. We can watch that with the pirates at the coastline of Somalia boarding passing trading ships on high sea. The WHO has now called for help to protect their leased ships and land convoys bringing food into Somalia against such attacks. This is demonstrating the necessity and demands the willingness for a tighter and better coordination between the military and the foreign aid side.

The statement:

“development is important for security and therefore has the priority“

is misleading and wrong. Without a minimum of security there will be no development, as development per se does not lead to more security.

I like to demonstrate that with the following example:

A new school was built with foreign aid means at a small village in the north of Afghanistan to offer young Afghan boys and girls a good school education at village level. As the Taliban are strictly against the visit of girls at school, they announced in public they would punish the school visiting girls and in addition their parents, when they identify them visiting school. As consequence the girls didn't dare to go to school and the parents were frightened of the Taliban punishments, because they don't receive any protection by western military forces against the local Taliban due to lack of sufficient military forces. In addition the Afghan parents don't trust their own police force, if there is any around in a village. With other words, they are left alone without protection, when the Taliban fighters are visiting them at night to punish them. As consequence of the missing military protection of the school project the Afghan girls don't receive the chance to visit school, the whole education project stays without success and the Afghan people loose confidence in the ability of the Western aid.

e. The Western allies have a limited responsibility for foreign aid after the war

The West is only responsible for the reconstruction of war damages, caused by the engagements in Iraq and Afghanistan. There his moral responsibility is ending. Support beyond that responsibility may be offered but may also lead:

- to inactivity of the Iraqi and Afghans getting accustomed to receive help,
- to an easy waste of financial aid. It may be seen as easy money, not earned by own labour.

Therefore very much is depending on the kind of offered aid. The aim of the foreign aid should be, to encourage the own initiatives of the Iraqi and Afghans. The foreign aid projects beyond the responsibilities for reconstructions of war damages should be modest and should avoid the impression there exists a legal or moral right for aid.

There is a general danger to be seen, that too much foreign aid might:

- create dependencies on foreign powers or enterprises,
- undermine the initiative and activity of the local people,
- support especially those administrations, who are able to put forward a request for foreign aid best.

f. After end of fighting in Iraq first aid stayed beyond expectation.

After the end of fighting in Iraq the first aid for the population arrived too

late, was too little or didn't arrive at all. The foreign aid of the West stayed far beyond both, the needs and the expectations of the suffering population. The Iraqi people didn't see their personal situation improved after being freed from Saddam's brutal regime. Same applies for the security situation. As consequence the Iraqi population has no more trusting in the promises and abilities of the West. The allied forces are seen now as an occupation force that can't provide the necessary security for the Iraqi, like the regime of Saddam was capable of and the Iraqi population is not aware of the foreign aid, due to the devastating security situation in the country. Confidence in a better life couldn't be achieved amongst the Iraqi and qualified personnel, urgently needed for the supply of the Iraqi population and the reconstruction of the country, is leaving the Iraq en mass due to the security situation and most of them are not willing to come back.

3. Main military mistakes

Until the end of the " Cold War " the main threat for the NATO military forces was symmetrical. Military concepts, training of personnel, equipment, armament and dislocation of the forces was serving one aim, to deter the communists from attack and, if that fails, to defend effectively and successfully. Now a new type of threat by strong terrorist groups like the Al Qaida or the Taliban has added. This new type of asymmetric threat requires a change of the military concepts, the training of the personnel, the military missions, equipment and armament. Most of the Western military forces are presently in a transformation process to meet the new requirements. There are different approaches of the NATO partners to be seen, how to counter the new asymmetric threat. NATO is developing now a new strategic concept. With the fights against the terrorists first experiences have been made and should be considered for an effective use of military force in future. These experiences are demonstrating as well what kind of mistakes have been made by the military. Main mistakes have mainly occurred with the fights against terrorists in Iraq and Afghanistan. In the following analysis I'll try to point at some of these main mistakes.

a. Sufficient military manpower is required to occupy and hold an area against terrorists

To keep an occupied area under own control, the military commanders need to have sufficient personnel to restrict terrorists from reoccupying the area. This basic military rule was valid in the past and is still valid to-day. Only sufficient military manpower will:

- enable the military commanders to observe the occupied area during day and night from the air and on the ground in order to detect terrorists in time and to cross their plans. Terrorists should not be allowed to move unwatched and to maintain undetected hideouts.

- give the military leaders the opportunity by a permanent search and chase of the terrorists, to prevent them from resting, reorganizing and returning.
- prevent the terrorists from maintaining undiscovered ammunition depots and secret workshops to built their booby-traps undisturbed in safe places and to place these booby-traps unwatched (f. e. along supply roads as traps against military transports).
- avoid many own casualties, caused by surprise mass attacks of terrorist groups, by early detection and quick reaction with effective means. This will create a psychological feeling of helplessness on their side, when the terrorists can't reach their aims anymore and are suffering from high casualties with every attack. Thus the terrorists will loose confidence in the skills of their leaders and their moral will go down.
- create confidence among the population in the protection abilities of the military against the attacks of the terrorists. This confidence will be the basis for a good cooperation between the population and the military and will lead to inside information about the terrorists and their intentions.

In both countries Iraq and Afghanistan the required military manpower was and still is too small and provides the terrorists with most of the above mentioned capabilities they shouldn't have.

b. The importance of sufficient mobility

To fight against terrorists under geographical conditions like in Afghanistan and Iraq, the military forces need to have sufficient:

- support by a strategic air transport from home bases,
- ground mobility with vehicles, protected against landmines and fire of light infantry weapons, suitable to go cross-country.
- air mobility with transport and attack helicopters.
- airborne and ground reconnaissance means.

This required mobility of the allied forces could not be achieved in Afghanistan up to now and is restricting the effectiveness of the military forces in their fight against the Taliban.

c. Importance of an effective protection against booby traps and ambush attacks for the fighting spirit and combat moral of the troops

An effective protection of the military personnel against booby traps and ambush attacks is vital for the fighting spirit and combat moral of the troops.

The military need to have the feeling, they can rely on their protection. This protection is ranging from:

- Jammers, carried on vehicles, to prevent the remote electronic ignition of booby traps at the road side,
- the personal outfit of a soldier with protection against exploding mines and enemy fire,
- the protection of the used transport vehicles,
- sufficient air and ground reconnaissance against set-up of ambushes,
- to the protection of the military field base as a safe place for rest and recreation between the missions.

This necessary protection of the military personnel couldn't be provided in the required amount by some allied forces (f. e. the Germans), especially not at the beginning of the military engagement in Afghanistan and was causing own casualties that perhaps could have been avoided.

d. The US overestimated the ability and effectiveness of high-tec weapons against terrorists

As a terrorist has no chance to win a fight against the military in an open battle he tries to avoid such a situation and will look for a type of fight where he has a chance to win or is feeling to be superior.

The characteristics of terrorist attacks are:

- The terrorists do not offer suitable targets for heavy, expensive military precision weapons by avoiding concentrations in the open field.
- They search for a duell situation with their military opponents in a fight man against man, to eliminate the advantages of military high-tec equipment and combat support.
- They avoid an open battlefield but instead fight in an environment they feel at home and can use their advantages but not their military opponents.
- They use attacks with snipers, booby traps, landmines and suicide bombers and they don't care about casualties among innocent civilians or violations of international conventions.
- They are using a civil dress during their attacks and they are carrying hided weapons as fighters or explosive belts as suicide-bombers.

- They are mixing with civilians or using civilians as shields.
- They use ambushes for their attacks.
- They try to provoke the military in their defence against terrorist attacks to kill innocent civilians and by doing that losing the sympathy of the population.
- With their terror attacks against the population and the police force the terrorists are trying to demonstrate the helplessness of the military to care for security and to guarantee protection of the population with the aim, to destroy the confidence of the people in the ability of the allied military forces of the West and to set a warning signal not to cooperate with the Western military forces.
- They are taking revenge on people, cooperating with the military, to demonstrate the consequences of such cooperation and to avoid that inside information about their plans, activities and hide-outs will be passed onto their enemy.

To counter such type of threat, high-tec weapons are of limited use. It seems to me the US trusted too much in the ability of such high-tec weapons and thought, the deployment of such weapons and equipment could reduce the strength of needed troops in Iraq and Afghanistan substantially. But that wasn't the case. The warning voices of old, combat experienced US military commanders were not listened to by defence minister Rumsfeld.

e. Importance of intelligence information

The best way to fight the terrorists is, to prevent their attacks. Prevention is affording intelligence information, giving the military or police force the chance to strike before the terrorist attack will happen. Such a concept is requiring intelligence information about the organisation of terrorist groups, their leaders, their members, their hideouts, their support lines and their planning. This kind of intelligence information can mainly be provided by own secret service personnel, undercover agents, friendly foreign intelligence services you can trust (f. e. doubts exist on my side, the allies should trust Pakistan's secret service ISI.), by sympathizers of the military among the population, by payed traitors etc. and only limited by technical intelligence means, like intelligence satellites, air reconnaissance etc. To receive such intelligence information from the population there need to exist a friendly relationship between the military and the local people. This friendly relationship will provide useful, important warnings for the military and will help to save lives. A military force, behaving like an occupation army, will never receive such important intelligence information. At Washington the Rand Corporation gave the advice too, the US should concentrate more on secret service and police actions than on military missions.

f. Importance of a good preparation of the military in advance of their missions against terrorists in foreign countries

The military commanders and their men need to be fighters and diplomats in one person with their missions against terrorists in foreign countries. To get the necessary sensitivity for their task and the knowledge about the people and the country of their mission, they have to be familiar with:

- the geography and history of the country
- the culture and religion,
- the customs and traditions of the people,
- the influence and importance of the religion and their leaders,
- the existing taboos etc.

This knowledge about the foreign country and the people is leading to a “ **codex of behaviour** “ for the military to be seen as a friendly military force. Such “ codex of behaviour “ is as important as the “ rules of engagement “. A good preparation of the military personnel ahead of the stationing will give the personnel a safe feeling of what is allowed and what not and what is expecting them in that foreign country. It is very difficult to correct negative consequences of military violations in a foreign country, after they have happened. Carrying out this “ codex of behaviour “ by all military personnel, will be the prerequisite for a friendly reception and treatment by the population and will form the basis for confidence and good cooperation. Commanding officers must keep a close watch that no violations will take place or will be tolerated. Such violations may jeopardize or destroy the developed cooperation and partnerships and perhaps will put the whole military engagement on risk.

Examples of such violations with negative consequences are:

- The authority of local village leaders are disregarded by the military.
(They´ll have the saying furthermore, after the military has left the village)
- The local people and their habits are not treated with necessary respect.
- The military is using a disproportion of power against the population with their search for terrorists.
- Sexual or criminal acts by the military take place.
- The military shows disrespect against religious leaders and female citizens.
- Misinterpretations or missing knowledge of old traditions lead to civil casualties. (f. e. the celebrating Afghans, firing their rifles traditionally at a wedding ceremony, are mixed up with anti aircraft ground fire and are bombed).

- The military personnel doesn't show good manners and a modest appearance in the public.

When the military will stick to their "codex of behaviour", it will not be easy for the terrorists to see discord in the population and it will pay off very much for the military over the long run. And in addition they will be remembered as friendly force after they have left.

g. Importance of language, communication and information of the people

The military should be prepared sufficiently to manage the language problem with their mission in a foreign country at all levels of command. That will not be easy in a foreign country with a language and local dialects, most people in the West don't talk. To communicate with the native people, to understand and make use of their provided informations and to make conversations, the military has to have sufficient interpreters in the staffs and units. But that isn't always the case. The lack of language may lead to fatal misunderstandings, to frustration or to disinterest on both sides.

To communicate with the people is of great importance and will help to cross a negative PR about the military, distributed by the terrorists in the language of the country. As demonstration I'll show two examples:

First example:

The Taliban had spread out the rumour in the villages in the north, the German army would bomb their villages with CH-53 helicopters. The people could see the bombs hanging beneath the helicopters. In reality it was the reserve tank to enlarge the distance for the helicopter. Suddenly the German military forces noticed a very unfriendly behaviour of the Afghan population against them without they had an explanation for it. When they found out the reason for the changed attitude of the people by conversation, they could clarify the situation. The result was, the Afghans in the villages treated the German army friendly again and stopped to believe in negative rumours of the Taliban about the Germans.

Second example:

When the German Air Force stationed reconnaissance Tornados at Mazar-e-Sharif air base, one could notice that the attitude of the Afghan population changed suddenly from friendly to hostile. The reason was that the Afghan people are believing that the German Tornado pilots are providing the US Air Force pilots with target information about Taliban targets in housing areas, causing a lot of casualties among the civilian population by US air strikes. The Afghan people started to blame the German Forces for these innocent civilian casualties and don't see the Germans no more as friendly forces. It is a typical case where the own PR failed to inform the Afghan public in time about the intended friendly support missions of the Tornados. This failure was leading now to a hostile attitude of the majority of the Afghan population against all German forces, supported by the PR of the Taliban. (I received this information from reliable Afghan resources).

A general problem of the military is to keep the population informed, especially in Afghanistan, where many people are living like in middleage. Most of them can neither write nor read or they have no telephone / handy/ radio / television due to lack of telefon lines, electricity or batteries. The information is mainly passed from mouth to mouth and is therefore arriving late at the villages far away from Kabul and can be easily manipulated. But that information of the population in their language is of great importance for the military, to counter the spread out disinformation of the population by the terrorists.

h. Optimistic interpretation of the military situation by the US after the fighting stopped in Iraq

After the fighting stopped in Iraq the American president, supported by his Secretary of Defence Rumsfeld, declared in public: " The war is over! " The main address of this political declaration was the American nation. But this declaration turned out to be an illusion very fast. The simple reason was, the US had forgotten to answer the question, where the fifth strongest conventional army in the world and all the fanatic young Islamic guards of Uday Saddam, dressed up in black dress, were hiding. The main part of the Iraqi forces had survived by avoiding an open battle with the US forces, after the Iraqi had noticed their inferiority and after they had suffered from high casualties. We all remember from these days that most of the Iraqi pilots fled to Iran with their modern Mig-29 fighter aircraft, after some of them had been shot down by US fighters without the Iraqi pilots could get a radar contact of their enemies on the intercept radar in the cockpit. And we still remember the tank battles and their demoralising results for the Iraqi special guards. As consequence, the Iraqi military leaders tried to avoid a battle against the US forces on the battle field further on. Instead of they decided to go with their forces into the underground, changing combat dress against civilian dress, hiding in cities, towns and villages, protected by the population of the Sunnites, and to fight from there the announced "mother of all battles" against the allied forces. The US concentrated most of their military forces on the search for the alleged hided atomic, chemical and biological weapons country wide after the end of the fighting, instead of searching with all forces intensively and with high priority for the rest of the Iraqi forces. That gave the Iraqi military leaders time enough to organize the resistance from the underground. The Iraqi forces became additional support by Al Qaida terrorists. When the US noticed, the resistance of the Iraqi was growing from day to day and was becoming more and more effective, it was too late. The US military had become a problem they had completely underestimated. When the US Secretary of Defence Rumsfeld became aware of that big problem he changed his mind and started to talk in public about an US military engagement that could take longer than expected. And now he was right.

i. Civil casualties are creating new suicide bombers

When a foreign military force is invited to free a nation from a terror regime

or a dictatorship, the people of that nation are normally expecting they are helped by the foreign military forces to return to a normal civil life again, without to have a steady fear of being arrested or killed. The people will be grateful for the foreign military assistance to be freed and they will start dreaming of a better personal economic situation and a life under safe conditions. Something they are not expecting and accepting at all, is, to be wounded or killed by the foreign military forces.

Therefore one single civilian, killed by one military force of the coalition, is a disaster for all military forces of the coalition. It doesn't matter if that civilian was killed by mistake or not. Such civil casualties may have the following consequences for all military allies:

- The population will change their attitude from friendly to hostile against the foreign military forces. They will stop cooperating with the foreign military, they will start to feel the foreign military forces as an occupation army and not as a friendly force anymore and, as last consequence, the people will try to get rid of them as soon as possible. Inside intelligence information about the terrorists will not be passed to the foreign military.
- The terrorists will take the opportunity to spread out a negative PR about the foreign military and will receive good chances to gain the sympathy of the people. With civil casualties by foreign military forces, the terrorists will be provided with the chance to increase the support by the population.
- Every killed civilian will give the terrorists the chance to recruit new suicide bombers, because the relatives or friends of the victim will be susceptible for revenge. A study has shown, a high rate of suicide bombers were recruited from that group of people. The study showed as well that the terrorists are getting more and more a problem, to recruit new candidates they can indoctrinate for suicide missions. Therefore the terrorists are grateful about every civilian, killed by foreign military forces, because they will find new candidates now again. By killing civilians, the military is creating their own suicide bombers. Their numbers will increase and not decrease, because a civil victim has normally more than one relative or friend.

For these reasons it is very important for every military personnel to avoid civil casualties and to remember that the foreign military forces came to help and not to wound or kill the people.

j. The problem of body count

A high amount of killed terrorists isn't a safe criterion of the effectiveness of a military unit in fighting against terrorists. If that would be the case it would mean that military units, having killed less or no terrorists, are countering the terrorist threat ineffectively. In most cases the opposite is true.

Military commanders, judging the effectiveness and professionalism of a military unit mainly after the rate of killed terrorists, may run into the following risks:

- The carrying out of humane, fair fighting as military and the keeping of international conventions may be violated by military units. Terrorists, who are giving up fighting, may not be taken as prisoner but shot. Such treatment of terrorists may be tolerated to increase the number of killed terrorists in the reports of the units to higher headquarters or the military units may solve the problem of terrorists being captured by killing them.
- The sensitivity of not using weapons against terrorists that are mixing with civilians or using them as shields, may get lost. The military may not step back from shooting at terrorists, when civilian lives are endangered.
- The soldiers may only follow their main personal targets to survive and return home unhurt and don't care less about civilians being killed. They may forget one of their main tasks, namely, to protect the people against attacks of terrorists and will put their personal target on top to stay alive.
- During their fights against the terrorists, the soldiers may become inured to kill somebody and don't bother anymore if it is a terrorist or a civilian.
- Soldiers, becoming witness, how their best comrades are killed at their side by terrorists, may get furious, loose control and start firing blindly to take revenge and by doing that killing innocent civilians too. Such a behaviour of the military may be covered by the body count and may stay unnoticed by the commanding officers.
- The military may be encouraged to count killed civilians as terrorists to increase the number of killed terrorists in their reports or to camouflage crime acts on the people.

It could be as well that units with a high rate of killed civilians are lacking in training, leadership and professionalism. That is the case, when a unit is attacked by terrorists and their soldiers start shooting around unaimed in panic to save their lives and care less about civilians.

Such a military unit is destroying the positive picture that the people have of all the other well trained, disciplined military units and should be withdrawn from the mission.

k. Missing directive for US forces after the end of fighting in Iraq to save the public order and to avoid chaos

When the fighting stopped in Iraq the world public could watch on television that the US forces didn't prevent the Iraqi people from looting and setting public buildings on fire. They became witness on TV how GIs participated in searching for war memories to take home. Obviously the military had not received an order to keep the public order and safety in Bagdad and to prevent the people from destroying the infrastructure and administration, needed for the reconstruction of the new Iraq. Important files and the inventory of one of the most famous museums in the world disappeared or were destroyed. Shops, needed for the supply of the people, were looted and set on fire. Schools and universities lost their furniture and equipment. With other words, the US military allowed the break-out of chaos and stayed inactive. Everybody knows that it is easier to keep an existing order than to restore it, especially when the people get accustomed to the inactivity of the US military, tolerating the looting and when they are not anxious anymore to be punished by Saddam and his forces. The impression from outside was that the US military were caught by surprise and had no plan to handle the situation. This chaos was used as well by the Iraqi military to get organised for a resistance out of the underground without being prevented.

I. Reason for no cheering of the freed Shiits in the south of Iraq

When CNN brought the first pictures from a freed south of Iraq, the embedded TV-reporter missed the cheering and welcome of the allied military forces by the local people. His comment on television was, that he had expected the Iraqi people to be more grateful and welcome US troops in the streets of Basra. That should have been a warning signal for the US but it seems to be ignored. There was obviously nobody trying to find out, why the Iraqi Shiits showed that behaviour, for there was a reason for it. To understand their reserve, we need to remember the war in Kuwait. The allied forces under the command of General Norman Schwarzkopf had freed Kuwait and were on their march towards Bagdad to end the terror regime of Saddam. The Shiits in the south, thought to be freed from Saddam by the US troops, stood up against the troops of Saddam. Then General Schwarzkopf received the order from the former US president Bush, to stop and withdraw behind the borderline of Iraq, because the UN mandate wasn't covering an occupation of Iraq. That gave Saddam the opportunity to reoccupy the south of Iraq with his special guards. As consequence for the cooperation of the Shiits with the US troops in the south, they got heavily punished by Saddam and suffered very much, without the US could help them. To be left alone by the US at that time is something, the Shiits in the south have not forgotten and probably has led to a deep distrust in the American reliability and is maybe one of the reasons for the unfriendly behaviour of the Shiit people against US forces.

4. Recommendations for the military forces

a. Civil casualties must be avoided in Iraq and Afghanistan

My recommendation to avoid civilians being killed during fights against the

terrorists goes mainly to the address of the US forces. Almost every week the world public is receiving the news from television, radio and newspaper that innocent civilians were killed again by US forces during combat missions against terrorists. The US forces should ask the question, why other forces, like the British, Norwegian, Australian, Italian, Dutch, German, French or Canadian forces, don't have such a high amount of civil casualties. The high kill rate of civilians by some US forces is not acceptable. It is not in line with the tasking of the coalition force and is doing harm to all other professional forces.

Negative effects for the US forces are:

- they lost the confidence and sympathy of the population, they should protect against the terrorists. The Afghan people can't understand f. e. that the US reconnaissance is able to identify smallest targets from the air and from space on one hand but is not able to identify a peaceful celebrating wedding party in a village as non-target on the other hand. The Afghans started to believe the US forces are not very much interested in avoiding civil casualties among the population by attacking Taliban terrorist from the air and on the ground. They lost their faith in the US forces as protection force against the Taliban terrorists completely and would like to get rid of them now as soon as possible. The US forces are not seen as a friendly force anymore by the majority of the Afghans. That has a negative impact on the ISAF in total.
- they create permanently new candidates for suicide bombing and help the terrorists with their recruiting system. Young girls, as a new type of suicide bomber, are probably the sisters of killed brothers, looking for revenge.
- the other forces of the coalition may try to avoid a fight side by side with the US forces, as long as civilians are wounded or killed by the US forces.

b. Differences in the codex of behaviour of the forces should be eliminated

The " codex of behaviour " of the different coalitions forces need to be harmonized. The population in Iraq and Afghanistan should see all military personnel of the coalition force following almost the same codex of behaviour. That requires:

- sufficient knowledge of all military personnel about the country, the traditions and habits of the people, the religion and the existing tabus ahead of the mission and
- during the mission the necessary sensitivity of the military in contact with the people.

This preparation of the military personnel for the mission is as important as

the required military training. In this point, the US may learn from the European allies. Existing training facilities in NATO countries should be used by those allies that don't have such facilities in order to reach an equal knowledge level in accordance with the agreed codex of behaviour.

c. The prevention of terrorist attacks should be given priority

To prevent terrorist actions you need to have the necessary intelligence information. The military should try to receive these information by using all available sources. A friendly population with good relationships to the military forces is a prerequisite to receive those intelligence informations about the hideouts, strengths and planning of the terrorists. The military would size the initiative and would avoid just to react on terrorist attacks. Crossing the planning of terrorists will create an unsafe feeling on their side and will affect their combat moral.

d. The US forces should not use the expression “ to be at war against the Al Qaida or Taliban terrorists “ anymore

I have shown in my analysis, why the US can't declare one day that they have won the war against the Al Qaida and Taliban terrorists. Therefore the US forces should talk of a “ fight “ instead of a “ war “ against the terrorist. A fight is something the US military can and will win. By avoiding the expression “ to be at war against the terrorists “ the US will be able to get out of that problem, without been seen as loosing superpower or as liar.

The US should avoid to give other terrorist groups an example, how they can fight against a superpower with success, they may follow then.

e. Recommendations to prevent booby-traps and suicide-bombing

Booby-traps and suicide-bombing are effective weapons of the terrorists and demonstrate a great threat for the military forces. To be in a position to use these weapons the Al Qaida and Taliban terrorists need to have:

- Hided ammunition depots with the required explosives.
- Hided workshops to develop booby-traps and explosive belts.
- Suitable detonating devices.
- Explosive experts.
- Candidates for transport, placing and igniting the booby-traps.
- Candidates for indoctrination as suicide bombers.
- Occasions to place booby-traps unwatched, f. e. along military supply roads.

- Necessary information about the military to have success with these means.

Taking actions on the basis of intelligence information against these different needs of the terrorists might be more effective than to have a high rate of killed terrorists. It looks like this type of concept is used already by some allied forces with success.

f. Sufficient manpower, suitable equipment and also sufficient air and ground mobility are of high significance for the military forces

Under geographical conditions, like we have them in Iraq or Afghanistan, the military commanders should be allowed enough ground troops by the nations,

- to occupy areas, controlled by terrorists,
- to prevent terrorist from return in occupied areas,
- to protect the population against terrorists,
- to protect foreign aid projects against terrorists,
- to protect vital installations like power stations, a dam of an artificial lake, oil production facilities and pipelines against explosive attacks.

Otherwise the terrorists will have options they shouldn't have.

This recommendation goes especially to the address of the responsible national politicians, deciding about military engagements of their forces in foreign countries.

Additionally the military should have:

- Suitable high-tec equipment that will protect the military personnel against the attacks of terrorists.
- Modern reconnaissance means, allowing a day and night watch by air and on the ground, preventing the set up of unnoticed traps and ambushes. The terrorists should not be allowed to move and operate unwatched.
- A high mobility in the air and on the round. These are the prerequisites to use the intelligence and reconnaissance information of detected terrorists by quick military reactions. Own ambushes can be set up against moving terrorists, to capture them in a military surprise action. Attacked forces by terrorists can be given quick assistance with air

support and thus casualties of own personnel can be avoided.

- The availability of enough suitable communication equipment is another prerequisite for a flexible fight of the military against terrorists under geographical conditions like in Iraq and Afghanistan.

g. Political advantages of well prepared and equipped military forces in suitable strength for operations against terrorists

When the military commanders would be granted by the politicians with the required manpower and technical means to fight the terrorists, as mentioned above under points 4. f., they would have the chance to finish their operations against terrorists in a shorter period of time successfully.

The main advantages for the NATO nations would be:

- The military forces would need less time to be successful with their operations against the threats of terrorists in foreign countries and could return earlier to their home bases.
- The required budget frames for the engagements would be reasonable lower, due to the capabilities of the military forces to cut down the time of their engagements.
- The own population would probably agree more to a military engagement, that is limited in time, than to an unpredictable engagement with an open end.

Enough military manpower, to protect foreign aid projects and the daily life of the Afghan people against attacks by terrorists in an occupied area, would demonstrate the Afghans the difference between a life under a regime of the Taliban with a lot of brutal religious restrictions, and a life in freedom without fear of punishment. Important would be that the Afghans are convinced that they have the saying and not the foreign powers. When the Afghan people will notice a substantial improvement in their personal situation, compared with their situation under a Taliban regime, they will support the Western allies in their efforts, the Taliban will lose sympathy among the population and the recruiting system of the Taliban will find no candidates any more and will be dried out.

h. Final remarks

My analysis is leaving out the economic situations in Iraq and Afghanistan with intention, as I am not an economic expert. But I am well aware of the importance of improvements in this field. From my point of view the success of economic development will play the key role. Military and police actions can only support these economic developments.