

## **Launch of natochannel.tv**

**by NATO Secretary General Jaap de Hoop Scheffer  
and Danish Prime Minister Anders Fogh Rasmussen**

**JAAP DE HOOP SCHEFFER (NATO Secretary General):** James Appathurai was welcoming Prime Minister Rasmussen, was welcoming my wife, was welcoming me, I hope. May I also welcome Ministers Per Stig Møller and Søren Gade.

Prime Minister, ministers, many of you heard me say in the past that when it comes to video, NATO was in the Stone Age when I took up the post of NATO Secretary General. That may have been a bit of a rhetorical flourish but we had almost no ability as NATO to gather the video in a systematic way, to send from the field and to get it to the public through TV or through the web.

When it came to video, we were simply not on the field. This was simply unsustainable in a world where most people get their news from television or from the World Wide Web. NATO as an organization has to be present there too to show clearly what we are doing, how we are doing it and why we are doing it.

I made that Stone Age reference during a conference in Copenhagen. It is no coincidence that Prime Minister Rasmussen is standing beside me here. Because Denmark took up the gauntlet and has been instrumental in taking NATO out of the Stone Age and into the 21st Century when it comes to video.

Denmark not only recognized the challenge, Denmark stepped forward to help NATO meet it. Copenhagen has contributed its leadership, its energy and its resources to help build something new: NATO TV.

Starting today, there will be a web-based NATO TV channel. Anyone can click on it, and they will see news stories every week focusing for the moment on Afghanistan.

There are NATO video teams on the ground now gathering stories. Video from all operations will be there and from exercises. Video interviews, archival material, it will all be there at the touch of a mouse.

For journalists, there will be a separate link where you can download broadcast quality video, including from our latest items to use if you wish, and the way you wish.

I realize, Prime Minister, that it is not the silver bullet solution to improving the visibility of NATO. But it is a substantial step forward. Let me thank warmly once again, you, Prime Minister Rasmussen and the Danish government for everything Denmark is doing to make this reality. And it is with great pleasure and thanking you once again, Prime Minister Rasmussen, that I would ask you to take this floor please.

**ANDERS FOGH RASMUSSEN (Prime Minister of Denmark):** Thanks you very much Mr. Secretary General. It's indeed a pleasure for me to be here today. Any serious organization or company has to take communication towards the public and its employees very seriously.

As we all know, the media environment has changed profoundly over the past years both in terms of technology, speed, accessibility and audiences.

The 24/7 news cycle and new ways of communication, like the Internet and YouTube are the order of the day. And the extremist groups that we face in operations are very quick to successfully utilize these new media platforms. That is one of the reasons why we have to ensure that NATO can meet the media challenges of the 21st Century.

And we also owe it to the many men and women in NATO operations as well as their families to show the results and challenges of their work in mission areas. Of immediate relevance is of course that we can effectively communicate the results and challenges of the ISAF operations in Afghanistan.

I'm therefore pleased that Denmark has been able to support NATO's public diplomacy effort by facilitating this very concrete initiative: the establishment of a video production facility, two camera teams and an Internet-based NATO TV Channel on NATO's homepage. It will enable NATO to provide regular news updates and video reports from the different regions where NATO is engaged.

It is my sincere belief that both the local populations in NATO's mission areas, our servicemen and women, as well our domestic publics and the media will benefit from this initiative. Thank you very much.

**MODERATOR:** I invite you to together press the button and we'll have a demonstration.

*[Launch of the NATO TV Channel...]*

**MODERATOR:** Questions?

**Q:** (Inaudible) Bauman(?) from the Danish Broadcasting Corporation. I guess this is for the Prime Minister primarily. Prior to the Crimean War, Wall Street editors would go to the Admiralty and to the Army Headquarters to ask what they could write. And when it came to war reporting, they would engage a lieutenant or captain in the field. With this initiative aren't we moving backwards rather than forward?

**DE HOOP SCHEFFER:** You're address it to? Prime Minister, or...?

**RASMUSSEN:** I'm prepared to answer to...

**DE HOOP SCHEFFER:** Me too, but go ahead, Prime Minister.

**RASMUSSEN:** ...that question. Well, first of all, I feel confident that free and independent media will know exactly how to keep and protect their integrity. That's the first important point to make. Secondly, it is a prerequisite for the credibility of this TV channel that it provides you with correct and accurate news. Otherwise, it will not be interesting. So, I feel confident that this is a way how to deal with the communication in the 21st Century. We have to address the fact that we live in a new world concerning communication.

**DE HOOP SCHEFFER:** If it would, sir, be considered propaganda by let's say your colleagues in your profession, it would be self-defeating. So there is of course a responsibility we all have, be it the Danish Prime Minister or the Secretary General, to see to it that you're not going to see this as propaganda. On the other hand, I think I would underestimate your profession, I think, as a journalist when you would be influenced by a quality in this exercise that you would consider below standard or sub-standard. You would be the first one to write about this.

But the fact is that in the 21st Century where we have so many sources and where people need so many sources and use so many sources and the Internet is one of them, becoming more and more important, NATO can't simply not afford not to do this and move, as I said, from the Stone Age into the 21st Century. But, of course, you know NATO as an organization where integrity is an important word. And that our watch, as long as I'm Secretary General.

**Sursa: NATO**