

NATO SKYWATCH

Volume 23, No. 7

NATO Air Base Geilenkirchen

5 April 2007

First Flight Remembered

By Capt. Phyllis Kent
Public Information Officer

On 23 March 1982, the NATO E-3A Component successfully completed its first-ever mission flight. In order to celebrate this important milestone in our history, the organization hosted a special event exactly 25 years to the day later, with many of the original flight crewmembers on board the original E-3A, aircraft #442.

The original flight, with crewmembers from Canada, Denmark, Germany, the Netherlands, Norway and the United States, flew over the Geilenkirchen area, providing surveillance for five hours, and completed the first two "touch and gos" before their full stop landing. The total flight time was a resounding 10 hours flown on that historic, inaugural flight.

On Friday, 23 March 2007, the Component welcomed Mr. Hartmut Buchholz, Mr. Axel Friedrich, Mr. Willem Ghijsen, Mr. Adolf Klugkist, Mr. Holger Laufenberg, Mr. Heinrich Michel, Mr. Norbert Rosin, Mr. Peter

Semrau and Mr. Otto Westvang, the original crewmembers from the premier mission.

Between them, they achieved 52,214 flying hours on board the E-3A AWACS. They held a variety of crew positions: display and radar technician, flight engineer, weapons and surveillance controller, tactical director and pilot. In addition, some served as instructors and evaluators.

"NATO AWACS represented strength, resolve, and unity of the NATO Alliance to the world and it continues to do so 25 years later," said NATO E-3A Component Commander Brig. Gen. Stephen D. Schmidt. "This was the first flight of the world's only integrated, multinational flying unit – multiple nations, but one successful NATO team."

On 23 March 2007, the Component honoured these individuals with a special light of their own. "We are extremely privileged to have them return for this unique flight 25 years later," said NATO E-3A Component Deputy Commander Col. Jelle Zijlstra.

Brig. Gen. Schmidt presented them



Original crew deplanes after a successful flight, which lasted five hours and brought back many fond memories. Photo by Photo section



The welcome committee 25 years ago.
Photo PIO Archive

with certificates of recognition at a reception held in their honour. They were joined by approximately 90 base personnel to help celebrate their homecoming. The level of esprit de corps was high at the Officer's Club as everyone was beaming with pride because of this great accomplishment.

Thank you to all those that helped make this event possible, especially the hard work of Mr. Norbert Rosin and Mrs. Petra von Schwerin-Bode.

This is one of several activities the Component will host leading up to the main 25th Anniversary celebrations on 16-17 June 2007.

For the most current information regarding the 25th Anniversary activities, log on to www.e3a.nato.int.

**Next NATO Skywatch:
20 April
Submissions due by:
12 April**

Also in this issue:

Economic Impact Study
See page 4.

9th Intl. Canine Biathlon
See page 6.



LEADERSHIP FORUM



Training Wing

By
Lt. Col. Kim Poulsen,
Training Wing Deputy Commander

Training Wing modifying its mission

The number of modified E-3A aircraft has permanently expanded and this increase has now prompted a response from my organization. As an important piece in the NATO Mid-Term (NMT) "jigsaw puzzle," and a natural step in the overall conversion strategy, TW will soon commence NMT-tailored Basic Qualification Training.

Yes, a sense of urgency has been felt in the hallways of the Training Wing. This might be because it is no longer possible for our staff to ignore what is happening in the world outside Building 244. The facility is simply too close to the flightline and the steady stream of NMT-modified aircraft has finally had an impact on this intellectual stronghold also known as TW. Business-as-usual is no longer an option. The consequence being that we started the last Legacy E-3A Basic Qualification Training (BQT) class last month, and after a short, four-month

recess, TW will welcome the first NMT BQT class in July 2007.

You might have thought that the TW team was completely surprised to realize its role in the NMT conversion process. On the other hand, several months and years of intense preparation have taken place inside these walls. A large part of the foundation for keeping the Operation Wing (OW) flying is TW's capability to provide qualified E-3A Component aircrew members. This training effort must be a step ahead of the development, which, believe me, is not always easy.

So what I am saying here is, TW needs to be able to "feed" the OW with flight and mission crews since personnel do not stop leaving the Component just because we introduce a new aircraft modification. Now is the time when TW has to exert a special proactive attitude that will allow a painless transition from one aircraft type to the other.

So after realizing that all resistance was futile, what has been done to prepare TW for its future demands? Of course, the first priority had to be providing our instructors with appropriate knowledge to commence NMT training, and to upgrade the technical systems to support the future educational effort. Thus, the following main issues have so far been addressed during the preparation phase:

Qualifying a large number of TW instructors on the new system.

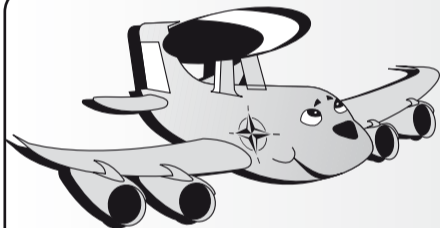
BQT syllabi preparation, which basically meant preparing the training modules and getting a clear idea of how to teach the new system in an effective way. One mission simulator NMT upgraded to allow for operator hands-on- training.

I do admit that there are still obstacles and shortcomings in the preparation phase, but with the always-positive attitude among the TW team, and a fully operational coffee machine, I am confident we will be ready to receive the students in July. It is important to note that during our

so-called recess, we will still be training the remaining Legacy E-3A students since this aircraft will be operational for quite some time.

Even though it seems like TW has accomplished a lot of work already, we, however, are like a supertanker. It might be hard to get it going, but once it starts moving it is virtually unstoppable. The conversion to the NMT age does not stop with the start of the first class. As you might have noticed earlier, only one of the two mission simulators has been modified. If all goes well, the remaining upgrade will commence in early 2008. And what about the flight simulator? It might just ensure a longer life expectancy of the E-3A aircraft (and the aircrews) if we, as well, provide the flight crews an opportunity to train. This of course means an upgrade to that simulator also.

So as you can see, there is still some ways to go before the TW is fully NMT-modified. But rest assured, our team has been working diligently for a while to cross the finish line on time to keep the Component flying.



**This aircraft landed
at Geilenkirchen
Air Base**

**Do you know
what it is?**

SEE PAGE 6

PLANE SPOTTER



Photo by A1C Florian Hüftle

By A1C Florian Hüftle

On 28 March, the German NCO Association (DUK – Deutsche Unteroffiziers Kameradschaft) handed over a donation from the proceeds of the 24. "Oktoberfest" attended by 4000 people last year.

The donation of €15,000 is going to fourteen public services like schools and charity organizations. Emphasis this year is put on procurement of educational materials as well as software for computer labs in schools.

E-3A Component commander Brig. Gen. Stephen D. Schmidt and DUK Vice-President TSgt Dieter Mertens presented the donation. Special guests were the mayor of Geilenkirchen, Mr. Andreas Borghorst, German Senior National Representative Colonel Reinhard Mack. The event showed again the close and friendly relationship between the local communities and the NATO Air Base.



Photo by DUK

DUK donates €15,000

Vacancy

Applications are invited for the following post:

Chief fireman/shiftleader, AGK SAF 0040, Advertisement Number 07005, NATO Grade C-6, assigned to the Fire/Crash/Rescue Branch, Airfield Services Squadron, Base Support Wing. This post is due to be filled as soon as possible. Closing date: 23 Apr 2007.

For further details, please visit the Component Information Portal (WISE) under Headquarters, PEC, Recruitment/Services Section or review the advertisement posted in Building 8.

NOTE: Only applications of qualified personnel will be considered. German military personnel and civil servants must send their application forms through BMVg, PSZ II 7 in accordance with ZDv 14/5.



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Report reveals NATO Air Base's positive financial effect on area

By Lt. Col. Michael P. Kleiman, Chief, Public Information Office

An Economic Impact Study (EIS), compiled by the E-3A Component, documented the NATO Air Base Geilenkirchen's financial effect on neighboring communities as 262.4 million euro within a 200-kilometre radius, containing a populace of 450,000, and 417.8 million euro overall in 2006.

The total monetary figure consists of the installation's contribution to its neighbors (262.4 million €) and another 155.4 million € obligated

throughout Europe and North America.

Last year's data revealed an increase of 17.5 million € and 20.7 million € respectively from 2005.

"From major construction projects to more personnel, it is not surprising that we saw our local economic impact increase by 17.5 million €. It was a very busy year for us in 2006," said Brig. Gen. Stephen D. Schmidt, E-3A Component commander. "We also experienced key improvements in our environmental efforts as the Component significantly reduced the number of air movements (take

offs/landings/touch and goes) around Geilenkirchen to the lowest level since NATO stood up the organization in the 1980s."

The second-year report analyzed several factors such as the number of personnel working at the installation, associated payroll costs and operational expenses such as construction, service contracts, as well as equipment and supplies. For example, in 2006, the Component employed 3,150 plus military and civilian members, accounting for 140.7 million € in direct compensation, as well as generated an estimated 1,774 indirect jobs

valued at more than 50.2 million €.

Focused on capturing all air base expenditures, the EIS also included the financial influence of U.S. military pay and allowances on surrounding locales, which amounted to approximately 2.1 million € in 2006.

"We are still on relatively new ground with the Economic Impact Study," said Maj. Gary Gualano, deputy financial controller, E-3A Component. "As with the first, this study accurately reflects the air base's significant economic effect on the Tri-Border Region."

A heartfelt thanks to the E-3A Component

By Mr. Norbert Rosin

On behalf of the nine crew-members that flew LX-N-90442 on 23 March 1982 and again on the day, 25 years later, I would like to thank the Component Commander Brigadier General Stephen D. Schmidt for inviting us for that special flight. A heartfelt thanks to the PIO, who made the whole day a very special event for us. I also cannot forget the team from the 25th Anniversary Committee who picked up the idea of the flight and brought it forward, as well as got it rolling.

We were impressed by the introduction we got in Squadron 1, where we were given all appropriate briefings, and even a visit and short briefing by the flight surgeon - most appropriate for these elderly men. In addition, Lt. Col. Matt Philips made us feel at home and we were all presented with the Squadron 1 coin.

The men and women in charge of crowd control had a busy morning as many of us wanted to see their old offices before leaving for the bus.

We feel that LX-N-442 is 'our' aircraft, as some of us who were present at the Roll Out, and later when the aircraft launched from Boeing Field, Seattle, to fly to Europe. Twenty-five years later, we found the aircraft in superb condition inside and out; absolutely spotless. The airframe, as well as all its systems were up and running during the whole flight.

Air refuelling was another highlight, especially for our pilot who watched it most of the time from seat 5. In addition, aircraft personnel gave us informative briefings on all the different crew positions. After further guidance, we were even able to press the buttons.



Photo by Photo Section

Original crew proudly present their certificates on 23 March 2007.

In the Galley Area we all enjoyed a bite to eat, and the seniors had a well-deserved break.

During the reception in the Officer's Club, we met Component members and previous colleagues. Brig. Gen. Stephen D Schmidt presented us with a framed picture of the event, which really shows that the first crew is in

the same good shape as tail #442.

Norbert Rosin was honoured for his initiative, as well as the time and energy he invested to pursue his idea of an anniversary flight.

Thank you for an unforgettable day at the Component!



First mission crew 23 March 1982. Photo PIO Archive

Happy 25th Anniversary Deutsche Unteroffizier-kameradschaft!

By Eberhard Schleicher

2007 is the 25th anniversary of the E-3A Component, but like that historic milestone, another organization is also fondly looking back on the same amount of successful years.

The Deutsche Unteroffizier-kameradschaft, founded on 18 April 1982, will celebrate its 25th birthday on Friday, 27 April 2007, 1800, at the Frisbee Club. Approximately 220 individuals have been invited along with many special guests including 1st German Air Force Division Commander Maj. Gen. Gericke; E-3A Component Commander Brig. Gen. Schmidt; Mr. Leo Dautzenberg, German Parliament member; Mrs. Meurer and Mr. Krückel, Parliament from North Rhine Westphalia representatives; the Mayor of Geilenkirchen, Mr. Andreas Borghorst and participants from the Heinsberg District Council.

Event Chairman Senior Master Sgt. Cordie will open the celebration with brief remarks followed by comments from a few guest speakers.

In addition, DUK members for the past 25 years will be recognized prior to the buffet meal, which begins at 1900. After dinner, attendees will be entertained by the band Ikarus. At 2200, fireworks commemorating the DUK's special occasion will illuminate the sky above the Frisbee Club.

9th International Canine Biathlon

By Component Biathlon Committee

On Saturday, 02 June, the Civil Guard Section of the Security Squadron hosts the ninth International Canine Biathlon at the sports fields close to the new gym by the wooded area in the southern part of the air base.

The biathlon involves a cross-country run for police and military canine handlers, as well as for their duty dogs. The teams (handler and dog) run a distance of about 8.5 kilometres and complete almost 20 obstacles, which require different skills by the contestants such as climbing, crawling, biking, shooting, dog drill (attack and obedience), and swimming. Time and penalties will ultimately decide the competition, with the fastest time and the fewest penalties deciding the overall victor.

For this year's event, almost 100 teams have applied to participate. Teams from Germany, Belgium, the Czech Republic, France, Hungary, Holland, Switzerland, Latvia, and Lithuania have already registered.

The biathlon will begin at about 0900 and will conclude around 1600. Both the start and finish occur at the

sport fields. At the activity's end, awards will be presented with all competing teams in attendance. During the biathlon, the Civil Guard Section will serve barbeque and drinks for a reasonable cost.

Civil Guard Section is looking for volunteers. About 40 volunteers are needed for judging at the different obstacles in a 4 hours session. There is a morning session (08.00-12.30 hrs) and the afternoon session from 12.00-16.30 hrs. The reason for splitting is to give all volunteers the opportunity to view the contest. Before starting your session you will be briefed by our specialists.

Civil Guard Section is looking for interested Component members and their families (Minimum age 16) who would like to support us. If you would like to volunteer, give us a call (ext. 4814), send a mail (Dohmen, Hans-Willi or Hensgens, Matthias) mail.

All volunteers are invited to attend a party on Saturday night together with the organization team and all participants in the tent at the Sport fields.



Water is one of the many challenging hurdles that the teams have to cross.

Photo PIO Archive

Conversion US to German Plates

For those of you who, for security reasons, have been looking forward to the arrival of the new German license plates for your cars, you only have to wait 10 more days. Starting 15 April anyone with American license plates, technically called Euro plates, will now have the option to get German plates.

The new license plates provide a great opportunity to blend into the community. But before you zip out of work on 16 April, and drive right over to the USAREUR Vehicles Registration Office, Building 297, there are a few items that will be of great interest to you. Below is some of the information

you will need to make this transition a smooth one.

Let me hit the highlights...First, this is not a free trade one for one. If you want the new German plates you will have to re-register your car for \$30. The Security Forces section recommends that you wait until your car is due for its annual registration before you purchase the new plates. This brings me to my second point. The new German plates are strictly optional. You do not need to replace your current Euro plates, nor do new personnel in-processing need to agree to have them rather than the current

Euro plates. If you are wondering why everyone would not just love to have them, I am getting there. Let me get through point three first. Point three is you cannot rotate out with them on your car, nor can you leave your car with someone as an 'agent' to sell it for you with the German plates still on it if you are heading off to your next assignment outside of Germany.

Prior to rotating out, however, you must swap your plate for the current Euro plate FREE of charge as long as you do so 90 days or more out. Please note though, if you wait until you are 89 days or closer to your departure, you will have to purchase the Euro plate so you have a valid plate on your car when you either return to the United States or are assigned to another base abroad.

There's more, bear with me, because without a visual you may get lost. Right now, you either have two long plates or two shorts plates, right? With the new German plates, you only get the option of either two long plates or one short and one long plate. That's right, you can't have two

short plates...unless you want to apply for an 'exception to policy' for the short/short combo. One other point should be made. Once you have German plates on your car, your car must be outfitted according to German law. There are rules about window tinting and the width of your tires. If you are in violation of either of these, for example, the German polizei can take your plates...in any part of Germany; Munich, Berlin, Geilenkirchen...you get the point.

Although this process may seem a little complicated, the personnel at Vehicle Registration can answer any questions that may arise. They are happy to help you with any concerns about your license plate size for your car and any restrictions you might have questions about. Vehicle Registration will only have so many German plates in stock at one time, so please be patient as the process starts. Currently there are no trailer or motorcycle plates available.

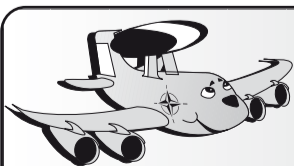
If you have any questions about the process, please feel free to contact Vehicle Registration at 02451 63 4924.

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Skywatch Classifieds are free to all NATO personnel. Advertisements must be printed or typed, and include your name, office symbol and duty extension. The editor will not accept advertisements for services that generate a regular income, or for housing other than vacation rentals. Submissions for the next NATO Skywatch are due to PIO, Mail Stop 33, e-mail: pio@e3a.nato.int, before noon Thursday, 12 April.

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PLANE SPOTTER

It was a German C-160 (Transall) on 29 March for passenger transportation.

International Friend's Mother's Day Bazaar

May 5th and 6th , 10 a.m.-6 p.m. In the Multi Purpose room (Bldg # 298) on GK behind the GK elementary school.

Sissel's Norwegian Sweaters
Konya's Italian Charms
Mohammed's Turkish carpets
Belgian Tapestries

Polish Pottery
African Sandals and Baskets
Handmade Jewelry
And MUCH, MUCH, MORE!!!

If you have any questions call Konya: (49)02456508461

Sail on sailor

By Manfred Bode

Ever dreamt about sailing off into the sunset? Well, this time I am not talking about the Caribbean. There is, however, a great opportunity to either sharpen your existing sailing skills, or to try something new you always wanted to do. Do you know that there is a sailing club at JFC HQ Brunssum, the Netherlands, which is open to all NATO identification cardholders? The club operates a variety of boats for beginners, as well as for advanced sailors at a nearby location.

Sailing occurs near Roermond, where side-arms of the Maas River form small lakes, which provide a nice environment for various types of water sports. The club also offers a well-equipped fleet of family boats (the Dutch Stockpaard, which is an easy and safe to sail open keelboat equipped with a small outboard engine), 420s (which are double-handed dinghies for the more sporty crew), Lasers (for the single-handed challenge) and Toppers or Optimists for training younger sailors.

For a very reasonable annual fee, the club's boats can be used throughout the sailing season. If already a licensed skipper, you need only to complete a



Stockpaard entering Roermond harbour. Photo courtesy of Sailing Club

check ride on your preferred type of boat, and then you are ready to go. With sufficient interest from new members, the sailing club can organize training activities to help you learn the necessary skills to obtain a license, which recognizes both club sailing activities, as well as at the destination

wherever boating takes you. And maybe then that Caribbean sunset dream does come true!

For further information, please feel free to contact one of the club members listed below:

At JFC Brunssum:

Dr. Björn Eggert: 0031-45-5263147
Oliver Zedrosser: 0031-45-5263155
Andrea Olczyk: 0031-45-5262636

or send an e-mail to bjjoerneggert@bundeswehr.org

or Klaus Wagner, E-3A Component's Logistics Wing, extension 3652.

NATO Air Base Geilenkirchen's International Children's Festival 22 April 07

By the International Children's Festival Committee

Less than a month to go, and planning for the International Children's Festival is switching into high gear!

NATO Air Base Geilenkirchen, led by Turkey's National Support Unit, with assistance from all Component countries, will host an International Children's Festival, Sunday, 22 April 2007, 1300. There will be lots to see and do, and children are asked to participate in a drawing contest (submissions due no later than 09 April, details in the poster), as well as dress up for a costume competition.

Drawing contest

Express your imagination and be the winner of:
A bicycle - first place
A digital camera - second place
A scooter - third place
For each of the three age groups (4-6, 7-9, 10-12)

Subject of the contest: "Animals of Our World"

All kinds of drawings will be accepted. Each participant, however, can only submit one drawing, and it should be on A4 size paper, no later than 09 April 2007.

Please write on the back of the drawing the following information: name, age, nationality, address, phone number, and send it to:

NAEW E-3A Component, NSU Turkey stop # 8, Post box 633007, 52511 Geilenkirchen

Costume contest

All children (also adults if they wish) are kindly asked to come to the festival in costume. Animal costumes are preferred, but others are also welcomed. A best costume award will be presented at 1400. The winners will be selected by judges located at the entrance of the Astra Theatre between 1300 -1330. Winners receive an aircraft tour with their families

escorted by duty personnel.

Our children represent our future, and for one day we should take pride in the joy and pleasure of seeing their laughter, as well as celebrate the innocence of youth.

Looking forward to seeing you there!

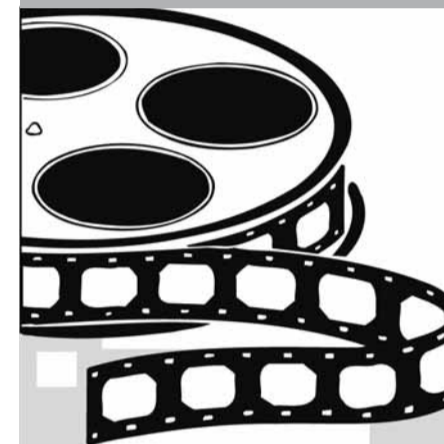
When: Sunday 22 April 2007, 1300 hrs-1800 hrs

Where: NATO Air Base Geilenkirchen Astra Theatre

Activities

- AIRFIELD TRAINRIDE • CLOWNS AND MAGICIANS • FACE PAINTING
- F-16 SIMULATOR • COTTON CANDY AND POPCORN • AIRCRAFT STATIC DISPLAY • DANCE PERFORMANCES • DRAWING AND COSTUME CONTEST • CHILDREN'S CHOIR • INFLATABLE TOYS AND SLIDES • BALLET SHOW, TAE KWON DO SHOW, DOG SHOW AND MUCH MORE • FREE FOOD, BEVERAGES AND HOMEMADE DESSERTS

The Alliance Theater is located in Bldg. 406 at JFC HQ Brunssum. Doors open 30 min. prior to show time. Adult Admission €4, children (11 & under) €2.



Smoking Aces (R)
Fri 06 Apr 07, 1930
Ben Affleck,
Jeremy Piven

The Queen (PG-13)
Sat 07 Apr 07, 1600
Hellen Mirren,
Michael Sheen

Blood & Chocolate (PG-13)
Sat 07 Apr 07, 1900
Agnes Bruckner,
Hugh Dancy

Dream Girls (PG-13)
Fri 13 Apr 07, 1930
Beyonce Knowles,
Jamie Foxx

Epic Movie (PG-13)
Sat 14 Apr 07, 1600
Kal Penn,
Adam Campbell

Catch and Release (PG-13)
Sat 14 Apr 07, 1900
Jennifer Garner,
Timothy Olyphant

Hannibal Rising (PG-13)
Fri 20 Apr 07, 1930
Gong Li, Gaspard Ulliel

Monthly Park & Sell begins April 14

The Park & Sell (flea market/garage sale) occurs the second Saturday of each month from April through October, 1000-1300, U.S. Dental Clinic parking lot (next to the NATEX grocery store).

Sellers should arrive and set up between 0900 and 1000, and no reservation for space is required. Vendors pay a 5€ or 4\$ non-refundable fee.

Park & Sell features interesting items and good bargains, as well as can be beneficial for incoming and departing personnel to buy and sell items unique to the area (i.e. 220 volt adapters). Activity is open to all NATO ID cardholders.

For more details, call Greg Johnson at +49-(0) 2451-63-2258.



High-level NATO consultations on Afghanistan and Kosovo

At a special meeting at NATO HQ, 27 March, NATO countries expressed optimism about the situation in Afghanistan and full support for the proposals for Kosovo's future made by UN Special Envoy Ahtisaari.

The high-level meeting of the North Atlantic Council, NATO's principal decision-making body, brought together senior representatives from the 26 capitals.

Following the meeting, NATO Secretary General Jaap de Hoop Scheffer briefed the media on the discussions.

On Afghanistan, the Secretary General said he sensed strong "satisfaction and optimism" around the table due to a greater number of

NATO forces on the ground, increasing funding for reconstruction and greater coordination among international organizations and with civil actors.

"Momentum is the right away to qualify the meeting," said the Secretary General, "Challenges ahead, but a clear sense that we have traction and momentum".

Full support for Ahtisaari proposals

Issues that still need to be addressed included counter-narcotics and stepping up political dialogue with Pakistan; the Secretary General said he is planning to visit the country, following an invitation by the Prime Minister.

On Kosovo, Mr. De Hoop Scheffer stressed that all NATO countries expressed their "full support" for the proposals for Kosovo's future made by UN Special Envoy Martti Ahtisaari to the UN Security Council on 26 March.

The Secretary General stressed that this was an issue that was fundamental to European security.

Mr. De Hoop Scheffer said that both Afghanistan and Kosovo will be key themes at the upcoming meeting of NATO Foreign Ministers in Oslo, 26-27 April.