

# Voices of Moderate Islam (VoMI)

*"This will be, no doubt, a life changing event for all of you. May you remember all that you will see and return home and share it with your family and friends so that they may benefit from what you learned."*

-- Col. Jim Johnson, Commander 173<sup>rd</sup> ABCT

**20 November 13**

# The Amman Message

## Fight the extremist ideology

- Stands against Justifying Violence in the name of religion
- Stands Against extremism in the name of Islam
- Terrorists In the name of Islam, have twisted the religion as their tool to achieve their Goals
- Islam is not only a religion but also a way of life, where the principles of tolerance and dialogue prevail
- **Amman's Message is the compass for all those who seek the Truth of the real Islam**

# Summary: Voices of Moderate Islam (VoMI)

## What we did:

- Took 33 Afghan Key Communicators to Amman, Jordan
  - 10-day intensive religious study, tour, and debate program
- Took attendees to Mecca, Saudi Arabia for Umra
  - last 10 days of Ramadan, earned honorific title *Haji*
- Returned to Afghanistan
  - shared unscripted story of VoMI w/ family and friends
- 40 days after return, we held VoMI reunion shura
- Why VoMI?
  - Demonstrate respect for Islam
  - Demonstrate respect for Afghan culture
  - Facilitate an Afghan-to-Afghan narrative
- To What end?
  - ...to make irrelevant a critical thread of the Taliban narrative that sought to represent the US and Coalition Forces at war with Islam

# 173<sup>rd</sup> ABCT S-7 Philosophy

**“This is not a war for hearts and minds.  
This is a battle of words, deeds and images:  
We and our Afghan allies must win all three.”**

**-LTC Matthew J. Yandura, Brigade S-7, 173<sup>rd</sup> ABCT**



# Illustration 1: Enemy Center of Gravity Analysis

## Cycle of Frustration

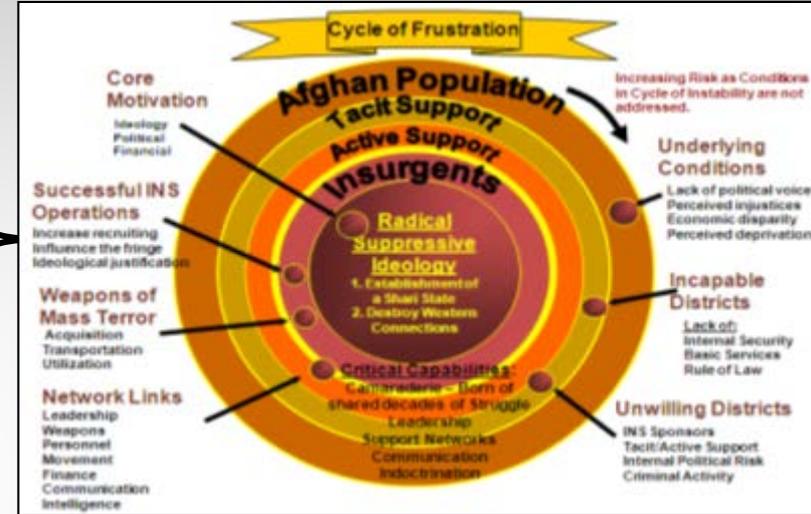


# Illustration 2: Campaign Visualization

Gaining and maintaining the support of the local Afghan people is the ultimate objective of every action we take.

Populace	<b>ADVERSARIAL:</b> Anti-GIRoA Anti-Coalition	<b>ISOLATIONIST:</b> Geographically Separated Traditionalist Autonomist	<b>AMBIVALENT:</b> Alienated Undecided Subject to INS coercion	<b>REFORMIST:</b> Progressive Supports GIRoA Supportive Partners
	<b>Disrupt</b>	<b>Overwatch</b>	<b>Secure/Co-Opt</b>	<b>Maintain</b>
Actions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Separate INS from people</li> <li>• Reduce INS influence</li> <li>• Disintegrate INS networks</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Overwatch and engage only as required</li> <li>• Provide development to support strategic goals</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Partner with Local Leaders</li> <li>• Incorporate Local Initiatives into Development Programs</li> <li>• Educate</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Empower Moderate Voices</li> <li>• Stress Self Governance</li> <li>• Sustain Development</li> </ul>

*Fight the enemy's strategy first, attack his forces only when they threaten the population and get in the way of our partnered solutions.*



Reverse the Afghan Cycle of Frustration by Attacking Enemy CoG Vulnerabilities

Lines of Effort

**Information Operation:**  
Communicate Tangible And Recognizable Progress

**Security:**  
Embedded Partnerships Protect Afghan People By, With, and Through ANSF

**Governance:** Afghan People Accept GIRoA Working For Their Interest

**Development:** Sustainable Development Through Economic Growth

What we look like, what we do, what we say and don't say are the first and most persistent message in our Information Operations

**END STATE**

Increased Local Community Capacity To Fulfill Basic Needs of Afghan Populace

# VOICES OF MODERATE ISLAM: US \*JORDAN \*AFGHAN INITIATIVE

## CONCEPT OF OPERATION:

• **SEND 33 AFGHAN KEY COMMUNICATORS FROM WARDAK AND LOGAR PROVINCES TO JORDAN TO PARTICIPATE IN THE VOICES OF MODERATE ISLAM**

## 5-PHASE OPERATION

- (PH I) SELECTION & RECEPTION PHASE: EMPOWERED BN/SQDN TFS TO NOMINATE CANDIDATES FOR VoMI
- (PH II) AMMAN PHASE: A 10-DAY INTENSIVE RELIGIOUS STUDY, TOUR, AND DEBATE SEMINAR IN AMMAN FOCUSING ON ISLAM IN THE CONTEXT OF A MODERN JORDANIAN SOCIETY
- (PH III) UMRA PHASE: PARTICIPANTS MAKE PILGRIMAGE TO MECCA, SAUDI ARABIA TO CONDUCT THE UMRA, LAST 10 DAYS OF RAMADAN
- (PH IV) ENGAGEMENT PHASE: UPON RETURN, THE HAJJIS WILL ENGAGE IN A SERIES OF PUBLIC ENGAGEMENTS TO SHARE THEIR STORY
- (PH V) REUNION PHASE: 40 DAYS AFTER RETURNING HOST A REUNION SHURA TO CONTINUE THE DIALOGUE, SPREAD THE VoMI STORY

**ENDSTATE:** DECREASE EFFECTIVENESS AND RELEVANCE OF INS NARRATIVE; FACILITATE A MODERATE ISLAMIC NARRATIVE THAT ALLOWS BAYONET TO ACHIEVE LONG-TERM OPERATIONAL OBJECTIVES; IMPROVE LN OPINIONS AND ATTITUDE TOWARDS CF, ANSF, AND GIROA; POSITIVELY INFLUENCE THE BEHAVIOR AND BELIEFS OF KEY INFLUENCERS

## KEY DATES:

- **NLT 24 AUG 10 – ARRIVE IN AMMAN, JORDAN**
- **25 AUG – 5 SEP 10 – AMMAN SEMINAR**
- **05 SEP – 09 SEP 10 – PILGRIMS MAKE THE UMRA**
- **14 SEP 10 – PILGRIMS FLY TO FOB SHANK,**

## SUPPORT REQUIREMENTS:

- **ISAF & HIGHER APPROVAL**
- **FUNDING: REQUESTED \$116K ; RECEIVED 65K**
- **US C-130 MISSION LIFT SUPPORT 24 AUG 10, 14 SEPT 10**
- **EXPEDITED VISA AND PASSPORT SUPPORT FOR ALL ATTENDEES**



# Attendee Selection Sample



**NAME:** Rahmatullah (Mayden Shar District Council Member)

**SELECTION CRITERIA:** Ideologically aligned w/insurgents Overall political powerhouse of Kowt-e-Ashrow

**IO OPPORTUNITY:** Strong influence with ambivalent population, able to tip their viewpoint towards a pro-GIRoA and moderate ideology

Wardak Province

## Composition

- 33 Afghan Attendees
  - 15 Village elders
  - 9 ANSF members
  - 4 GIRoA members
  - 2 Reintegratees
  - 2 LN Interpreters
  - 1 Afghan radio broadcaster
- 2 US Mil Escorts (plain clothed)
- 2 Jordanian Mil PAX (plain clothed)

• Attendees selected based on their standing as formal or informal leaders from social, civic, government, and security forces circles in Logar and Wardak provinces

## Initiative achieves multiple effects

- Decreases the relevance of the INS narrative that seeks to depict the US forces at War with Islam
- Improve LN opinions of CF, ANSF, GIRoA
- Facilitate a moderate Islamic narrative that allows the US to achieve long-term objectives
- Foster a network of key communicators in Logar and Wardak province whom enables FOM and support for operations



**NAME:** Kaka (Dara Village Elder/Former TB Commander)

**SELECTION CRITERIA:** Reintegration a marked success, positive influencer

**IO OPPORTUNITY:** Continue reintegration process w/moderate religious views and teachings

Logar Province



**NAME:** Gul Mohammad (SGT AUP)

**SELECTION CRITERIA:** Strong desire for increased leadership positions

**IO OPPORTUNITY:** Young NCO who is respected and has great interaction with the populace. Positive ANSF spokesman



**NAME:** Agha Jan (Baraki Barak Head of District Community Council)

**SELECTION CRITERIA:** Leading member of B.B. DCC/ promotes positive effects of GIRoA

**IO OPPORTUNITY:** Representative of the people/able to affect the needs and concerns of locals



