

The Portrait: Ulf Strahl of Sweden

Ulf Strahl has been almost in every place of the globe where peacekeepers are needed. Since March 2008, 53 years old Ulf has been serving as EUPOL mentor at provincial level.



EUPOL Officer Ulf Strahl

Inspector Strahl is based in Mazar-e-Sharif, with responsibility for Balkh province. He is also Swedish contingent commander.

Ulf Strahl joined the Swedish Police force in 1975. After various assignments he is now shift leader in Gothenborg (Police Station Kortedala), an area of approximately 200.000 inhabitants, which is well known for a high level of crime (the motorcycle gang's "Hells Angels" and "Bandidos" are very active over there).

Ulf's first peacekeeping assignment goes back to '92, when he was assigned to the United Nations Temporary Administration in Cambodia (UNTAC), more precisely in the North western town of Sisophon where refugees were returning from the neighboring Thailand. Later on he served in Angola, with the UN Verification Mission (UNAVEM III). Ahead of the NATO intervention in Serbia Inspector Strahl was a member of the OSCE – Kosovo Verification Mission (KVM) Mission; he was stationed in Prizren but that assignment did not

last long since KVM was withdrawn abruptly in early March '99. A year later he was seconded to UNHCR in the FYR of Macedonia. In 2002 he took part to the UN Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL). After the Tsunami catastrophe in South East Asia Ulf was sent to Thailand with the Swedish identification Mission.

In 2006 Inspector Strahl served for the first time abroad under the EU flag, in Banda Aceh, Indonesia, as Police and Security adviser of the Aceh Monitoring Mission (AMM). Again in SE Asia in 2007 with the Nordic Mission SLMM in Sri Lanka. Since March 2008 he has been here in Afghanistan.



EUPOL Officer Ulf Strahl with Afghan Colleagues

"Comparing Afghanistan to other missions – Ulf says - this is the most difficult mission ever, due to the security situation. That's why everything takes a little more of time to get used to the society".

"As a Mentor at the provincial level I work closely with the Chief of Police in Balkh province – Inspector Strahl added - . He's my point of contact, my mentee; I hope I have gained his confidence, as this is essential to our chances of success."

Trust, confidence and respect are important not just here but throughout Afghanistan.

Before dashing to a meeting Ulf ruled out that this will be his last mission. We believe him!