



**For Immediate Release**  
**By: Capt. Amy B. Slinker, 134<sup>th</sup> Public Affairs Detachment**

**Aug. 21, 2009**

## **Guardsmen Meet Mongolian Counterparts for Upcoming Deployment**

*Alaska Soldiers observe training, develop relationships prior to mission in Afghanistan*

**FIVE HILLS TRAINING AREA, Mongolia**—Two Alaska Army National Guard Soldiers are taking advantage of a rare opportunity to meet with the Mongolian troops they will embed with next month in support of Operation Enduring Freedom in Afghanistan.

Maj. Wayne Don, of Eagle River, and Master Sgt. Eric Schlemme, of Anchorage, are scheduled to deploy mid-September as U.S. liaisons with the Mongolian Expeditionary Force. The unit will provide base security at Camp Eggers for approximately six months.

Don and Schlemme were able to travel to Five Hills Training Area outside of Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia as part of Khaan Quest 2009, a multinational peacekeeping operations training exercise running from Aug. 3-25. The Mongolian Expeditionary Force is conducting simultaneous training at the Mongolian Armed Forces training center to prepare for their deployment.

Don and Schlemme are the sixth rotation of Alaska Army National Guardsmen to volunteer to deploy with the Mongolians. The previous five rotations have all been to Iraq. The first rotation of Alaskans kicked off the partnership in April 2004. The liaison program is part of the Alaska National Guard's ongoing relationship with Mongolia through the National Guard Bureau's State Partnership Program.

Normally embeds from the Alaska National Guard don't get a chance to meet with their receiving unit until deployed in country, so Don and Schlemme were pleased to meet their Mongolian counterparts now. They've been spending time meeting with key leadership, observing training and building relationships with members of the unit.

"We're both excited about working with the Mongolians and looking forward to a good deployment," Don said. "It's a really unique opportunity to deploy as advisors to a foreign army."

The Alaska Guardsmen will be the Mongolians' direct link into the U.S. command at Camp Eggers. They will work as tactical advisers, provide consult on base security operations, and serve indirectly as mentors — offering insight to the U.S. command structure and operational tempo.

The Mongolian Expeditionary Force is a unit compiled of approximately 130 elite soldiers selected by Mongolian Armed Forces Maj. Javkhlanbayar Dondogdorj specifically for this deployment. He will have a dual role in Afghanistan: serving as the commander of the Mongolian Expeditionary Force and as the senior officer over four Mongolian contingents.

Dondogdorj previously deployed with an embedded Alaska Guard liaison, Lt. Col. Stephen Wilson, who is currently the Alaska National Guard's state partnership coordinator. Dondogdorj said having an embedded liaison benefits the Mongolian unit.

“They resolve challenges, logistics problems and help with communication with the U.S. command,” Dondogdorj said.

Schlemme hopes to also bring the spirit of the non-commissioned officer corps to the unit. The Mongolian Army is in the process of transitioning their structure to increase the responsibility of NCOs.

“They can benefit from developing their junior and senior NCOs and understanding what a force multiplier they can be,” Schlemme said. “By mentoring these sergeants and guiding them to take on more of a leadership role, they'll get a much more robust structure.”

Don, who deployed twice to Bosnia with the Army, was chosen for the mission because of his company command and battalion level experience. He lives in Eagle River and works as an administrator at Southcentral Foundation in Anchorage. Don grew up on Nunivak Island and is a University of Fairbanks alumnus. He serves as a supply officer for 38<sup>th</sup> Troop Command at Ft. Richardson.

Schlemme has experience as a first sergeant and has deployed to Panama on active duty prior to joining the Guard. He resides in Anchorage and serves as a full time Guardsman with 38<sup>th</sup> Troop Command at Ft. Richardson.

Khaan Quest 2009 continues at the Five Hills Training Area, Tavan Tolgoi, and the city of Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia. The purpose of Khaan Quest is to increase interoperability and planning expertise among participating nations, and to further develop the Mongolian Armed Forces' training center at the Five Hills Training Area.

Media can track the exercise and download photos, stories and video using the exercise website at <http://www1.apan-info.net/khaanquest>.

**Embed1:**

Alaska Army National Guard Maj. Wayne Don, left, Mongolian Armed Forces Maj. Javkhlanbayar Dondogdorj and Master Sgt. Eric Schlemme meet outside a ger at Five Hills Training Area, Mongolia Aug. 20. Don and Schlemme are scheduled to deploy in September to Afghanistan as embedded U.S. liaisons with Dondogdorj's unit, the Mongolian Expeditionary Force. Don lives in Eagle River and is a supply officer with 38<sup>th</sup> Troop Command at Ft. Richardson. Schlemme is an Anchorage resident and is an operations sergeant with 38<sup>th</sup> Troop Command.

Photo by Capt. Amy B. Slinker, 134<sup>th</sup> Public Affairs Detachment

**Embed2:**

Alaska Army National Guard Master Sgt. Eric Schlemme, left, and Mongolian Armed Forces Senior Sergeant Battulga Baatar discuss tactics and techniques used by the Mongolian Expeditionary Force executing a traffic control point training lane at Five Hills Training Area in Mongolia Aug. 20. Schlemme is scheduled to deploy with the Mongolian Expeditionary Force as an embedded U.S. liaison. He is an Anchorage resident and serves as an operations sergeant with 38<sup>th</sup> Troop Command at Ft. Richardson.

Photo by Capt. Amy B. Slinker, 134<sup>th</sup> Public Affairs Detachment

**Embed3:**

Alaska Army National Guard Maj. Wayne Don and Mongolian Armed Forces Maj. Javkhlanbayar Dondogdorj discuss a traffic control point lane as the Mongolian Expeditionary Force executes a training scenario Aug. 20 at Five Hills Training Area, Mongolia. Don, an Eagle River resident, is scheduled to deploy with Dondogdorj and the Mongolian Expeditionary Force as an embedded U.S. liaison next month.

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**Embed4:**

Members of the Mongolian Expeditionary Force execute a training scenario Aug. 20 at Five Hills Training Area, Mongolia. The unit is preparing to deploy to Afghanistan, and will have two Alaska National Guardsmen embedded with them as U.S. liaisons. Maj. Wayne Don of Eagle River and Master Sgt. Eric Schlemme of Anchorage will serve as advisors and the Mongolians' direct link with the U.S. command.

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