

# *NATO Chief Vows Continued Role in Afghanistan*

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Kabul, November 7 (RHC)-- The new secretary general of NATO -- the North Atlantic Treaty Organization -- has made a surprise visit to Afghanistan. Jens Stoltenberg vowed to continue NATO's role in the country beyond this year's pullout date.

Speaking with reporters, Stoltenberg said: "Next year, we will open a new chapter. The future Afghanistan will be in Afghan hands, but our support will continue. We will start a new mission to train, advise and assist Afghan forces."

Afghan troop deaths have increased this year, with more than 4,600 killed in 2014 alone — that's more than twice the number of U.S. soldiers killed since the war began in 2001. An estimated 12,000 NATO troops will remain in Afghanistan beyond this year, most of them from the United States.

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