

**November 5, 1979**

**Soviet Defense Minister Ustinov, Report to CPSU CC  
on Mission to Afghanistan of Deputy Defense  
Minister Army-Gen. I. G. Pavlovskii**

**Citation:**

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**Summary:**

Soviet Defense Minister Ustinov, Report to CPSU CC on Mission to Afghanistan of Deputy Defense Minister Army-Gen. I. G. Pavlovskii describing military assistance provided by Soviet Union in Afghanistan and areas that necessitate improvement

**Original Language:**

Russian

**Contents:**

Translation - English

Top Secret

CPSU CC

On the Results of the Mission of the USSR Deputy Defense Minister, Army-General I. G. Pavlovskii, in the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan

In accordance with the CPSU CC's Decree No. P163/62 of 15 August 1979, the USSR deputy defense minister, Army-General I. G. Pavlovskii, and a group of generals and officers were in the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan from 17 August to 22 October with the aim of [1] reviewing the state of the People's Armed Forces of Afghanistan and the organization and methods of their combat operations against the rebels, [2] providing on-site assistance to the Afghan commanders in dealing with these questions; and [3] preparing recommendations for the further strengthening of the combat capabilities of the People's Armed Forces of Afghanistan.

The work of Com. I. G. Pavlovskii's group in providing assistance to the Afghan military command was carried out in strict accordance with the CPSU CC's decision and with instructions issued by the USSR minister of defense, taking account of the military-political situation in the country and also the political and organizational measures implemented within the Afghan army by the DRA leadership.

On all matters that they studied, recommendations were devised and transmitted personally by Com. I. G. Pavlovskii to H. Amin, offering them as proposals for the further strengthening of the Afghan armed forces.

The provision of comprehensive practical assistance by our side to the People's Armed Forces of Afghanistan enabled them to make a transition between August and October. Rather than continuing to rely on a passive defense and faltering operations by small units against the rebels, they were able to launch coordinated and active operations by larger groupings. This allowed them to gain the initiative in combat and to destroy the most dangerous forces of counterrevolution in the provinces of Paktia, Ghazni, Parvan, Bamian, and several other areas.

To prepare the troops for these actions, tactical exercises with live fire were held, and combat operations were conducted to resolve specific tasks. Soviet generals and officers provided direct assistance in working out the plans for operations and in carrying them out. This experience in preparing and conducting operations taught the Afghan commanders, staffs, and political organs the methods and means of organization for undertaking active combat operations in mountainous regions. Help was provided to the Main Political Directorate in organizing party-political work among the troops according to the different categories of servicemen, so that they could be mobilized for the active pursuit of combat objectives. Taking account of the combat operations, drafts were also prepared of documents providing basic guidelines for the organization of combat and operational preparations.

Despite these efforts to increase the combat capability of the People's Armed Forces of Afghanistan, a number of questions are still unresolved.

Military regulations that were codified with help from Soviet advisers have not been instilled in the People's Armed Forces, and they have no impact on the practical life of the troops. The commanders, staffs, political organs, and party organizations do not always coordinate their work in resolving tasks among the troops. Staffs at all levels, including the General Staff, have still not become a central, directing organ in the daily life of large and small units and in the troops' combat activity.

Political work in the Afghan army, especially with the officer corps, is still not conducted concretely or effectively enough. The combat morale and fighting elan of the troops, the state of military discipline, and the army's willingness to act are still low.

During the final conversation with H. Amin, M. Yakub, and M. Ekbal, Com. I. G. Pavlovskii once again directed their attention to the unresolved problems and our recommendations for solving them. At the end of the discussion, H. Amin said: "We are taking all measures to ensure that your recommendations are fulfilled, and we will always work in coordination with Soviet advisers and specialists. Our friendship is unwavering." Then he expressed the hope that Soviet military advisers would be assigned to every battalion of the Afghan armed forces. In conclusion, H. Amin thanked the delegation for providing help and requested that they transmit warm greetings and personal thanks to Comrade L.I. Brezhnev, and also to Comrades A.N. Kosygin, D.F. Ustinov, Yu.V. Andropov, and A.A. Gromyko, as well as all the other leaders of the CPSU and the Soviet government.

Overall, the group of generals and officers headed by the USSR deputy defense minister, Army-General I.G. Pavlovskii, fulfilled the tasks assigned to them.

Reported for informational purposes.

D. Ustinov  
5 November 1979  
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[Source: APRF, f. 3, op. 82, d. 149, ll. 120-122; translated by Mark Kramer; first publication in Russian in *Novaya i Noveishaya Istoriia* 3 (May-June) 1996, pp. 91-99 (document on 97-98), intro. by G.N. Sevastionov.]