***Record of Service: Afghanistan Transcript English***

On the morning of September 11, 2001, 19 members of al-Qaeda, a terrorist network based in Afghanistan, hijack four commercial airliners with the aim of flying the planes into high profile targets in the United States. The world watches as two planes collide with New York City’s World Trade Center, destroying both towers. A third plane strikes the Pentagon, the headquarters of the United States Department of Defense. A fourth jet crashes into a field near Philadelphia after its passengers overwhelm the hijackers. The attacks kill close to 3,000 people, and thousands more are injured. 24 Canadians are among the dead.

In the wake of September 11, Canada joins a coalition led by the US and other members of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization called the International Security Assistance Force. ISAF is established by the United Nations Security Council through Resolution 1386. The primary aims are to dismantle al-Qaeda and the Taliban government of Afghanistan to re-establish security and law in the country. Canada contributes sea, land and air support to toward the international fight against terrorism. Canadian soldiers participate in combat, reconstruction and peace support operations. Operational theatres include the province of Kandahar and the city of Kabul, Afghanistan’s capital.

Canada ceases combat operations in 2011 and the Mission Transition Task Force arrives to wind down the Canadian military mission in Kandahar province. Canada’s engagement continues through the NATO Training Mission–Afghanistan. The task force mentors and trains members of the Afghan national security forces to prepare them to assume leadership. In March 2014, Canada’s military mission in Afghanistan comes to an end.

The coalition succeeds in toppling the Taliban regime, destabilizing al-Qaeda, rebuilding infrastructure and improving living standards. However, the counter-insurgency efforts cannot root out the Taliban from neighbouring Pakistan. Of the more than 40,000 Canadian Armed Forces members who serve in the 12-year conflict, 158 soldiers are killed and 1,800 are wounded, physically and psychologically.