

CV Lieutenant General Ton van Loon



Lieutenant General Ton van Loon was born on October 10th 1956 in Weert, son of a sergeant major in the infantry. During 36 years of military service he commanded in all ranks from second-lieutenant to Lieutenant General. He studied at the NLD staff college but also at the UK staff college and spent a substantial part of his career in Germany. For his work with the German army and his service to Germany in general he was awarded the German Defence Meritorious Service Medal (Ehrenkreuz der Bundeswehr in Gold) and the Grand Cross of Merit (Großes Verdienstkreuz mit Stern). He still works closely with the German Army at their staff college but also as an advisor at political and military level.

Throughout his career he has been involved in training and training modernization. He organised the first rotations of the Dutch army at the (US) Combat Manoeuvre and Training Centre in Hohenfels, Germany, and played a leading role in the introduction of instrumented training. During his first posting at 1 (German/Netherlands) Corps as G3 training and exercises he organized several exercises and helped put into practice the vision of deepened integration. He continues to advocate smarter cooperation as he is convinced European NATO can only be strong together.

Lieutenant General van Loon commanded on operations as battalion commander in 1999 with the first deployment into Kosovo (KFOR 1) and in 2006/7 as Major General he commanded Regional Command South in Afghanistan. During his tenure in Kandahar he led several operations and particularly worked to implement the so called 3D (defence, diplomacy, development) approach. After returning he stayed involved in the ISAF mission both as a senior mentor in numerous preparation exercises and as a lecturer. Both deployments convinced him of the importance of comprehensive approach for which he stayed an advocate. He teaches at the CIMIC centre of excellence and at several NLD and DEU institutions on how to operate in the interagency environment.

Besides operations he also led the NATO Response Force 4 brigade (January – June 2005). For his role as Commander of this multinational brigade he received the NATO Meritorious Service Medal. Also with NATO as Chief of Staff of Allied Land Component Command Headquarters in Heidelberg, Germany he transformed this headquarters into a force command, providing deployable teams at the operational level. Early 2010 one of these teams was deployed to the ISAF HQ in Kabul.

Finally as Lieutenant General he commanded 1 (German/Netherlands) Corps in Münster, Germany. Based on his experience in the Balkans and in Afghanistan he made the further development of comprehensive approach his main effort. Under his command the corps developed innovative ways of working effectively with civilian actors in Germany, the Netherlands but also within the UN family.

On 25 September 2013 he handed back his command and retired from active duty. On this occasion he was promoted to officer in the order of Orange Nassau. Currently he works as senior mentor for NATO and enjoys sharing his experience with students at military academies in NLD and DEU but also at several civilian universities.