

# News Release



**NORTH ATLANTIC TREATY ORGANIZATION**

**Allied Joint Force Command Lisbon**

Office of the Public Affairs Advisor



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## **Preparing for ‘the Toughest Foot-Race on Earth’ With a ‘Vale Sempre A Pena’ Aim**

**Oeiras, Portugal** – Today Lieutenant Commander Andre Milne (Royal Navy of the United Kingdom), working for NATO in Oeiras (SHAPE FOR Operational Preparation Directorate, OPD), performed a training run of full marathon distance (42 km.) around inside of the NATO Oeiras base, as a part of his training process to participate in Marathon Des Sables (MDS).

In early April 2012 LtCdr Milne will participate in the grueling MDS in the Sahara Desert described as ‘the toughest foot-race on earth.’ He will compete over 240 Kilometers of the harsh Sahara Desert – on foot and running. The only support will be 9 litres of water for each day of the 6 stage event, which means he must be self-sufficient and carry all his equipment whilst running a marathon each day.

“I am raising 15,000 Euros for a Children’s Charity that specializes in care related to brain injury” says LtCdr Milne to define his real aim behind attending MDS and running everyday for preparing for it. Maybe being “a family man” and “the father of two” drove him paying attention on charity especially about children and he came up with the idea of using this “largely an individual sport to give something back, raising significant funds for a worthy charity.”

Fund raising continues at [www.justgiving.com/DesertMarathon2012](http://www.justgiving.com/DesertMarathon2012), any donation towards their aim will have an enormous effect on the good work of The Children’s Trust.

The training marathon was run between 0930 - 1330 hrs. Commander of JFC Lisbon Lieutenant General Philippe Stoltz, Deputy Commander Lieutenant General Manuel Mestre and Chief of Staff Rear-Admiral Pires da Cunha supported LtCdr Milne by attending the start with many other staff members and the Milne’s Family.

LtCdr Milne was happy with the outcome at the end of the marathon and gave the impression that he is ready for much more, MDS. And of course he was happy with the received donation and thanked everybody who supported him by shouting, joining for a couple of laps or donating.

NATO Lisbon family is proud to have such an engaged and active member and wishes him all the best for the BDS and of course for the further raising of donation.

Please see the Photo Coverage of the event at  <http://smu.gs/AntkIL> on the JFC Lisbon Smugmug Photo Album (<http://jfclisbon.smugmug.com>)

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## Background Information:

### **The Marathon Des Sables**

- Annual running race in the Sahara Desert, start and finish in Morocco.
- Only 1000 competitors each year.
- 150 miles (240km) in 6 stages, 1 stage per day with a marathon the daily distance (26.1miles / 42.2km).
- The winner usually completes in a cumulative time of 20 hours.
- 1 stage includes 11 miles of pure sand dunes and a further stage is at night.
- Completely unsupported apart from emergency medical cover and provision of 9 litres of water per 24hrs.
- You have to carry all your own equipment and food for 6 days ... whilst running!
- On each day, if the camel at the back of the field over takes you, you are pulled from the event!
- Approximately 30% of competitors do not finish the event.

### **The Charity**

The Children's Trust, Tadworth is a national charity providing a range of specialist services to children and young people with multiple disabilities, complex health needs and acquired brain injury. The Trust provides expert nursing care, including palliative care, in the form of short breaks or as continuing care for children whose needs are too complex for them to be looked after at home. The Trust also runs the UK's largest residential rehabilitation centre for children with acquired brain injury and an on-site special school, The School for Profound Education, for pupils with profound and multiple learning difficulties (PMLD).  
[www.thechildrenstrust.org.uk](http://www.thechildrenstrust.org.uk)