KABUL, Afghanistan (AP) — French President Francois Hollande for the first time provided details of his plan to pull France's combat troops out of Afghanistan by the end of the year, saying Friday he would leave around 1,400 soldiers behind to help with training and logistics.

The new French leader, making good on one of the major foreign-policy promises of his campaign, confirmed in a one-day visit to Afghanistan that all of France's 2,000 combat troops would be brought home by the end of this year — putting France on a fast-track exit timetable that sparked consternation among some allies at a NATO summit in Chicago early this week.

Hollande's comments marked the first time that he had put an exact figure on the French deployment after the combat troops leave, suggesting that logistical necessities for France as well as its support for Afghanistan's hoped-for transition to peace will go well beyond the year-end target.

"The time for Afghan sovereignty has come," Hollande said during a meeting with French troops at a base in Kapisa province's Nijrab district. "The terrorist threat that targeted our territory, while it hasn't totally disappeared, is in part lessened."

Hollande, who took office last week, said that after more than a decade in Afghanistan, French combat troops had carried out their mission and it was time for them to leave in an early pullout coordinated with the United States and other allies. He said some trainers would remain to help Afghanistan's nascent security forces. NATO has set a pullout date of 2014, when Afghan troops are to take over security control.

The French leader met with troops and discussed plans with Afghan President Hamid Karzai to withdraw French combat troops two years faster than NATO's 2014 pullout schedule. Hollande's visit was not announced ahead of time for security reasons.

France now has 3,400 troops and 150 gendarmes in Afghanistan. Under Hollande's plan, some would stay behind to help send military equipment back to France, and others would help train the Afghan army and police. He did not provide a breakdown for the roles of the 1,400 soldiers who will remain past 2012 or how long they would stay.

"We won't have any more combat forces in Afghanistan after Dec. 31, 2012. I say specifically combat forces," Hollande said during a function at the French Embassy. "We will still have a military force that will be dedicated to the training of Afghan army officers — that will also be present at the hospital, the airport and also will allow the Afghans to have a police force that is the most effective possible."

Hollande insisted France was not abandoning Afghanistan.

"This is a continuation, and there will be further engagement — but in a different form," he said, such as in cultural and economic matters. "We want France to have a presence in Afghanistan differently from how it did in the past."

France has troops in the capital Kabul, in the Surobi district and Kapisa province to the east, and at Kandahar air base in the south — where it has three fighter jets. A French military spokesman, Col. Thierry Burkhard, said most of the 2,000 who will leave will be those in Kapisa and Surobi. He said "hundreds" of trainers would remain, and soldiers conducting pullout logistics will leave bit by bit along with the withdrawing troops.

Hollande warned of possible problems in the pullout. "We will have to take every precaution. We must limit as much as

Nuevo Laredo, police found 14 butchered bodies in a van outside city hall, a salvo in a see-sawing battle of horrors between Mexico's two most powerful drug cartels.

Soon after, nine people were hanged from a bridge in Nuevo Laredo. Fourteen heads were left in coolers outside city hall. Eighteen mutilated bodies were dumped by a scenic lake in western Mexico. The decapitated bodies of 49 people were dumped outside a small town 75 miles from the U.S. border.

The man who appears likely to become Mexico's next president says he can ease the waves of violence consuming the country by changing the focus of its six-year offensive against organized crime.

Mexico's current administration has targeted the top ranks of the country's drug cartels, deploying thousands of troops to capture crime

is not uncommon for President Felipe Calderon's administration to boast of its success in arresting many of the country's most-wanted men.

Enrique Pena Nieto, who has a double-digit lead five weeks before the July 1 election, says his top security priority will not be arresting the leaders of the organizations that move hundreds of millions of dollars of narcotics each year into the United States. Instead, he and his advisers say, they will focus the government's resources on reducing homicide, kidnapping and extortion — the crimes that do the most damage to the greatest number of Mexicans — by flooding police and troops into towns and cities with the highest rates of violent crime.

"This doesn't mean that we don't pay attention to other crimes, or that we don't fight drug trafficking, but the cen-

Associated Press in a recent interview.

Pena Nieto's campaign said drug cartels could still be attacked, particularly if they carry out murders, kidnappings and extortion, but arresting their leaders will no longer be the focus of government efforts.

"Each administration chooses its operational objectives, and the objective per se is not the extradition or capture of big bosses, or the burning of seized drugs," Pena Nieto's campaign coordinator, Luis Videgaray, told the AP.

Some observers say that a strategy to reduce violence above all else could mean that drug dealers who conduct their businesses discreetly will be quietly left alone.

"I think that it's very clear that he's moving in the direction of concentrating the resources that the federal state has (toward) fighting

resources on combating drug trafficking," said Former Foreign Minister Jorge Castaneda. "If you have scarce resources and you're focusing them on A, you're not focusing them on B."

Pena Nieto's Institutional Revolutionary Party, known by its Spanish initials as the PRI, ruled Mexico for 70 years until it lost the presidency in 2000, and high-ranking party figures and their relatives were often accused of striking deals with cartels in exchange for political protection. Violence was far lower, in large part because cartels maintained uncontested control of smuggling routes in many parts of the country.

Opponents have been quick to say that Pena Nieto will go back to the old PRI model of cutting a deal with cartels.

"They've shown themselves to be absolutely tolerant of organized crime," said Josefi-

running on the presidential ticket for the National Action Party.

With Mexicans expressing strong support in polls for a militarized confrontation with crime, Pena Nieto is promising continuity in key aspects of Mexico's U.S.-backed drug war.

He has rejected legalization, called for more cooperation with Washington and praised Calderon's decision to confront the cartels shortly after taking office. On the campaign trail, Pena Nieto has been emphasizing his plans to maintain or increase the military presence in violence-torn cities like Monterrey and Veracruz. He has pledged an increase in the number of federal police officers from 36,000 to 50,000, and is also proposing a new semi-military police force composed of former soldiers and marines under civilian command.

Senators admonish GOP senator

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Senate Ethics Committee admonished Republican Sen. Tom Coburn on Friday over his contact with a top aide to former Sen. John Ensign, the Nevada lawmaker who resigned in disgrace last year after lying about his affair with the staffer's wife.

In a letter released Friday, the six-member panel said Coburn's communications with Doug Hampton and his actions on behalf of the former administrative assistant "were improper conduct which reflects on the Senate." The committee said the contact warranted a public letter of qualified admonition. Specifically, the committee said a meeting between the two violated the Senate rule barring contact on legislative matters within the first year of a staffer's departure, commonly known as the "cooling off period."

In issuing the letter, the panel said it considers the matter closed.

Ensign, a Nevada Republican, quit May 3, 2011, one day before he was to have testified under oath to the Senate Ethics committee about his affair with Cynthia Hampton, her husband Doug Hampton's subsequent lobbying of Ensign's office and a payment from Ensign's parents to the one-time aide's family.

In 2008, Hampton received a $96,000 gift from Ensign's parents, and an earlier Ethics Committee report cast Coburn as participating in subsequent, unsuccessful negotiations in May 2009 over a far larger amount. Coburn, R-Okla., has disputed the report.

In its letter, the committee said Coburn had a personal friendship with Doug Hampton and knew that he was no longer a Senate employee. Yet Coburn agreed to a meeting with Hampton less than one year later that involved discussion of legislative issues.

"Your relationship with Mr. Hampton provided you with a basis to have known he was engaging in prohibited post-employment communications when he contacted you and scheduled the March 11, 2009, meeting on behalf of his employer, Allegiant Air," the committee wrote.

In deciding on a qualified admonition, the committee said it took into account the fact that Coburn and Hampton's prohibited contact was limited to one meeting, and that the senator has acknowledged that he was wrong and should have been more careful.

SHELTER INSURANCE®
"Seek Shelter Today!"
• AUTO • HOME
• LIFE • FARM
• BUSINESS
WILLIAM CULP
102 W. Lincoln
Charleston 61920
345-3802
www.shelterinsurance.com

YAMAHA
SALES EVENT
3.99% APR FOR 36 MONTHS + $1,000 CUSTOMER CASH
MATTOON YAMAHA INC.
21st & Broadway, Mattoon, IL 61938, 217-258-2000
YAMAHA

A new transmission line to meet our need for reliable, cost-effective and safe energy

Ameren Transmission Company of Illinois (ATXI) proposes to construct new 345 kilovolt transmission lines that will interconnect Missouri, Illinois and Indiana. The project, known as the Illinois Rivers Project, is part of a portfolio of Multi-Value Projects (MVPs) that has been approved by the Midwest ISO, a regional transmission organization.

The MVPs will facilitate the delivery of renewable energy, improve reliability, and provide economic and efficiency benefits. The Illinois Rivers Project is directly aligned with Ameren's strategic goals of providing our customers with reliable, efficient and environmentally responsible energy.

We need your help.

ATXI invites you to attend an Open House.

Friday, June 1st
Unique Suites Hotel
920 West Lincoln
Charleston, IL 61920

Stop by anytime between 11:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m.

At this Open House, we will explain why this new transmission line is needed and what it will look like. We will answer your questions.

By sharing your thoughts and concerns with us on June 1st, you will help us determine the best possible routes for this new transmission line.

For more information, please visit our Web site at illinoisrivertransmission.com or call us at (800) 229-9200.

CHARLESTON RECREATION DEPARTMENT
PRE-SEASON POOL PASS SALE

Type	5/25 & Before	Starting 5/28
Family of 4	$150.00	$170.00
Extra Family	$10.00	$10.00
Individual (1-9 yrs)	$75.00	$95.00
Individual (10-54yrs)	$80.00	$100.00
Senior (55+)	$75.00	$95.00

Pool rules & Regulations are available at office.

ROTARY COMMUNITY AQUATIC CENTER OPENS MAY 28th
SIGN UP NOW for these programs:
Learn to SWIM
Evening Swim Lessons Now Available
• Levels 1-6
• Mom & Infant
• Mom & Tot
• Jr. Life Guarding
• Life Guard Training
• Aqua Aerobics
*Discounts available on lesson program with pass purchase
CONTACT PARKS & REC DEPT.
(217) 345-6897 9am-5pm M/F – 520 Jackson Ave.

CARPET CLEANING SPECIAL
3 AREAS Cleaned For Only $90*
*Hurry! Offer Ends 5-31-2012