

October 30, 2007

Hero's dad: Talk peace

By [KATHLEEN HARRIS](#), NATIONAL BUREAU

OTTAWA -- The father of Canada's first female soldier killed in frontline combat is calling for more peace talks and less military might in Afghanistan.

Dr. Tim Goddard, who was in Ottawa yesterday for a scholarship award in honour of his daughter Nichola, said the casualty count would continue to mount under a proposed two-year extension to the military mission.

Canadians must throw support behind troops in the field, but military strategies must be replaced by an "intensive effort" to resolve the conflict peacefully, he said.

"Without the development side, the diplomatic side, then our military work in isolation will not be very successful," Goddard said.

While he believes soldiers should continue to play a security role to foster development, he declined to comment on whether Canada should play a role in negotiations with the Taliban. Nichola, 26, who was based in Shilo, Manitoba and serving with the Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry, was killed during a firefight with Taliban insurgents in 2006.

Wahida Valiante, national vice-president of the Canadian Islamic Congress (CIC) which created the scholarship, insisted the mission is not accomplishing Canada's traditional goals.