



Biography of Major General Koenraad (Koen) A. Gijsbers

Koen Gijsbers (1958) attended the Royal Military Academy in 1976. In 1980 he was commissioned into the Corps of Engineers. He initially commanded an armoured engineer platoon and then a field engineer company. He was assigned as a project manager at the Netherlands Infrastructure Directorate, before going to the General Staff Officers Course. As major and lieutenant colonel, he was assigned to the Army Staff at several positions in policy and plans departments and instructed strategy and joint operational warfare at the Netherlands Defence College.

He took command of 11 Armoured Engineer Battalion in 1997. After promotion to colonel, he was deployed to Kosovo in 1999, directly after KFOR moved into Kosovo, as commander of a regimental task force consisting of infantry, engineers and logistical units, delivering security and humanitarian aid to the suffering local population. Subsequently, he was appointed chief of the Policy and Plans department of the Netherlands Training Command and chief of the General Policy Department of the Commander in Chief Royal Netherlands Army.

In 2003 he took command of 11 Air Manoeuvre Brigade (Air Assault). During his command, his units were deployed to Iraq and were part of NATO Response Force. Furthermore, he prepared units for deployment to Afghanistan, ISAF stage III, Congo and European Union Battle Group.

Major General Gijsbers holds a Master degree in Military Art and Science of the US Army Command and General Staff College (Ft. Leavenworth, Kansas).

In 2001, Major General Gijsbers was knighted in the Order of Orange Nassau (with Swords), awarded by Her Majesty Queen Beatrix. During his Military Academy studies, Major General Gijsbers was a good athlete at 400m and 800m running. He attended the Olympics in Moscow (1980) and was part of the European Relay Team 4x400m at the World Cup (1981); He still holds a Dutch Record at this distance.

Major General Gijsbers is married to Rixt A. Meines and they have a son, Kit, born in 1998.