

## Traditional German Day at Baltic Barracks

Written by AG

Wednesday, 03 October 2012 08:04

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**Traditionally, German community of Headquarters Multinational Corps Northeast (HQ MNC NE), German National Support Element and German Office of Defence Administration (ODA) invited other members of the Headquarters for celebrations of German Unity Day held on 2 October 2012, one day prior to the national holiday of Germany. In the late afternoon, in a less formal tone, multinational community of Baltic Barracks met during Oktoberfest at Baltic Barracks.**

### German Unity Day

All service members of Multinational Corps Northeast coming from as many as twelve countries find it vital to celebrate together important moments for each nation. These might be national holidays, as in case of the German Unity Day and the Polish Armed Forces' Day or traditional family gatherings, such as the Danish Jule-Glögg. It has become one of the many ways to show mutual support, understanding and friendship.

German Unity Day commemorates the reunification of two German states after forty-five years

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of division. The historical and political background of the process as well as the contemporary perception of the events were presented by Lieutenant General Rainer Korff, the Commander of the Multinational Corps Northeast. A guest speaker was Ms Annette Klein, the Consul General of the Federal Republic of Germany in Gdańsk, who also addressed the audience gathered in the auditorium. *"I am very happy to celebrate together with you, with so many military personnel, the German Unity Day under the auspices of Multinational Corps Northeast, here in Szczecin,"* said Ms Klein. *"We are very lucky to celebrate our German holiday in very good moods; we can go back to numerous positive events in Europe which created favourable conditions for the reunification of Germany. We can celebrate this day together with our European neighbours and allies, many of whom are represented here today,"* she added.

The official ceremony ended with a reception.

### **Oktoberfest: "O' zapft is"!**

In the late afternoon, the participants of the German Unity Day celebrations changed their service dress into more casual attire, in case of many German personnel – into traditional Bavarian outfit, and, together with spouses, joined in the celebrations of Oktoberfest. This famous feast in Bavaria has traditionally been organised in Baltic Barracks, adjusted to the Corps' needs and possibilities, since Multinational Corps Northeast was founded in 1999. Each participant is always welcomed by the German Senior Officer and the spouse, and invited into the world of white and blue, the colours of Bavaria. Traditional Bavarian snacks and drinks, live music and a number of challenging competitions make the Oktoberfest at Baltic Barracks a memorable event.

Oktoberfest can only be inaugurated when a barrel of beer has been tapped. This year, the honour of tapping was given to the MNC NE Deputy Commander Major General Bogusław Samol. The famous shout "O' zapft is" announced tapping the barrel and opening of Oktoberfest 2012.

In the course of the event there were numerous occasions to talk to representatives of other nations, chat and spend a nice time together as the event is very much about integration and socializing within the multinational Corps' family. The organisers of the event also ensured some additional entertainment and organised several competitions, such as sticking in nails into stumps, sawing wood or longest holding of raised mugs.

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*Photos by: Marian Cihon, SVK CIV*

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