

A step forward in preparing Crystal Eagle

Written by AG

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The Crystal Eagle 2008 Main Planning Conference and the second scout prior to the exercise took place from 28th to 31st January 2008 at the Army Warfighting Simulation Centre (AWSC) in Wildflecken, Germany.

Each military exercise, no matter whether it involves troops movement or assumes a form of a “computer-assisted command post exercise”, like Crystal Eagle, needs to be prepared long in advance. It requires taking into account not only “serious” operational planning or communication systems but also a number of “details”, such as accommodation, transport, furniture and equipment setup...Discussions on those and many other issues gave about 150 military sleepless nights at the Army Warfighting Simulation Centre (AWSC) in Wildflecken. Among them there were representatives from the Headquarters Multinational Corps Northeast (HQ MNC NE), Polish Land Forces Command, Estonian 1st Brigade, German 37th Brigade together with their superiors from the 13th Division, Latvian Brigade and Polish 7th Brigade. Finally, there were also members from “sister corps” of the HQ MNC NE – German-Dutch, Greek, Italian and Turkish Corps.

During those four days two important events took place – the scout No 2 and the Main Planning

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Conference. Both events meant to take the preparations for the exercise Crystal Eagle the next step forward. And they did.

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The aim of the scout was to confirm, elaborate or improve, if necessary, all arrangements made during the first recce in December 2007. It was especially important for representatives of four brigades since they had been designated to be the main training audience for this exercise. In fact, it was the first time when they had opportunity to get familiarized with a building setup or locations of command posts. Therefore they were obliged to deliver comments on their expectations concerning among other things equipment arrangement in the buildings.

Planning the rest

During the Main Planning Conference, which was being conducted simultaneously to the scout, the current status of preparations for the exercise was being discussed. For that reason three working groups were created to focus on different aspects of that process in greater detail. The first working group was mostly concerned with manning issues but also planning and evaluation of the exercise. The second working group dealt with preparing a scenario for the exercise, which involved a lot of operational planning. Logistics, movement and medical support were also discussed within this group. The third working group was concerned with Communication Information Systems and Real Life Support, which included accommodation, messing and other logistic support.

The range of preparations for Crystal Eagle 2008 proves that this exercise is going to be the biggest training endeavour of the Headquarters Multinational Corps Northeast in 2008. The process of preparation started in 2007 already and will be continued until the exercise Crystal Eagle starts in September 2008.