

The Baltic Amber

Multinational Corps Northeast Magazine
10 Years of Success



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Intro

It will not be a typical issue of the Baltic Amber magazine since the occasion is unusual – Multinational Corps Northeast celebrated its 10th birthday in 2009. Facts will not be in major focus either, because it will be more about emotions and memories. After all, they have greater power than tangible documents with detailed data.

The intention of this issue of the Baltic Amber is to present the story of Multinational Corps Northeast; the Corps, which has managed to cover many pages of its 10-year history with successes and highlights. This story will be told by people whose experiences have been scattered in time and space. But they all have met here, in Baltic Barracks, home of the Corps. These people will present the Corps' history from their own perspective, which may not necessarily be the only one and complete, but it will definitely have a human touch. It is the right time and place to listen to people who make this Corps strong.

The following pages of the Baltic Amber will take you deep into the Corps' world. You will find out what the process of founding the Corps looked like, what events shaped the Corps throughout those past 10 years and what the current and future challenges and visions to be met are. All this will give you a taste of a multinational adventure and unique character of this “Corps of the new Millennium” and its 10 years of success.

Public Affairs Team



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The Baltic Amber is the authorized official magazine of the Headquarters Multinational Corps Northeast, which shall be a fruitful source of information on the Corps-related issues for members of the Headquarters, assigned formations as well as international visitors and individuals.

The name Baltic Amber is derived from the natural resin amber that can be found on the beaches of the Baltic Sea close to Szczecin. It is well known in Poland, the host country of the HQ MNC NE.

Opinions expressed in the Baltic Amber are those of the writers and do not necessarily reflect official HQ MNC NE or NATO policy. Companies placing advertisements in the magazine and a printing house are in no way connected to or endorsed by the HQ MNC NE or NATO.

The Baltic Amber 10 Years of Success

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Commander sounds proudly

The 40th anniversary of military service was for Lieutenant General Zdzisław Goral a good occasion to summarize the achievements and recollect the past. General Goral finished his tour of duty as Commander of Multinational Corps Northeast on 17 December 2009 and is about to start well deserved retirement.

Anna Galyga: General, the year 2009 was a special year not only for Poland, the Corps, but to you personally as well. In the context of 60th anniversary of NATO formation, 10th anniversary of Poland's joining the Alliance, 10th anniversary of the Multinational Corps Northeast, how do you perceive 40th anniversary of your military service which you celebrated together with the personnel of the Headquarters on 15th September?

Lieutenant General Zdzisław Goral: Indeed, it is a special year, as I call it, a year of anniversaries. Very significant ones. For me personally 40th anniversary of my military service is especially important. I provided my military service in two political systems in equal time frames – in the years 1969-1989 in one political system and in the years 1989-2009 in a different one. I performed my service both in Poland and abroad and assumed various posts including the Commander of the Multinational Corps Northeast as the last one. I step back from that position on 17th December whereas on 31st January 2010 my over 40-year military career will finish. The time of my service constituted a very interesting period as the service in two political-military

pacts offers a great experience and the possibility to compare how it is today and how the situation used to be in the past. Additionally during that 40-year period of service I had a chance to meet many people, both servicemen and civilians. I am not talking only about Poles but also about foreigners met during missions, duty travels and conferences. It is one of the nicest aspects of my long-standing service. In that context the position of the Commander of that Corps is an important experience as the Corps is a multinational unit currently representing 11 countries.

Was joining the army your dream when you were a young boy?

Certainly, it was. My family always presented the army in the positive light; during family meeting we sang military songs. That is why I was attracted to the uniform. I became a scout. Then I started my high school and my intention was to pass the final exam as soon as possible and go to an Officers' College. Even then I knew what I wanted to do although not everybody believed me. And today, after many years, when I participate in school reunions in the uniform of the lieutenant general – nobody doubts that it is as it was to be.

Did you dream also to be a three star general?

I wanted to be an officer and the commander and obviously as every officer I thought that maybe I would be a general one day. But that is not all. I became a lieutenant general, so I have achieved a very high military rank.

Many people dream about

becoming a general but not many people achieve that. General, how one can make such dreams come true?

Such dreams may come true in various manners. Firstly, one needs to want them to come true, secondly one should like what they are doing and have a positive attitude. Thirdly – one should work hard. Nobody will be appointed to assume important positions if their level of performance is not good enough. People have to do their best so that their superiors notice that and appoint them to higher positions. I was also appointed to various positions. Let me also stress that my military service was not all roses. Nothing came easily to me, but thanks to perseverance, determination, and ambition I managed to overcome problems and go ahead.

And do you perceive the day of your birthday – 15th August – symbolically?

In the beginnings of my military service the Polish Armed Forces' Day was celebrated in October, and 15th August was celebrated as a church holiday. As history taught, I also knew about the battle of Warsaw. At that time I did not assume that we would come back to that date. However, it is good that we have it and it is especially good for me to celebrate that day not only as a human being, but also as a member of the Polish Armed Forces.

How does a soldier need to change to adjust to the changing reality?

Generally speaking a serviceman is such a creature that, in simple words, it does not matter to him in what reality he is because he is supposed to serve. As a soldier I do not serve politicians, Members of Parliament and other authorities. What ever political system is implemented I serve my motherland – Poland.

Which of the posts you have assumed shall remain as the closest to your heart?

Most of my service is related to so-called line units. I have not spent much time as a staff officer with what I am glad. From the very beginning I was with troops, on training fields. I recall with pleasure the time when I was the commander of



a platoon, company, regiment and subsequently a division. You have the power, the right to undertake decisions and give orders which for a soldier who feels himself a commander constitutes a significant aspect. On the other hand, you need to bear responsibility for everything and you need to have the capacity to place all the puzzles in the right place.

Currently, you assume the post in the NATO structure and not a national structure any more.

Before assuming the post of the Commander of this Corps I spent two years in SHAPE, in the strategic NATO headquarters. It offered me a wider perspective over the operation of NATO. Then I was a Deputy Commander of NATO Rapid Deployable Corps in Turkey and for three years I was preparing myself to become the Commander of this Corps.

What are you most proud of as the Commander of the Corps?

First of all, performance of the tasks during the mission in Afghanistan on a very high level and the experience our cadre have gained – it was a real success. This was the evaluation of the ISAF Commander and many generals and officers. Secondly, the Crystal Eagle 2008 exercise, which was conducted abroad in Wildflecken, Germany. That was a very good exercise, during which we trained four brigades and we shared with them our experiences gained in Afghanistan.

Then, arrival of new members to the Corps. When I performed my duties in the Corps as a Deputy Commander in 2000 and 2001 there were only three Framework Nations – Denmark, Germany and Poland; currently 11 countries are represented in the Corps. During my tenure as the Commander, Romania and Slovenia joined the Corps. The additional two countries during three years. It is a real success, especially taking into consideration the economic crisis.

Establishing the Command Support Brigade which is very well equipped and prepared was a very significant aspect, too. Talking about command support, the implementation

of Szafran Command, Control and Information System was a crucial undertaking.

I am also happy with the construction of the new building and at the same time improving working conditions of our personnel. The new building offers office space, very useful auditorium in which meetings and exercises will take place. It is the facility that the Headquarters has awaited for a long time. I think that the building additionally improves the esthetics of the barracks.

Finally, preparation and conducting of the ceremony of 10th anniversary of the Corps was a large-scale undertaking which I had in mind since I assumed the post in the Corps. I had a very serious approach to the task and the celebrations turned out to be a success. The guests and all the personnel engaged in the preparations evaluated the ceremony positively.

Is there anything that you have not managed to achieve during those 3 years?

I did not manage to improve the structure of our staff – to form two separate divisions G7 and G9. It is necessary if we want to have the same structure as other NATO headquarters, that is, the full structure from G1 to G9. In other case our structure shall remain “crippled”. I wish my successor managed to introduce such a change.

Isn't it related to increasing the number of the personnel?

The number of the personnel in the Headquarters would be increased by 10-15 persons. Within the structures of G3 and G5 Divisions respectively we have Training & Exercise and CIMIC branches so the germs are ready. They only need to be developed as individual divisions. The first one is responsible for preparation and training for operations, the latter one – for operations within the field of civilian and military cooperation. Thus, they play a significant role in each operation.

How do you perceive the future of the Corps?

Everything depends on the new NATO strategic concept as well as

tasks which are anticipated for the command structure and NATO forces. Currently, an additional ISAF Joint Command Headquarters in Afghanistan is being formed. It will be responsible for conducting operations in which Corps as standing headquarters or core staff element will play a significant role. I am also convinced the Corps will develop further. Among the issues I will discuss with my successor for sure there will be a question of improving its structure and the question of forces affiliation.

Do the preparations of the personnel of the Corps for the subsequent mission in Afghanistan proceed well?

We are going in the right direction, we have already gone through such preparations, starting from individual, national trainings and ending with Mission Rehearsal Exercise at the Joint Warfare Centre in Stavanger, Norway. The previous cycle of preparations of our Corps was estimated in Brunssum as a model for headquarters going on missions. If the process brought such positive results last time then this time it should be the same or even better.

What would you like to tell your personnel in the last words, General?

I would say it short– do what you are doing and do not lose your time spending three or more years in this Headquarters. I mean – learn, but also train your body, and simply be yourselves. At the same time I would like to add that I have a very high esteem of the military and civilian personnel of the Headquarters, National Support Elements, Headquarters Company and Command Support Brigade.

Will you miss the Headquarters then?

Yes, but I will miss not only this Headquarters. People often ask me what I will be doing having completed my military service. It will feel sad and probably hard at the beginning but I think that I will have more time to spend with my family and my grandchildren. I think that I will visit the Corps from time to time just to see what is going on.



18th September 1999 symbolizes a new era in military cooperation between Denmark, Germany and Poland. On that day, Multinational Corps Northeast was officially inaugurated in Szczecin.

The establishment of a Danish-German-Polish corps was not only a compliment to Poland that had just joined NATO but also a serious step towards a closer cooperation. Obviously, among the reasons for establishing a three-national corps lay the intention to accelerate the integration of Polish Armed Forces into the Alliance, and also other new NATO members in the future, too. The choice of Szczecin as the Corps' home garrison was not accidental either. Geographically, the city turned out to be conveniently located – next to the Polish-German border and closer to Berlin and Copenhagen than to Warsaw. Historical relations with both Germany and Denmark were also in favour of Szczecin, which had risen to become a city of tolerance and openness towards other nations and cultures. Above all, the city manifested its long-lasting military traditions as a perfect place for a future corps.

Roots in Rendsburg

Headquarters Allied Land Forces Schleswig-Holstein and Jutland (LANDJUT) located in Rendsburg, Germany, was a forerunner of multinational military cooperation be-

tween Danes and Germans (as well as American, British and Canadian personnel) for more than 30 years. It was the only multinational structure within NATO for a long time.

At the turn of 1980s and 90s, the world faced significant changes in political systems of many countries, which had also an impact upon military cooperation. Following a policy of troops reduction and a growing need for peace support operations involving numerous countries, multinational structures had become a popular idea or rather a necessity. In the wake of structural changes in the Alliance, LANDJUT was disbanded to form a nucleus of a new structure, transferring a well-developed model of tolerance and multinational cooperation eastwards. The founding countries were Denmark, Germany and a new partner – Poland which aspired to join the NATO family.

Trilateral cooperation had been constantly developing throughout the 1990s and gained momentum when the Czech Republic, Hungary and Poland were offered membership in the Alliance during the 1997 NATO Summit in Madrid. In August 1997, in the Polish town of Omulew, the Danish, German and Polish Ministers of Defence decided that a tri-national corps would be formed on foundations of the existing LANDJUT. Thereafter, the Trinational Working Group was

created to determine basic conditions for such a corps. Their findings were submitted to the Ministers of Defence in March 1998. It was a necessary prerequisite before the meeting of the Danish Minister of Defence Mr Hans Hækkerup, German Minister of Defence Mr Volker Rühle and Polish Minister of Defence Mr Janusz Onyszkiewicz, which took place on 5 September 1998. On that day, the Corps Convention was signed, forming legal basis for the establishment of Multinational Corps Northeast and specifying its future missions and tasks. Originally, three Divisions were assigned to the Corps – the Danish Division, the 14th German Division and the 12th Polish Division as well as a number of affiliated formations. Lieutenant General Henrik Hovard Ekmann, who had been commanding LANDJUT since 31 March 1998, was in charge of the challenging transition from LANDJUT in Rendsburg to the new Multinational Corps Northeast in Szczecin. Following a series of meetings and decisions, a shape of the new corps emerged gradually. As early as in March 1999, an interim structure was launched as LANDJUT ceased to exist. An official LANDJUT closing ceremony held in Rendsburg on 29 April 1999 gave way to the new Multinational Corps Northeast. The Corps had to wait for its inauguration ceremony until 18th September, though.

There were lots of people involved in making Szczecin their place on Earth for Danish and German soldiers and their families. First reconnaissance tours started before any official papers saw the light of the day. Danish-German Information Office functioned since April 1998. Already two months later, the Information Day and the first out of several family orientation tours took place.

Major Henning Wilgaard, the then Chief of Danish National Support Element, admitted that although he officially started his tour of duty in Szczecin in May 1999, housing, schooling, legal affairs or border crossing were his concern long before. In the end, after different housing ideas were discussed, Major Wilgaard arrived in Szczecin to find houses for almost 50 families. His wife was his great supporter.

If it were not for the **Danish-German Information Office**, finding comfortable accommodation would not be possible on time. The office started its operation on 14th April 1998 as a permanent link between Szczecin and Rendsburg before the Corps was inaugurated. **Lieutenant Colonel Hans Legies, Chief of the Office**, had also a task to build up relations to the Danish and German Honorary Consuls, Szczecin authorities and 12th Mechanized Division. Apart from that, the Office served as an information centre for media and everybody interested in functioning of a future corps. Lieutenant Colonel Legies emphasized the contribution of a Polish-speaking secretary, Ms Alicja Gawęda, who helped to solve many issues and the office was soon flooded with renting offers.

Housing was not the only challenge to be faced. Another one was finding schools and kindergartens in

which children of soldiers would get proper education in English. Opening an international school in September 1999 was considered a big success of the new Corps. Major Wilgaard also mentioned issues such as car registration, legal affairs, border crossing and language challenges. In many cases, Danish and German National Support Elements were assisted by the hosts: "We were helping Danes and Germans as they often felt adrift in a foreign country not being familiarized with all laws and regulations", said **Lieutenant Colonel Jacek Pawlewicz**, who was the first **Chief of Polish National Support Element**. All Support Elements and the Information Office were able to create a harmonious team which managed to arrange all necessary matters for the Corps. "There were many successes including registration of cars and tax exemptions", stated Lieutenant Colonel Pawlewicz.

"For me personally it was a big satisfaction that we have succeeded to have housing and schooling and it was only possible due to a great help of nice Polish people and not least colleagues in the Headquarters and first of all general Pietrzyk", said Major Wilgaard. "Looking backwards, I am very thankful that I got the chance to head the office. It was a wonderful time in Szczecin, friendly people, great support. My farewell party and the closing ceremony of the office were the events I still keep in my heart and I remember the tears which I saw in many eyes", Lieutenant Colonel Legies continued.

As soon as Multinational Corps Northeast was inaugurated, functioning of National Support Elements stabilized and Danish-German Information Office was closed on 29th September 1999. Daily routine for Headquarters personnel started. And lots of work, too.

Moving from Rendsburg to Szczecin involved a great deal of preparations concerning housing, schooling and providing support to families which started their lives in an unknown city of a foreign country.



“Creation” – the act of making something new. In the context of Multinational Corps Northeast – a complex process involving a high number of personnel from Denmark, Germany and Poland, and many phases. Over 30-year heritage of Allied Land Forces Schleswig-Holstein and Jutland (LANDJUT) from Rendsburg experienced in multinational military cooperation confronted with a completely new environment and a new partner. Language of creation: English and human enthusiasm.

Preparations for the establishment of a new corps in Poland involved people both in Rendsburg and Szczecin. 8-hour driving distance between both locations was covered innumerable times. “I remember very well the preparation phase inside Headquarters LANDJUT in late 1998 with the idea to use the existing Danish-German Corps staff as a kind of skeleton and training body for the future Danish-Polish-German Headquarters”, recalls **Lieutenant Colonel Holger Heine**, aide-de-camp to Lieutenant General Henrik H. Ekman (note: first MNC NE Commander) since July 1998 to September 2000.

Several delegations from LANDJUT, and also from the Polish side, visited different locations in Szczecin before and after it was decided to situate the future headquarters in Baltic Barracks. During one of the visits, Major General Edward Pietrzyk, designated Deputy Commander of the forming corps, met his future subordinates – Captain Bogdan Dobrowolski, who would become Chief Headquarters Support and Captain Jacek Pawlewicz – future Chief of Polish National Support Element. Simultaneously, the preparations were also taking place at LANDJUT. “Since spring 1998 I had been involved in the infrastructural planning of Baltic Barracks as a

member of the tri-national group of engineer experts who had to prepare requests for all buildings to be used for the HQ staff in close cooperation with the responsible Polish architect”, stated Lieutenant Colonel Heine.

It is said that General Pietrzyk was the first Polish officer of Multinational Corps Northeast. As soon as the Corps Convention was signed on 5th September 1998 and he received special powers from Polish Minister of Defence Mr Janusz Onyszkiewicz, General Pietrzyk became Chief of the Advance Party, which enhanced preparations for the corps establishment. Later on, also German and Danish representatives joined in as well as other Polish officers and non-commissioned officers. The Advance Party occupied a building in the barracks in Ku Słońcu Street waiting for the reconstruction of Baltic Barracks to be completed. Since 1st November **Lieutenant Colonel Jochen Ewert** was assigned to the Group: “After a short time working in Rendsburg I directly moved with my wife to Szczecin. My task was to work as a liaison officer for LANDJUT and the new developing Headquarters. I could see astonished faces of soldiers of the 11th Recce Battalion when they met a German staff officer inside their barracks...In my second function I served as the German aide-de-camp to General Pietrzyk, travelling around the country and giving lectures about the future corps. My ability to speak Polish was very helpful and it opened hearts of many people.”

Lessons on multinational cooperation

Traineeships at the Headquarters LANDJUT in Rendsburg constituted an important step towards the in-

tegration of Polish personnel into the multinational structure. The first servicemen arrived in Germany in November 1998 and stayed there for a couple of weeks. For all of them, it was travelling into the unknown. “I was sent to Rendsburg for individual traineeship from one day to the next, together with other non-commissioned officers. There was a lot of uncertainty. It was my first visit to Germany ever”, admits **Warrant Officer Stanisław Glugla** from G4 Division who went to Rendsburg in January 1999. “I remember lunch we were invited for when we arrived. We were supposed to communicate in English and it was a nightmare for me. But after a couple of weeks – it got completely different”, said Lieutenant Colonel Bogusław Dobrowolski, the then Chief Headquarters Company. During those couple of weeks, all officers and non-commissioned officers were learning their future duties and getting acquainted with the new multinational environment. Most of all, they had to get used to working in English, which was quite a challenge, and get familiarized with NATO procedures.

Some of civilian personnel were also sent to Headquarters LANDJUT for training. Among them was **Sylwia Tańska**, who currently works in G8 Division. This is how she recalls her traineeship: “I was employed in June 1999 and practically soon after I was sent for a two-week training in Rendsburg. Everything was organised at breakneck pace and there was very little concrete information. I was supposed to learn everything later. It looked a bit funny because three officers came for me and I had to trust people who introduced themselves officers and were taking me somewhere abroad. Only when we arrived at the area of the military unit in Rendsburg I could sigh with relief”.

On home straight

The closer it was to the actual launch of HQ MNC NE in Szczecin, the more things had to be arranged. “It is an incredible feeling to create something new. It was hard but pleasant work”, recalls **Lieutenant Colonel Jacek Pawlewicz** who headed Polish

BLUISHNESS
felt in the air

National Support Element, which supported activities of the Advance Party as well as other National Support Elements and Danish-German Information Office.

The Headquarters Company (HQ Coy) was responsible for a great deal of things. Since June 1999 they were taking over the renovated buildings of Baltic Barracks: "We have actually received empty buildings so we had to organise everything – the move, security. An interesting story was related with training the cooks. The intention was to 'bring up' soldiers from the beginning so a special course was organised for them. At the end of it, there was even a final practical test in front of the examination board consisting of General Pietrzyk, Captain Pawlewicz and me", recalls **Lieutenant Colonel Dobrowolski**. He also noticed even though lots of people were interested and wanted to work for the Corps, many of them were afraid of an unknown multinational environment. Therefore, it was a challenge to find enough qualified people for the HQ Coy. But in the end, a group of about 100 soldiers was ready to work. They were stationed first in Narutowicza and Mickiewiczza Streets before they all moved to Baltic Barracks.

In the meantime, necessary packing was taking place in Rendsburg. One of civilians involved in the process was **Aneta Marendziak**, currently Personal Assistant to Deputy Commander – "I was placing labels on everything that was supposed to be taken to Szczecin. I knew that there were some renovated barracks. However I did not realize what we would face in reality. As far as documents are concerned – I received only two files with correspondence". The actual moving took place in the last week of July 1999 when heavily loaded trucks reached Baltic Barracks.

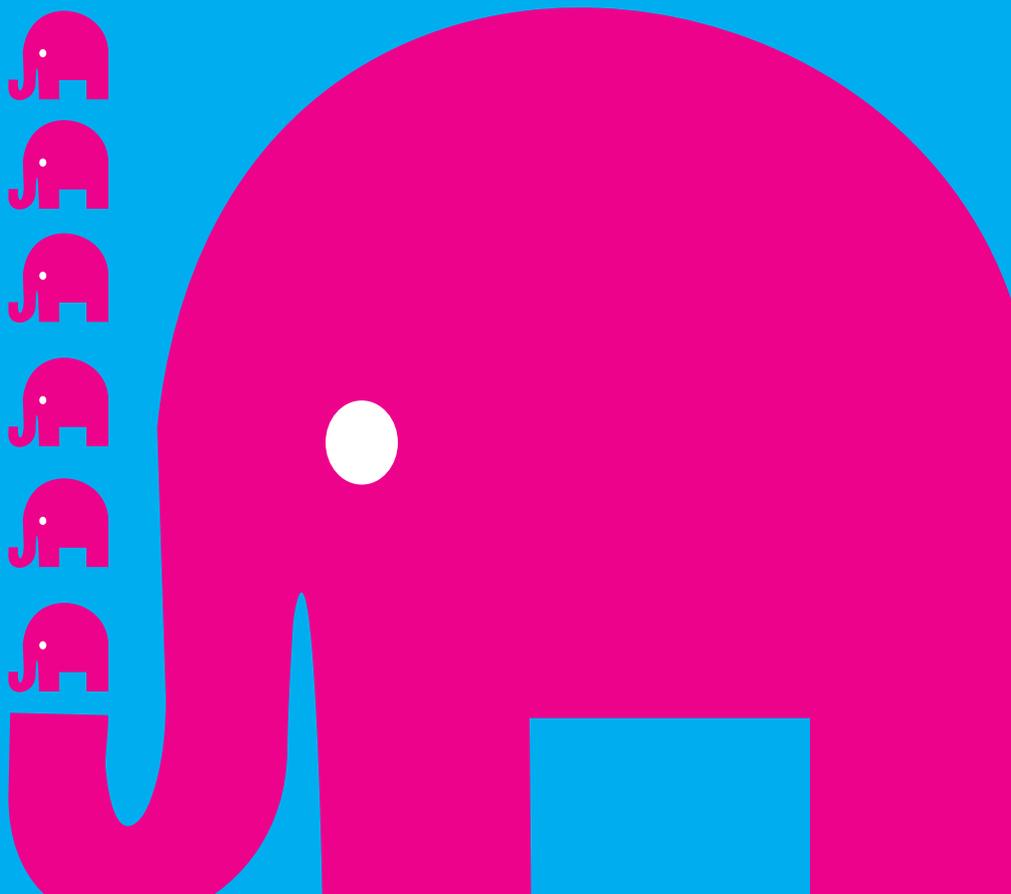
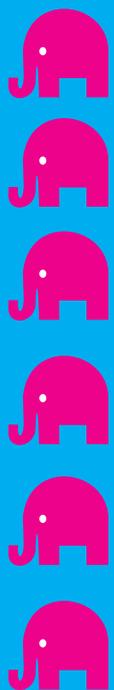
Pink elephant

Apart from purely technical matters related to the move from Germany to Poland, also human perception had to be adjusted to the new situation. Obviously, there were doubts of different kind from both sides. "Uncertainty most of all. A soldier from

a typical unit was not used to be in touch with generals", stated Warrant Officer Glugla. Some personnel in Rendsburg were concerned about the living conditions in Szczecin and Poland. "The reason for that was the nice surrounding and countryside in Rendsburg. The questions: where will I live? Who can help with communication problems? Where will my children go to school? – were very important for the incoming members of the staff", admitted Lieutenant Colonel Ewert. Even media interest was really high at that time, as everyone was eager to see "the pink elephant", if to quote Colonel Møller's (first Chief of G5 Division) expression. But the situation in Szczecin turned out to be favourable; the city warmly welcomed the incomers. **Lieutenant Colonel Michael Engholm**, aide-de-camp to General Pietrzyk, recalls: "My best experience was my daughter Laura's birthday on 18th March 2000 in Szczecin, and the support my wife and I received from the hospital. General Pietrzyk arranged the meeting with the City Mayor. During that meeting, conducted in a very relaxed atmosphere, I was handed over a special letter from the City Mayor and also pictures were taken for the press. I still keep it all for Laura."

Moreover, the atmosphere within the Corps was excellent. Common spirit, enthusiasm and willingness to work

were mentioned in all accounts. "Everybody had this spirit of pioneering, everybody was just very keen on success", recalls **Colonel Lars Møller**, previously Chief of G5 Division, currently member of the Corps Committee. "Our goal was to merge the staff of officers from three nations in one headquarters. I believe that only through the hard work we succeeded", adds Lieutenant Colonel Engholm. It was also because everybody was really open to cooperate with a positive attitude. Obviously, multinational character of the Corps was its trademark from the beginning. Not only did all cells encompass personnel from different nations, but also generals had an aide-de-camp (ADC) from a different nation – the Danish Commander had a German ADC, the Polish Deputy Commander had a Danish ADC and the German Chief of Staff had a Polish ADC. Lieutenant Colonel Engholm in this way recalls his tour of duty in the Headquarters: "The first 1.5 years I was ADC to Deputy Commander Major General Pietrzyk. Then, for a short period I was ADC to Major General Goral. During Crystal Eagle 2000, I was 'promoted' to ADC to Commander serving Lieutenant General Ekmann. After the Change of Command, I served for Lieutenant General Sadowski until I was posted back to Denmark in September 2001. Four generals in 2.5 years – not bad for a Captain!"



CHIEFS OF THE MILITARY WORLD

MB

AB

Two women who joined the military world and had to learn how to find themselves in it. They worked in different places, but their experiences complement each other and present things from different angles at the same time. Monika Bury started her military adventure on 1st March 1999 as a secretary to Deputy Commander Major General Edward Pietrzyk. Anna Bardasz joined in just a few weeks later, on 15th April, assuming the position of a secretary in G4 Division.

Beginnings

Monika Bury: As far as civilian personnel of the Headquarters is concerned I was employed as the first civilian in the Headquarters, whereas there already had been civilians employed in Polish National Support Element. I started the work in the barracks at Ku Słońcu (note: MNC NE Advance Party was temporarily located in the barracks of Battalion Headquarters in Ku Słońcu street).

Anna Bardasz: And I was working in Ku Słońcu and Narutowicza streets (note: one of the temporary locations for Headquarters Company) in turns – I was a commuter.

MB: Do you remember the interview? We were sitting in a big hall waiting for the interview. I remember even the question I was asked by Mr Hans Legies (note: Chief of Danish-German Information Office) – what I would do if I noticed that my superior made a mistake. I remember that a thought crossed my mind that it would be improper to point it out. After all it is the army. Probably it was a question of loyalty related also to the fact that the level of English language capability might be different.

AB: It was difficult for me to switch to work in English. I remember that after a whole day of work I did not want anybody to talk to me and for sure not in English. During my first G4 meeting I did not understand anything. The presentations did not have any logical sense to me as they were larded with abbreviations. The speakers used them in their briefings not using normal words. For two months I suffered terribly be-

fore I learnt those abbreviations, however still new ones appeared.

MB: Probably in April General Ekman and General Sachau arrived and together with General Pietrzyk (note: first MNC NE Commander, Chief of Staff and Deputy Commander respectively) they decided to introduce themselves to the representatives of the city authorities. At that time there were no translators employed. I went with the Generals for an official meeting in the Marshal's Office to provide interpretation. However, after the meeting I could not recall anything from it as it was a serious stress.

AB: The beginnings of the work in the army were a totally abstract notion.

MB: The military discipline itself, the relation superior-subordinate – we had to learn all that including military ranks. Danish and German servicemen who arrived here for the same time were equally lost as the civilian personnel. They found themselves in a new country; new place and they wanted to integrate with us. We found ourselves in a new to us military environment. The cooperation proceeded.

AB: In was nice. The servicemen were very open. They wanted to help us and they answered all our questions and repeated that we were all there to learn.

People

MB: I remember that on 26th June 1999 the first big barbeque took place in Jutland Garden in Baltic Barracks...

AB: ...and it was very enjoyable. I did not know almost anybody and I talked to so many people. People approached each other and asked what you would be responsible for. Some officers came with their wives so the atmosphere was really pleasant. I remember that the weather was gorgeous – hot and sunny. I have not missed any event for several subsequent years. You really wanted to come back to those people.

MB: One day in September 2000 I went to the city authori-

ties' office when Captain Michael Engholm, aide-de-camp to Deputy Commander, called and told that I had some 15 minutes to get back and say goodbye to General Pietrzyk who was just about to fly to Warsaw to assume the post of the Land Forces Commander. Unfortunately, there were traffic jams and I did not manage. I was deeply affected by that.

AB: In general it was a hard time to say goodbye to people with whom one was emotionally attached and who finished their service in the Headquarters. I remember that I was crying at each farewell party. Many wonderful people appeared here and we miss them.

Comparison

MB: After the inauguration of the Corps' operation my scope of duties was defined and limited a little bit. Previously every day was a great unknown – a thousand of activities could take place. In spite of the fact that we were working until 16.00 I remember that there were phone calls at 22.00, 23.00. Preparation of correspondence was challenging as well – there were no staff directives defining how it should be done at that time. Additionally, I assisted with media contacts, organisation of meetings, flights etc. I even used to go to the Hunters' Association where I interpreted at exams for officers. The workload was tremendous.

AB: Me and Monika Behrent were employed at the same day primarily to teach English to servicemen of Headquarters Company. From 8.00 to 12.00 we were teaching at Narutowicza and then we either continued there or came back to Ku Słońcu, depending on the need. At the end of May or in the beginning of June Lieutenant Colonel Wilfried Uttenwiede came to G4 Division and everything changed. It started to get interesting. I already worked in the barracks at Łukasińskiego and I started to visit with him all the authorities' offices.

MB: At that time we were still at Ku Słońcu, probably in May Captain Engholm arrived and assumed the post of the aide-de-camp to General Pietrzyk. We moved to the bar-

racks at Łukasińskiego in summer.

AB: I remember that when on 1st August all the personnel were supposed to start in the Baltic Barracks I had already been working at my desk. While your work started to stabilize then my started to change. During the first two years I dealt with e.g. car clearance procedures and I was still assuming new tasks which I still do.

Exercises

AB: The first exercise that I participated in was Crystal Eagle 2000 at the training ground in Drawsko Pomorskie. I was living in nearby Karwice. The living conditions were very good; I had my office in a castle. I was dealing with administration matters including preparation and translation of official letters. The weather was good and one could even go for a walk to the nearest lake.

MB: Whereas in Wildflecken during the Crystal Eagle Exercise 2003 the weather conditions were horrible. There was a heavy snowfall. We had to get up at 5 o'clock because we started to work at 7.00. We started and finished our work when it was dark. Still worse, we did not reach the canteen because it was really far away. However, I remember that I really wanted to participate in that exercise. I was there with Commander MNC NE Lieutenant General Zygmunt Sadowski, Deputy Commander Major General Rolf Schneider and the driver. I dealt with the office matters including preparation of speeches, official letters and presentations.



Selected Events

1997
1998
1999

- **July** – NATO Summit in Madrid: the Czech Republic, Hungary and Poland were invited for partnership in the Alliance

- **August** – meeting of Danish, German and Polish Ministers of Defence in Omulew, Poland, during which the idea of a tri-national corps was born



- **5 September** – the Corps Convention was signed, which served as the official “birth certificate” of Multinational Corps Northeast (MNC NE)



- **29 April** – Closing ceremony of Allied Land Forces Schleswig-Holstein and Jutland (LANDJUT)

This is how **Major Jerzy Wiatrowski**, Polish Air Force, one of the participants, recalled that event: “An official LANDJUT closing ceremony was held in the main square Parade Platz in Rendsburg. The entire climate of the event, including the preparations, rehearsals and the very day of the closing witnessed by Rendsburg’s inhabitants, was an interesting experience. It was worth seeing if only for the military ceremony”.





Lieutenant Colonel Holger Heine, German Army, the then aide-de-camp to Lieutenant General Henrik Ekmann: "A heavy rain poured just after the church ceremony. I was not able to change my uniform, so the German Minister of Defence got a wet shoulder when I handed the documents to him for signature since the water was really streaming out of my sleeve."

Lieutenant Colonel Jacek Pawlewicz, Polish Army, the then Chief of the Polish National Support Element: "It was a huge undertaking. I was lucky not to get wet, as I was responsible for the reception. In fact, I spent two nights to make sure everything was organized properly. And till the very last moment I was not told which entrance President of Poland Mr Aleksander Kwaśniewski would choose. And we had an orchestra waiting..."

Lieutenant Colonel Bogusław Dobrowolski, Polish Army, the then Commander of Headquarters Company: "We got soaked to the skin – but the enthusiasm of soldiers was gigantic. The last week before the parade we were told that soldiers of Headquarters Company would also march and we had to prepare everything. I remember my soldiers coming to me asking if they could make their boots clatter, the way special boots of honour guards soldiers did..."

13-23 November – Crystal Eagle Exercise

It was the first large Corps' exercise and a test of its operational readiness for Article 5 Operations. Almost 4,000 soldiers trained planning and conducting Article 5 Operations, including collective defence of the NATO territory.

Lieutenant General Zdzisław Goral, Polish Army, the then MNC NE Deputy Commander: "Crystal Eagle 2000 held in Drawsko Pomorskie training ground was a large exercise based on Article 5 scenario, i.e. combat operations. The Corps strived for its first operational capabilities certificates. Command posts of Corps' three divisions and the affiliated formations were developed. Distinguished Visitors' Day's highlight was a demonstration of the formations' capabilities. One of the brigades of the 12th Mechanized Division conducted a practical exercise, so called LIVEX, involving troops, live shelling and combat helicopters. Very prominent persons, among them President of Poland Mr Aleksander Kwaśniewski, took part in the DVDaY".

Warrant Officer Stanisław Glugla, Polish Army, G4 Division: "It was a memorable exercise organised on a grand scale, involving all the procedures and development of all the posts. I dealt with logistics. Our subcommand post was dubbed LOGMAN (logistics and manning), and I was assigned as an assistant to the officer in charge. I have good memories of that exercise. As an ordinary service member, I had not had any opportunities to participate in this kind of exercises. A command post exercise on a corps level was something I only had heard of:"



- **2 April** – Forest Planting

Lieutenant General Zdzisław Goral, Polish Army, the then MNC NE Deputy Commander: "We were invited to plant trees along with the city authorities. I remember bishop Gałęcki's presence there. There was a clearing near Głębokie Lake. This place had been prepared by foresters and all we had to do was take saplings, drilling tools and simply start planting. All staff members were there, including the command group, officers and their families with children. The foresters showed us how to do it properly and then everyone grabbed a basket of saplings and got to work."

- **5 April** – Change of Command: Danish Lieutenant General Henrik H. Ekmann handed over the command to Polish Lieutenant General Zygmunt Sadowski



- **14 August** – Visit of President of the Republic of Poland Mr Aleksander Kwaśniewski and Chancellor of the Federal Republic of Germany Mr Gerhard Schröder

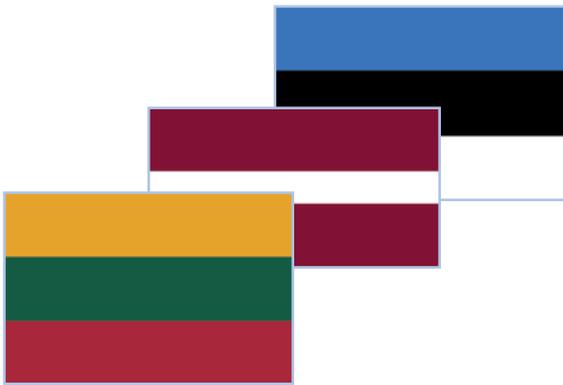


- **1 – 15 March** – Strong Resolve Exercise
NATO's biggest exercise in 2002 took place in Poland and Norway. 40,000 servicemen (26,000 of whom in Poland) from the land, naval and air forces from 25 countries faced two threats in unison – fighting conventional opposing forces that attacked NATO territory and separating hostile armies in a non-NATO country.

Lieutenant Colonel Bogusław Dobrowolski, Polish Army, Chief Headquarters Support: "I remember this exercise very well. As a LOGMAN (logistics and manning) officer I spent most of the time in garage no 9 because one of the command posts was there. I was responsible for a very small department– maintenance section. There were so many nationalities there. I guess, this cultural diversity got most engraved in my memory."

Sergeant Damian Fijołek, Polish Army, member of Headquarters Company: "At that time I was at a regrouping coordination centre. I can recall that many columns moved across Poland under supervision of military police. Military vehicles rolled out of the Danish transport vessels mooring at Ewa quay. Large, white tents stood in the middle of the Pomeranian Square, next to the gym and a helipad was located at the site of today's housing complex. Two or three helicopters landed here every day. One of them was navy-blue and it flew from the exercise command post, a vessel anchoring in the Baltic Sea."





18 September – opening of the Partnership for Peace (PfP) Office

The will to integrate representatives of the Baltic States into the Headquarters' structure had been present since the establishment of the Corps. After discussions on a ministerial level and MNC NE Commander's visit to the Baltic States, the office was ready to be opened. Its aim was to ensure mutual understanding and unity of activities conducted by the Corps in cooperation with the Armed Forces of the Baltic States through common exercises and study periods as well as a developing integration process.

Major Livars Vangovskis' tour of duty at HQ MNC NE started in October 2002 and finished in July 2004. He was a liaison officer from Latvia in the Partnership for Peace Office. When Latvia joined NATO in March 2004, his mission ended and two other officers came to HQ MNC NE to serve as full staff members.

"During my service, I learned many practical things and got great experience of working in an international environment. I remember many people and great and helpful attitudes I encountered from the very beginning. There were also many nice social events. I have a very lively recollection of the New Year's event in the Officers' Club, when each branch had to prepare a short, funny performance. The G-6 summer event with different interesting competitions was another one. The spirit was really great during those events. We had contacts with colleagues from other countries and never felt any unkind attitude to us. At least I did not. Of course, we had many restrictions as non-NATO country representatives. But that did not influence our relations with other HQ MNC NE members by any means. As PFP officers from the Baltic States, we took part in several exercises. One of them was Crystal Eagle 2003. We were merely observers during this exercise but, it was very interesting anyway."

Major Darius Vaicikauskas served at HQ MNC NE from October 2002 to July 2006 first as a liaison officer in the PFP Office and as Plans & Policy Officer in G5 Division since Lithuania joined NATO in 2004.

"There are a lot of things to be mentioned. First of all, it was the social life and the town itself – most of all because I was able to speak Polish. I also found a small Lithuanian community in Szczecin and the vicinity, so I established some contacts and I keep them until today. At work, we had all the things we needed. There was this culture of work – at the HQ everything was perfectly planned and there were almost no emergency cases – this I enjoyed very much. Also the social life at the HQ, the most memorable event was the Christmas Eve; the official part was followed by presentations of the branches. After my service at HQ MNC NE, I was a battalion chief of staff and I applied this model, too, and people enjoyed it very much.

From the professional point of view I entered the HQ MNC NE when the Corps was on the way to reach Full Operational Capability so it was a great experience. Being a liaison officer my work slightly limited us in our capacity. But when we joined NATO, it was like day and night. We were perfectly incorporated into the HQ with no limitations or restrictions. All in all, this service broadened my knowledge; I was able to see how everything is going on the Corps level as well as on divisional level."

27 January–6 February – Crystal Eagle Exercise in Wildflecken, Germany

It was one of the biggest Corps' exercises, in which staffs from subordinated Divisions and other commands participated. Altogether almost 2,500 soldiers were involved in it. The aim of the exercise was to train planning and conducting joint operations including collective defence operations, joint operations in cooperation with air forces and airborne units as well as rear operations.



Lieutenant Colonel Fred Spelly, German Army, former member of G4 Division: "It was winter time and it was snowing like hell. I was in G4 area of the German 14th Division, the headquarters of which was located up the hill, far away from the main training area. Whenever the Headquarters called up a meeting, I started to walk down the hill but it was very slippery so when I finally arrived, the meeting was usually over".



2 June – visit of Danish Prime Minister Mr Anders Fogh Rasmussen and Polish Prime Minister Mr Leszek Miller



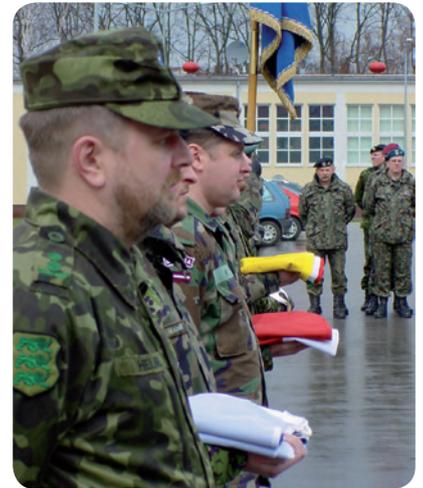
18 February – German Lieutenant General Egon Ramms took over command



5 April – Flags of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania were raised

10-13 October – Baltic Express Exercise II

Colonel Andrzej Gołębiewski, former Chief G4 Division: "Successful passing of Full Operational Capability (FOC) was a crucial challenge. We were given tasks by the Joint Force Command Brunssum. There were about a hundred logistical objectives. Prior to the main FOC exercise, Baltic Express exercise was conducted. We had to move from Wałcz to an airport and a seaport for embarkation. The Brunssum command examined our capability to deploy, our transport organisation and compliance of our documents with NATO standards. That was a first phase and it was exclusively the logisticians' responsibility area. We passed that test."



20-28 October – Capable Warrior Exercise in Karup, Denmark

The aim of the exercise was to validate the Interim Operational Capability. It proved the MNC NE's ability to plan, coordinate and conduct operations across a broad spectrum of skills from Peace Support Operations to full combat.



Major Kim Matzen, Danish Army, former member of G5 Division: "I was a Plans Officer during Capable Warrior. Prior to this exercise some parts of the Headquarters had been reorganized and they were launched to operate for the first time. A totally new element for the Headquarters was, for instance, Joint Effects Centre, which coordinated both kinetic effects, such as artillery, airplanes and non-kinetic effects, such as Information Operations, Psychological Operations, Key Leader Engagements etc. All the above mentioned structures were assembled in one cell and everybody had to learn how to proceed in such a complex structure. I think it was the main challenge related to this exercise. Within my area of responsibility our goal was to make a plan from scratch to final results within 24 hours. I think we managed to make the first plan in 36 hours and the subsequent one in 24 hours. It was a huge challenge but our plan was accepted by the Commander. We felt successful afterwards."

Sergeant Damian Fijołek, Polish Army, Headquarters Company: "The exercise was held at a Danish airbase. The weather was gloomy. It was rainy and the wind gusts were so strong that they lifted up a huge cafeteria tent in front of our very eyes. I had just begun dealing with physical supervision of three checkpoints established separately by the Danes, Germans and Poles. As an observer, I made sure they had no problems and I coordinated pass issuance and certificate verification process. As each of the nations organised its checkpoint in a different way and they all worked out very well, I became aware that what counted was the final goal and not the measures used to achieve it."

26 January and 6 October – Slovak and Czech Flag Raising Ceremony

31 October–11 November – Compact Eagle Exercise

Almost 4,000 soldiers from 17 NATO countries took part in this exercise conducted in Szczecin (Poland), Jägerbrück (Germany) and Finderup (Denmark). The overall aim was to ensure that the Headquarters was able to meet all the Full Operational Capability (FOC) criteria settled by the evaluation team from SHAPE. The Headquarters trained within a high intensity warfighting scenario and, for example, the Corps' transition into Peace Support Operations. The exercise ended up with a success – the Headquarters fulfilled all the criteria. Therefore, a few months later, on 6 February 2006, it was certified a Deployable Headquarters of the NATO Force Structure.

Captain Egidijus Timinskas, Lithuanian Army, former member of G2 Division: "The first time I was here in 1999 for the first exercise of this HQ, Baltic Cooperation. The second time I came here in 2005 when the preparations for the Compact Eagle exercise were ongoing. Command Post Exercise 2, 3 and straight this FOC exercise – it was a huge experience, the biggest exercise I had ever participated in. After the exercise I started my service here. It was January 2006. I enjoyed it because I moved from the battalion to the corps level. My family was very happy, too."

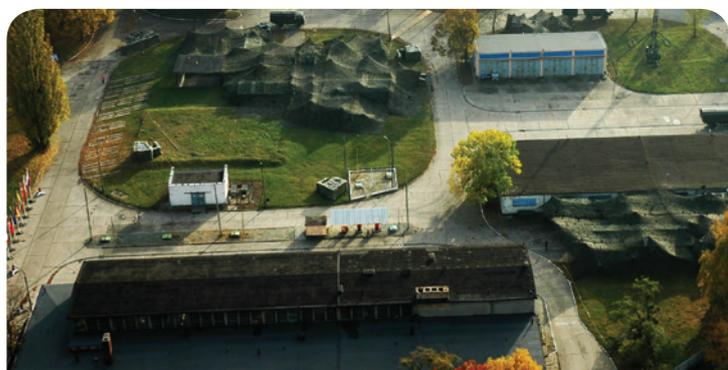
Master Sergeant Roland Ziegler, German Army, former member of G6 Division: "The most important and biggest challenge for me was the Compact Eagle exercise 2005. I was responsible for planning, managing and running all ADP matters. To illustrate the scale of the task, let the numbers speak: there were 8 different locations involved, each location had 4 different local area networks and had to communicate with each other. It was done by sat-links, cable-links and radio-links. All in all, 60 servers and around 1200 personal computers were involved."

Colonel Andrzej Gołębiewski, Polish Army, previous Chief G4 Division: "This exercise impressed me with the organisation of the Support Cluster, a place where the field command posts were developed along with the entire logistic structure, accommodation, medical support, fire protection, etc. We had to show that we had a required number of tents, canteens, workshops, and a field hospital. Everything was there. At that time, we organised it on the basis of the 12th Mechanized Brigade from Szczecin. Presently, it is all available in the Command Support Brigade in Stargard Szczeciński. The most difficult part in terms of logistics? Simply to amass the equipment because then we did not have what today is the Command Support Brigade and we could only rely on the Wałcz based Signal Battalion. Inasmuch we were not concerned about the signal equipment, the remaining part of the material to be presented was kept at various warehouses across the country."

Captain Waldemar Herold, German Army, former member of G6 Division: "The greatest challenge for me was the FOC exercise. It was pleasant to see how our Corps, NATO's smallest corps, was implementing the Field Headquarters concept. Good cooperation with the supporting formations and a great effort of service members from the Corps' nations led to a successful conclusion of FOC. We in G-6 Division were responsible within Communications Branch for connections between the Main HQ, Field HQ, and the command posts in Szczecin and its vicinity."



2005



• **26 November** – Second Charity Christmas Bazaar

One of the highlights of charity actions organised by the community of Baltic Barracks was collecting money for the daughter of Polish Lieutenant Colonel Maciej Gałązka, who went down with diabetics. The only way to avoid 6 insulin injections per day for a 5-year-old girl was to buy an expensive insulin pump.

Lieutenant Colonel Maciej Gałązka, Polish Army, G3 Division: "I had served in the Corps since July 2005 and my daughter's problem was simply touched in conversation and found its way to the then Commander, General Ramms. In December 2005, before Christmas Eve, on an initiative of General Ramms' wife, a Christmas Bazaar was held at Radisson hotel. The collected money was to be spent on an insulin pump. The bazaar offered hand-made Christmas decorations and cakes. Many people were involved. I remember the Slovaks sell their products, and one German made a beautiful ginger-like cake in the form of a house. Children of Szczecin International School (SIS) did a lot of work, too. They all collected 6 thousand zloty, which was record-breaking. On behalf of the Commander, in the presence of Mrs Ramms, representatives of the Rotary Club, SIS and the Ladies Club, a representative of Morale & Welfare gave me the money. My daughter's life changed so much to the better."

Charity initiatives are still organised by the Headquarters' community. There are donations for schools, campaigns encouraging people to donate 1 per cent of the income tax to funds for the injured in missions. The Headquarters Company and the Ladies Club usually support children's homes."

• **21 February** – visit of Ministers of Defence of Poland – Mr Radosław Sikorski, Germany – Mr Franz Josef Jung and Denmark – Mr Søren Gade

• **28 March** – First Indoor Soccer Tournament

Lieutenant Colonel Wojciech Wiśniewski, Polish Army, Command Group: "Sports activity is a good means to get to know other people better. The Football Branch is one of the most active ones within the Allied Sports Club of the Headquarters. The Indoor Soccer Tournament organised for the representatives of the uniformed services in Szczecin and beyond was an important undertaking which proved our teamwork and openness towards the world outside the Headquarters. What I remember most was the fantastic atmosphere of the tournament. The Chief of Staff welcomed all the participants and also awarded the winners with beautiful cups. I also think all the participants were positively surprised with the perfect organisation including some additional events which accompanied the tournament. What is important, it was not an event for football enthusiasts exclusively; the whole Headquarters got involved in the tournament and supported different teams."



• **28 June** – visit of President of the Federal Republic of Germany Mr Korst Köhler and President of the Republic of Poland Mr Lech Kaczyński



Master Sergeant Arnold Weber, German Army, G1 Division: "I officially started my tour of duty on 1st April 2006 at Visitors and Observers Bureau. The first big challenge for me was to organise the visit of President of the Federal Republic of Germany, Mr Horst Köhler and President of the Republic of Poland, Mr Lech Kaczyński. For instance, three helicopters were supposed to land in Baltic Barracks. This was impossible because of insufficient space. Eventually, two of them landed on the Pomeranian Square and one beyond Szczecin. We had to prepare the landing place – remove all cars or even dismantle lamps. I still remember a huge gust of air that lifted umbrellas and other small objects in gardens nearby. It was also difficult to find good place for journalists – not too close not to interrupt military ceremonial but close enough to gather good coverage."

• **21-22 September** – Visit of His Royal Highness Crown Prince Frederik of Denmark during the Fat Eagle exercise



24 November – the US Flag Raising Ceremony ●

15 December – Change of Command:
German Lieutenant General Egon Ramms ●
handed over the command of Multinational
Corps Northeast to Polish Lieutenant General
Zdzisław Goral

19 and 25 January-5 August – deployment of HQ MNC NE personnel to Afghanistan
It was the first Corps' mission, in which about 160 MNC NE officers and non-commissioned
officers served in the International Security Assistance Force Headquarters in Kabul. ●

Colonel Klaus Finck, German Army, former Chief G3 Division: "I was deployed to Afghanistan immediately after having joined this Headquarters and it was my first mission abroad, my first multinational appointment and I was a little bit uncertain if I could meet all the expectations but I found a really good team down there. As Chief CJ3, I was responsible for the operational area. The greatest challenge was to coordinate the needs of five different Regional Commands with the Commander's guidance. As a soldier I went back home with a feeling that we have pushed things a little bit forward. There is an Afghan saying 'The western people have the watches and we have the time' so we have to be patient. As a person, I had a very small contribution to that overall development, too. I became acquainted with an Afghan family. Their daughter, aged 18, had never attended school during the Taliban time. Some colleagues and me gave some money to employ a teacher to teach her to write and read. When we were there for a farewell, she wrote down in a diary 'Thank you my German friends'...this was heart taking."

Major Radomir Curny, Slovak Army, former member of G3 Division: "It is something you cannot buy, something you must go through. After half a year spent in Afghanistan I have become a different person, I have changed my priorities and found out that me and my colleagues may feel happy in comparison to some people. Even though I was there without my family, the relationship with my wife has strengthened. I also learnt much about my colleagues – what they were really like, especially when tired or working under a lot of stress. The most challenging for me as Shift Director was to conduct analyses and make decisions in a few seconds. Undertaken decisions exert an impact on people's further lives, that is why, it is important not to be intimidated to say "I don't know" or "I am not sure". All in all, I would conclude that the mission in Afghanistan was the best half a year of my military life. I would like to share all my experiences with other people."

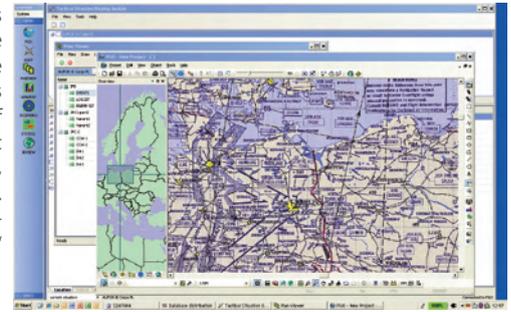
Lieutenant Colonel Helmut Foag, German Army, former member of G5 Division and Chief of Staff of Permanent Headquarters (PHQ): "From my perspective, the major challenge was firstly to keep the deployed part of the Corps and those staying in Szczecin as "one" Corps and to keep each other informed. Secondly, HQ MNC NE was to ensure that some of the major projects like structure review and introduction of a new Command, Control and Information System were kept on track. And so all parts of the HQ did. I especially remember the close cooperation of all members – remaining parts of the staff division, National Support Elements and HQ Company. And I want to highlight the meeting schedule. The most difficult moment for me as Chief of Staff? When HQ MNC NE received a bomb warning. It was only a few weeks after the deployment of our comrades. On that day I was in charge of the PHQ. I will never forget it."



● **13 December** – Contract for Command, Control and Information System Szafran was signed

Lieutenant Colonel Robert Wierziński, Polish Army, G6 Division: "The Corps is obliged to have a Command, Control and Information System enhancing the commanding process and supervising the situation on the battlefield. The choice of Szafran was preceded by numerous tests to check its usefulness in the Corps environment. Afterwards, the contract was signed and the implementation of Szafran began. This complex system is a functional tool for each staff member. It allows for fast exchange of information, receiving reports and compiling orders, and, thus, shortening the decision process from battalion up to the Corps level.

As a result, the overall operational picture is systematically updated and decisions made by the Commander are more accurate and in time."



● **13 March–11 April** – Close Air Support Seminar and Tungsten Sword Exercise



Colonel Peter Hauser, former Chief of Air Operations Coordination Centre (AOCC): "Tungsten Sword was the biggest exercise organised by AOCC with about 80 participants from different nations. I would say the feedback was the most positive thing I have ever experienced because people phoned us from Afghanistan, their home garrisons, saying – 'great, I could use my experience, which I gained in Nadarzyce'. That is the best reward you can get. During the exercise they learnt the integration of air power in their own mindset, forward air controllers had the opportunity to see live firing. That is a live experience before they go to their area of operation. Also AOCC personnel trained coordination of all the aircraft coming from different air bases like Miroslawiec, Świdwin and Poznań. That is actually our day-to-day business. Only 7 people organised a 14-day exercise with live flying air assets. I am very proud of my people that they managed to do that. As a team leader I was making sure that every individual piece of exercise is coordinated and actually it is like a mosaic or puzzle – every puzzle thing has to come together to the big picture."

● **6 June** – Corner stone laying ceremony

The construction process of a new multifunctional building in the area of Baltic Barracks started.

● **18 July** – Romanian Flag Raising Ceremony

28 July – Danish Lieutenant Colonel Hans Teglers became the Ambassador of Szczecin

Mayor of the City of Szczecin Mr Piotr Krzystek awarded Danish

● Lieutenant Colonel Hans Teglers the title of honorary "Ambassador of Szczecin" in token of gratitude for his long-standing contribution to propagating the Polish culture in Denmark and the Danish culture in Poland.

● **18-25 September** – Crystal Eagle Exercise

About 1,200 soldiers from 18 NATO countries trained planning, preparing, executing, commanding and assessing Peace Support Operations at the Army Warfighting Simulation Centre in Wildflecken, Germany. The main idea of the exercise was to share experiences gathered during the mission in Afghanistan by Headquarters' personnel with nominated units, in that case – four brigades from Estonia, Latvia, Germany and Poland.

Major Daniel Pirvu, Romanian Army, G5 Division: "I arrived in July 2008 at this Headquarters and the Crystal Eagle exercise was scheduled for September. It was a good exercise for me indeed, even though I was not the training audience. I was in the White Cell which played the role of local authorities from a fictitious country of Auriga. For most of the time, I was Chief of Local Police. Because I had never been placed in such a high position, it was quite a challenge. I exchanged correspondence with German Brigade Commander playing his role in the scenario; I had some meetings with him."

Major Patrik Adamec, Slovak Army, G1 Division: "When I arrived here, the exercise Crystal Eagle was just ahead of us. It was a great challenge to go through it and be a real part of it, not just being a 'greenhorn'. I had to do my job in 100 per cent or even more. I was a member of a pre-deployment party for this exercise; we arrived to Wildflecken earlier than the rest of the personnel. My colleagues and me were responsible for the in-processing. It was a different exercise to what I had done before at home. Each day I learnt something new from other officers or non-commissioned officers. The international environment was especially interesting."





Sergeant Major Norbert Speicher, German Army, G1 Division: "This training was organised by our Non-Commissioned Officers (NCOs) Board consisting of Warrant Officer Jarosław Byjoś, Sergeant Major Michael Frøslev and myself. We asked the Mobile Education Training Team from the Joint Force Command Brunssum for help and they conducted this course for us. Our idea was to combine different kinds of training for all NCOs of all nations in the Corps to achieve the same level of proficiency. The aim of this particular training was to enhance leadership skills. We were trying to achieve that during both theoretical lectures and practical exercises. Training team building was especially interesting. We were supposed to react in a given way to different simulated situations. For example, one of our tasks was to cross a river. We had different tools and had to build some wooden structure. Obviously, a lot of things had to be coordinated. Some people had to play the roles of builders and planners. We also needed a leader to guide us to complete the task. A big advantage of this training was that NCOs were working together in a different environment than usual. It resulted in strengthening comradeship among them."

Warrant Officer Wojciech Wroński, Polish Army, G5 Division: "CIMIC Conferences are conducted regularly except the mission time. We invite representatives of other commands and headquarters, members of charity and Non-Governmental Organisations, such as the International Committee of the Red Cross, Polish Humanitarian Aid and German charity organisations active in conflict areas. Conferences usually last for three, four days. I am responsible for managing transport and accommodation for our guests as well as providing technical assistance during the conference. The most challenging aspect is to prepare a transportation plan – each participant usually arrives at a different time and place, and this may change from one minute to another."

2-5 March – CIMIC Seminar

24-29 May – Little Eagle Exercise

Warrant Officer Allan Sander, Danish Army, G2 Division: "I was a liaison officer to G2 at Combined Joint Operations Centre. It was still an eye-opener, I learnt a lot because what does actually a liaison officer do? I had known he would connect some branches but how important was he? Now I know he is really busy and knows where to ask questions to get the right answers."

Major Arturas Radvilas, Lithuanian Army, G3 Division: "I was a watchkeeper at the Combined Joint Operations Centre. This is the place where all incoming pieces of information meet. Afterwards, they are delivered to the responsible person who can deal with them. It was very interesting because you never know what you would get and information you deal with is very diversified. The flow of information keeps the watchkeeper quite busy. For me, it was a good way to prepare myself for the position of watchkeeper that I will assume at the Combined Joint Operations Centre in Afghanistan in 2010. An additional challenge during that exercise was using the Command, Control and Information System Szafran. To know the theory is one thing, to use it in practice is another one."

Major Robert Smerdu, Slovenian Army, G3 Division: "I knew this Headquarters when I arrived here because I had attended the 2002 Strong Resolve exercise. I spent a really nice time here working at Visitors and Observers Bureau. Then, Slovenia expressed the will to affiliate a battalion to this HQ and I came here for working meetings. When we discussed the possible manning for this Headquarters, I was one of the candidates. So when I finally arrived here in August 2009, it was not so difficult for me to adapt. I had been introduced to my future co-workers in G3 Division before. I must say that the reception I received was really excellent. I also had no problems with the integration into day-to-day life in Szczecin. I have arranged my riding lessons in one of the stables close to Szczecin, joined the running community and, of course, I have had Polish language lessons."

11 August – Slovenian Flag Raising Ceremony

19-20 September

MNC NE 10th Anniversary Celebration



17 December – German Lieutenant General Rainer Korff assumed command of Multinational Corps Northeast



February 2010 – after several months of mission preparation process, MNC NE personnel deploy to the mission area in Afghanistan



Major Jerzy Wiatrowski served uninterruptedly for the Advance Party of MNC NE, and subsequently MNC NE since December 1998. He even kept a toy dinosaur in his office as a memento of his long lasting duty. This interview was conducted a few months before the end of his tour of duty in July 2009.

Anna Galyga: You dubbed yourself "a dinosaur" justifiably. How long have you been serving at the Headquarters?

My service here began mid-December 1998. I was assigned as a part of an organising and preparatory group, so-called the Advance Party, under command of Major General Edward Pietrzyk, which was tasked with laying foundations for a multinational corps, a headquarters for the entire staff, and initial procedures to integrate other countries. The Advance Party was located on the first floor of the Battalion Headquarters in Ku Słófcu Street, as the barracks in Łukasieńskiego Street were still being renovated.

Advance Party sounds mysterious

– what were your responsibilities at that time?

I was assigned to the Advance Party as General Pietrzyk's aide-de-camp and I held the post until I left for Rendsburg to practice as a support section officer in February 1999. It was a larger group of Polish officers and non-commissioned officers. Each of us was assigned to a cell in which he was to serve in the future. Our task was to get familiar with and learn about our future responsibilities. I was in a support section with the Headquarters Commandant where I learnt about transport and headquarters support, staging events and general operation. In fact, we were to see what cooperation in a multinational corps was like.

And what was it like?

The Rendsburg Headquarters was located in one building in a barracks complex in Tulipan Strasse, so in this respect our cooperation was easier than in the presently existing large complex in Szczecin. Our procedures originated from NATO, the working language was English and so the working conditions and climate were more or less the same.

What did you exactly do in Rendsburg?

Honestly speaking, it was one great practical lesson.

It encompassed an analysis of all the procedures and a practical implementation. It also was a great challenge and responsibility, as Poland was not yet a NATO member. We had the pleasure to access the Alliance as members of LANDJUT and 12 March 1999 (note: date of Poland's accession to NATO) was a deep experience for us. We had an opportunity to take part in it live. We even held a special Polish Day whose highlights were Poland's history and way to NATO. A small reception followed to let the Danes and Germans taste traditional Polish dishes.

And then the Corps moved to Szczecin. What did the relocation look like?

The whole planning process – the number of vehicles, equipment to be taken along or purchased in Szczecin as well as stages for relocation of personnel and equipment – were all coordinated during my service in Rendsburg. After return to Poland, we could go on leaves and then we started working on our posts. I was G-6 Chief HQ Support to May 2003.

What do you remember most of the Corps' first months and years?

After all the years, I can say that all the persons serving in the first shift formed a group based on strong interpersonal ties. We built solid relations and friendships.

Our duties were not just about coming to work and doing our jobs, but we also were responsible for start-up of the entire Corps. The leisure time we spent together played an important role, too. Our integration with the Danes and Germans was built at work and among our families alike.

Was it easy and nice?

Our cooperation looked all-right, but quite a number of historical stereotypes and prejudices had to be overcome. However, thanks to talks, exchange of experiences, observations and ideas we always met halfway.

Were the compromises harder to reach as the Corps kept integrating new nationalities?

The more the better, as they say. The process was rather fluent. Each nation was accepted in a friendly manner and adjusted to the existing work procedures. I think it is very good that we have not confined ourselves to the three countries and have been able to integrate other nationalities.

Your working environment changed not only with regard to the growing multinationalism. You were transferred to Air Operations Coordination Centre (AOCC) in 2003. Could you view the Corps from a slightly different angle? Was it any different?

When I served with G6, we were over 60 persons. Of course, our daily routine was about meetings and experience exchange. Integration process was slower not only due to a large number of personnel, but because of variety of tasks carried out within the division. When I was transferred to an 8-person AOCC cell, more frequent interactions were possible and the task fulfilment process required a closer cooperation.

What events do you consider the Corps' milestones?

In historical perspective, this certainly was Poland's membership in NATO, and first certification exercise codenamed Crystal Eagle, held in Drawsko Pomorskie training ground in 2000. We did our utmost then and proved we were able to conduct an international exercise ever since the Corps was established. As for other achievements, these are the Interim Operational Capability and the certification, the Full Operational Capability and the first mission in 2007.

Which events evoke your best memories?

The first exercise in the Drawsko Pomorskie training ground as something that got stuck in my memory – first things you do in life stay in your memory for ever.

It was the Corps' start-up phase and we were to face a serious challenge. Our skills underwent a thorough examination with regard to our ability to conduct such an exercise. We proved we were. The sheer fact that heads of states arrived to watch how service members of the Corps' nations deal with challenges greatly motivated us. I was Chief of Support Section, which was responsible for transport, accommodation and meals – the most important things to be provided to the serviceman.

Are you in touch with any of those whose tours of duty came to an end?

With many persons from various countries, as the beginning required from us an arduous effort, and as they say – you have to go back a long way with one to get him to know well. I think we did it at the beginning of our service and the friendships we made at that time will be kept alive.

You have been originator of a circle for those who have served at the Headquarters for a longer period.

I have thought that people who have seen their duty at the Headquarters for about 10 years uninteruptedly or with short breaks should form this circle. There are about a dozen of such servicemen and civilian em-

ployees. Many have shown their interest in this circle.

The then and the present Corps, is it the same?

I think this is a slightly different Corps, one that works on foundations laid by experiences of those who served here through all the years. I think that rotations of personnel have a good effect on development, as everyone may contribute something new to his procedures, his work methods, and graft something useful on to the international community. Interpersonal relations, however, depend on very different factors and I do not think I see any important changes that may influence this Corps' working procedures. Work and social lives go hand in hand.

In which of the two Corps would you like to serve?

All the periods of the military service are good and remembered with sentiment after years. There are always good sides of our service and we will view what we have done from this positive angle.



WOK



Colonel Andrzej Gołębiewski, Polish Army, former Chief G4 Division: „The atmosphere of commanding and very friendly international relations are very important in the Corps. Let me outline that in the logistics itself 26 work posts are held by representatives of 10 nations – all the meetings with the Commander, subordinates and superiors are really great, and first of all there are no matters that shall be arranged “for yesterday.”



Captain Marcel Trojan, Slovak Army, and former member of G2 Division: “I started my service in this HQ on 1st August 2008. I was grateful and happy that I got a chance to be appointed to this HQ. There were plenty of expectations – I knew that everything would be new, several different nations working together and I had never lived outside Slovakia before. I was a little bit surprised about the comradeship because everybody was willing to help and offer support 24 hours a day. I will never forget these great people and excellent relationships. I took part in only 2 exercises – Little Eagle 2008 and Crystal Eagle 2008. High Manning in Wildflecken, perfect organisation – for me it was a great experience, the word “good” is not good enough to describe it. But after a year, I have to leave this Headquarters. I can frankly say I am sad because of that. I will miss Poland, Szczecin, and this HQ. Of course, I am also looking forward to seeing my country again.”



Colonel Lars Møller, Danish Army, first Chief of G5 Division, Chairman of the Corps Committee in 2009: “Without the Corps I would never have opened my eyes to Poland. But it is a lovely country with lovely people. They have a “bardzo trudny” (very difficult) language, oh dear, the way they pronounce s, ż, z...is unbelievable.”



Colonel Peter Hauser, German Air Forces, former Chief Air Operations Coordination Centre: “A little bit of myself will stay here because I not only fell in love with the job I have performed but also with the country and the people and especially with the town of Szczecin so definitely I regret leaving. On the other side – I am looking forward to the next job. In the nearest future I am going to be in Kabul, Afghanistan. I will meet everyone from the Headquarters who is going to be in Afghanistan.

The experience that impressed me here most is, first of all, the integration of the Air Operations Centre with the Corps structure. We are collocated but not subordinated, however, we are very well integrated and the sense of joint approach is very well implemented in the Corps. Another vivid experience was the Tungsten Sword exercise we did in 2008.”



Lieutenant Colonel Veiko-Vello Palm, Estonian Army, G3 Division: "I have been serving here for almost 3 months. I used to live in Tallinn, the capital of Estonia. Szczecin is so different but on the other hand it is very beautiful. The architecture and the city layout are quite different from Tallinn's. And we do not have as many big parks as Szczecin has. Working at this Headquarters has been a really good experience. There are many nationalities but everybody cooperates with each other so the working environment is really good. The working tempo is slightly slower than back home and the work load is very specific – you do what is written in job description, whereas in Estonia you usually had to carry out a large variety of tasks."



Major Patrik Adamec, Slovak Army, G1 Division: "I started my service on 1st August 2008. I came from a town that is smaller than Szczecin and the traffic here was a little bit difficult for me but after a while I adjusted the volume' and it is fine now. I even have to say now that Polish drivers are more patient than Slovak ones. The beginning was also slightly difficult at work because everything was new. Thanks to cooperation with colleagues in the office and in the branch, I felt very safe. I was positively surprised that everyone tried to help as much as possible. I feel really pleased to be here, it has been more than a year so far and I have so many good experiences both from the professional and civilian side. The social life here is interesting, too because there are so many opportunities here to get to know other nations and their customs."



Roland Ziegler, German Army, former member of G6 Division "After some time spent in Rendsburg, I started my service in Baltic Barracks as an ADP specialist on 2nd Aug 1999. At the beginning, we had to establish the server farm, local area network itself and to install personal computers (PCs) in the offices. We had to reinstall approximately 160 PC's, half of them with old and half of them with brand new hardware. Further on, I was working as an IT Manager and Deputy Fund Manager being responsible for planning, coordinating and executing all IT-related aspects for HQ MNC NE, including exercises. Serving in the Corps has been the best experience in my life as well as my private life in Poland. I found a lot of friendly, respectful and helpful people. And I am still a citizen of Szczecin and often visit the HQ and old friends."



Major Jose Garcia, US Army, G4 Division: "It was the first time I came to Poland – I did not know the culture and what to expect so at the beginning there was a lot of preparations, trying to search the Internet, learn locations and at least a couple of phrases in the language. After I got here, everything changed – the town, the hospitality, people are nice, I am not used to the cold but all is good. I still do not know all the locations because I did not have time to travel; I just got my new house a couple days ago so I am still learning the area. But at work, I guess, I can call myself part of the family."



Major Patrik Tabaček, Czech Army, G4 Division: "I like the environment very much because the atmosphere is very friendly. It has probably to do with the fact that this Headquarters is not too big and comradeship is very close. It is my first experience at a NATO Headquarters. It is important for me to see how the NATO structure works and to get more information about my specialization. I am a mover officer and in my previous job I worked with NATO air bridges. Now, I got experience in ground and ISAF transportation as well as some new information about air bridges."



Warrant Officer Allan H. Sander, Danish Army, G2 Division: "For me it has been the first time to do staff work at the Headquarters' level. The greatest challenge was to drop my flag jacket, my rifle and get in front of the computer. But it has been very good to be here and work in a multinational place. I have learned a lot about the countries and different ways they do their work. The people here help each other and always come to a solution."

Crystal Eagle 2008 was my first exercise here. It was a great eye-opener for me to see how the staff works. I was an analyst within G2 area. But every exercise is important to get better because when we go to Afghanistan, it will not be an exercise any more, but real life."



10th Anniversary

You could have a feeling that on 19th and 20th September soldiers from 11 nations overran Szczecin. This impression was both true and false. First of all, it was right in the sense that everybody could see different dress uniforms of soldiers who were marching proudly along the Odra River being accompanied by military bands from Denmark, Germany and Poland. It was also false, though, since multinational military community had been present in Szczecin for 10 years already. The 10th Anniversary of Multinational Corps Northeast gathered thousands of inhabitants of Szczecin and the surrounding area, the Corps' enthusiasts, tourists, ordinary passers-by and obviously servicemen's families. They were all there at Wały Chrobrego in Szczecin. For two days, they were celebrating this unique birthday together.

Official celebration

It all started on 19th September at 14:00. All eyes were directed at Commander MNC NE Lieutenant General Zdzisław Goral who reported troops ready for inspection of Danish Minister of Defence, His Excellency Mr Søren Gade, Polish Minister of Defence His Excellency Mr Bogdan Klich and German Secretary of State His Excellency Mr Thomas Kossendey, being representatives of the Framework Nations, which established the Corps 10 years ago. This military ceremonial was observed by about 250 honourable guests from the world of the military, diplomacy and politics. There were representatives of Szczecin authorities, members of cultural and social circles, former members of the Headquarters as well as many other people related to the Corps in either sentimental or professional way. Above all, there were also thousands of inhabitants of Szczecin who were eagerly waiting for this incredible military event. After a series of speeches, which underlined 10 successful years of Multinational Corps Northeast, and a decoration ceremony, the military parade started. The formation included military bands from Denmark, Germany and Poland, platoons from HQ MNC NE and Command Support Brigade personnel together with Danish, German and Polish colour

guards and guards of honour. They were marching along the Odra River. All military bands were performing, which made the show unique. The official part of the celebration was continued at the Pomeranian Dukes' Castle and followed by the reception for honourable guests.

Public festivity

One of the most important things about the 10th anniversary celebration was its open character to the public. A static display of heavy equipment turned out to be a great attraction. And there was much to see. Two Polish armoured vehicles – “Rosomak” and “Żbik”, a command vehicle ZWD-3 type as well as transmission and management shelters were waiting for visitors to be discovered. The German side displayed e.g. the “Leopard II” battle tank, the

“Gepard” air defence tank, the “Büffel” tank recovery vehicle, the “Mardler” armoured fighting vehicle and the “PanzerHaubitze 2000” armoured howitzer. The Danish “Man HX” heavy logistic truck and the Mercedes GD 270 military vehicle were also very popular. Everybody could not only see all the equipment from distance but also touch it. Children could go inside tanks, try on a bulletproof vest and hold real weapons for a while or even fire water cannons. It was a huge attraction for those who had only seen such military equipment in photos or on TV. Apart from that, three warships moored at the quay – the Danish patrol boat Hjortø, the Polish transport-mine layer “ORP Toruń” and the German first attack craft “Wiesel”. All crews were eager to show people around.

Everybody could learn more about

the Corps, take part in competitions and receive MNC NE-related gadgets in the MNC NE Promotion Tent. Balloons and flags with MNC NE crests were considered especially valuable trophies. Almost everybody took a snap in stands with a photographic background presenting Danish, German and Polish desert battle dress uniforms. Leaflets, multimedia presentations and guides as well as two exhibitions provided excellent opportunities to broaden knowledge about MNC NE and its achievements. Among other attractions were music played by military bands, a special exhibition at the National Museum, fireworks displayed at the end of the first day and, obviously, army-style pea soup with sausage and bread baked by soldiers at the site. The queue for such military delicacies reached the horizon...



VIP Corner



Anna Galyga: Sir, what do you think the importance of this Corps for the Danish Armed Forces is?

Danish Minister of Defence Mr Søren Gade:

I served in the Danish Armed Forces for many years and was attached to this Headquarters – I worked as an officer in G5 Division some years ago. I think one of the biggest achievements was the establishment of this Multinational Corps Northeast in cooperation with Germany, Poland and Denmark. Right from the very beginning, this achievement was a sign of a new Europe. But of course, the Corps' certification in 2006 was a very important date indeed. Now, the formation can be deployed for any mission.

What do you think the greatest benefit for the Danish soldiers to participate in this Corps is?

We have learnt a lot because it is multinational. Working together with people from 11 nations is just great, you have to adapt and look upon the things in a different way – you do not have the right solution all the time. Whether you are in Szczecin, in Afghanistan or elsewhere, you have to adapt and have faith in soldiers from other countries; you cannot do it on your own. It is also great that Multinational Corps Northeast can be used to integrate both new countries inside NATO and countries outside NATO that want to join our Alliance.

Today, it is the 10th birthday of Multinational Corps Northeast – what kind of wishes would you like to express on this occasion?

The best wish would be – may this great cooperation continue in the years to come. Hopefully, Multinational Corps Northeast will even play

a bigger role in the NATO structure. For many reasons, it is important for me as Secretary of State for Defence and we will continue to support this Multinational Corps Northeast.

It really means something to me to be here today, I have been here as an officer, as a tourist with my family, I have been here hunting with my friends. I really do like Poland; that is also a part of the strong relationship Denmark has today with both Germany and Poland.



AG: What is the significance of Multinational Corps Northeast?

Polish Minister of Defence Mr Bogdan Klich:

It was a breeding ground for the new cadre and at the same time it constituted a very important experiment – how much time does Polish Army joining the North Atlantic Alliance need to become an appropriate and respected partner. The experiment proved to be successful. Within 10 years of its operation Multinational Corps Northeast has become our label not only in Europe but in Afghanistan where it was a part of a composite headquarters in 2007 as well. The cadre performed well, the assumptions turned out to be good and our Polish hospitality confirmed in the form of ensuring appropriate infrastructure, base, and conditions suitable for cooperation between three NATO member states – Denmark, Germany and Poland.

What is the future of the Corps?

A short time ago we opened a new auditorium together with a building for the command group and staff; investing in this Corps confirms that it has good prospects for the future. It is a very important element for us which we would like to reflect on the East.

What do you wish the Corps on its 10th anniversary?

Subsequent, at least 10 years of operation and radiating with those good experiences to the East.



AG: What do you think the importance of this Corps for the German Armed Forces is?

German Secretary of State Mr Thomas Kossendey:

The importance is the possibility to cooperate in a multinational environment with the Danish and Polish military and with military personnel of all other contributing nations. Here in Szczecin the integration of new NATO member states takes place in daily military work.

What are the benefits for German soldiers resulting from their participation in the Corps?

I think the benefit for German soldiers is gaining experience in cooperation with soldiers from other Alliance nations. They share ideas about security, partnership or military missions. During their time in the Corps HQ they have an opportunity to discuss these issues and learn from each other.

Does military cooperation between soldiers here influence any other spheres of life?

Yes, it does. Working together in a multinational HQ means not only sharing military experience. It means for example also sharing cultural and traditional aspects. For every soldier at the end of an assignment within the HQ there is more than only a military benefit.

How do you see the future of the Corps?

Maybe the Corps family will grow. I am convinced that the next mission in Afghanistan will be at least as successful as the mission in 2007 was.



AG: Sir, you are still wearing the MNC NE badge on your shoulder, what is the reason for that?

Commander Joint Forces Command Brunsum General Egon Ramms:

The badge on my left arm belongs to the German uniform and it was the last one I received when I served in the Army. Now I am in the Joint Command within the NATO Command Structure, which does not have its own badge, so that is what I will wear in the future until I retire. And I have to say I like it.

Do you still feel a close attachment to the Corps?

These nearly three years spent here in Szczecin were, first of all, a very nice time and a very important time for the Corps Headquarters as well as for me. It is not only the military work; it has really something to do with relationships within the city, with things we have done for civilians, helping people.

How would you assess the Corps' achievements?

The members of the Corps and its Commander can be proud of their own attitude and what they have done. This is the only Headquarters of lower readiness to be deployed to Afghanistan for the second time within a three-year rhythm. By that they are in competition with higher

readiness headquarters. Based on the performance I saw during their last deployment in 2007, the Corps did very well and I expect that when they go there again, I will gain a similar impression.

What do you think might be the future of this Corps?

This kind of corps headquarters will be needed in the future. They are multi-purpose tools within the NATO Force Structure and even more tasks can be given to them. Now, the new NATO Command Structure is being introduced and I believe that the new NATO Force Structure will follow. But it is dominated by decisions taken by the nations. If I may give a recommendation to Poland, Denmark and Germany – based on the quality of this Corps Headquarters and the positive situation it has in Szczecin, this Corps Headquarters should even be reinforced or further developed and perhaps become a high readiness headquarters in the future.

Is there anything you would like to say to the current personnel of the Headquarters? Many of them still remember your tour of duty.

It was a pleasure today to see a lot of known faces, be it German, Polish, Danish or other. You feel as if you were coming back into a kind of family. The cohesion, which obviously exists in the Corps Headquarters, is a very good one. This is what makes this Corps strong.



AG: Sir, you were the first Commander of Multinational Corps Northeast. What does it mean to you to take part in its 10th Anniversary?

Lieutenant General Henrik H. Ekmann: I well remember 18th September 10 years ago. The weather was not very friendly but the sun came through at the last. That in fact was symbolic. We had to move from Germany where the headquarters had originally been for more than 30 years. It was a very new thing to come to Poland and there were 2 things that I had to deal with as Commander. One was the military side – to move the people in uniform, which was quite easy, whereas the other one was to move the families. There were many, many questions such as housing, school, medical care, insurance, language issues I had to deal with. But still I must say at the end we really went away from Szczecin with the city deep in our hearts. There were so many positive things here in Poland.

Coming here today is great. I can see how the Corps has developed. We were three nations, now it is eleven and that is good. A lot of achievements have been made. I think there are a lot of very dedicated people working in this Headquarters, also among civilians. I have really enjoyed meeting some of them, for instance, my secretary Aneta Marendziak whom I am in contact with until now. There is a very good atmosphere here and I really must say that Poland has done a very fine job supporting this Headquarters.

Has the Corps fulfilled visions you had as Commander MNC NE?

The political side wanted this Corps to be a step into the east of Europe to tie other countries closely into the Headquarters. In my opinion, this has been a success. Now, you can see all the Baltic nations here, the Czechs and other nations – all this was part of my hope but I would not have expected that it could be done in 10 years but now they are all here.

CORPS OF THE NEW MILLENNIUM



1999 ★★ 2009
10 YEARS OF SUCCESS



Walk across Baltic Barracks

A barracks complex in Łukasińskiego Street (previously Wamlitzer Strasse) was built in 1935 and used by the German Army till the end of World War II. Afterwards, the buildings were shortly occupied by the Polish 78th Infantry Regiment. The 41st Infantry Regiment (from 1958 reorganized into the 41st Mechanized Infantry Regiment) of the Polish 12th Mechanized Division moved into the Baltic Barracks and stationed there until 1995. When the formation was disbanded, the 29th Mechanized Brigade was created in its place and the formation occupied the place until June 1998. Then, the unit was dissolved, too. Since 1999, Baltic Barracks have been hosting personnel of HQ MNC NE.

Pacing long corridors of Baltic Barracks, it is difficult to find traces of the old times before the HQ MNC NE era. It is possible, though, to find people, who have some reflections of the past. Warrant Officer Stanisław Glugla from G4 Division does not seem to be bored with his office even though he started his service in Baltic Bar-

racks as early as in 1984. Having had some breaks for other posts and a number of missions, he keeps coming back to his building. In comparison to year 1984, he has just moved one floor higher. "I remember that there used to be cellars where sauna and gym are today. The coke was stored in there in the wintertime. I still remember those large heaps and how they disappeared somewhere in the basement", recalls Warrant Officer Glugla.

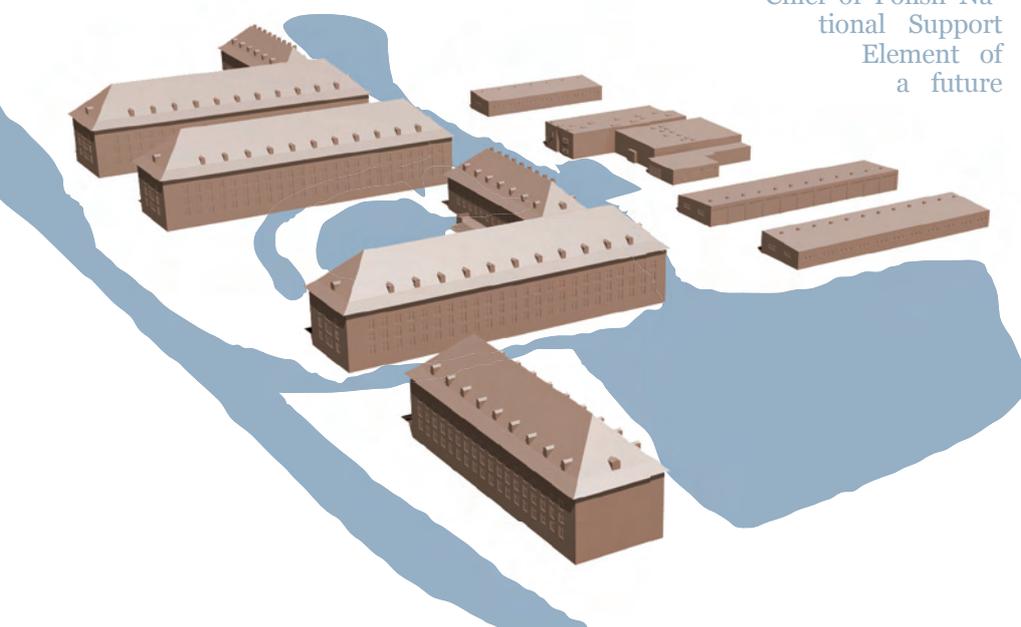
Lieutenant Colonel Jacek Pawlewicz, Chief of G8 Division, has served in Baltic Barracks for 20 years. As soon as it became clear that Baltic Barracks would host staff of Headquarters Multinational Corps Northeast, renovation works started in June 1998. But it was still the time when the 29th Mechanized Brigade, in which Lieutenant Colonel Pawlewicz was serving in the financial section, was being dissolved. "It is said that a captain abandons the ship last. The same applies to financiers. I could only finish my job if the report indicated zero". This happened in January 1999, when Lieutenant Colonel Pawlewicz had already been double-

hatted, also serving as Chief of Polish National Support Element of a future

corps. In the course of duty, he moved from one building to another along with changing posts, but he is fond of all his previous offices.

A technical park was present in all the accounts. Located in the area of today's housing estate, now beyond Baltic Barracks, it encompassed tanks, battle vehicles and other heavy equipment as well as garages. Lieutenant Colonel Bogusław Dobrowolski, Chief of Headquarters Support, indicated the park as his favourite place in spite of actually being in charge of it. Lieutenant Colonel Pawlewicz even recalled a pig farm situated at the end of the park, and wagons carrying food to the military canteen, which was located at the site of today's clubs. Accelerated heartbeat constantly evokes a gym, not necessarily because of sports efforts involved. "When I served in the 29th Brigade, there was a training water obstacle centre in the gym and I was sunk in a tank there. Besides, I have always enjoyed physical training", stated Lieutenant Colonel Dobrowolski.

Even though changes within Baltic Barracks have been substantial, no one really regrets them, as they indicate progress. It took about a year to renovate the buildings and make them suitable to host Headquarters Multinational Corps Northeast. All buildings received not only new interiors, but also new names – "Copenhagen", "Berlin" and "Warsaw" after the capitals of the Corps' Framework Nations; "Rendsburg" – after a garrison town of Allied Land Forces Schleswig-Holstein and Jutland (LANDJUT), "Fredericia" and "Neubrandenburg" – after locations of original two divisions affiliated to LANDJUT. One of the buildings was also dubbed "Szczecin" to honour the hometown of HQ MNC NE. Recently, "Brussels", a brand-new facility, joined other "cities" proving that Baltic Barracks keep changing and developing.



THE FUTURE IS IN OUR HANDS

VISIONARY THEORY BY COLONEL LARS MØLLER

As Chairman of the Corps Committee (note: in 2009) I think the Corps will have to set up a vision for the next 10 years of activity, just like we did 10 years ago. If the Corps does not have a plan, if it is just a place from which personnel deploy to Afghanistan every three years, the interest in the Corps will be lost. Money spent on this Corps should also go on developing skills on an appropriately high level – the Corps level. And I think the Corps should be a part of discussions on deployable headquarters so that it could set standards for other Corps in NATO.

THREE PILLARS THEORY BY MAJOR GENERAL OLE KØPPEN, MNC NE DEPUTY COMMANDER

I find this Corps Headquarters one of the best because of its size and truly multinational character. A few weeks ago, the 10th Anniversary of Multinational Corps Northeast was a big highlight. There were two main ideas about the celebrations – to expose the Headquarters to Szczecin and its inhabitants, and to increase the feeling of cohesion within the Corps family. But now, it is time to start discussing the Corps' future for the next five, ten years. And I can see three main pillars, which could be guiding us.

Pillar 1: Training officers and non-commissioned officers of new NATO countries. "Old" NATO nations find service at the HQ worthwhile, too. I can see the necessity of having places like this Headquarters where servicemen from different nations train and work together.

Pillar 2: Preparing to participate in international missions. Although I think the Headquarters personnel will have the third turn to Afghanistan, the Corps will have to go beyond Afghanistan at

a certain time. Unfortunately, I am afraid there will always be a necessity for organisations like NATO to help other countries and provide a secure environment. As our Corps Headquarters already has a role as a Land Component Command (LCC), we should look into the possibility of establishing LCCs in an Nato Response Force role also at the divisional level, thus giving us more flexibility, which again makes us a more useful tool for NATO or the United Nations.

Pillar 3: Even though this pillar has not been fully identified yet, it is an idea the Corps should look for. The Corps will fall behind if it stops evolving. A good idea for the Corps might be taking up focus areas others have not gone for yet. In this way, our Corps will become the holder of special capabilities, as we are already acquiring in the areas of multinational military police, Civil-Military Cooperation (CIMIC) and others. We should also keep on following current developments in the world so that we could adapt our training process in relevant directions.

CHALLENGE-ORIENTATED THEORY BY BRIGADIER GENERAL JOSEF HEINRICH, MNC NE CHIEF OF STAFF

The functioning of Multinational Corps Northeast has been strewn with challenges. It was the first Corps to pass the Full Operational Capability test with no remarks, which meant outstanding. When I arrived here, the Corps had had a lot of exercise experience but no mission experience. This challenge had to be met. Despite being a headquarters of lower readiness, its personnel manned key positions as a standing headquarters during their first mission in Afghanistan in 2007. Their performance was rated as excellent. This, in turn, has set another big challenge for the subsequent mission – to reach at least the same level of

performance.

The Founding Nations, i.e. Denmark, Germany and Poland, agreed to give a status of lower readiness to this Headquarters. A lower number of personnel when compared to higher readiness headquarters is a direct consequence of that decision. On the example of the last deployment, more than 80% of the Headquarters personnel were sent to Afghanistan to man key positions within the Headquarters ISAF. Although it was quite a challenge for the Corps, I think we completed all tasks successfully and we will keep doing our best in the next deployment to Afghanistan in 2010, too.

The ISAF mission in Afghanistan has been ongoing for eight years now but the challenges of that mission have developed dramatically over the time. In comparison to year 2002 or 2003, it is much more challenging today. Events increased not only in number but also in their complexity and variety. Another challenging aspect of the upcoming mission is that we are going to man a brand new ISAF Joint Command Headquarters.

Following the Commander's decision, the Corps' future involves meeting a wide diversity of challenges. The obligation to conduct operations in accordance to Article 5 cannot be forgotten, though, as it formed the basis for the Corps establishment in 1999. We also need to think about our strategic location because it has been still the only NATO Headquarters at the tactical and operational level located on the soil of the former Warsaw Pact. It is a challenging geographic position to hold from the NATO perspective. Finally, this Headquarters continues to be the most wanted training destination for new NATO members. It is a responsible mission to share valuable experiences with member states joining the Corps.



**HEADQUARTERS
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