

The Baltic Amber

Multinational Corps Northeast Magazine



www.mncne.pl



Second Edition - 2006



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EDITORIAL COLUMN

Dear readers and collaborators!

Welcome to the Second Edition - 2006 of Headquarters Multinational Corps Northeast (HQ MNC NE) magazine. In the first part of the magazine, we have tried to present some snapshots from January to June of the busy life in HQ MNC NE. And in the second half the articles are focused on Afghanistan and Peace Support Operations.

It is the intention to produce 4 issues of the magazine every year. The first magazine will be the updated Special Edition, which could be named „This is HQ MNC NE”, and the three following issues (one spring, two autumn) will cover our activities in Poland and abroad also dealing with topics of general importance for the Corps.

If you think that 3 magazines per year is not enough to cover - in an updated way - the life in this Headquarters - you are quite right. The Baltic Amber can be seen as a supplement to the news and actual information, which you will find on www.mncne.pl.

Erik B. Bruhn
Colonel DNK Army
ACOS G-1 Divison/HQ MNC NE

The Baltic Amber
Multinational Corps Northeast Magazine
Second Edition – 2006

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The Baltic Amber reflects to 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 HQ MNC NE.

The Baltic Amber is the authorised official magazine of the Multinational Corps Northeast, intended to inform and educate members of the Headquarters and assigned formations, as well as international groups and individuals.

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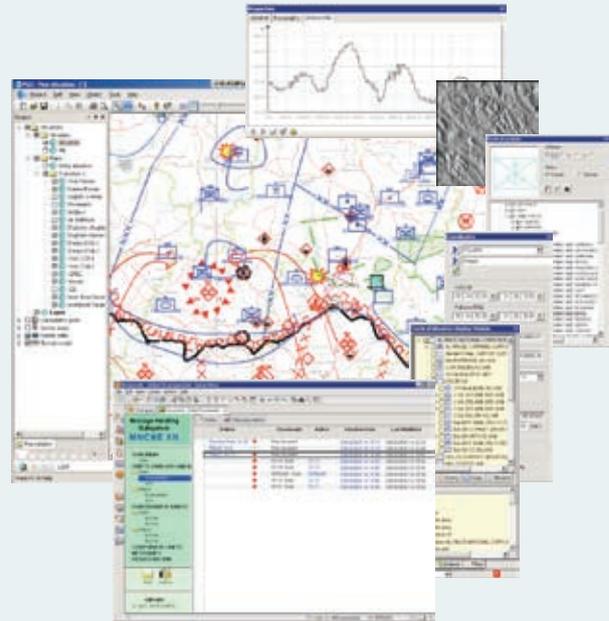
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The **SZAFRAN** is a Polish tactical level C2IS aimed at Land Forces. It has been designed to support all phases of command and control cycle, speed-up planning and decision making processes, provide battlefield situation monitoring capabilities, introduce automation, standardization as well as integration and interoperability with other systems in joint and combined operations.

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- Common staff calculations (e.g. force ratio, resource aggregation)
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- Command post's work-flow organization, document management and distribution
- Document templates in accordance with STANAG2014 and ADatP-3 B11
- MIP Block 2 solution implementation as an interoperability mechanism



Software environment

- TCP/IP communication protocol
- *Workstations:* MS Windows 2000/XP, MS Office 2000/XP, Lotus Notes
- *Servers:* MS Windows/Sun Solaris, IBM Informix DBMS, Lotus Domino

Hardware characteristics

- Environment temperature:
 - ♦ operating (major system components): -30°C to +65°C
 - ♦ storage: -40°C to +65°C
- Ability to operate under NBC warfare conditions



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From the Commander...



HQ MNC NE is a part of NATO's Force Structure, and we can all be proud of it! We have reached our first goal. The next step will be to prove our readiness and operational capabilities directly in the field.

MNC NE is now getting ready for the deployment to Afghanistan to support peace-building and democratization processes. Certainly, the deployment will come earlier than originally planned, but the Corps showed a high level of professionalism and flexibility by immediately adjusting the entire preparation programme.

Achieving this goal would not be possible, however, without the efficient and long-term planning during the past few months. The HQ consistently fulfilled numerous allied requirements in regard to equipment, skills, structures and procedures. In other words, the Corps has achieved to be considered a flexible organisation, capable of efficient cooperation and effective communication on the battlefield. Undoubtedly, my staff proved to be reliable, well organized and determined to face any kind of challenge. To be the Commander of such an organization is a great honour and personal satisfaction. We are ready because we have done a great job!

Providing more than 160 personnel, our HQ soon will be a part of the multinational, composite ISAF Headquarters, and we will run this very important mission shoulder-to-shoulder with other NATO-nations.

The term "peace-support operation" nowadays has a new and comprehensive meaning that includes a wide range of activities. It encompasses different types of civilian, civil-military or plainly military programs essentially designed to give peace a chance in varying circumstances of violence across the country. This reflects the entire complexity of MNC NE's tasks in Afghanistan.

Finally, the multinational approach to the PSO today is considered a both military and political necessity – from the military perspective, because resources can be combined and specialized skills utilized, and from the political point of view, because it lends more legitimacy to the operation. In addition, nations working together have to learn from each other on both the professional and the cultural level – we know it from our daily life.

I have no doubt that the next year will be extremely challenging for us. Now is time for us to put the final touch to our preparation and to accomplish the mission.

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read "Egon Ramms".

Egon Ramms

Lieutenant General DEU Army
Commander Multinational Corps Northeast

TECHNICAL Interoperability Relies On Human Interoperability

Exercise Compact Green 2006

Before HQ MNC NE is deployed for the mission, the Corps will have to go through various tests and exercises to make sure that every element of mission preparation has been buttoned up properly. For that purpose, the Command Support Brigade (CSB) of Headquarters Multinational Corps Northeast (HQ MNC NE) and the Wólcz-based 100th Signal Battalion conducted the technical exercise called COMPACT GREEN 06 from 20th to 24th of April. During COMPACT GREEN 06, the CSB staff on the one hand concentrated on testing satellite communication, while on the other hand analyzing different communication procedures – as those operations will be essential during the period of HQ MNC NE's deployment.

The training was important, too, because it was the first time for HQ MNC NE to train together with the "advance party" from Stargard Szczecinski – a future Polish core of the CSB staff. In addition, 100th Signal Battalion, one of HQ MNC NE's supporting units, used the opportunity to train its operational capabilities in relation to orders given by the "Advanced Party" and the CSB staff. Last but not least, all exercise participants could work with the state-of-the-art satellite equipment and test its technical capabilities in running different types of the communication such as telephone network or Video Teleconferencing System (VTC).

As a result, the exercise Compact Green 06 had a wide range of training objectives, which were divided into two parts – a technical portion that was carried

out in Baltic Barracks (home base of MNC NE) and an operational one conducted in Wólcz. **"Such an exercise used to be a part of the preparation phase for an upcoming exercise, the so called "big-scale HQ MNC NE exercise" organized in autumn**

every year, but this time we wanted an additional training for our staff, and we wanted to coordinate our work with the Advanced party on the operational level as well" – said LtCol H. Teglers.

The general idea for Compact Green 06 was to establish something that could be described as a civilian phone net, but used in the battlefield environment. 100th Signal Battalion from Wólcz used a tactical area communication system, called "STORCZYK" and also Satellite Communication (SATCOM) for establishing such a convenient telephone service. **"Around the Baltic Barracks we have installed a few shelters, called transmission or switch shelters. By using them we will try to establish normal telephone connections, as we have in our ordinary life. So, when somebody will pick up the telephone receiver in one of these**

units, it should function like in your own home." - explained Cpt P.S. Loumand.

The positive outcome of the training was extremely important not only for CSB staff, but especially for 100th Signal Battalion, since they will be responsible in future for maintaining the communication between mission area and the home base. From that point of view, the exercise Compact Green 06 was an invaluable chance

"Satellite Communication" (SATCOM) can sustain the permanent contact from the mission area back to the home base. The system can transmit vital operational information about the situation in the mission area, but also keep the families informed. Furthermore, the Commander of HQ MNC NE will have advanced **"Video Teleconferencing System"** (VTC) communicating tool to guide his subordinated troops.

"Advanced Party" – a germ of unit representatives sent in advance to certain area for the purpose of establishing, and coordinating the work for the main body. The Advance Party for the CSB is located in Stargard Szczecinski.

for all participants to learn how to operate the satellite communication equipment and how to solve specific problems that might occur anytime and anywhere during the operation. **“SATCOM equipment we have right now can be described as state of the art – the newest hardware available and absolutely the best way of creating this kind of VTC communication. To use this enormous communication tool effectively, we need to train our staff.”** – said Cpt P.S. Loumand.

In addition, the CSB staff developed the fictional conflict story illustrating how the signal installation should move around and how different operational procedures could be checked simultaneously. **“For operational purposes of the exercise we built up a fictional play with some links to reality, which will help soldiers to optimize their operational readiness and to train some procedures.”** – said LtCol Teglers. As a result, soldiers trained different types of administration work, reporting procedures and logistic preparation.

Nevertheless, it was not technical or operational tasks which were the most difficult to solve for the soldiers, but the challenges were related to the beginning of the new co-operation with the Advanced Party. **“To us, the most difficult thing is that we are doing the common exercise together for the first time. There are always small things to deal with in the beginning, such as differences in training and obviously a language barrier.”** - said LtCol H. Teglers.

Therefore, the exercise coordinators make sure that soldiers do not only concentrate on the exercise objectives, but also meet the social dimension of it. Definitely, social events help soldiers to create the good sense of comradeship that certainly influences the process of obtaining the exercise objectives. For the possibility to meet after duty hours give soldiers a chance to integrate and to create the good working environment. **“If you don't make sure that you have a human interoperability you will never obtain the technical interoperability”** - concluded Cpt P.S. Loumand.

“Interoperability” is the ability of products, systems, or business processes to work together to accomplish a common task. It can be defined in a technical way or social, political and organizational factors.

STORCZYK 2000

Tactical automatic digital communication system based on switching primary 16 kbps channels with the possibility of multi-time slots connection at 32, 64 or 128 kbps rates. It also performs the functions of packet switching for data transmission.

The idea of STORCZYK was introduced to Polish Land Forces in 1995. However, the technical work in military institute of telecommunication was done a long time before. In 1995 the equipment was fielded and since that time STORCZYK has been modernized several times.

One communication link of STORCZYK can reach a receiver in planning distance of 30 - 35 km. In the year 2000, the 100th Signal Battalion received the most modern transmitting equipment – transmitting shelters and switching shelters.



The switching shelter has the symbol RWŁC-10/K (abbreviated AK), and the transmission shelter has the symbol RWŁC-10/T (abbreviated AT). Various types of telecommunication nodes are composed mainly of these shelters. The shelters have been designed with taking into account future modernisation in accordance with the development of technology and NATO standards. The shelters are planned to be in use at least until 2015.

STORCZYK 2000 is capable to operate with modern Satellite Equipment as well as Computer Network systems. The system is able to cooperate with other systems of the same type, the public systems, and the communication systems of other NATO members.

VIA SATELLITE...

Monika Warkocz talks about the recently operating satellite station



Storczyk 2000 tests in HQ MNC NE

Monika Warkocz: What is it satellite communication?

LtCol H. Teglers – Satellite Communication system (SATCOM) was one of the most important preconditions for obtaining the full operational capability (FOC) status for our Headquarters. Since that time, we are ready to be deployed and maintain the permanent connection via satellite between our home base and mission area. Obviously, SATCOM is invaluable during a mission, as permanent contact can be maintained from any place around the world and can be used for transmitting vital operational information as well as general information about the situation in the mission area.



LtCol H. Teglers

Due to the fact that neither Poland, Denmark nor Germany has the military satellites available, the HQ MNC NE decided to choose the civilian provider to facilitate us with such system. Especially that our provider is

experienced in facilitating Polish troops in Iraq. We have permanent satellite station in BB, in Szczecin and we have two mobile station in Walcz, which are currently used by 100 Signal battalion for training its how to operate with such modern equipment.

- How expensive is it to use SATCOM?

Cpt. D. Horowski – The HQ MNC NE signed the three-years contract for renting the SATCOM equipment and for having the necessary service. On monthly basis we pay for two things - having this equipment available for us and for having the satellite space available anytime. To make it more vivid - 1 minute of satellite phone connections costs approx. 2.5 \$ Due to the fact that we pay a monthly fee for the usage of SATCOM, we can use satellite for eight months in the year as much as we want. We have a bandwidth available from April to November every year, so it is also period when we conduct our main exercises. Nevertheless, when we call via SATCOM, we have to pay per minute. I should underline that when the contract will expire in three years time, the equipment will automatically become the Headquarters' property.

- What is the compatibility of SATCOM system with those CIS systems already used in HQ?

Cpt. P. S. Loumand - The Sat Com system is 100% compatible with information and communication systems available in our Corps. SATCOM is just a part of this system. You shall see the system from the following perspective: there is no difference if I use my computer here in the office environment or I use the same computer in the field. The CSB and 100 Signal Battalion will ensure that the connection between the HQ and the alternative command post in the field will be stable and convenient for the users. In that point, the fact of being deployed will not influence our normal daily office work. Obviously, it can happen that during mission time it will last for the file a bit longer to reach its destination. But, in principle there will not be a difference.

- Is it the most modern SATCOM equipment available on the market?

Cpt. D. Horowski - Unfortunately, the SATCOM commu-

nication is changing so rapidly, that we are not able to be always up to date. Nevertheless, our equipment is from the top level, technically advanced and sufficient for our requirements.

- So if you the SATCOM technology is so rapid – how will you keep your units updated and prepared for the possible usage of the equipment?

Cpt. P. S. Loumand – This is a reason why we have so many technical exercises during the year - to optimize our preparation and make it in accordance with the newest technology.



Cpt. P. S. Loumand

- Did you experience any difficulties in establishing or running the SATCOM?

Cpt. P. S. Loumand - During the last exercise Compact Eagle 05, we experienced some technical problems in running Video Teleconferencing System (VTC). The VTC is one of the tools for the Commander to control and command his units. Because when you command the Corps with three divisions, sometimes it is not possible to be physically present in each unit. VTC gives the possibility to run optimal Commander's control over his troops. For that reason the CSB staff wants to train 100 signal battalion from Walcz sufficiently so that they will be able to maintain the SATCOM connection independently. During current exercise Compact Green 06 we ran the VTC test smoothly and we are ready to use this tool in the future.

- For which other purposes the VTC can be used in HQ?

Cpt. P. S. Loumand - Currently, there is a debate in the HQ, considering the possible usage of VTC system. For example, it can be also used for the families' communication during the HQ's deployment. There is a lot of possibilities and factors that has to be thought over before the final decision will be taken in that matter.

Cpt. D. Horowski – The SATCOM communication gives us a lot of possibilities but it is up to our superiors what will be the ground concept of the SATCOM usage. Right now, we are in the testing phase, checking, familiarizing ourselves with the equipment and solving technical obstacles.

- When you think about “communication” you should also bear in mind the word “security” – how will you protect the data and information transfer?

Cpt. P. S. Loumand - We will secure this, definitely. If we look on the connection system - there has to be a “caller” and a “receiver”. Among those actors, there is a communication channel, which might be disturbed by many factors. To ensure that this will not happen – our specialists will establish a special guarded area, so called “red boxes”. Behind them you can have either a phone or a personal computer. Those “red boxes” are a sort of secret entran-



The switching shelter - Storzcyk 2000

ce, which not entitled persons, will not be able to see. Furthermore, we will encode this communication channel so it will not be understandable for everybody. Such encoding system is valid for all means: a SATCOM, Internet, phone line or radio net. Of course, the classification on those red boxes depends on the type of information and can vary.

100TH SIGNAL BATTALION FROM WALCZ



100th Signal Battalion was established in the year 2000 in the old military barracks in Walcz. The core of the unit was taken from the 2nd Signal Brigade that used to be located in Walcz. From the very beginning, the battalion has been playing a role as supporting unit for Command Support Brigade (CSB) of Headquarters Multinational Corps Northeast (HQ MNC NE).

The main task for the battalion is to set up, maintain and operate Tactical Area Communication System (TACS) and to build up and maintain Alternate Command Post as well as Forward Command Element. 100th Signal Battalion has about 40 transmission shelters and 7 switch shelters available to fulfill this military task. However, both the amount of the equipment and the size of the personnel will be changed in the course of the next years. Currently, 450 soldiers serve in the battalion, but its personnel strength will be increased by about 1/3 in future to then 650 soldiers. This is because the battalion will receive new tasks such as the responsibility for providing comprehensive communication services to the CSB. The battalion will take care of all communication means including satellite communication (SATCOM), whereas the other units supporting HQ MNC NE like 610th German Signal Battalion will be responsible for all command posts.

Furthermore, the Advanced party from Stargard Szczecinski and the staff of HQ MNC NE CSB will provide the core of the new Command Support Brigade that will supervise the work of other supporting battalions – 100th Signal Battalion, 610th German

Signal Battalion, 104th Field HQ Support Battalion, Force Protection Battalion and some independent companies. **In future, we will make a clearer division between the tasks for all supporting units. So, if all soldiers are present, we will have all in all 5000 soldiers on the ground in this Brigade** - explained LtCol R. Wierzbinski, the Commander of 100th Signal Battalion.



LtCol. R. Wierzbinski

The cooperation with 100th Signal Battalion and HQ MNC NE started in 2000 already, and since then the battalions have gone through many exercises together in Poland, Denmark or in Germany. It is natural then to continue that co-operation and even strengthen it. In particular, since 100 Signal Battalion pays a lot of attention to be well trained and to have staff with international experience. **I hope that the future cooperation between the 100th Signal Battalion and HQ MNC NE will be as good as it was in the past. Nevertheless, what it will look like exactly is difficult to foresee, and this kind of questions should be submitted to our decision-makers and politicians** – said LtCol R. Wierzbinski.

Peace Support Operations

Interview* with Col R. Wagner

Interview was conducted by Mrs. Monika Warkocz and Maj Wojciech Wisniewski



Col R. Wagner and PI Team

- Peace Support Operations are today very complex. How would you define it?

Peace Support Operations are defined as a complex support for reconstruction of the country by the civilian organizations and civilian companies in safe and stable environment. This is a basic definition, but during the recent years we have seen many changes. We will not fight a simple PSO in the future, like we did for example 10 years ago. For example in Bosnia, where the forces acted under the Dayton Agreement, their main task was just to support that peace agreement. Nowadays, the peace support operations have to face more challenging and variable situations all over the world. Iraq or Afghanistan can be mentioned as examples, where on the one hand, we are going to support the reconstruction of the government and the society and on the other, we are going to fight terrorists or insurgents. In that sense, the PSO term evolves from purely concentrated on reconstruction tasks, to more complex operations. Personally, I am convinced that the future will bring more and more exacting tasks and the military troops will have to respond to these challenges.

- What are the challenges ahead of the stabilization force in the theatre of PSO?

The challenges are manifold. First of all, the main task is to support authorities and guarantee them a stab-

le and peaceful environment. This is a starting point for the further peace building activities – secure and stable political scene. Then, developing the proper cooperation with NGOs and IOs within the controlled area should follow. Finding the common understanding and building up the good level of cooperation is the most essential part for the further development of stabilization process. In the same time, the involved troops should be prepared for fighting terrorists or to counteract different forms of violence. The complexity of PSO demands the optimal apportionment of tasks among soldiers and the capability to adopt themselves to various changes on the battlefield.

- How can you foresee, in the process of preparation those complex situations, which may occur in Afghanistan?

That's another difficult question - how are we going to train our staff to prepare it for this operation? Up to now, we have prepared our soldiers pretty well in High Intensity Warfare. During the last two years we have been training combat operations, with the emphasis on attacking and defending objectives. Obtaining "Full Operational Capability" by HQ MNC NE during the last exercise Compact Eagle 05 has clearly proved our combat readiness and capability.

Now, as a fully operational headquarters we have to concentrate on other means and to look on the "conflict" from another perspective – as peacekeeper and peace builder. The main challenge for us right now is to transform soldiers mind into "peace keeping thinking". In other words, we need to explain to soldiers the essential requirements and preconditions for leading the PSO, and provide them with the answer for the critical questions such as: what kind of means they have in hand, what can be done with it and how can they operate with it?

Let me explain by using following example – at the moment our soldiers have two toolboxes in their hands – the first one containing tracks, helicopters, ammunition, and all the other physical/lethal means of fight and the second one with Civil and Military Cooperation, public information, information operations, psychological operations and the other non – lethal "tools". Then, the next step is to put both toolboxes together and make our soldiers able to operate with them flexibly and effectively in different circumstances. Our main objective is not only to explain the available resources for PSO, but also to train soldiers to use the right tool in the right time. Undoubtedly, this is one of the most challenging tasks that we have ever faced and we will during the upcoming months.

- Today military is only one part of the solution during PSO, what about other players: NGO's and IO's?

The reconstruction of a country is not normally a task for military units. The task for military forces is to provide the country with the safety and stable environment. NGO's and IO's, which act under the lead of United Nations, are responsible for the reconstruction. The military units only support all those organizations and

prepare a proper scene for them. Surely, there should be cooperation and mutual support in the area of reconstructing the country among all players. Though, the forces provide the country with the stable environment, military can use some of



Members of HQ MNC NE during PSO Seminar 2

the NGO's assets for helping restoring it. In my opinion, it should be done in the direction of promoting the army in the local community and to enable society to perceive forces as those, which are there, not to fight civilians but to help them. Therefore, the entire Headquarters in the preparation process tries to learn how to effectively work with various non – military organizations on the battlefield.

- Before we start with peace support operations, usually prior to this there is HIW period and transition phase. How are we going to do the change from fighting soldiers into peacekeeping soldiers?

Personally, I am convinced that if you do the major combat operation and PSO later on, you have to change your troops in between. It's very hard for the soldiers from the psychological point of view to fight one day and the next day work as a peacekeeper. However, this is the reality.

On the other hand, this will be the major challenge for the expansion into southern and eastern part of Afg-

hanistan during the stages 3 and 4 of ISAF operation . We are simply not able to change the troops. The major goal will be to present to the local society that none of the ISAF soldiers is going to fight the population, but they are going to fight terrorists. Though, if you fight terrorism intensively, then it's very difficult to change your perception, mind and attitude immediately. Furthermore, ISAF mission is divided into stages and the country itself has a different level of security. It means, that one of our soldiers can conduct combat

operation in one province, whereas the others can conduct normal PSO operation - building schools, establishing radio station, etc. There is no doubt that it is an extremely difficult thing to achieve. Therefore, it is so important to make each time

very clear to the soldiers why we are fighting and that we do everything to avoid side effects. Otherwise we are going not only to face the terrorism but the population as well.

- Do you see multinationalism of our Corps as an advantage or disadvantage concerning Afghanistan deployment?

I think, we should not discuss the advantage or disadvantage of multinationalism, because we will not face anything else than multinational operations in the future. It could be, that the national headquarters might be more effective in the beginning of the operation than the multinational one. But international environment brings so many advantages such as additional views, perspective and ideas that in the end is the best solution for handling the burdens of extremely difficult military operations. On the other hand, multinationalism is the signal for the local population that people from different nations can work together and respect themselves. This message can be very important, especially in such complex demographic society as we have in Afghanistan.

MNC NE Calendar 2006

Selected Events

6th January - The New Year Reception 2006

It is already a deep – rooted tradition to celebrate the New Year Reception in Headquarters Multi-national Corps Northeast (HQ MNC NE) together with the representatives of the city of Szczecin, voivodeship as well as families and friends of the Headquarters. The New Year reception is a good occasion to express appreciation to all for a good cooperation in the past year and inform about Corps' plans for upcoming year.



Visit of Chief of Estonian Land Forces HQ and Chief of the Estonian Defense Forces

Acting Chief of Estonian Land Forces Lieutenant Colonel Meelis Kiili and Vice Admiral Tarmo Kouts, Chief of the Estonian Defense Forces pay a visit to Headquarters Multinational Corps Northeast (HQ MNC NE). LTC Meelis Kiili is familiarized with the Corps issues such as: history, organization, future tasks and challenges before deployment to Afghanistan. Whereas, Vice Admiral Tarmo Kouts, Chief of the Estonian Defense Forces discusses ways of strengthening bilateral relations and expanding cooperation between Estonian Defense Forces and HQ MNC NE.



31th January - 1st February - CIMIC Conference in Baltic Barracks

CIMIC (Civil Military Co-operation) Seminar I is held in Baltic Barracks, Szczecin. 18 staff officers from 11 nations discuss lessons learned from recent deployments to NATO operations such as SFOR, KFOR, ISAF as well as the mission in Iraq.



8th February - Szafran, DACCIS and HEROS tested by MNC NE specialists

HQ MNC NE tests all three command and control systems (Szafran, Heros, Daccis) offered by Denmark, Germany and Poland. Specialists from Headquarters in Szczecin test all proposed telecommunications systems in accordance with established requirements.



17th - 19th February - PSO Seminar I.

The PSO Seminar is a part of HQ's annual plan for educating and training the Corps' personnel in the planning and conducting the peace support or post conflict resolution operations. By means of briefings and discussions the MNC NE initiates the process of transforming the entire HQ for the upcoming operational deployment in Afghanistan.



13th February - Satellite Central Station for MNC NE

The Satellite Communications (SATCOM) central station in Baltic Barracks in Szczecin, is operating right now. The system is invaluable during a mission, as a permanent contact can be maintained from the deployment area wherever it might be.



21th February - Danish, German and Polish Ministers of Defence tri-lateral meeting

On Tuesday, 21 February, a trilateral, ministerial meeting takes place in the Headquarters Multinational Corps Northeast in Szczecin. The Minister of Defence of Denmark – Soeren Gade, the Minister of Defence of Germany – Dr. Franz Josef Jung and the Minister of Defence of Poland – Radosław Sikorski discuss the conditions for the deployment of the Headquarters MNC NE to Afghanistan in 2007.



27th February - 10th March - Exercise Bold Ambition 2006

The Exercise Bold Ambition 06 is conducted by Air Operations Coordination Centre (AOCC) in MNC NE. AOCC together with the representatives from different NATO Air Force units exercise Combined Air Operation Centre's (CAOC1) ability to develop and execute an air campaign, as a part of deployed joint forces in both Peace Support Operations and Crisis Respond Operations.

28th March - Soccer Tournament in Baltic Barracks

HQ MNC NE's Allied Sports Club Soccer Branch organizes first indoor soccer tournament. The gauntlet is taken up by following teams from Szczecin: 5th Engineer Regiment, 12th Headquarters Battalion, 3rd Air Defense Regiment, Police Provincial Headquarters, 12th Reconnaissance Battalion, Garrison Orchestra and by 12th Mechanized Brigade. As a hospitable host, the HQ MNC NE soccer team achieves the 7th place.



28th April - MNC NE plantes trees

"Tree planting" is a great family tradition in Headquarters. All participants have a clear task to carry out – to plant 7,5 thousands oaks and beech trees. The voluntary work of the HQ MNC NE's soldiers result is the 10-years old forest, called Saint Wojciech grove.

8th May - Warsaw Conference “NATO Operation in Afghanistan”

HQ MNC NE together with Polish non-governmental organization Euro-Atlantic Association organize the seminar for discussing the complexity of Afghanistan mission. Among honored guests the seminar is graced with the presence of: Mr Radoslaw Sikorski, Polish Minister of Defense, Yusuf Nuristani, First Deputy Minister of Defense from Afghanistan, Mr Adam Kobieracki, Assistant Secretary General for Operations from NATO HQ, Mr Renatas Norkus, Undersecretary for Defense Policy and International Relations in Lithuanian Ministry of Defense.

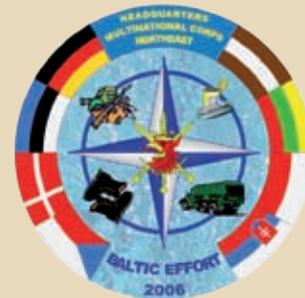


12th - 14th June - Exercise Baltic Effort 2006

HQ MNC NE as part of the NATO Force Structure has reached Full Operational Capability as a NATO Deployable Corps, which should be ready for deployment within 180 days. To sustain this ability, HQ MNC NE exercise its deployment capabilities with all of its supporting elements.

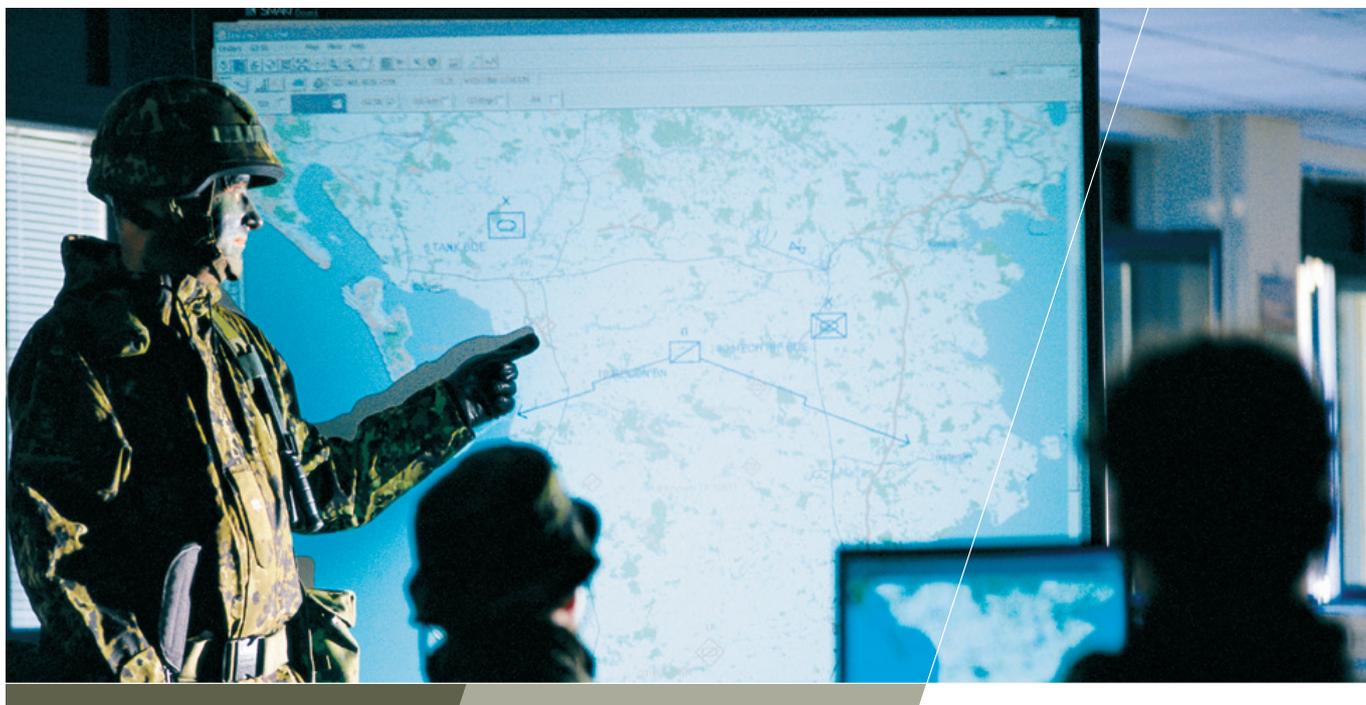
17th – 18th May PI/Media Seminar

The overall aim of Seminar is to create the platform of common understanding the PI matters by the entire HQ's personnel. The seminar is an occasion to learn how to cooperate with media and not to fight them. TV and Radio trainings gave the participants an opportunity to learn different technics and tricks how to act in front of a microphone or camera.



28th June – Presidential visit

His Excellence Prof. Dr. Horst Köhler, President of the Federal Republic of Germany and His Excellence Mr. Lech Kaczynski, President of the Republic of Poland visit Headquarters Multinational Corps Northeast (HQ MNC NE) on their first, one-day official visit. Commander of HQ MNC NE, Lieutenant General Egon Ramms, the Deputy Commander of HQ MNC NE, Major General Jan Brun Andersen and the Chief of Staff, Brigadier General Henryk Skarzynski welcome the honoured guests.



DACCIS – A command and control information break-through in the Danish Army



In 1998, the Danish army started cooperating with Maersk Data Defence on the development of a command, control and decision-support system, which was named DACCIS, Danish Army Command and Control Information System. A first version of the system was rolled out in 2004 to Danish divisions and underlying brigades, and DACCIS has proved its worth on many exercises. Version 7.0 is delivered in 2006.

Interoperability via NATO standards

The Danish army units solve many, widely different tasks internationally. So interoperability with the C2IS systems of other forces is an indispensable requirement. This is why ODIN – the international version of DACCIS – is based on NATO standards for communication (JC3IEDM) and the functionality of the system. And the development of DACCIS has taken into account the varied tasks of the Danish army. The system's architecture is based on three central concepts: modularity, scalability and flexibility.

DACCIS consists of components that may be put together so as to meet the needs related

to specific tasks and the units available to solve them. This makes DACCIS a very flexible system. Moreover, DACCIS is scalable as regards functionality and actual needs, which means that all levels – from corps to battalion – will benefit from DACCIS.

Command and control at the same time

Another advantage of the system is its ability to both retrieve, store and communicate information while future tasks are being planned. This makes it easier for the individual staff officer to stay on top of things in the planning process. When the plans are ready to be published, they are distributed to the underlying units. Thus it is ensured that the correct information is available to everybody at the right time. This also goes for tracings, outlines, etc.

Common situation awareness

One of the challenges related to traditional command and control is to ensure that everybody has a common situation awareness. Enemy reports may take a long time to get through since reports are made via radio;

this means that the information has to pass through a lot of people before it ends up with the staff, who are to plan the next phases of the operation. However, in the DACCIS world communication is simplified and at the same time the validity of the information is ensured.

The intelligence map and the frequent replication provide an updated picture of the situation for all units connected to DACCIS. When an enemy is recognised, the location is plotted into the intelligence map and shortly afterwards, the information is replicated to all units. Thus DACCIS provides the units with a common situation awareness.

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ISAF – the biggest challenge for NATO

Monika Warkocz talks with Assistant Secretary General for Operations Mr. Adam Kobieracki



Mr. Adam Kobieracki during his presentation on Afghan mission

Monika Warkocz: Two indicators can describe the situation in Afghanistan: dynamism of changes and constantly deteriorating state security. Bearing this in mind how do you judge the idea of implementing composite headquarters for International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) operation?

Adam Kobieracki: Composite Headquarters is a natural step in the development process of any operation or mission. In the beginning of the ISAF operation, we virtually had no time and a quick decision was needed about the NATO involvement, that's why NATO decided to have the rotational/national HQ at that time. Nevertheless, each of those models has its specific purposes. Rotational/National HQ was probably the better solution in the beginning of the operation as we were starting to deploy in Afghanistan. But as there is more and more stability, regardless of the recent security incidents, and we are also more experienced in Afghanistan, it is rather natural to introduce composite headquarters. Basically, the difference between

those two models can be described as follow: in rotational headquarters, people know each other, they used to work together and they are just deployed into the theatre. But then they just stay for only six months. Whereas, in composite headquarters people will meet themselves in theatre or during the predeployment training, but they will work together much longer, at least a year. From operational point of view there is a clear benefit from having composite headquarters – a better sense of stability, continuity, etc.

- What kind of significance has composite headquarters for HQ MNC NE and what kind of challenges you may foresee for the Corps during the deployment to Afghanistan?

It is up to the Command Group of the Corps, Polish officials and officials of the nations contributing in the Corps to decide how they would like to make the use of the composite HQ. One thing is clear, it is the introduction of the composite headquarters into NATO structure. It will not be possible any more just to deploy the Corps

from Szczecin to Kabul. This is totally excluded. In my opinion, it will require more diplomatic skills, including some kind of military diplomacy to make sure that the officers from the corps will be actually appointed for the different posts within the composite headquarters. But this will be more time consuming and probably it will take more effort because you will have to arrange and make sure that people fit to these positions.

- On the 4th of May the Allied Rapid Reaction Corps (ARRC) took over the responsibilities for ISAF IX. What kind of challenges and tasks they are going to face?

Lieutenant General David J. Richards, the Commander of Allied Rapid Reaction Corps (ARRC), now the Commander of ISAF IX took over his responsibilities on the 4th of May. His main task will be to expand the ISAF mission to the south of the country - to Kandahar, Lashkar Gah, Nimruz. Undoubtedly, this is a very challenging task. Especially that, at the moment NATO nations are deploying or have deployed forces to the south part of Afghanistan - United Kingdom, Canada, Netherlands, and few others. But as those countries deployed their forces, they become a part of the coalition forces, for the time being. However, during the summer, probably at the end of July or early August, two operations ISAF and OEF operation will be merged and Commander ISAF, Lieutenant General David J. Richards will become also responsible for north, west and the south regions of Afghanistan. Therefore, his biggest challenge will be to implement stage three of ISAF expansion.

Definitely it will be not an easy task, because south part of Afghanistan is not an easy territory and you can hear about many incidents there. So gen. Richards will have to firstly implement the stage three, and then make sure that this is actually functioning till February next year.

- How long do you expect NATO troops to be present in Afghanistan?

We are committed under the terms of London Conference document "Afghanistan Compact" to stay there at least five years, as this is the currently agreed timeframes. It is difficult to prejudge the exact moment how long we will stay there. NATO is always very careful in setting down the exact date - we will stay there as long as it is needed. Nevertheless, we do hope that after five years the Afghanistan and Afghan institution will take more and more responsibilities for the situation in their country. But, frankly speaking in my own opinion is that it will be at least ten years.

- Building up the democratic society is a long-term process. How far in this process is right now the Afghan population?

Actually, it is a kind of the paradox. We are talking about successes in the Afghanistan all the time. We keep saying that there are still some challenges but things in Afghanistan are moving forward. But if you look at Afghanistan for the last three years or so, actually their biggest achievements are of the political nature. They managed to go for elections – regional and national elections. They managed to go through the presidential elections and the institutions, which they have built, are really functioning. In my opinion the best example of Afghan democracy is the cabinet of president Karzai – when president Karzai presented 25 members of his cabinet for the approval of parliament 20 of them were approved, 5 members not. So it means that Afghan society is learning and constantly improving their democratic means. Frankly, speaking with the democracy you never know how long it will take to make sure that it is an irreversible process. But Afghan population knows how to use democratic institutions, despite the fact that they do not have long democratic traditions. You need to remember that they are extremely well educated people and they know how it works in the west. Though, it is very difficult for them to implement some western solutions because of the caste composition of the society. So in my opinion the process of introducing the democracy to the Afghanistan society should be regarded as the biggest success.

- In your presentation you mention that the ISAF operation is a direct reflection of the internal transmission within NATO – could you explain that?

Five years ago, there was a kind of philosophical debate going on at the NATO Headquarters asking can NATO go unlawfully. The only things that can limit the NATO operational involvement anywhere, is firstly the political consensus of the member nations, and secondly the availability of the capabilities and resources. So right now, we are over this taboo whether we can go out from Europe, or not. So this is first layer of NATO transformation.

Secondly, NATO is becoming more and more operational. NATO is not a kind of static alliance, we have a mission in Afghanistan, we are still in Kosovo with almost 17 000 troops. We have a training mission in Iraq. We are doing an "Active Endeavor" in Mediterranean Sea. We are supporting African Union in Darfur. This is a proof that NATO is becoming more and more operational. Finally, NATO Respond Forces which is also a clear sign NATO transformation. Nevertheless, the test phase for this transformation is Afghanistan, because this is the most challenging mission, and we will have there soon 15 000 feet on the ground.

Even the longest trip, begins with the first step...

Interview with Yusuf Nuristani, First Deputy Minister of Defense from Afghanistan

Monika Warkocz: Two indicators can describe the situation in Afghanistan: dynamism of changes and constantly deteriorating state of security. Bearing this in mind, how do you judge and predict the development of political and military situation in your country?

Yusuf Nuristani: In my opinion the political si-

tuation in Afghanistan is improving. Firstly, the government authority has significantly extended its area of responsibility over the country in comparison to the status from three years ago. Secondly, professional civil servants are being employed in different governmental institutions. Those things did not exist in the past years and they are a clear sign of the democratic changes in Afghanistan.



Mr. Yusuf Nuristani talks to Monika Warkocz during Afghanistan Seminar in Warsaw

Furthermore, military situation is also improving, especially when you think about the active military service of well-trained soldiers. Afghan Army and Afghan National Police will be trained and very soon ready to be deployed and work for the Afghanistan security. In my opinion, Afghan Army and Afghan National Police will definitely do a great job for the internal situation in our country, because they are Afghan people, they know the country, social psychology, terrorists' bases.

All those elements prove that Afghanistan is moving into the right direction. The coalition forces and ISAF forces are helping us to speed up all that processes. Obviously, we still have some problems to overcome but even the longest trip begins with the first step.

- Building up the democratic society is a long-term process. How far in this process is right now the Afghan population?

Definitely, democracy is the new concept for the Afghan people. We did have some kind of traditional democracy in the past. Nevertheless, Afghanistan is an egalitarian society and even though we had our own democratic institutions, they were not exactly the same as those from the west. Western democracy is something new for the Afghan people.

For the first and the most, we were able to secure the basis values for the democracy such as freedom of press. Currently, we have over 400 publications issued daily, weekly or monthly and they are independent. Furthermore, the democratic institutions from day to day are functioning better and better. More and more well – educated people such as lawyers and attorneys, who were educated in the west, are coming back to the country and begin to work for the new Afghanistan. From that perspective the Afghan society has done a lot and made a huge step towards the democratic society.

- The master message from the London Conference was to keep the “Afghan case” as a matter of the international concern. In some senses, it means that Afghanistan

needs to be on the spot and attract international attention? How long will you have NATO troops present in your country?

I am very pleased about the decision that was taken during the London Conference in January 2006, concerning the “Afghan Compact”. As a representative of the Afghan government, I am very happy that the international community decided to continue their support for our country. It also means that Afghanistan is a success story- the Afghan society and the governmental institutions made the greatest stride ever. For that reason the international community decided to support Afghanistan further for few more years.

Even though, the Afghanistan is a success story, it is still very difficult to predict how long NATO/ISAF and the coalition forces will stay in Afghanistan. Nevertheless, our request is that the training and the equipping of the Afghan military and policy should be completed as soon as possible. Then, we will be able to stand on our own – this is the statement or rather the insistence of both Afghan Ministry of Interior and Afghan Ministry of Defense. It is rather obvious that if our own forces will be well trained and equipped, we do not expect that foreign troops will stay and die in our country. Most probably when we will have our own troops, the foreign troops will return to their home countries or reduce their presence in Afghanistan. Nonetheless, it is very difficult to answer this question precisely.

- What are your private wishes for Afghanistan?

My wishes for my country are – peace and stability. I wish that Afghan people would not have to worry about war, violence or how to feed their families. I dream that one day there will be enough peace and stability for them to send their children to school and give them freedom of choice. I wish that everybody could live a normal life in my country, take care of his own business without fear of terrorism, explosions or starvation. This is my wish – to give ordinary people a chance to live in peace and stability.

THE AFGHANISTAN'S SUCCESS STORY

NATO transformation

As underscored by NATO Foreign Ministers at their recent informal meeting in Sofia (Bulgaria), Afghanistan is the operational priority number one for the Alliance and the most visible example of NATO's ongoing transformation. NATO is not only committed to International Security Assistance Force's (ISAF) evolving operation, but is also in the process of moving its support to peace and security in Afghanistan to a completely new level.

The stage III of Afghanistan operation (EXPANSION) will be the most challenging part of the entire ISAF operation. From that moment on, ISAF will be responsible also for the south part of Afghan territory. The total number of ISAF troops is to reach 15 000, when the stage 3 is completed.

For the last few years, the Alliance forces in Afghanistan were able to support democratic powers and gave the chance to Afghan population to live in much more stable environment than before. Therefore, from the NATO perspective, Afghanistan continues to be a success story, despite all recent security incidents.

The Afghanistan's success story

The Afghanistan's achievements are confirmed by several facts, which speak for themselves. Firstly, the Bonn process has formally come to the end with successful carrying out of National Parliamentary and Provincial Council elections. The government of President Karzai continues to expand gradually its influence throughout the country and has managed to bring many regional powers brokers – yesterday's warlords – into political fold.

President Karzai's new cabinet has recently sworn, what can be also described as clear sign of real democratic changes in the country. Furthermore, the process of building-up Afghan public institution, while admittedly still lagging behind in many areas, has made enormous pro-

gress with the help of the international community. As a result, ISAF has successfully extended its presence to the west of the country and is seen as an indispensable partner in helping maintain security and stability.

Secondly, there is a broad political consensus to work together and continue to build up on the success to date if Afghanistan is not to slip back into its pre-2001 state. Thirdly, ISAF continues to have an extremely positive image among the Afghan population and keep the world's attention focused on Afghanistan.

ISAF expansion

The decision to expand ISAF to stage III was formally taken more than a year and a half ago and it will be the first enormous challenge. Right now ISAF will expand to the south and then later on to the east. Troops deployment to the south has already begun with the perspective lead nations (United Kingdom, Netherlands, Canada) augmenting their presence.

The expansion will not only be geographic in nature but will carry with it a new operational profile in a clearly more challenging environment.

It has to be emphasized that, NATO forces will deploy and operate in areas that are less stable, with the higher threat, and where the opposing military forces remain active. For that, NATO needs to have a much more robust approach to security and stability operations in order to create the conditions that will allow our forces – through Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRT's) – to do their job. Therefore, NATO forces will have to be properly manned, equipped and directed to prevent threats and take more pro-active approach. Notwithstanding ISAF expansion challenges and ISAF – OEF synergy, the mission itself will remain distinct and complementary.

While ISAF will not be involved in counter terrorism operations, it may become necessary to act pre-emptively or engage in aggressive patrolling. As a result, appropriate rules of en-

agement that are broad and flexible enough to cover all scenarios have to be approved and will be applied, if necessary.

Above all, ISAF mission will essentially remain the same that means assisting the Government of Afghanistan in the maintenance of security facilitating the development of government institutions, and assisting with reconstruction and humanitarian efforts.

The role of PRT's

For Afghan's future development, the PRT's will remain the main vehicle through which, especially the expansion will take place. Countries such as United Kingdom, Canada, the Netherlands, Denmark and the United State of America will play the key role in stage 3, which is envisaged to be completed by late July and early August.

The concept of the PRT's has evolved over the last three years. PRT's are still run by lead nations and adapted to regional circumstances. However, there is still growing realization that closer coordination – not only on the military side – is desirable to pool common efforts and harmonize their activities with Government of Afghanistan's national and regional priorities. In the future, ISAF-led PRTs will focus increasingly on security sector reform, supporting the Afghans to develop their capabilities at the local level. Operational and training support to the Afghan national Army (ANA) will be a key activity in this regard.

PRT philosophy based on the realization that stabilization and reconstruction is two sides of the same coin, and both are essential to Afghan governance and ownership. In other words, while reconstruction is not possible without security, security without reconstruction remains equally meaningless. In the end, however, we want the Afghans themselves to be able to provide that security.

Supporting Government of Afghanistan (GOA)

ISAF will continue with its supportive role to the Government of Afghanistan (GOA) and will also extend to counter-narcotics. In essence, NATO will not expand ISAF's responsibilities for counter – narcotics, but will build up existing guidance in the areas of intelligence sharing, logistics support to UN agencies and supporting actively infor-

mation campaign on the part of the government. Finally post – Bonn – agenda should be mentioned, as it is a sort of continuation of assisting Afghan in the years to come and to work closely with the Afghans. In that point, London conference was another milestone in this regard. The new "Compact for Afghanistan" co-drafted by both the International Community and Government of Afghanistan serves as a mutual commitment to continue much needed work in the areas of security, governance, rule of law, and human rights as well as sustainable economic and social development. The new "Compact for Afghanistan" very much emphasizes Afghan ownership and also sets benchmarks and timelines, providing helpful roadmap for the next five years. As a result the new Afghan Joint Coordination and monitoring Board has been set up.

Afghanistan's test case

Undoubtedly, Afghanistan has become a "test case" for the entire Alliance. Similarly to the Balkans conflict, NATO learnt a lot from that mission and still go on adopting itself. Simultaneously, ISAF operations indirectly contribute to the overall transformation process of the Alliance. It is the reality of the on the ground that is changing NATO's agenda. For instance, a new member of the Alliance, Lithuania, is leading a PRT in a very remote part of Afghanistan. This is, in itself a sign of how far NATO has come. Nevertheless, moving into stage III will put NATO in a very challenging position. As the Alliance will not only need to protect its forces credibly, but has the necessary robustness and means at its disposal to reduce real threats.

Afghanistan has shown that the organisation needs a lot of flexibility for its own forces. While some will be engaged in possible thwarting a local Taliban attack, others will continue to assist with reconstruction work. As a result, Afghanistan has become in many ways the showcase, where all of the above comes together.

Finally, close international coordination and cooperation will remain a key to success. Therefore, it is highly important to continue on building up the coordination mechanisms, which already exist but can be clearly refined. In this regard NATO will welcome the UN to take on a lead role in coordination civilian efforts by the International Community.

Minister's View

Interview with Mr. Radoslaw Sikorski, the Minister of Defense of the Republic of Poland



Monika Warkocz: How do you, Mr. Minister evaluate ISAF operation on the territory of Afghanistan?

Radoslaw Sikorski: No doubt, it is a great challenge for the Alliance. Especially as the reliability of the Alliance will be determined by that mission. At the same time we shall bear in mind that this is a country of difficult geography, complex demography and different culture. However the most concerning issue is the relation between incomes from drug business and radical Islam policy. In practical terms it means that fanatics receive revenues from narcotics and they have funds to finance actions of the enemy. Thus, undoubtedly we will have to face a great challenge.

- What is the future of ISAF? How long NATO forces will stay in Afghanistan?

Unfortunately I don't know the answer to that question. Obviously, all the participants of the mission would like to have it finished as soon as possible. I believe that we can say that we play a supporting role in Afghanistan. Our intention is to support the government of Afghanistan to keep full control over security of the country. Thus, the decision on our stay or withdrawal will be contingent on the government of Afghanistan. We are there only as guests.

- How will the decision on composite headquarters influence the participation of Multinational Corps Northeast in the operation in Afghanistan?

I must admit, and I have expressed my opinion on that issue, that I am disappointed with the decision of introduction composite headquarters. The nations which established HQ MNC NE have invested substantial funds in it. Officers have gained appropriate abilities and the headquarters has reached Full Operational Capability. Moreover, the fact that the command would be assumed by a Polish general next year would be an additional asset. It would be easier to convince Polish public opinion to approve of the mission if it was the first mission of the Alliance under the command of a Polish general.

Unfortunately there was a change of the concept concerning the operation of the Alliance headquarters in Afghanistan. However the Polish party has been informed that most of the personnel of HQ MNC NE will serve in the composite headquarters. Of course it is not the same, however, it is the best solution we were able to bring about.

- Mister Minister, on the 12th February this year you paid a visit at HQ MNC NE for the first time. How do you evaluate the preparation of the Corps to conduct a peace mission.

I paid a visit in HQ MNC NE together with the Ministers of Defense from Denmark and Germany. The Corps has achieved all the goals. It is not only my personal opinion. The Corps underwent an evaluation of competent NATO body. The Corps met all the required criteria and reached full operational readiness. We shall remember that HQ MNC NE together with Joint Training Centre in Bydgoszcz reflect presence of Poland in the Alliance. Thus, they are of crucial character.

HEROS-2/1 Lot 2

The mobile command, control and information system for modern operations command

HEROS in Use

The mobile command, control and information system HEROS-2/1 Lot 2, which has been newly developed by ESG Elektroniksystem- und Logistik-GmbH as the main contractor, provides the military with an effective and proven system with a high user acceptance readily available for immediate deployment. HEROS has been developed to meet the operational requirements of land forces and provides support at the corps, division and brigade command levels with an emphasis on the command process.

Modern IT equipment with commercial components ensure that information processing within and information exchange between all command posts can take place quickly and reliably. Users always work with a common operational picture. Interoperability with other command, control and information systems is ensured at all times due to the international MIP-DEM and ADatP-3 interface.

Command post configurations can be established for different types of command posts depending on operational requirements. To avoid unauthorized access to the HEROS server and clients, special security means are integrated such as password protection, hard disk encryption, smart card system.

Administration and security settings can be made by the administrator from the standard user interface.



HEROS during command post work

Source: 1 (GE/NL) Corps

Concept and Architecture

HEROS-2/1 Lot 2 is characterised in particular by its flexibility with regard to future operational missions, maintenance and administration. Its open system architecture allows the integration of new technologies and additional functions – such as in-service support by operations research, decision support systems and voice recognition in automated data reception. The system has a client/server architecture that is impartial with regard to products and manufacturers and features standard interfaces between the different components. This means that, if necessary, any component can be readily updated or replaced with products from other manufacturers.

Functions

HEROS-2/1 Lot 2 incorporates the following core functions:

- ▶ Common database
- ▶ Joint user interface
- ▶ Office and headquarters functions
- ▶ E-mail service
- ▶ Tables and overviews
- ▶ Data aggregation
- ▶ Command processing
- ▶ Replication of operational data to other command posts
- ▶ Map and situation processing (APP- 6A)
- ▶ Message handling
- ▶ Communications

All functions are selectively accessed via the standard user interface and can be linked by means of common object-oriented data management.

HEROS Benefits

- ▶ Improvement of information processing and communication capabilities within and between posts for the corps, division, brigade and battalion command levels
- ▶ Interoperability with other command, control and information systems through the MIP interface (international standard)
- ▶ Clear situation assessment and reliable decision-making
- ▶ System concept using COTS products
- ▶ Scaleable command post structure
- ▶ Networking, with modern, flexible LAN as well as WAN network systems, according to the command level
- ▶ System-specific administration and maintenance



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G-1 secret mission

Once somebody told me: **“If you want tourists to come to your city, be its best ambassador”**. I have no doubt that Szczecin is not an easy city for sightseeing, because it does not delude tourists with its beauty at very first glance, such as Krakow, Wroclaw or Warsaw does. Its complex and tempestuous history caused that you have to make a slightly more effort to reveal Szczecin’s charm, mystery and unique character, especially in the most unexpected places.

nishment increases when we walk down to the old underpass, in which you can find more local vagabonds than real travelers. Suddenly, we stop in front of the big rusty doors with the sign S-1 – the main entrance to the bunker. We hear the scrape of the key in the lock and shortly after Mr Zbigniew Mocny, our bunker’s guide, welcomes us.

At first glance, our attention is attracted by cork floor in the bunker. The ground’s floor of this enormous split-level underground building is inlaid with the original cork plate. This is how you can insulate and protect object from dampness. – our guide explains.



“To the Lecture Room”

During one extremely hot, summer afternoon, I have decided to take my colleagues Danish, German, Polish and Slovak officers and noncommissioned officers from our Headquarters, who most likely think they know Szczecin like their own pocket – to very exceptional place - underground Szczecin.

Apart from the inner circle the mission is secret. Nobody is informed about our tour destination. We reach main railway station in Szczecin. My colleagues do not hide their surprise and impatiently wait how the situation evolves. Their asto-



The Corridor

The bunker was put into operation in 1941. The structure of the bunker consists of two-level hallways of few meter wide made from the reinforced concrete. – continues Zbigniew Mocny. The thickness of the walls is more than 3 meters. Currently, the bunker can accommodate 1700 persons. However, during WW II. its capacity was much larger, about 5000 persons.

”It is quite possible that nowadays, only a part of the object is accessible, because in many places you can see for instance a heating pipe, which



Among the experts, there are some thesis that the tunnel has been built up much earlier for the underground train purposes, and then in 1941 it was only reconstructed to function of a bunker. Its capacity was also enlarged in the way that it

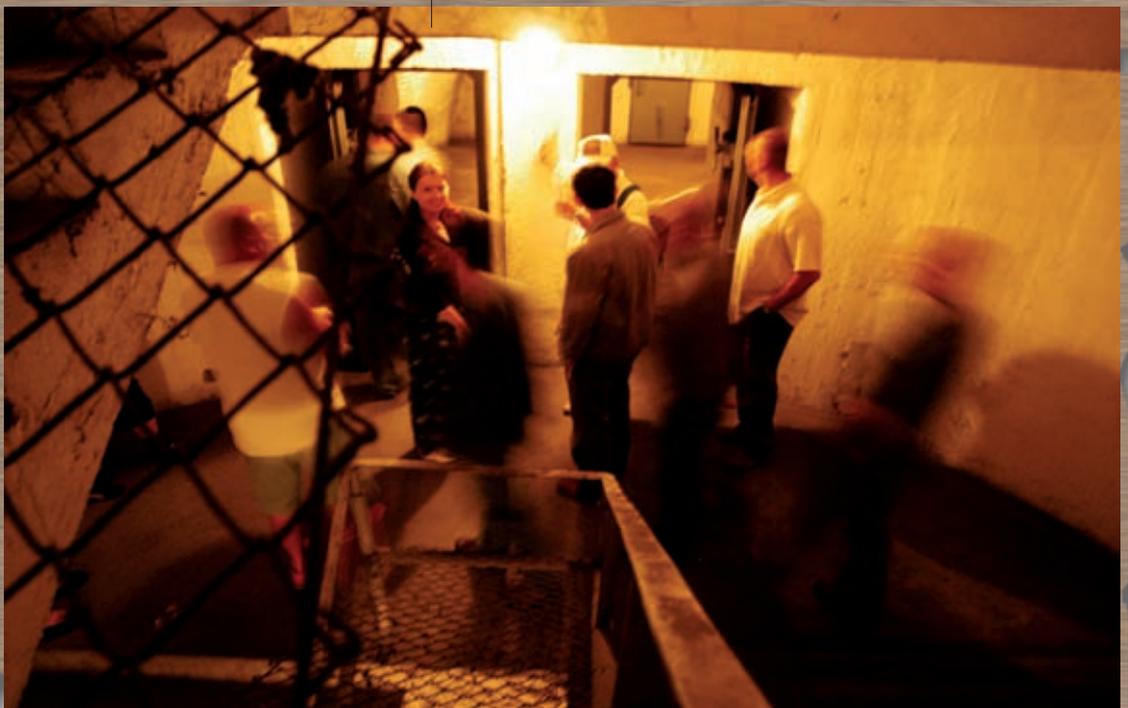
suddenly disappears in the wall. But about this we are not certain – assures us Mr Zbigniew Mocny.

The bunker is self-sufficient. It has water from its own intake, generating set and air conditioning, which with the use of air filters can work in the closed cycle. On the walls of hallways, you can find signs of the phosphorescent paint. It gives enough light in case of a blackout. Unfortunately, through the years the bunker has been painted so now is pretty difficult to discern those marks.

could accommodate twice as many persons. It is quite possible theory, especially that in the same way the tunnel dated on 1846, under Poltulicka street was reconstructed. It was used for withdrawing trains from Szczecin's main railway station. – explains Mr Zbigniew Mocny.

Undoubtedly, our short stay in the undergrounds proved my colleagues, that there are still many places in Szczecin which wait to be unveiled.

The hallways, every few meters bend, what make us feeling, that the corridor is much longer than in reality. Reaching a big staircase, winding stairs lead us 16 meters higher to the new level of the bunker. There are two exits to the center of the town, close to the old city Hall at Zawisza square.



Spectral Spectators



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