

The Baltic Amber

Multinational Corps Northeast Magazine



MOSAIC 2007

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EX CRYSTAL EAGLE (CE 08): EXERCISE SPECIFICATIONS

NICKNAME: CRYSTAL EAGLE 2008 (CE08)
FORM / TYPE: CPX / CAX
TA: DEU 37 BDE
EST 1 BDE
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EXCON: HQ MNC NE
HQ/CP/RC OF TA SUBORDINATED FORMATIONS
HQ/CP/RC OF AFFILIATED FORMATIONS
SUPPORT FORMATIONS (RL CIS AND RLS)
INDIVIDUAL REINFORCEMENTS FROM OTHER NATO
CORPS HQ / NATO AGENCIES

DURATION: 08 SEP - 25 SEP 2008
EX AREA DEU AWSC, MTA WILDFLECKEN
OSE: COM MNC NE
OCE: COM MNC NE
EXDIR: DCOM MNC NE
AIM: TO TRAIN THE NOMINATED HQS/FORMATIONS
IN A COMBINED AND JOINT PSO SCENARIO.
IN THAT RESPECT CE 08 WILL STRIVE
FOR TRAINING THE OPP AND CURRENT
OPERATIONS PROCEDURES AIMING TO
ENHANCE THE TA TO PLAN, PREPARE, EXECUTE,
COMMAND AND EVALUATE A JOINT AND COMBINED
PSO AT ITS PARTICULAR LEVEL.

IF YOU DON'T FEEL LIKE DECIPHERING MILITARY JARGON, CHECK PAGE 31 FOR THE DECODED VERSION OF INFORMATION ABOUT THE EXERCISE CRYSTAL EAGLE 2008.



Welcome to this issue of *The Baltic Amber*, which focuses on various aspects of multinationalism. It is not just a word depicted in our name – Multinational Corps Northeast – but a fundamental characteristic of this Headquarters, which decides upon who we are.

The Corps takes pride in being home to as many as nine nations. In fact, our multinational family is going to become even bigger. This year, two Romanian officers are going to join us.

A good approach to cooperating with different nations is an advantage in daily work, whereas in the mission time it is simply essential. The Corps' personnel have successfully passed that test. In Afghanistan our soldiers not only proved their high capabilities and devotion, but also showed they were able to create a good team and to achieve common goals despite language, cultural or other differences. More importantly, multinational environment of the ISAF Headquarters, where the soldiers served, was incomparably richer. But we found our place there.

Even though the Corps is currently in "between-the-missions" stage, we wish to devote this time to enhancing our military capabilities and strengthening ties between the MNC NE personnel. Learning about other countries, their military experience, customs and habits is a chance to create a better teamwork and a valuable asset, from which we can profit in daily work and in future missions, too.

Zdzisław GORAL
Lieutenant General POL A
Commander
Multinational Corps Northeast

The Baltic Amber is the authorized official magazine of the HQ MNC NE, 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 Headquarters Multinational Corps Northeast.

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 - Mosaic

Publication Management

Public Affairs Office
Multinational Corps Northeast
P.O. Box 59, 70-961 Szczecin, Poland
tel. +48 (91) 4445 125
fax. +48 (91) 4445 124
e-mail contact@hqmncne.mil.pl
website www.mncne.pl

Editor in Chief

Major Wojciech Wiśniewski (POL A)

Journalist

Mss Anna Galyga (POL CIV)

Graphic Design & Photographs

Staff Sergeant Marian Cihon (SVK AF)

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INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL**

Global IDENTITY

Distinctive feature?

WIE GEHT ES DIR? JAK SE
MÁS? KUIDAS LÄHEB? HOW
ARE YOU? AKO SA MÁS? KAIP
SEKASI? SVEIKS? JAK SIĘ
MASZ? HVORDAN HAR DU
DET? – THERE ARE DIFFERENT
WAYS OF SAYING THE SAME.
THERE ARE DIFFERENT WAYS
TO ACHIEVE A COMMON GOAL
AND THERE IS JUST ONE
EXPRESSION TO COVER IT
ALL – **MULTINATIONALISM.**

IN THE CONTEMPORARY
WORLD, WHICH IS A
GLOBAL VILLAGE IF USING
MCLUHAN'S TERM, PEOPLE
COMMUNICATE ACROSS
BOUNDARIES BECOMING ONE
HETEROGENEOUS AUDIENCE
EXPOSED TO A GLOBAL,
MULTINATIONAL VOICE.

Globalization and multinationalism have entered our homes with a satellite TV, films, music, computer games and the Internet. What used to be impossible in the past is already within the arm's reach. Distances are being minimized and technological barriers overcome, one click inundates with information concerning almost any issue. Obviously, such developments have an impact on social, cultural or even military spheres of life. Starting with positive aspects, multinationalism offers valuable opportunities of a dialogue between cultures. It is a perfect way of personal enrichment and a means of discovering new people and their ways of life, exchanging skills and knowledge, and creating a common community spirit. But keeping in mind that face-to-face communication is always more efficient than a virtual one, personal contacts with people from other nations are simply invaluable, regardless of their character.

Apart from evident profits of multinationalism, there are also some challenges brought ahead. Dialogues between cultures are not completely free from stereotypes or national interests. There is also a danger of blurring boundaries between them and, as a result, a possible erosion of national cultures. Besides, there is some space left for misunderstanding, misinterpretation or even ignorance. But are these arguments and hypothetical dangers a reasonable excuse to deny the value of multinationalism?

ITTY

Major General Jan Brun Andersen, Deputy Commander Headquarters Multinational Corps Northeast, talks about his impressions on working in multinational environment

For sure they form a good basis, we all trained at Polish, German, Danish or any other headquarters. Many things are easier to achieve at national headquarters, people understand each other, so when a nation is setting up a headquarters, for example a regional command, they can do more training without involving other parts. But I cannot think of any missions that are not multinational, perhaps Americans have some. At some stage if you do not involve people from other countries, you will probably fail.

I always stress that our multinational headquarters is probably one of the best Headquarters in the NATO force structure. But there are two main points we have to focus on, the first one being the language. People have to be more or less fluent in English before they come to our Headquarters. And we know it is not always the fact, so we train English as much as possible and push people to speak making sure that they are understood. And the other important point is that we have to use the time to listen to people coming from other countries and learn from their experience. And I would say that our Headquarters really benefits from being truly multinational. We are used to listening to other people and being flexible and we did not have to learn it when we deployed to the mission and for sure that was an advantage.

It is different; some might say it is easier to work at a national headquarters but I prefer to work at a multinational one. It is a bigger challenge and if you succeed – it is great. And I would not be able to gather the same experience if I worked back home, since we all were brought up in the same way, went to the same school so we tend to think in the same way to some extent. Here, people coming from other countries inspire me and I enjoy that.

For sure, yes, they are.

No, I do not think so. Things just take some more time and it is one of the challenges. And the outcome, if we all agree, is better. But you have to be more active at such headquarters than at national headquarters so if you just sit and say nothing, we will push you.

It takes more time during the training and sets a lot of requirements for everybody – from the commander to the latest incoming to be open and flexible.

We expect people to discuss the best solutions not just accept what the boss said.

I am sure. If the whole world joined NATO, if we all were members guided by the hearts rather than the brains, the chances for outbreaks of wars and people not discussing would be closed. But I doubt that all nations would join NATO.

The more members in a club, the more difficult it could be. It was also reflected in our deployment to Afghanistan, even though NATO is one organisation, there are national agendas. Sometimes it is more difficult for big nations that play a major role but also contribute most.

I would say it is controlled politically. For example some may blame Germans that they could do more in ISAF but Germany takes care of the whole northern part of Afghanistan, also contributes to Regional Command Capital and provides assets, aircrafts operating in other places. If Germans did not do it, somebody else would have to do it. And if the Americans did not provide all the assets, helicopters, airplanes - we simply could not work without it. Besides, NATO is pushing all countries to put more assets to Afghanistan. I am quite sure that it would be very appreciated if Germany, but also Denmark, Poland and other countries, were participating more in all areas.

Multinationalism is difficult but it is the only right way of doing it.

The idea of multinationalism has also reached military spheres. Even though long time ago history proved that an alliance is a successful tool to achieve military goals, only in the twentieth century military organisations appeared in their current shape. North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) serves as a good example of such an organisation established with the idea of effective collective defence. In fact, multinational environment created by twenty-six members and other twenty-three nations affiliated within the Partnership for Peace Programme, reflects the basic concept of the Alliance. From a military perspective, such cooperation not only contributes to greater security in the world but also increases resources and operational capabilities. In the political context, it promotes transparency and

have been created along with a multinational concept of NATO and a tendency to reduce the number of troops. Multinational Corps Northeast (MNC NE), founded in 1999, was one of those formations. Its nucleus was in fact shaped by LANDJUT. Though the smallest Headquarters in terms of personnel, MNC NE consists of nine nations already, which share responsibilities, efforts and successes.

Exercises with multinational training audience and instructors provide an

how to face such challenges within multinational environment.

Nevertheless, involvement in real operations like Peace Support Operations is the case when multinationalism matters most, as it not only allows for combining resources and

personnel, but even more importantly it gives greater legitimacy and credibility to

an operation. The current NATO mission

in Afghanistan proves its significance since thirty-nine nations already contribute to the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) and devote their best capabilities. What seems important to state is that collective endeavours of such kind allow for participation of smaller countries in operations, thus lessening the commitments of larger countries. Moreover, sharing burden gives a chance to participate in various operations at the same time. Finally, gained exchange of experience and knowledge both on professional and cultural levels shall not be underestimated.

deepens cross-nation cooperation, which can be also developed in non-military areas.

Multinationalism is not an empty word but it is a key issue for day-to-day business. In 1962 Allied Land Forces Schleswig-Holstein and Jutland (LANDJUT) in Rendsburg was established as the first truly multinational corps within the NATO family. Since then, other multinational formations

excellent opportunity for practising cooperation among nations before facing real mission tasks "in the battlefield". It is important since current conflicts often have global character, which stems from easy exchange of information and makes them difficult to control. Another feature is asymmetrical character of warfare, which sets higher requirements for parties involved. The exercise at Fort Campbell, USA, in which the MNC NE personnel supported the 101st Airborne Division in their preparations before the Afghan mission, was a good example of





**Interview with Air Marshal
Christopher H. Moran
DCOM JFC BRUNSSUM**

Anna Gatyga - There are 26 nations in NATO, would you consider this multinational character of the organisation an advantage or a disadvantage?

First of all, it is very important that we have multinational organisations, particularly multinational military organisations like NATO. If you look back over the centuries, military force was always more successful when it was fought as an alliance since no individual nation has the wealth or indeed all the skills required. Coalitions not only do produce political results but also bring unique quality of different forces together and basically the mass of force required to overcome the enemy.

But even in your own family – the more people there are, the more difficult it is sometimes to get consensus. Therefore we have to accept both very positive benefits of working together as an alliance and those small irritations when we just have to find sensible ways of working together.

- How about the issue of equal contribution of nations within such multinational organisations?

NATO has made a statement aspiration

DCOMPROMISE

- Is multinationalism a merit in missions such as the one in Afghanistan?

In any operation being multinational is a significant benefit. The number of countries participating in the mission in Afghanistan politically shows how important it is to support this country. Having those countries collectively agreed to take actions sends a very powerful message around the world about resolved make-things-happen and hopefully sends a very powerful message to own enemies as well and those who wish to oppose the good work in Afghanistan. Again, we have to accept that in any coalitions sometimes it takes longer to make decisions but I hope that those some small drawbacks do not outweigh the benefits of working together.

- How would you comment on clashes of national interests within multinational organisations? Are not informal chains of commands, 'meetings 4-, 6-, 8-eyes only' a problem?

I hope that on military level people are focused on achieving the best outcome in Afghanistan and therefore I expect all the people inside the organisation to first and foremost present their best military advice to serve this mission. Of course, different countries are going to have a different perspective and people are free to express that difference of opinion. But we all hope that countries can reach a compromise

people do share the information they gather even if they do not share the source from which they got it.

- A composite ISAF Headquarters has been working since February 2007. What were the implications of replacing the previous model?

Well, I guess that if you just had a single headquarters that trained and fought together then it would be more cohesive. But at any headquarters, even at a single national headquarters, people move in and out over period of time. People are serving that headquarters for two or three years and it means every year potentially one-third to half change anyway, so every headquarters has a problem of bringing in new blood, training people and moving forward.

And if we are going to sustain the operation in Afghanistan over many years, which we may have to, then we do have to balance having a cohesive long-term headquarters with a simple practicality of a constant flow of people. I think at the moment we have a reasonably sensible balance; it does create a higher training burden but the benefit is that we can sustain the mission for a long period of time. The role of JFC Brunssum in this operation is very important; the Commander is to help shape and guide the coalition in Afghanistan. So people may come and go inside the ISAF HQ but it is Brunssum's role to maintain the long-term vision.

Exercise:

Unified Endeavour 08-1

Place:

Fort Campbell, USA, home of 101st Airborne Division

Time:

1st-14th October 2007

Participants:

101st Airborne Division, representatives from Regional Command East (Afghanistan), JFC Brunssum, 11 MNC NE personnel and others

Goal:

To train 101st Airborne Division before their mission in Afghanistan as Regional Command East

Role of MNC NE:

Higher Headquarters and Subject Matter Experts (SME)

Major topics:

Current operations, problems of coordination, coordination of air assets, detainees, information operations, press information coordination etc...

The next day the team processed in at Fort Campbell, checked the exercise facilities, and had the opportunity to do the first reconnaissance to the shopping facilities inside the base. MNC NE personnel also received a briefing on the exercise. Then MajGen Jan Brun Andersen, Deputy Commander HQ MNC NE, and LtCol Ralf Schipke presented our experiences gained in Afghanistan. MajGen Andersen underlined the role of the Headquarters ISAF as a higher Headquarters for Regional Command East (RC E) in Afghanistan. This was also a lesson identified during last year's exercise at Fort Bragg that the US forces still would have to get used to be under a multinational command such as the Headquarters ISAF.

GENERAL'S

Anna Galyga - Sir, how would you assess the importance of such exercises like Unified Endeavour? Are they a necessity or rather enrichment of the process of mission preparation, especially in the context of their multinational character?

MajGen J. B. Andersen: No headquarters, no unit, and no nation that form up a Regional Command can operate without such an exercise. And multinational character of such exercises is perhaps one of the most important points, especially when we are talking about Regional Commands that are primarily set up by one nation.

If you are used to working only in your national environment, it is a big challenge to cooperate with people from other nations. You have to communicate with people for whom English is not a mother tongue. But language is only one part; there is also the way that we have been brought up, the way we look at the world, the way we have been trained as soldiers in our homelands. It is important to understand that despite applying the same rules of engagement or Standing Operating Procedures (SOPs), it is difficult to agree on one area for people coming from 39 countries.

But you cannot train multinationalism without getting involved in such exercises. You cannot learn it by reading a book; you have to meet people, train with them before you go to the mission and face difficulties in all those areas where we have a different perception of life.

- How was Unified Endeavour 08 different or similar to Unified Endeavour 07, in which MNC NE personnel also participated in 2006?

Unified Endeavour 08-1

By Kim Matzen, DNK A

In 2006, prior to the mission in Afghanistan, personnel from Multinational Corps Northeast supported the 82nd Airborne Division (DIV) during its Mission Rehearsal Exercise (MRE) at Fort Bragg, North Carolina, USA, by replicating the Headquarters ISAF. Since the Exercise Directors were impressed by the effort made by our team, last year our Headquarters was asked again to take part in another Mission Rehearsal Exercise codenamed Unified Endeavour 08-1 and support this time the 101st Airborne Division at Fort Campbell, which is situated on the border between two American states – Kentucky and Tennessee, 60 km from the town of Nashville.

Our team consisting of 19 multinational soldiers, full of aspirations and energy, left the Baltic Barracks at two o'clock in the morning on 28th September. After 25 hours of travelling, upon our arrival at the hotel in Clarksville, our aspirations were still the same, but the energy was on a considerably lower level...

Initial problems with communication contributed to the slow start of the



exercise but this gave the MNC NE personnel additional time to become fully acquainted with the scenario and the role we were to play. Due to the fact that we were only 19 persons replicating the Headquarters ISAF with its 1200 personnel, some of us had to cover more than just one role. This was not a problem since

least some representation during the dark hours. WO Wroński, our ISAF nightshift expert, again got the task to run the nightshift being supported by one officer only.

VIEW



Unified Endeavour 08 was very much different in many respects. First of all, the 101st Division was not as ready as the 82nd was. They had not undergone the same amount of training because they still had four months left. And I think the 82nd was deploying in less than two months after the exercise and I would say that was the ideal structure of the exercise. On the other hand, the 101st Division has gained a lot of experience, which they can use during these four months of training. And if they have any questions or areas in which we can assist them, we are more than happy to do so.

- Were the goals of the exercise Unified Endeavour 08 met?

Basically, we should leave this assessment to the 101st Division, but in my opinion they gained a lot of good ideas of what the purpose of ISAF Headquarters is and how ISAF Headquarters really works. We shared our experience and presented rules of engagement, regulations and Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) to them. They learned from people who were participating in their own training and deployment and who were preparing lessons learned for successors. Even though we did not benefit from the exercise to the same extent as we did last year, I am quite sure that the 101st appreciates our assistance.

But we also have to keep in mind that there is a difference between the Americans serving at Regional Command East and all the rest of the soldiers in Afghanistan, since Regional Command East also forms up the main part of the US-led Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF), which ISAF is not a part of. Playing these two roles as OEF and ISAF and the coordination between both is very important.

Acting as the Headquarters ISAF was not the only task we had during the exercise. We also met in person with the exercise participants from the 101st Division in order to pass them the experience and situational awareness specific to their area. It turned out that at this stage the 101st Division was not really prepared to participate in the exercise of such magnitude. It was clear to us that Unified Endeavour was conducted too early in comparison with their level of preparations for the mission as Regional Command East. But for us playing the role of the Headquarters ISAF probably made our life easier and at the same time rewarding. We had enough time and good opportunities to discuss and educate our counterparts in the 101st Division.

Besides completing exercise tasks, which remained within limits of our capabilities, we also had good opportunities to do other things, for example shopping around in the PX facilities, where good prices on clothing, shoes and electronics could be found. That was not all though. To our surprise, during the weekend



we were able to admire either the remarkable nature of Tennessee or interesting attractions a musical town like Nashville provides. In general, we were divided into three teams, one team focusing on shopping in Nashville, the second on cultural life of Nashville and finally the mountain team visiting the Smokey Mountains.

Even though it is debatable which experiences were more valuable, there is no doubt that the most unique moment was the American football game between the Tennessee Titans and Atlanta Falcons. Our extremely helpful support team at Fort Campbell put a lot of effort into getting tickets for the game and it all ended up with a personal invitation from the Tennessee Titans owner, Bud Adams. We were asked to join him in his personal VIP suite and watch the game from there. We had full VIP treatment exceeding our highest expectations. This is something even most Americans can only dream about. VIP No. 1 was of course MajGen J. B. Andersen, who had the opportunity to shake hands with the Danish kicker Morten Andersen playing for the Atlanta Falcons, the game officials and even some nice cheerleaders from the Tennessee Titans. At that moment, everybody in the team wished to be a general...

On Sunday afternoon the reality sneaked back up on us. The nightshift began. Revitalized after a terrific weekend, the team reoccupied the positions on Monday morning and continued the exercise. In general the training gained more momentum, and the 101st Division also seemed to increase the pace and use new knowledge, which made them interact with us more – unfortunately reducing the time available for power shopping.

To conclude, from my point of view, it was worth the effort. Not only did we play the role of the Headquarters ISAF, which helped the training audience to gain a better understanding of their role in Afghanistan, but we also had the chance to share our experiences. In terms of social life, our multinational team had a good time together with the Americans. During the weekend we could even experience 'the American way of life' as well as their extraordinary hospitality, both inside and outside the base. This kind of hospitality is difficult to match. Another thing that impressed me was the appreciation for soldiers in general, which you experience anywhere you go. It would be nice if the Europeans showed similar appreciation for the uniformed.

Cultural mix

The notion of culture belongs to hot issues while discussing multinationalism and globalization. The overlapping of national behaviours, introducing foreign customs and vanishing others actually brings matters to a head. But the discussion could be also moved to the area of answering the questions who I am and what my culture is. Why not to replace rejecting foreign impact on our culture with “exporting” uniqueness of our own culture abroad?

My Culture is Your Culture

Interestingly enough is to claim that a shift between different countries – and at the same time cultures – would be even more absorbing to study. Does culture really decide upon the way we think and act? Where is the border between culture and individual behaviour? And finally, is it really such a problem to switch from one culture to another?

Every human being is an individual capable of independent thinking and acting. However, he or she is also a social being with a cultural identity that gives a feeling of belonging to a group or culture. The whole of shared values, norms, habits, symbols, but also ideas or

even highly regarded heroes determines the way we are and makes us distinctive as a group. Nevertheless, these indicators can be identified only when compared and contrasted with another group or culture. Mutual contacts are therefore essential.

Obviously travelling or visiting another country gives a chance to grasp cultural differences. But only after a few months of being abroad the phenomenon of a culture shock is expected to appear. Although it is often neglected or ignored, it may bring purely physical symptoms and change a mission or a duty time into a nightmare.

Referring to Hofstede's ideas, moving to a different country means encountering new things that provoke strong feelings of curiosity and excitement. But this "honeymoon" stage cannot last forever and soon disorientation and sense of inadequacy occur. These feelings are later replaced by frustration and anger, which result from language problems or unfamiliarity of cultural code and procedures.

As the time goes by, secrets of the new culture are being slowly uncovered and it is possible to reach a certain psychological balance and to start to feel comfortable. Finally, the person realizes that the new culture has

both positive and negative aspects and is able to profit from it becoming more or less fluent in both cultures. From the perspective of military personnel who tend to change their places of occupation, "reversed" culture shock shall also be discussed, since after years spent away from home, a mother culture also becomes distant and strange.

Complete distinctiveness versus distinctive completeness

Multinational character of the Corps provokes questions on the actual results and possible limitations of multinationalism. Do our cultures remain totally untouched? Or do we freely include into our culture customs and behaviours from others and create a new hybrid

culture? Is there a culture that dominates others? Or maybe the Corps has found another solution for these intercultural relations?

It seems hardly likely that people from nine countries would have no influence on each other. Similarly, temporary service abroad would probably not result in a total mixture of customs and cultures. Having rejected the two extremes, the

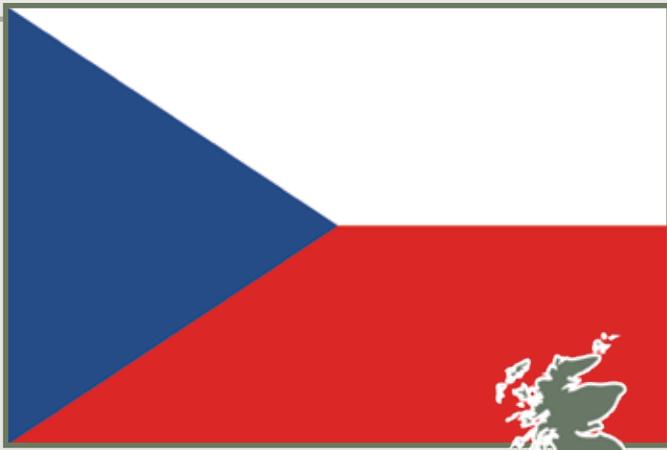
moderate solution may be chosen to more adequately reflect the intercultural relations in the Corps. People do influence each other showing their own customs, presenting their countries and sharing experiences. Even though the Polish culture could be viewed as supreme since the Headquarters is situated in Poland, in fact all nations' cultures are distinctive and not dominated.

It is interesting to notice that Szczecin, a home garrison for the Corps, has become a kind of bridge between nine nations and cultures of the Corps. Typical mosaic of various influences exerted upon the city has been minimized within the Baltic Barracks giving way to across-border coexistence.

Celebrating national events such as Danish Jule-gløgg, German Oktoberfest or Polish Armed Forces' Day serve as good examples of promoting national cultures. However, social life is not limited to events only. There are several clubs such as the Allied Sports Club, Allied Officers' Club, Non-Commissioned Officers' Club, Enlisted Club and Ladies' Club that actively involve members from different nations. Last but not least, there is ordinary daily routine, working together on tasks and problems, conversations in coffee corners or friendly greetings in the corridor. We are a community. And many of these signs of integration are continued in other than work spheres of life when the gates of the Baltic Barracks are closed.

One of the most frequently used words at the Headquarters is "multinational". Nouns derived from this word actually went to two directions – "multinationalism" and "multinationality". As the reality tends to be perverse – most of us got used to the form "multinationality" instead of "multinationalism", which is more widely used in British English.

On the following pages MNC NE members will share with you their impressions on working at HQ MNC NE and living in Poland. You will also find a lot of information about their exceptional home countries.



MAJ Jaroslav STOJAN, CZE A

“What I learnt about customs is that I cannot remember them all and that they differ”

Interoperability is definitely good – we are using different techniques and here we can influence each other. I can develop what I know from the Czech Army in the multinational environment and it really works.

Working abroad and meeting people from different nations and getting to know their traditions and customs is definitely a challenge but at the same it is also a big fun.

We are only two Czechs in here but I think together with Slovaks we create a nice band. But I do not avoid meeting other nations, the greater mixture of nations, the better.

Cultural differences play a minor role for me; I cannot see anything so important that would bother our cooperation or friendship. Besides, I think differences spring rather from the personalities of different people than national behaviour. And for example Czechs and Poles are like brothers...

Tasty borrowings

I am quite into the Polish cuisine and I have already learned how to cook traditional dishes such as “żurek” or “bigos” and this is what I can bring back home to the Czech Republic from Poland. Another example is German “Eintopf” – a kind of dish, in which you put anything you can find and just boil it several minutes. From the Danish side it could be the sense of humour but it is related to the personality more than the nationality again.

Official name:
Česká republika
Czech Republic

Motto:
“Pravda vítězí”
“Truth prevails”

Official language:
Czech

Government:
Parliamentary republic

Capital:
Prague

Area:
78,866 km²

Population:
10,349,372 (2007 estimate)

Currency:
Czech koruna

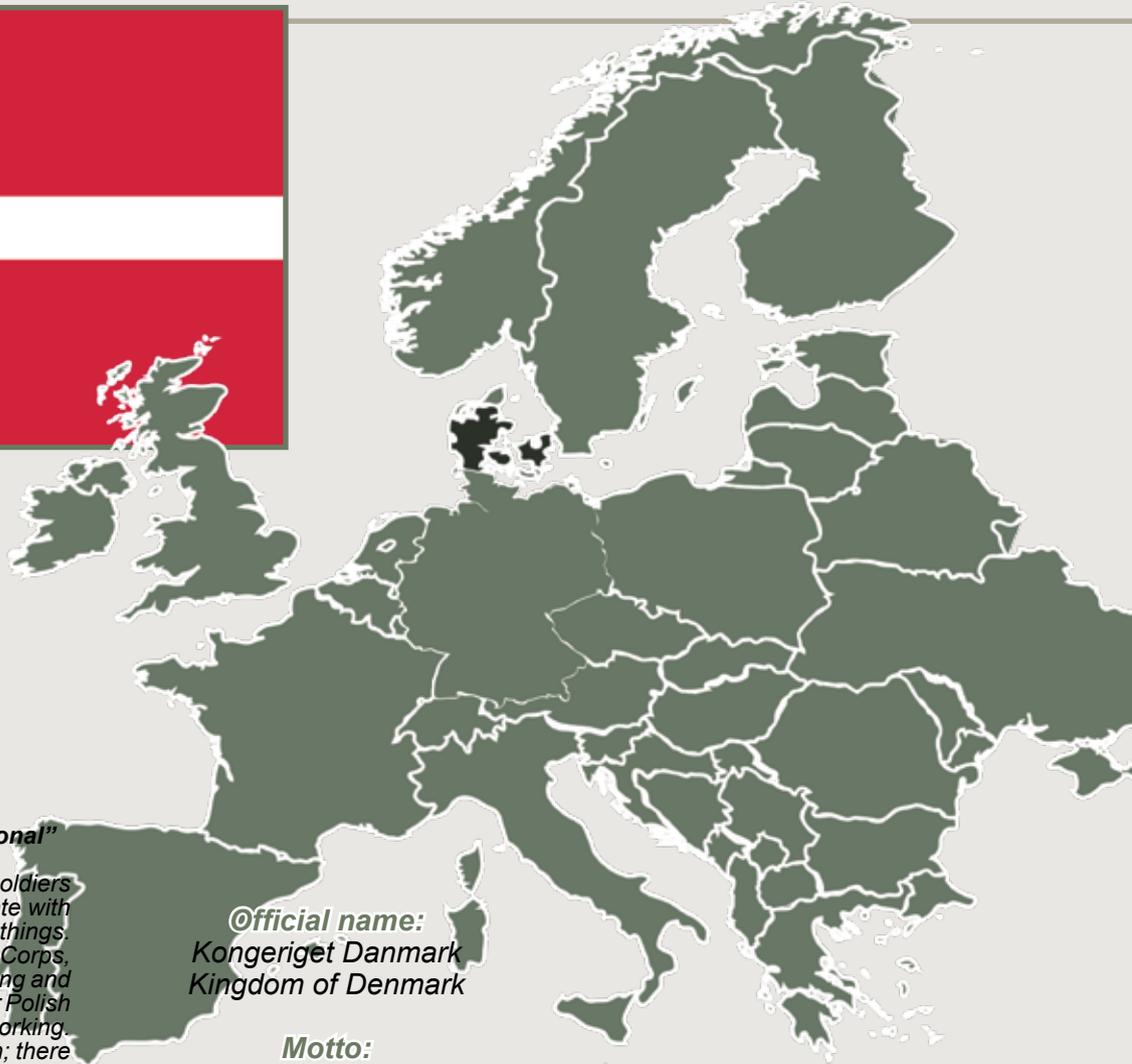
Did you know that?
Czechs are the world’s heaviest consumers of beer.
A famous film director Miloš Forman was born in Čáslav/ Czechoslovakia.

28th October – Independent Czechoslovak State Day

The patriotic efforts of several generations to establish an independent state culminated on 28th October 1918, when Czechoslovakia led by President Masaryk took its place at the table of nations. The newly democratic state was named Czechoslovakia and it was one of the successor states of Austria-Hungary that was dissolved at the end of World War I. The Czech lands were among the most economically developed on the entire territory of Austria-Hungary.

17th November – Freedom and Democracy Day

On 17th November Czechs commemorate two remarkable events – the first is the student demonstration against Nazi occupation in 1939 and the second is the demonstration against the communist government, which led to the so called Velvet Revolution of 1989. This revolution ended the communist regime in former Czechoslovakia – the first democratic elections since 1946 were held in June 1990 and were important steps towards democratic evolution of Czechoslovakia.



MAJ Kim NIELSEN, DNK A

„It is our strength to be multinational”

For me it is very important to meet soldiers from other countries and to cooperate with them, also in their way of doing things. There are different cultures at the Corps, which is also visible in the staff working and it means we can learn the German or Polish or Lithuanian or any other ways of working. There is not only the Danish solution; there are 8 other nations' solutions. And if we take something from all solutions and put them together into one – then we have an excellent solution. But still, we should learn to be tolerant towards each other. Not only Danes know how things should be done.

People...

I always take interest in the local people so me and my wife meet a lot of civilians from the outside, not only our neighbours, but also other children's parents from the school. We go to their houses to chat and then we can see their culture here. People are open-minded and they like to talk to us. But those who do not know us would rather keep us at distance.

Abiding memories...

What will I remember most? Probably I will have the Permanent Headquarters period in my memory because we showed that it is possible to successfully cooperate from the top to the lowest level. But I will also remember the people, the barracks and the development in the area of Szczecin – how it looked when I came here and how it looked after one or two years.

For me this stay in Szczecin is just another mission but it will have a greater impact on my family. My younger child has already learned to speak Polish, the older one has started to communicate in English effectively and it is a good thing. My wife had a very good time when she was together with our children at home the whole days.

Official name:
Kongeriget Danmark
Kingdom of Denmark

Motto:
Guds hjælp, Folkets kærlighed,
Danmarks styrke
“The Help of God, the Love of the
People, the Strength of Denmark”

Official language:
Danish

Government:
Parliamentary democracy and
Constitutional monarchy

Capital:
Copenhagen

Area:
43,094 km²

Population:
5,470,919 (2007 estimate)

Currency:
Danish krone

Did you know that?
No one in Denmark is more than
50km from the sea.
The world's children spend
5 billion hours a year playing
with LEGO bricks invented in
Denmark.

Constitution Day of 5th June

5th June marks the anniversary of the first Danish Constitution of 1849 (the latest amendment was made on 5th June 1953), which established Denmark as a constitutional monarchy. The day is “celebrated” around the country with political rallies, which especially formerly were in the nature of popular festivals. This day is also Father's Day in Denmark.

The Big Prayer Day

The Big Prayer Day falls on the fourth Friday after Easter. It combines several lesser fasting and prayer days and has been celebrated since 1686. Both the previous evening and on Great Prayer Day itself, people eat hot wheat buns and especially in Copenhagen it has been common to go for a walk on Langelinie, on the ramparts around Christianshavn or in ‘Kastellet’ (The Citadel), where the student choir also gathered to sing.



MS Marek MÄGI, EST A

“Eyes wide open”

I had a totally different view about Poland before coming here, but it is a nice country. It is Europe just like all western countries. And I just like being here; if it is possible, I am going to stay in Poland.

Working in a multinational environment gives me experience and I learn about other countries – how they think and what they do. It surprises me that everything works very well here. There are no misunderstandings and we are able to finalize the work. My previous experience from a multinational formation in Latvia was a bit different.

Different or same?

We are all doing things about the same way. But Polish or German people are very open-minded and tolerant. We Estonians are rather calm and quiet.

I learned from Germans their “Ordnung” and Danes showed me how to prepare work writing everything down. Poles are sure things will be done and just like we do they claim that everything, even the impossible, is actually possible. But when I hear them say “super”, it means some problems are coming.

Let’s meet

Estonians, Lithuanians and Latvians are very close; we visit each other and have parties together. We usually speak Russian but if we do not find the right word we use English. But I also meet people from the Corps and from the outside. That is why I know that I like Polish soups or German “Wursten”. I have a very nice neighbour. She is a retired Russian teacher and she teaches my wife to speak Polish. In fact, this stay is very important for my family. My wife has learned how to live in a different than Estonian environment. My son already speaks English very well and knows a few words in German. They are both learning. It is a mind-broadening experience and my son knows much more about the world than I did when I was at his age.



24th February – Estonian Independence Day

Official name:
Eesti Vabariik
Republic of Estonia

Motto:
“Mu isamaa on minu arm”
“My Fatherland, My Happiness and Joy”

Official language:
Estonian

Government:
Parliamentary republic

Capital:
Tallinn

Area:
45,226 km²

Population:
1,342,409 (2007 estimate)

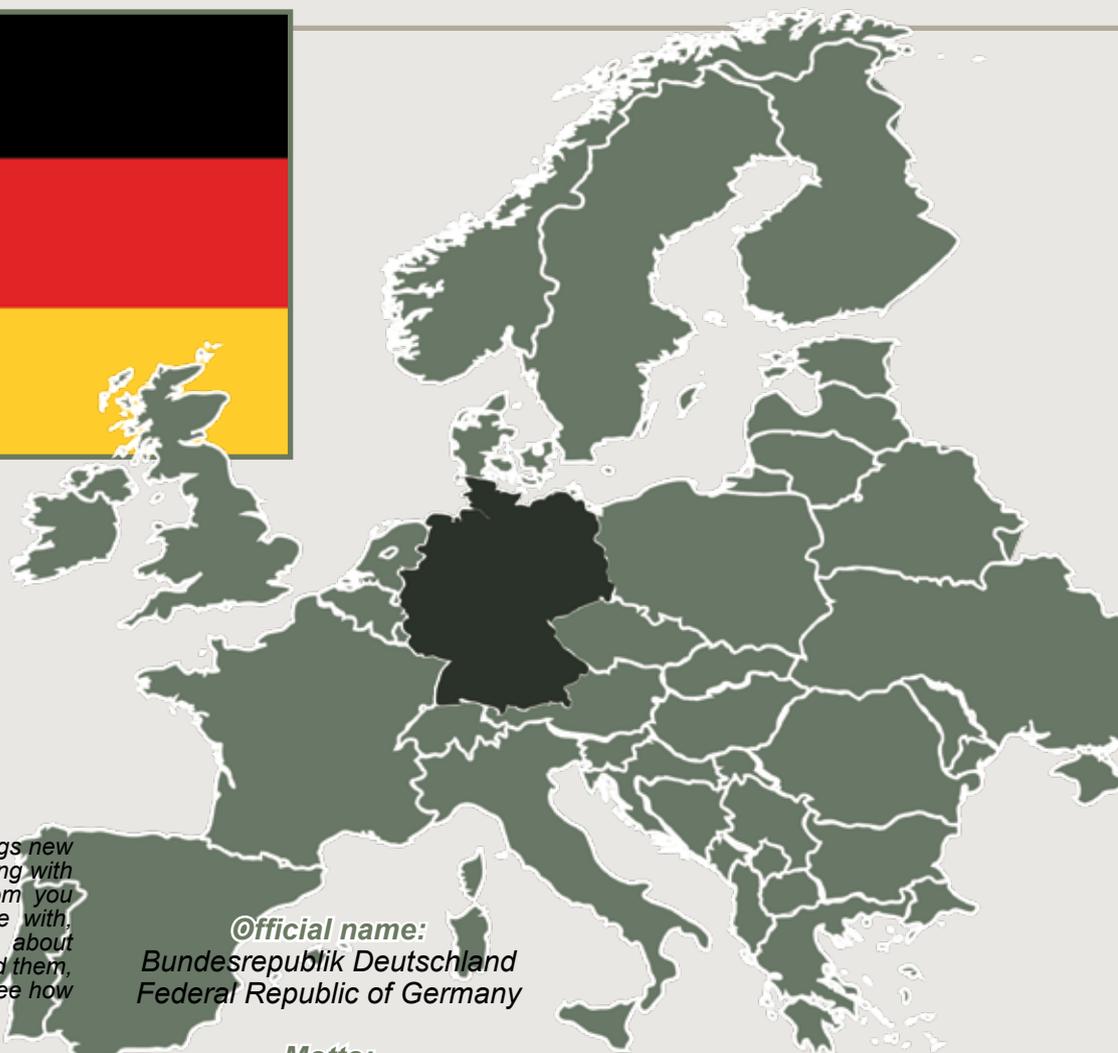
Currency:
Estonian kroon

Did you know that?
Estonian is one of the world’s smaller cultural languages. Over a third of the nation live in Tallinn.

The most important Estonian event celebrated nationally is the commemoration of the Estonian Independence that was proclaimed on 24th February 1918. However, sovereignty of the country lasted only 22 years; afterwards Estonia fell first under Soviet and then Nazi occupation eventually becoming part of the Soviet Union. But even during that time it was common to raise national colours that day, under the cover of night, though. Since Estonia regained its full independence in 1991, the event has been freely celebrated. Military parades, awarding ceremonies and receptions take place that day. The year of 2008 is proclaimed a jubilee to commemorate the 90th Anniversary of the Republic of Estonia.

23rd - 24th June – Victory Day / Midsummer Day

Victory Day of 23rd June commemorates the Estonian War of Independence (1918-1920) during which some important victorious battles were fought. The following day is called Midsummer Day and it has been celebrated by Estonians since the ancient times. After the arrival of Christianity, it was renamed St. John’s Day (Jaanipäev). The best-known ritual is lighting a bonfire and jumping over it. Fire is to frighten away mischievous spirits and to ensure good harvest, thus the bigger fire, the better. On this day Estonians gather to dance and sing.



MS Alexej MARTENS, DEU A

“Multinationalism is always a challenge”

Being in a new country always brings new experiences, you get used to working with people from different nations whom you have never met or worked before with, Danes for example. I also learn about them, which helps me to understand them, to learn about their culture and to see how they work and what they think.

People...

Danish people are really friendly and you would never hear anything negative from them, and if you need help – they are always there. They are not in a hurry, they do their jobs but they also have the time to talk to people. Polish people are comfortable and friendly. The same refers to Czechs and Slovaks – in Afghanistan I always worked together with some of them.

Feeling fine here

If it was up to me, I would like to stay here because of my friends and hobby – hunting. My daughter loves Szczecin and has a lot of friends here. Although she is a little bit lazy to speak Polish, she understands everything. And my wife? On the one hand she misses the job she had in Germany but on the other hand she has a lot to do here. She studies English and meets her friends, for example from Lithuania. We also have Polish neighbours and we visit each other. To make myself understood at first I had to speak Russian and a little bit of German then and after one year I could also speak Polish. If you want to visit anybody in Germany, you have to make an appointment first. In Poland you just knock on the door and say “Hi!”. This way life is much easier.

Do we meet people from the Corps? A lot of people do not understand a soldier's life. If you work for 8 hours with the same people then you are glad to be home. But during the weekend – yes, I meet my friends from the Corps, neighbours and my hunting colleagues.

Official name:
Bundesrepublik Deutschland
Federal Republic of Germany

Motto:
“Einigkeit und Recht und Freiheit”
“Unity and Justice and Freedom”

Official language:
German

Government:
Federal Parliamentary republic

Capital:
Berlin

Area:
357,021 km²

Population:
82,210,000 (2007 estimate)

Currency:
Euro

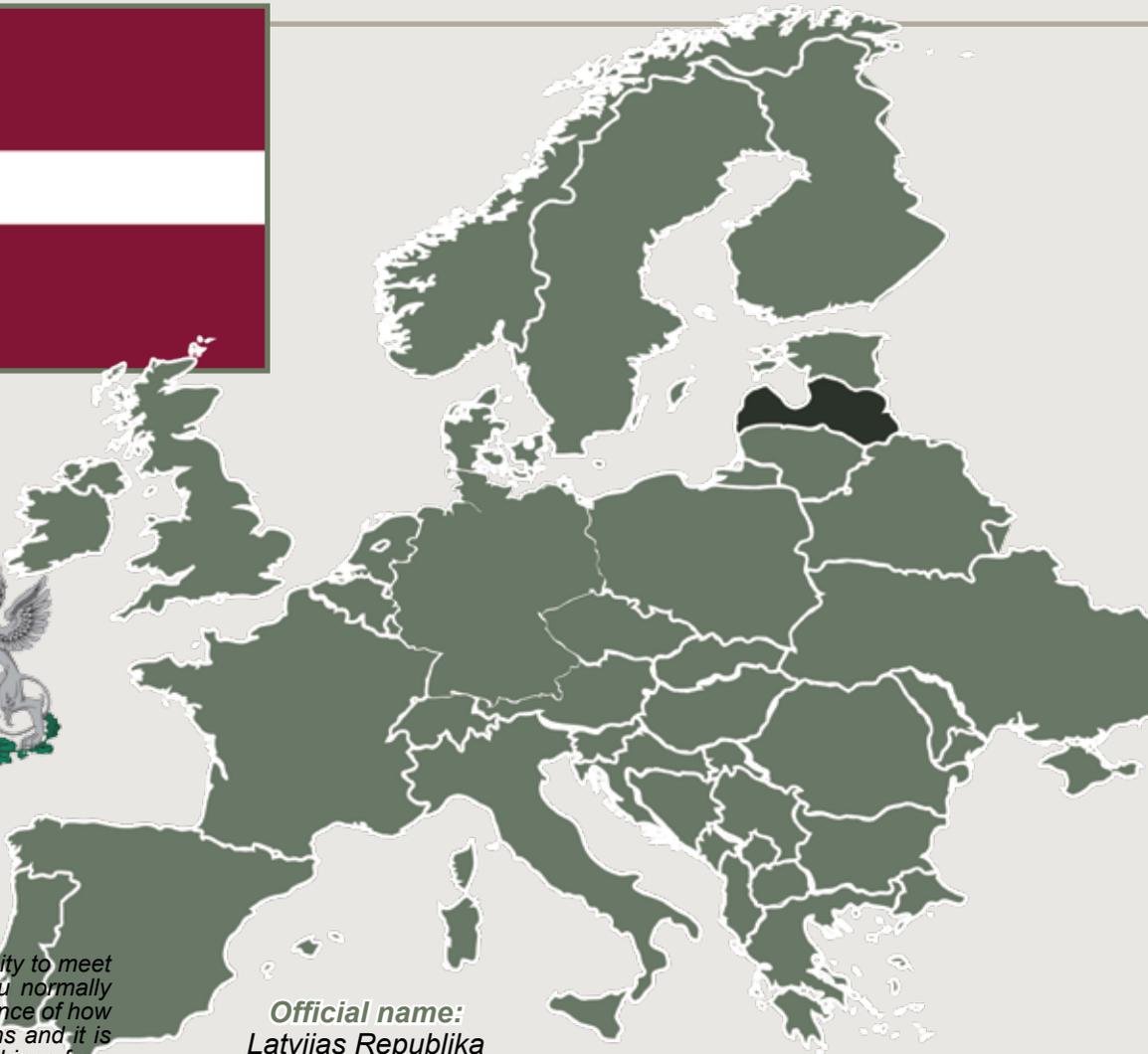
Did you know that?
Berlin has 3 opera houses, 53 theatres, more than 100 cinemas and about 170 museums and galleries.
Germany is said to start in the 16th century the tradition of decorating christmas trees, as we know it now.

3rd October - German Unity Day

Day of German Unity of 3rd October commemorates the anniversary of German reunification in 1990. Two former German states – the Federal Democratic Republic of Germany and the German Democratic Republic reunited under Article 23 of the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Germany. The symbol of the Cold War, namely the Berlin Wall, which literally and figuratively was dividing Eastern and Western Germans, had already been torn down a year before.

1st May - Labour Day

Labour Day of 1st May refers to social movements of industrial workers in the early 20th century. It was supposed to symbolise the new-found unity between the state and the German people. During the period of the 3rd Reich the holiday was abused for other political purposes. The Federal Republic of Germany reestablished the 1st May as a National Holiday giving it its original character again. Since many years it is more or less a tradition in Germany to use 1st May for well-organised political demonstrations.



CAPT Intar PAZANS, LVA A

Multinationalism gives opportunity to meet quite a lot of people whom you normally would not meet. It gives experience of how things are done by other nations and it is a kind of opportunity to look at things from a different angle and to see how other people perceive different issues.

People and their cultures

Almost all nations of the Corps come from Europe and I would not say that there are great cultural differences between them. But of course there are different traditions and events that are being celebrated. Personally, I do not split people in nations because every one of us is a professional in his field and this is what actually matters. What I am going to remember most is a good teamwork we had here ahead of a number of important events such as Full Operational Capability and also the mission.

Do I meet more people in national or multinational environment? Actually I would say it is 50/50 since we are only two Latvians here and we have our national issues but I also have good friends from Denmark, Germany or Poland.

Impressions

I came to this Corps in Szczecin three and a half years ago. To see how the city develops and grows is really impressive. It is good that there is an international school where my son meets a lot of kids from other nations; they play together and learn from each other. My wife also takes part in various activities organised by the Ladies' Club and it is an opportunity for her to meet new people and to get new ideas, new recipes etc.

Official name:
Latvijas Republika
Republic of Latvia

Motto:
"Tēvzemei un Brīvībai"
"For Fatherland and Freedom"

Official language:
Latvian

Government:
Parliamentary republic

Capital:
Riga

Area:
64,589 km²

Population:
2,270,700 (2007 estimate)

Currency:
Lats

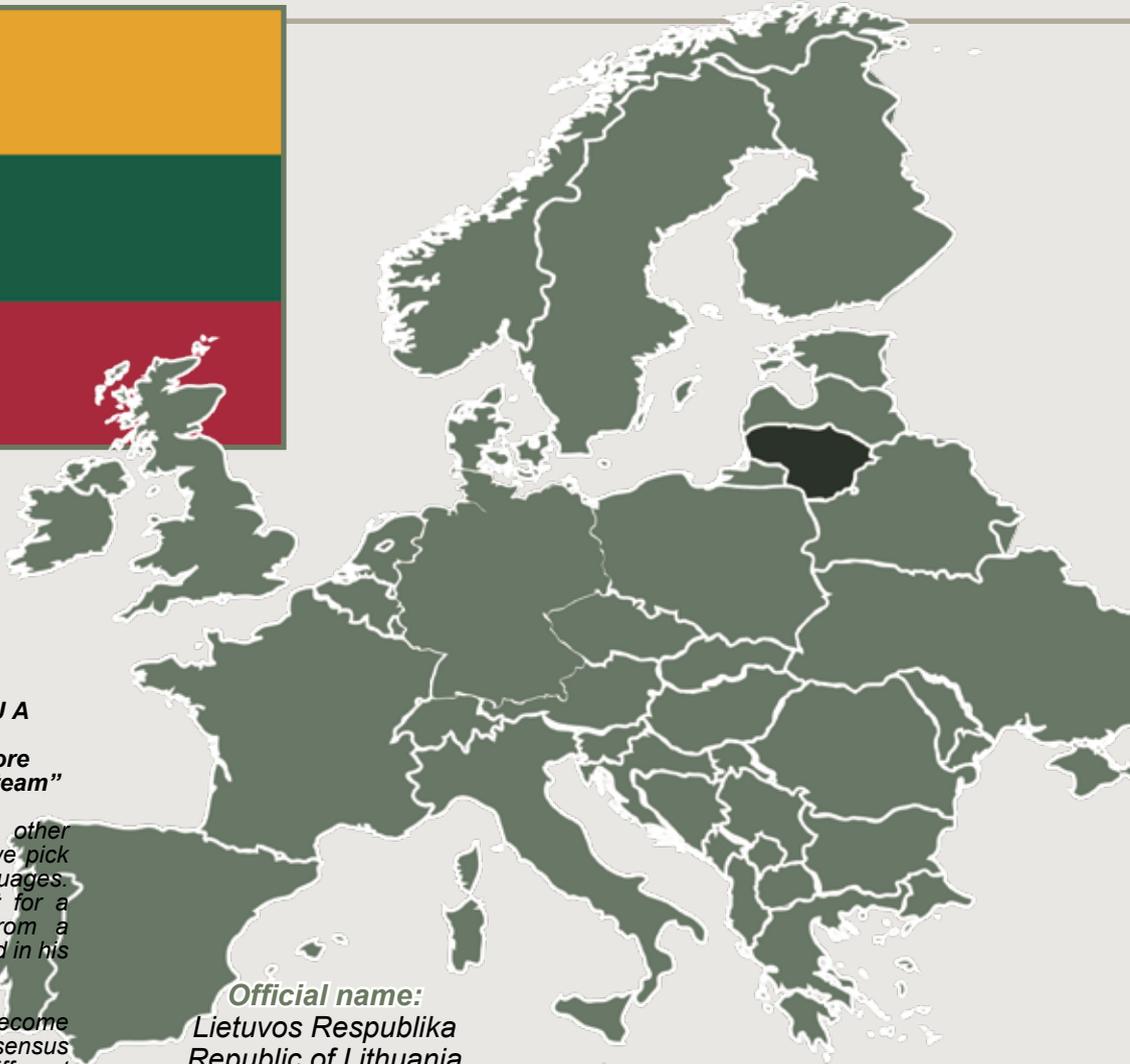
Did you know that?
The largest piece of amber ever was found in Liepaja. It was 123cm long and weighted 60kg. The widest waterfall in Europe is found in Kuldiga - it is 240 m wide.

18th November – Proclamation of the Republic of Latvia

On 18th November 1918 in what is nowadays the National Theatre in Rīga, the Republic of Latvia was proclaimed as an independent state. In a favourable situation, Latvian political groups made their dream of establishing a sovereign country come true. The first period of existence of the Republic of Latvia lasted up to 17th June 1940, when Soviet forces occupied the country. More than 51 years passed before the independent Republic of Latvia was restored on 21st August 1991.

23rd-24th June – Līgo Day and Jāņi

This is the biggest traditional Latvian festival, having a deep symbolic meaning for Latvians and known in other countries, too. The Līgo-Festival is on 23rd June, with Jāņi on the following day – 24th June. It coincides with the summer solstice, and the festivities include many ancient traditions: gathering wild flowers and cutting boughs, making wreaths of oak-leaves and flowers, decorating houses and animals, burning a ceremonial bonfire and singing songs with the 'līgo' refrain. Ritual food includes Jāņi cheese, with caraway seed and barley beer.



MAJ Aleksandras PETRULIS, LTU A

“It is not only about work; it is more about integration, about being a team”

We exchange experiences with other nations and in a less formal way we pick up new words from other languages. It is always a good starting point for a conversation with a colleague from a different nation when you say a word in his or her language.

We also learn diplomacy or how to become more flexible and reach consensus because we all have tasks and different ideas how to solve them but finally we have to come to common understanding. Time for accomplishing these tasks is sufficient but sometimes people do things and wait 5 minutes prior the deadline, they do not break any rules but sometimes it is annoying when you get their contributions 5 minutes before 16:00 on Friday afternoon...

Pros and cons

I will remember my friends, surroundings, Szczecin, the Polish language...Of course this stay in Szczecin is really important for my military career, but it is also a positive thing for my kids to be at Szczecin International School environment. English is definitely a big advantage, but syllabuses are different and I think it might be difficult for them to return to school in Lithuania.

The only disadvantage I can see is the 1000 km from home. Even though we can communicate with family and friends if something happens, somebody else has to help them.

Lithuanian ties

There are about 50 Lithuanian families in Zachodniopomorskie Voivodeship, even our own relatives who have been living here since the times of World War II, so we organise meetings and one of the biggest events is our Independence Day celebrated on 16th February. There is also a museum in Myślubórz (70km south of Szczecin) and a monument dedicated to two Lithuanian pilots, who crashed there after flying more than 6000 km across the Atlantic Ocean and having only 600 km ahead.

Official name:
Lietuvos Respublika
Republic of Lithuania

Motto:
“Tautos jėga vienybėje”
“The strength of the nation lies in unity”

Official language:
Lithuanian

Government:
Parliamentary republic

Capital:
Vilnius

Area:
65,200 km²

Population:
3,369,600 (2007 estimate)

Currency:
Lithuanian litas

Did you know that?
In 2009, Lithuania will celebrate its Millennium - the name Lithuania was mentioned for the first time in 1009 in the Annales Quedlinburgenses books. Kernave was the first capital of Lithuania.

16th February – Lithuanian Independence Day

Lithuanian Independence Day of 16th February goes back to 1918 when the Lithuanian Council signed “The Act of Lithuanian Independence”. Although the document proclaimed separation from influences of other countries, Lithuania achieved full sovereignty only after a few years. During the World War II Lithuania was occupied by the Soviets and Nazis, finally it was merged into the Soviet Union. During that time it was forbidden to celebrate 16th February. Lithuanians had to wait until 1989 to commemorate it again. On 11th March 1990 “The Act of 16th February” was restored and Lithuania became the first Soviet republic to declare its independence.

6th July – Lithuanian State Day

Lithuanian State Day is held in remembrance of Duke Mindaugas who was the only crowned King of Lithuania ever. He is known as “Wise Mindaugas” for uniting Lithuanian lands for the first time to more effectively oppose invasions of the Teutonic Knights Order. He also embraced Christianity to Lithuania, which gave Lithuania opportunity to enter the Christian Europe. The Pope crowned him on 6th July 1253. That summer day started to be celebrated as the day of European recognition of Lithuania.



LTC Tomasz NOJMILER, POL AF

„Military service members do not really differ from each other very much”

This is my first post in a corps headquarters. Working here is just great, particularly that I used to do slightly other things before.

Working at the HQ MNC NE means exchange of experiences, as each of the countries contributing to the Corps joined NATO in different times. Germany and Denmark have been NATO members longest.

During preparations for deployment I worked with colleagues from various divisions and nations of the Corps and everybody did their utmost. Also now as we are preparing for other events the atmosphere in the Corps is truly great. We are treating each other respectfully and respect the other nations' values.

Various working styles

Our various cultural backgrounds translate into working styles and ways. When it comes to solving a really difficult matter you can see that the Germans' approach is to solve it from A to Z. First, they define the problem and then take all steps to solve it. The Poles, on the other hand, are likely to approach the problem „head-on” and a combination of the ways ensures very good results. However, from my Afghan experiences I know that in instances when decisions have to be made immediately and there is no time for proper information exchange, language or cultural differences may make acting difficult.

Official name:
Rzeczpospolita Polska
Republic of Poland

Motto:
“Bóg, Honor, Ojczyzna”
“God, Honor, Fatherland”

Official language:
Polish

Government:
Parliamentary republic

Capital:
Warsaw

Area:
312,679 km²

Population:
38,518,241 (2007 estimate)

Currency:
Polish złoty

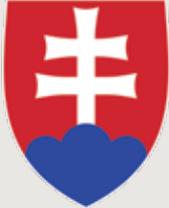
Did you know that?
The Pionier Cinema in Szczecin, opened in 1909, is the world's oldest cinema still in operation. Bialowieza forest on the Polish-Belarussian border is the last remaining ancient forest in Europe where the last free-living bisons live.

11th November – Polish Independence Day

Polish Independence Day of 11th November is held to remember the regaining of independence by Poland. In 1918, after 123 years of being partitioned by Austro-Hungary, Prussia and Russia, Poland reappeared on the map of Europe as a sovereign, democratic state. However, Polish people had to fight bloody battles to preserve their newly regained independence. Due to political reasons it was not allowed to celebrate this day during and after World War II. It was not until 1989 that 11th November became Poland's National Day again.

3rd May – The Constitution of 3rd May

The Day commemorates the Constitution of 3rd May 1791, which is generally recognized as Europe's first and the world's second modern codified constitution. It introduced political equality between townspeople and nobility and placed peasants under the protection of the government. The Constitution sought to supplant the existing anarchy fostered by some of the country's magnates with a more democratic, constitutional monarchy.



MAJ Radomír ČURNÝ, SVK A

“Taking working hours from Slovakia, techniques from Germany and food from Poland...”

This is a family Headquarters, everybody knows each other in our branch. We are a group of people that stick together, we are a good team- the best team I have ever had.

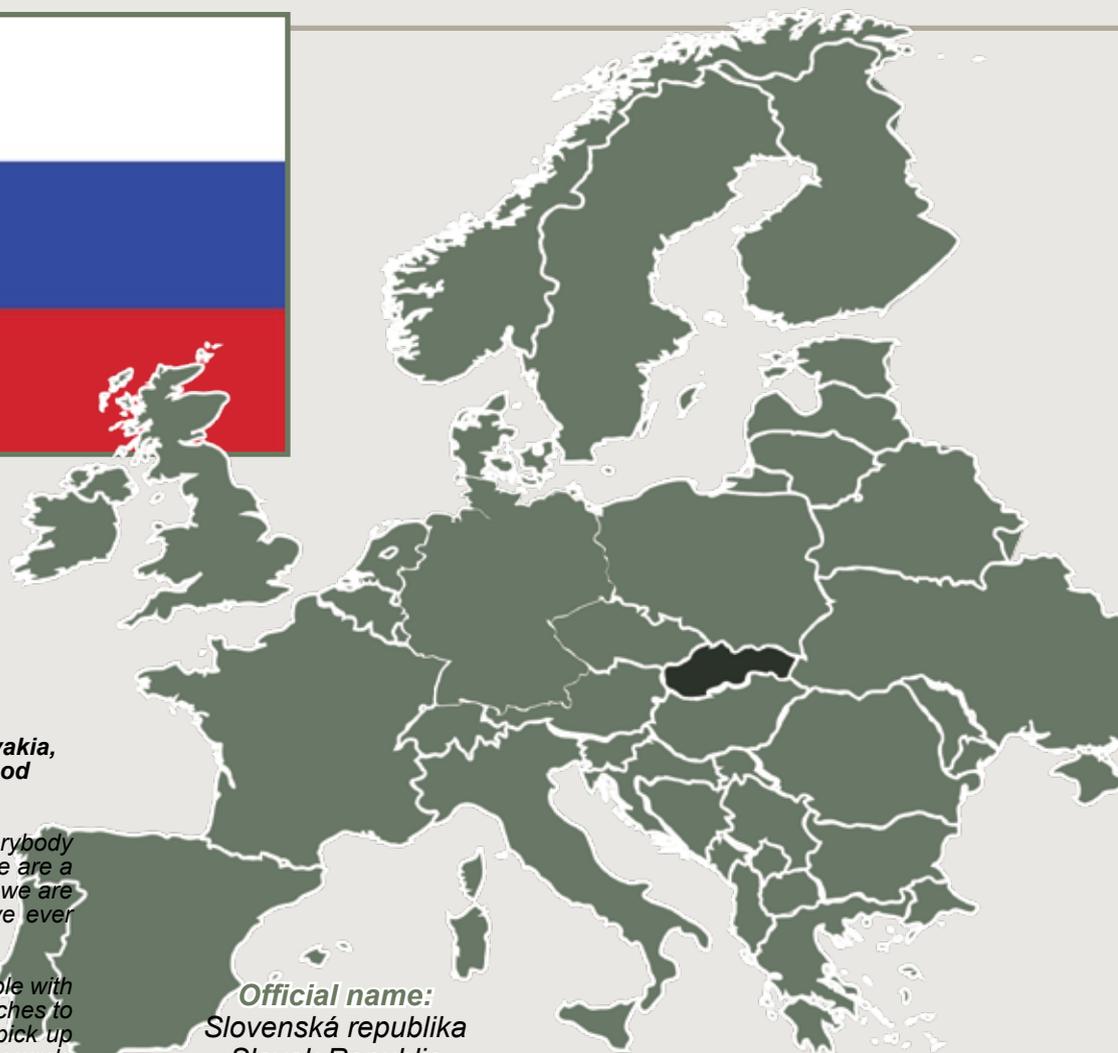
It is a challenge for me to meet people with different working styles and approaches to tasks and to learn from them – to pick up the best part that I can adopt in my work. Moreover, you are not tied by national regulations so you can become more flexible and creative. I also advertise my country always mentioning Slovakia.

Differences

Some nations, for example Germans, are constricted by procedures and rules, which may be perfect for soldiers – but when there is a very difficult situation they may start to lose their tempers. And some nations, like Danes, remain calm; they seem to be more flexible. I cannot evaluate myself but I think all former Eastern European countries are somewhere “between” Germany and Denmark. And I think there is a difference in leading a briefing or meeting – in my country there is a big gap between a superior and subordinates but I can see that for example in Denmark everybody is equal in the meeting and they do a lot of analysing before they decide on what to do.

Family...

We are lucky because my wife has been on a maternity leave so it is the same – here or in Slovakia. But when I was in Afghanistan for half a year it was a kind of test for her when she was alone with two kids. She handled that very well. Now it is easier for me to be at work when I know she can do it. And thanks to the mission we have become better friends. But staying in Poland is quite difficult for my children because they are learning a new language. They are not so open because they cannot understand their friends perfectly, but it is just my view.



Official name:
Slovenská republika
Slovak Republic

Motto:
“Nad Tatrou sa blýska”
“Lightning over the Tatras”

Official language:
Slovak

Government:
Parliamentary republic

Capital:
Bratislava

Area:
49,035 km²

Population:
5,447,502 (2007 estimate)

Currency:
Slovak koruna

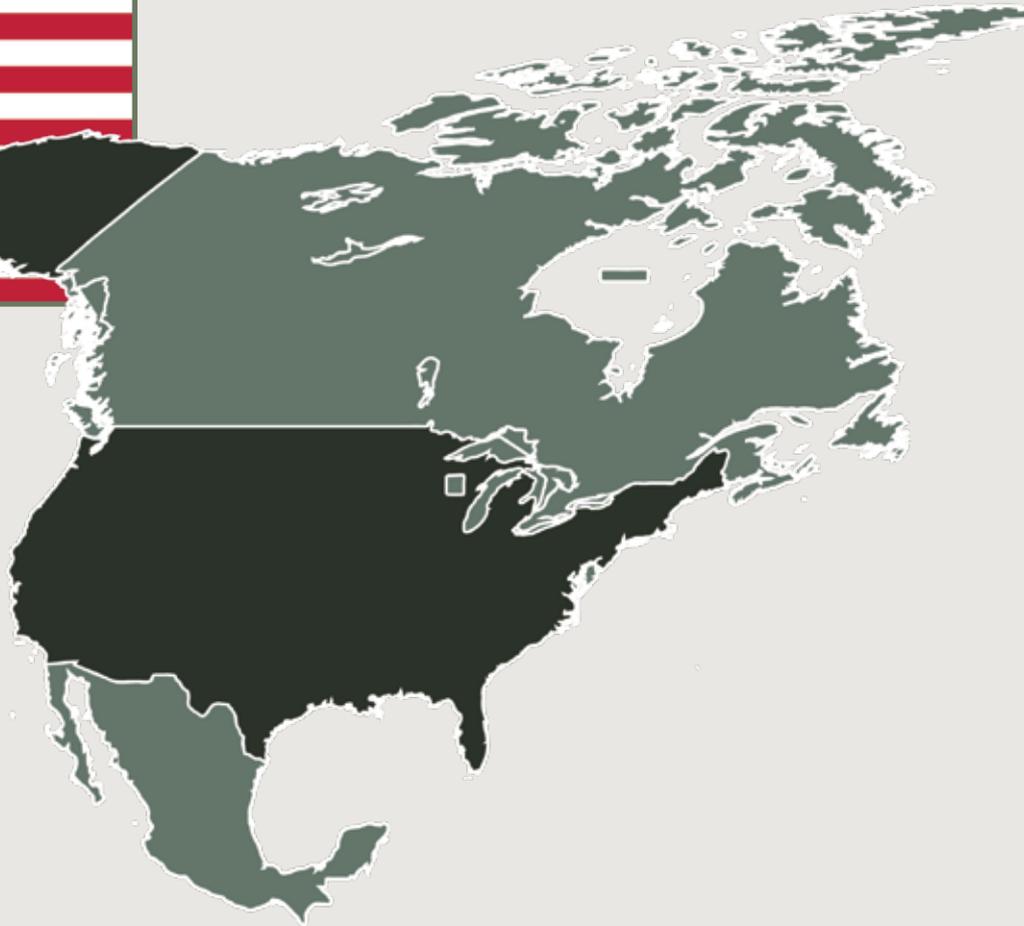
Did you know that?
Bratislava is the only capital city which borders two other countries - Austria and Hungary.
European geographical central point is located near village Kremnické Bane.

1st January - Day of Establishment of the Slovak Republic

On 1st January 1993 the Slovak Republic entered the world history as a new sovereign state by splitting from the former Czechoslovakia. It was a consequence of the Velvet Revolution in 1989, after which different ideas about the future of Czechoslovakia appeared. Since a satisfactory model of the coexistence of the Czech and Slovak nations was not found, it was agreed to dissolve Czechoslovakia peacefully. Thus “Velvet Revolution” was followed by “Velvet Divorce”. On 1st September 1992 Slovak Constitution was adopted and with the new year of 1993 two independent sovereign states emerged - the Slovak Republic and the Czech Republic.

17th November – Day of Fight for Democracy

On 17th November 1989, a series of public protests known as the Velvet Revolution began, which led to the downfall of Communist Party rule in Czechoslovakia. A transition government was formed in December 1989, Alexander Dubček was elected Chairman of the Federal Parliament and a dissident and drama writer Václav Havel – President of the Republic. With Havel as president, the students ended their strike and at the same time the Velvet Revolution. Afterwards, the first democratic elections since 1946 were held in June 1990.



MAJ Robert BAE, USA A

How often do you have opportunity not only to visit Germany or Poland but to work with Germans and Polish, get to know the bottom, not just the “cosmetic” buildings or history but how the people live and think? In the US Army you can spend 20 years and you would never have to work in a joint environment and for me it is also the first time in my 18-year career. I am going to remember it for long time.

Differences and similarities

This is a friendly environment with a lot of socials and I noticed people are more relaxed and polite here, comparing to the US. This is a very officer-heavy Headquarters, normally in the US Army we integrate a lot of NCOs into the unit. But here we do not separate each other by rank – officers and enlisted are really integrated.

I guess people are people in a sense, we may have different background but we all think the same way – we value our individual religion, families and friends. But there are many other things different here as well – obviously the living style, living conditions, even driving a vehicle on the road is different. But for me the main challenge is the language barrier which I do not have here in a working environment but I do when I go outside. It is sometimes hard when my next-door neighbour says “Hi” and that is everything – we cannot really communicate. And I still have difficult time calling the cab and trying to explain where I am and where I need to go so I always carry a little note with my address.

Missing...

I miss things like watching American football on Sundays, the convenience of eating out in the restaurants, shopping in the local US economy and generally the US support agencies and facilities on the base.

Getting settled here was not easy either but I told my kids “Hey, when you go back to States, how often are you going to find someone who actually was living in Europe for two years and travelled in all different places in Europe at that age? Very few”. So they should be very lucky and I feel very lucky too.

Official name:
United States of America

Motto:
“In God We Trust”

Official language:
English

Government:
Federal presidential constitutional republic

Capital:
Washington

Area:
9,826,630 km²

Population:
303,296,000 (2007 estimate)

Currency:
United States dollar

Did you know that?
US elections are always held on Tuesdays.
In 1939 there were 42 mil. automobiles in the world, from which 32 mil. were in the USA.

4th July – Independence Day

Independence Day commemorates the adoption of “The Declaration of Independence” on 4th July 1776, in which the original thirteen colonies formally declared their independence from the United Kingdom. This day is marked by many patriotic displays. Decorations and even clothing are all red, white and blue, the colours of the American flag. As a summer holiday, most celebrations take place outdoors with barbecues and picnics. Parades are often held in the morning while firework displays occur in the evenings in parks, town squares and fairgrounds.

Thanksgiving Day

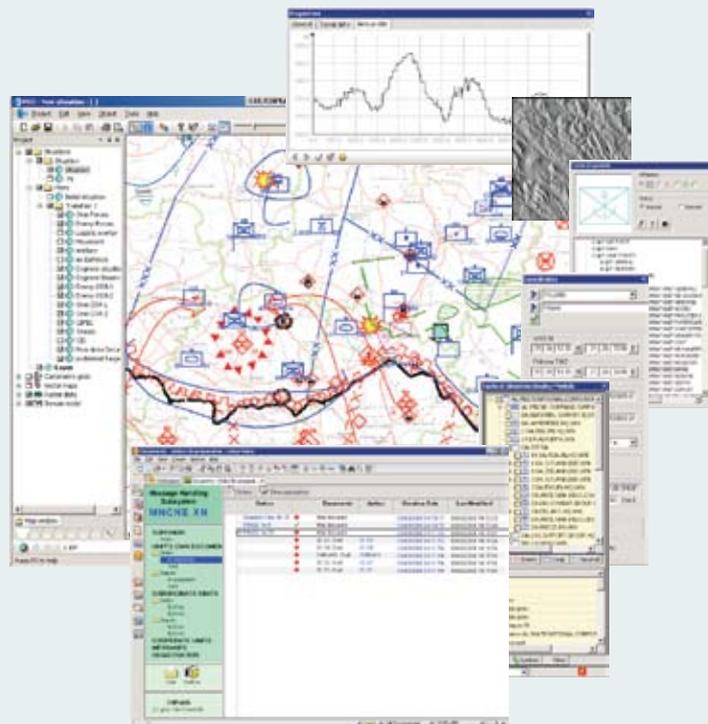
Thanksgiving Day is a traditional North American holiday to give thanks for the things one has at the conclusion of the harvest season. In the United States (as opposed to Canada), Thanksgiving is always on the fourth Thursday of November and part of a four day pause in school calendars. Many workers are given the day after off as well. Roasted turkey, bread stuffing, mashed potatoes with gravy, sweet potatoes, cranberry sauce and pumpkin pie are the foods most commonly associated with the holiday. The origin of the holiday dates back to 1621 when early settlers or “Pilgrims” of Plymouth Colony in Massachusetts feasted at the end of harvest with Native Americans of the Wampanoag people who helped them survive during their first years in the New World.

Command and Control Information System SZAFRAN

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.

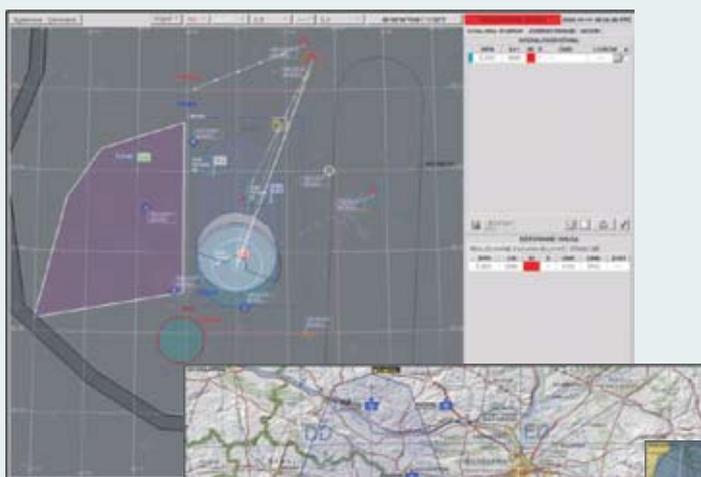
Operational capabilities

- Safe and secure multi-user access to the system,
- Visualization of current and planning battlefield situation on top of digital maps,
- Tactical symbols compatible with APP-6A,
- Estimation and assessment of terrain conditions (e.g. visibility & flooding zones, 3D),
- Support for plans creation and situation modelling,
- Common staff calculations (e.g. force ratio, resource aggregation),
- Simultaneous work on complex tasks like planning or command document preparation,
- Command post's work-flow organization, document management and distribution,
- Document templates in accordance with STANAG 2014 and ADatP-3 B11 and B12,
- Compliance with MIP Block 2 standards.



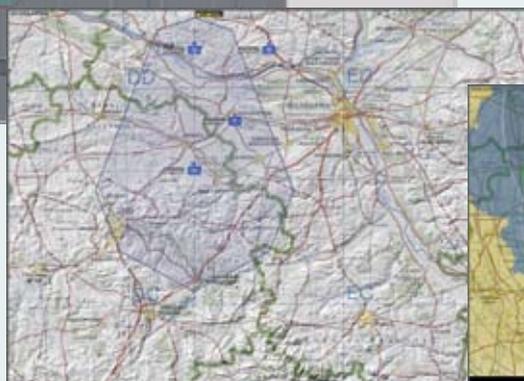
Surface-to-Air Missile Operations Centre (SAM OC)

SAM OC is a command and control object of the tactical level. It provides controlling of ground-based air defence units of different types (rocket squadrons). It is possible to apply the object in national and coalition systems.



Main functions of SAM OC

- Supports cluster planning by terrain analysis and prediction of radar coverage, automatic generation of order documents,
- Monitors weapon status (position, availability, hot and cold inventory),
- Provides tools for threat evaluation and automatic target-weapon pairing,
- Supports combat management by issuing commands,
- Monitors status of engagements.



TELECOMMUNICATIONS RESEARCH INSTITUTE
PRZEMYSŁOWY INSTYTUT TELEKOMUNIKACJI

ul. Poligonowa 30; 04-051 Warszawa, Poland
phone (+48) 22 4865 455; fax (+48) 22 4865 453
www.pit.edu.pl



MNC NE Calendar 2007

Selected Events

February - July – ISAF mission in Afghanistan

About 160 soldiers from the Headquarters Multinational Corps Northeast (HQ MNC NE), serve in the International Assistance Security Forces (ISAF) mission in Afghanistan. The MNC NE personnel are located at the Headquarters ISAF in Kabul and Regional Air Operations Coordination Centre (RAOCC) in Mazar-e-Sharif (MeS). It is the first deployment of the Corps in its history.



13th – 19th June – Exercise Compact Green 2007

150 soldiers from German 610th Battalion, Polish 100th Signal and 104th Support Battalions constituting Command Support Brigade (CSB) as well as representatives from Advanced Party CSB take part in the Exercise Compact Green. The aim of exercise held at the Baltic Barracks and Walcz is to test communication systems that signal units are equipped with.

14th August and 9th November – Celebrating Polish National Days at the Headquarters

For the 8th time the Polish Armed Forces' Day is celebrated at the Baltic Barracks to commemorate events from 1920 and the battle often referred to as "The Miracle on the Vistula River". Another important Polish event that takes place on 9th November is the ceremony commemorating Poland's return to the map of sovereign European states on 11th November 1918.



1st to 14th October – Exercise Unified Endeavour 08-1

19 members of the Multinational Corps Northeast support American colleagues from the 101st Airborne Division before their mission in Afghanistan. The MNC NE members as Subject Matter Experts (SME) share their own experiences gained in Afghanistan during Mission Rehearsal Exercise Unified Endeavour 08-1 at Fort Campbell, USA.

4th and 28th October – Celebrating German Reunification Day and Oktoberfest

The month of October gets colours of German flag. German Community invites honourable guest to commemorate the 17th anniversary of reunification of German states. The end of the month brings a lot of fun during Oktoberfest, where about 400 participants learn about German, or more specifically Bavarian, traditions.



27th November – Multinational cooperation not only at the army

46 students from Polish International Secondary School of Sports Championship and Danish Rønne Privatskole from Bornholm visit our Headquarters. They constitute only part of over 300 people from Denmark, Germany and Poland that visited our Headquarters in 2007.

3rd December – Danish Jule-Gløgg at the Baltic Barracks

Danish community of HQ MNC NE organises an annual celebration of Jule-Gløgg with a traditional St. Lucia procession of children at church and a reception at the Baltic Barracks. The event is honoured by the presence of His Excellency Hans Michael Kofoed-Hansen, Danish Ambassador to Poland, and many other guests.



6th December – Command Support Brigade will follow the same direction

A former HQ MNC NE G-6 Chief Plans, Col. Jacek Rolak becomes acting commander Command Support Brigade, a formation subordinate to the Headquarters in times of missions, operations or exercises. The Brigade with its Headquarters in Stargard Szczecinski consists of three Polish Battalions (one not developed) and a German one.



13th – 14th December – New landmarks in the Corps' history

The Corps Committee, a higher advisory body for the Corps, approves the new Corps' Peace Establishment (PE) structure, which among other things introduces a new G-8 Division; accepts the Infrastructure Project relating to building new facilities for the Corps and assists at signing a contract for a Command and Control Information System, which is Polish SZAFRAN.



AMERICAN IN Szczecin



AMERICAN IN
SZCZECIN LIKE
ENGLISHMAN IN
NEW YORK?

ANNA GAŁYGA
TALKS TO LTCOL
GEORGE MARKOS,
USA A, ABOUT HIS
SERVICE AT THE
HEADQUARTERS,
NATIONAL
DIFFERENCES,
CULTURE AND
CHANGES IN THE
WORLD.

- Have you got any experience in serving in multinational environment like our headquarters?

This is my first NATO multinational working experience. Previous to here I graduated from the NATO Defense College in Italy so that was a very good introduction to a NATO version of multinationality. I also worked with Iraqi and Afghan forces, but of course that was completely different.

- Why have you applied for a post in Europe?

Well, I often prefer the road less traveled. It is good to have a lot of fellow countrymen around you but I think it is a little bit more interesting to be further away and Poland is definitely that kind of experience.

- What is the greatest value of working here?

For me personally it is learning to get along with people from different countries and learning to work together. For my country it is the US way of demonstrating their commitment to multinationality in NATO and it is very interesting and an honour to be one of two guys to represent my country in the Headquarters.

- Are there any drawbacks?

I miss the United States, I miss things like Mexican food and I miss American football, although I found it on TV, and friends and my family back home. But it is only temporary, I will go back, so it is worth it.

- You have been in Poland for a couple of months already. What differences in culture have you noticed?

I do not know if it is a difference between countries or an effect of multinationality but there is a definite emphasis put on procedures, maybe we would like to formalize things here so that we understand what is expected. But in the US environment, believe it or not, you can get things done a little more informally. We have tools like "tasker tracker" but we often tend to ignore them.

Another thing is that in a national environment you rate everybody and they work for you. In a multinational environment this guy works for you too but in a long term he thinks about his country. So if you are trying to push him around, it is not going to work; you have to have something else, some kind of leadership skills or personality traits to get somebody to come over,



get him on a team and work together. But I think it is not a problem here, everyone is a professional; everyone here knows their job.

- But all this refers to job, what surprised you in other spheres of life?

The main thing I guess will be a sense of humour. I have always liked to tell jokes when I am in meetings but here I have to test my jokes on small population before I try them on bigger audience to make sure that it makes sense or it is funny or it translates somehow.

But actually, I have been very impressed by everyone's English. For me it is easy to work in my native language, it does not require much effort. I would never get good enough at Polish if I did not have to concentrate on work. But the funny thing is when people come to me and want to make sure that some phrase or presentation is acceptable to the native English speaker. So I look at it but the thing is that I am the only one, apart from Robert, and they have just showed everything to me.

The other thing is doctrine. I found that when I am presented with the

feel a culture shock with its distinctive phases (honeymoon stage, disorientation, hostility, adjustment)?

I think that I have got inoculated a little bit having spent six months in Italy. It was wonderful there, we went to Rome and there was the Coliseum and wine was great, fruits were awesome – but that is phase one. Phase two was – “OK, when are the stores open if the stores are not open at 10 o'clock in the morning?”. You realize that they work six hours a day and it does not mean it is going to be open just because it says so on the door. And after while you are like – “Damn it, when is the store open? It is ridiculous!”. I went through all those stages in Italy and got relaxed and used to it. In Poland I am a little bit more open minded.

- Do globalization and changes of the world have any meaning to you? Such developments actually brought you here to Poland...

The world has changed especially since the end of the Cold War and we did not really realize that until September, 11. Then we began to understand that we have to change but we are at the business that is resistant to it – we have structures, procedures, manuals and doctrine and it takes a lot of time to make them work. If you said to me that I would have to worry about restoring essential services like electricity and drinking water in the village or talking to a tribal leader or training a foreign army I would say – “What are you talking about? I did not join Special Forces or Peace Corps!”. But I had to do all these things and I have never fired a cannon in combat and I am field artillery. So although we may like to pretend that we just keep training and working on those things that we used to and thinking that we only want to keep Poland or Europe or the West safe – but we can not do that anymore. We have to change and globalization is kind of a driving force behind why we have to do it. Furthermore, we all need to work together.

“Kundelki” - looking for a new breed of dogs

I went to the market to get a dog and there was a sign “kundelki” so I asked a lady - “I have never heard that dog, how big do the ‘kundelkis’ get?”. The lady looked at me kind of funny but her English was not good so we could not really communicate. So I wrote down the word “kundelki” and I went home to look at the Internet and I saw there are six different kinds of dogs there. I still could not tell what kind of dog it was so I got the Polish dictionary, looked it up and the word in English is “mongrel”, we would say “mutt”. So I was thinking that it was some kind of a brand new dog like a German Shepherd, but it was just a mutt...

I was surprised that Polish people are actually quite courteous, especially on road. In Italy people will fight you for six inches in between you and them and another vehicle and they will never let you go. I drive from Mierzyn and there is always a lot of traffic coming this way and when I am making the left turn, I never wait more than a few seconds, someone always flashes their lights at me and lets me go.

Have you changed your behaviour in any way?

I have realized about myself that I talk fast and use a lot of slang and that sometimes even people who have excellent command of English can get confused or not understand what I meant.

problem like creating a scenario for an exercise like Crystal Eagle, my instinct is to go and look at the US doctrine on it to know the American way to do it. But I have to find myself asking my colleagues – “Does NATO have a doctrine on this?”. And sometimes NATO does not but all different countries do. So we come together and check if they match or conflict but eventually we have to put it off to the side and say – We're a NATO organization so how we are going to solve this in a way that everybody is content with it.

- Does it work?

Sure or we will see after Crystal Eagle 2008.

- Let us talk about adaptation. You come from a different continent; did you actually

A few pages from the calendar...

Discussions on working in a multinational environment like ours usually lead to serious, though accurate ideas of exchanging precious experiences and learning about other nations. However, such truly positive attitudes and numerous blessings involved, encouraged us to show all this in a sort of distorting mirror, with a little bit of distance and humour. So let us meet Mr. X. This fictional person does not have a distinct national background. This is the first week of his service at a similar headquarters to ours.

Monday

There was a lot of shaking hands today. Everybody was smiling. And I learnt nine different ways of saying “good morning”, including my own language (well, it always sounds a bit different with foreign pronunciation).

We had a meeting in our G-division. I am not that fluent in English but the discussion seemed exotic to me – all those mixed accents that I couldn't really match to faces. Uniforms were helpful; at least I was able to recognize the country. At the beginning I thought we would never reach a consensus. I thought everybody would stick to their views endlessly. But it was different. People were open, flexible and patient in listening till the end of everybody's presentation in our impeccable “Szczecin English”. And all of them seemed to have it carved on their foreheads – “I am a professional”. No wonder that we eventually managed to reach an agreement. Maybe it took two coffees instead of one, like it was in my home division, but we did it. And one more thing. I took a note

of some abbreviations I didn't understand, such as IPC. At my national unit all abbreviations we used were very clear.

I went shopping after work. I had to bear the fact that the first shop assistant ignored me after addressing him in my mother tongue; the second attempt was hopefully successful. Afterwards I went to the supermarket but I didn't buy anything – security guards stressed me too much. They apparently thought I was going to take something without paying...Well, they were wrong.

Tuesday

I had a conversation with my boss. There was a huge sign “Procedures will guide you” in his office. I couldn't concentrate. I still had shadows under my eyes after spending half a night reading SOPs (Small Outline Package? Service Oriented Programming? Student Operated Press?). Well, I didn't confess to my boss I didn't understand much of it because my English wasn't good enough. I just wanted to be professional.

In the afternoon there was a social event. We met in one of our Corps' clubs. There were people from all nations creating a real cultural puzzle. Some of them stuck to their national groups, others were weaving between different gatherings. Discussions had no end. Someone even prepared a presentation with funny pictures titled "Guess who got lost at the airport this time?". I didn't know why people were actually laughing. Another thing I didn't get was why "Lithuanian žurek" was served that day. Believe me, even Lithuanians didn't know what kind of soup it was.

Wives, girlfriends and kids were present there as well. Some ladies for example were responsible for desserts. All those cakes of different size, shape and colour almost broke the tables up...and then I thought I would have to try them all to be polite...Even though they all looked incredibly delicious, my stomach started to wave violently a white flag (in advance).

The more food and drinks disappeared, the less official topics were raised. I enjoyed standing on the sidelines and listening. Jokes that were told mostly referred to personality traits of people but more attentive listeners could recognize national characteristics, too. I could see how history can join or drive a wedge between people. Poles and Lithuanians for example mentioned the union of their counties. But they rather avoided discussing national status of some famous writers of the region...

Not all ladies could speak English well but with the help of hands and legs, communication was fluent. To my surprise, there was no problem with understanding so-called "dirty jokes". As soon as our eyes met, they started discussing children's problems at school and recipes. Not for long. The topic of the next social event appeared soon.

Wednesday

I received a task via one of our complex tracking system. It will probably remain a mystery how the system managed to reach me. I felt like the main character of a science-

fiction film. It's a pity I didn't know how to respond to the machine.

In order to complete the task I had to cooperate with other nations. First of all, I addressed a Polish guy. He seemed to be so enthusiastic about the project exclaiming "super" with a long "uuu:::" that it was awkward even to me. Only later I learned that it was like a sparrow bringing trouble.

I was left alone with about fifty complex slides to prepare on the topic I was not familiar with. No wonder I felt growing time pressure. Three days left until the task should be completed. When I was trying to engage my colleagues to finish it as soon as possible, I faced a sort of resistance. All eyes directed at me showed big question marks meaning "three days means a lot of time"...Then I showed them a long list of things to tick off prepared by the Germans. But a Danish guy approached to me, patted me on my shoulder and said with a smile – "Don't be in a hurry, we'll manage, it will be dobre (fine)..."

So I went for a coffee. When I was approaching a coffee corner I stopped for a moment to listen to snatches of conversations reaching my ear. To my surprise it was Russian. Only then I saw Polish, Lithuanian, Latvian and Estonian guys trying to fit in 2/2 square metres. They didn't notice my presence. Even though I had some Russian at school I didn't understand what they were talking about. It was like a code – two, three words and pearls of laughter. When they finally saw me, they automatically switched into English. The conversation went on but because my English was not perfect, we added some Polish words, an unofficial second language of the Corps.

Thursday

I was working on a document for two hours when the computer just blinked to me and the screen went black. I could almost see it waving to me with scornful smile. Someone said I should dial 666 – seemed diabolical a bit...But the document was retrieved. It went on the desk of one of our Generals.

The answer came back to me very fast. Huge letters at the front cover said "Szczecin English". So I started rewriting the document. I also decided to attend a language course...

In the afternoon I was asked to arrange something downtown. I would have been able to manage that in one hour if it hadn't been for the road that unexpectedly ended. Men wearing nice fluorescent uniforms were very surprised I hadn't noticed huge information boards about diversions. I went there to check. They were there. The problem was I didn't know the names of streets in a local language... When I finally got to my destination tiny parking spaces forced me to park about one and a half kilometer away and walk. I was moved by the memory of huge parking spaces I saw in the US last summer. But I was in Europe and I had to cross about six intersections with traffic lights that maliciously glowed in red for hours...

Friday

We had a common breakfast today. There was one volunteer who even delivered a speech and only after a while I realized it was because one of my friends had birthday. And it was actually arranged. What a pity that I have my birthday in 7 months.

I was stuck with some paperwork when, to my surprise, a mysterious mail from an unknown source announced an earlier close of business. Without going into detail, I left the office and went home. I knew there was another task waiting for me – long and tick grass to be mowed. When I was fighting with plant resistance, my neighbours passing by smiled to me for the first time. I didn't know that gardens with manicured grass can make people happy. But then beams of light broke through dark clouds. And I thought it's a sign – it's going to be a fine time spent here, at this place, at



Allied Sports Club

hq mnc ne

The Allied Sports Club HQ MNC NE gathers those members of the Headquarters, their relatives and friends, who wish to have fun together and compete in various sports disciplines under the MNC NE flag. At least once a year General Membership Committee elects a Committee that is in charge of running the Club. The Corps' Moral & Welfare provides necessary financial assistance to ensure effective functioning of the Club's branches.

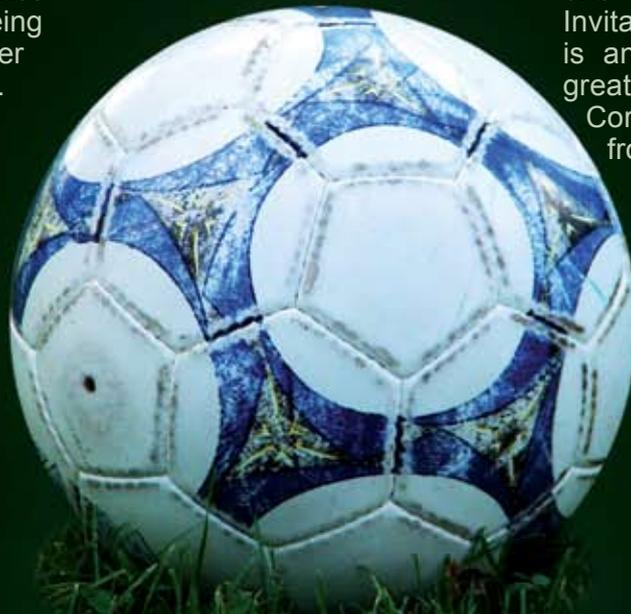
The Club provides chances for meeting people from all nations of the Corps; however, the number of members is not permanent since there are no requirements for being a member of the Club in order to join in the sports activities. There are several branches within the Allied Sports Club; at

the moment the running branches include Basketball, Running and Biking, Sailing, Aerobics, Darts, Tennis, Shooting & Hunting, Soccer and Golf. Some of the branches, such as for example Volleyball or Badminton, are sort of "sleeping beauties", however, if at least five people get interested in a given discipline, the branch is reactivated again.

The highest number of participants gathers Soccer Branch. This year the second edition of Indoor Soccer League takes place. However, matches are not only played among the Corps members. The MNC NE team

cyclically competes with teams from JFC Brunssum and SHAPE. Moreover, the HQ MNC NE Soccer Cup involves players from the region – policemen, military etc. In order to keep in shape, the MNC NE players, while having been deployed to Afghanistan, initiated Soccer League over there. Matches played at the Headquarters ISAF in Kabul drew a lot of attention of soldiers and evoked strong emotions.

Golf Branch is very active, too. There are at least ten Golf Tournaments organised each year, in which not only the Corps' members take part, the biggest one being the HQ MNC NE Invitational. In fact, this branch is an example of probably the greatest sports integration of the Corps' members and people from the local community.





LADIES' CLUB

The Ladies' Club has been created for spouses of soldiers serving at the Headquarters. At the moment there are 87 members from all nine nations of the Corps. Each September a Committee and a Chairwoman of the Ladies' Club is chosen to run the Club's business for one year. Activities of the Club are financed by the Corps' Moral & Welfare.

Magdalena Przybyła, the Chairwoman of the Ladies' Club, explained that the organisation offers help and assistance for ladies as well as provides chances for getting to know and spending time together. The language of communication is English, however, there is also place even for the body language proving openness and flexibility of the Club's members.

The Club organises a lot of social events for ladies, civilian and military workers of the Corps and children, which are often held under the patronage of different nations, additionally indicating culture-teaching purposes. Among the proposals of the Club there are: Polish "Andrzejki" and traditional Polish Christmas Eve, Danish Midsummer Party, German Lantern Procession or Black and Red Party prepared by ladies from the Baltic States. Sports events, trips, monthly coffee mornings, birthday celebrations already follow a cyclical pattern. Moreover, there is also space left for charity activities of the Club, the example of which was last December's money gatherings for children from Children's Home in Szczecin.

The Ladies' Club is not only an excellent chance for women to create their own community and to support each other in daily life, but it is also a valuable cultural experience involving a bit more than exchanging recipes.



SZCZECIN INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL

Szczecin International School (SIS) was founded in 2002 in order to meet the needs of international community of Szczecin. The school has more than a hundred of pupils and students, half of whom are children of the Corps' personnel. The school offers education on different levels – from the primary up to the high school levels, ending with the International Baccalaureate. Although the school is functioning according to three international educational systems, there is also place left for self-education in compliance with national programmes. Additionally, Polish children pass obligatory Polish examinations with the exception of “matura”.

The school promotes an idea of multinational cooperation, which is reflected by students coming from various countries of Europe and beyond. The school steps into the local community by visiting Children's Homes, hospices or organising charity actions, the example of which can be buying back a horse named “Jaśmin” and saving it from a slaughterhouse. The school is also part of an exchange programme with schools from Austria, Hungary and Spain. For strengthening internal ties there are integration days and camps organised. Numerous formal and informal meetings as well as celebrating birthdays together complement that picture.

Integration means also introducing new cultures. Teachers and students from various countries learn about each other all the time. Cyclical national days depict different countries and cultures, not necessarily only those represented at school. A link between all those varieties is English, which is the official language of the school. Even children with no command of English acquire the ability to communicate with others very fast.

As the head of the school Ms. Maria Sawka emphasizes, this school gives the students a chance to see the world in its widened spectrum. Since the differences between students blur in a positive sense – they have no problems with accepting cultural differences and adjusting in the new surroundings. They learn self-confidence and creativity that helps them to become real citizens of the world.



DECODED VERSION.

Dear Readers,

As you probably know the exercise Crystal Eagle is planned for this year. In response to all questions that had been asked concerning this exercise, LtGen Goral, Commander HQ MNC NE decided to let you in on the secret. Following his decision we will present a few facts about [Crystal Eagle 2008](#).

According to a three-year training cycle, Multinational Corps Northeast has to train nominated formations provided by the Framework (Denmark, Germany, Poland) and Partner Nations (remaining nations of the Corps). The exercise Crystal Eagle 2008 is a part of that cycle.

The exercise will be held from 8th to 25th September in Wildflecken, Germany. This year the following formations are going to be trained: Estonian 1st Brigade, German 37th Brigade, Latvian Brigade and Polish 7th Brigade. The control over the exercise will be held by the HQ MNC NE as well as representatives from subordinated, affiliated formations and other agencies. Commander HQ MNC NE will be the one to set goals and tasks for the exercise but his Deputy will act as an Exercise Director being responsible for its conduct.

During the exercise the soldiers will train planning, preparing, executing, commanding and evaluating joint and combined Peace Support Operations, Crisis Response, Post Conflict or even High Intensity Warfare at a particular level. The main focus will be placed on procedures and decision-making processes. The exercise will assume a form of a complex computer simulation based on a given scenario, so it will be a kind of "war-game".

The exercise will also provide chances to profit from the experience our soldiers gained in the Afghan mission and to test in selected fields our new Command and Control Information System SZAFRAN. As a matter of fact, this exercise is very important for our Headquarters. It is the most awaited training event of 2008 and a lot of the Corps personnel are fully engaged in planning and preparing this exercise.

I hope that this short description gives you an idea of what Crystal Eagle 2008 is. If you are interested in getting more details concerning preparations for this exercise, feel free to browse our website www.mncne.pl or contact us directly.

Yours faithfully,

Public Affairs Office



WYMIARZĄCZELI WŁADZY



TOYOTA



LEXUS



SAAB



OPEL



CHEVROLET

Toyota:

70-777 Szczecin, ul. Struga 17, tel. 091/464-41-60

e-mail: salon@toyotaszczecin.pl

72-200 Nowogard, ul. 3-go Maja 27b, tel. 091/392-57-00

e-mail: salon@toyotanowogard.pl

Lexus:

70-550 Szczecin, pl. Holdu Pruskiego 9, tel. 091/434-05-84

e-mail: lexus@lexus-szczecin.pl

Saab:

70-514 Szczecin, ul. Małopolska 12, tel. 091/431-42-20

e-mail: salon@saabszczecin.pl

Opel:

70-777 Szczecin, ul. Struga 31b, tel. 091/464-48-80

e-mail: szczecin-salon@opelkozowski.pl

72-200 Nowogard, ul. 3-go Maja 27a, tel. 091/392-56-00

e-mail: nowogard-salon@opelkozowski.pl

Chevrolet:

70-777 Szczecin, ul. Struga 31b, tel. 091/432-63-30

e-mail: salon@chevroletszczecin.pl