



The Flow and exchange of information is a key issue for any aspect of military operations. For that reason the Allied Rapid Reaction Corps (ARRC) organised a symposium on 12th February 2007 in Rheindalen, during which Counter Insurgency (COIN) was a central theme. The Headquarters Multinational Corps Northeast was represented by the Chief of Staff Brigadier General Josef Heinrichs.

The symposium named "Understanding Counter Insurgency" was hosted by the Commander of the Allied Rapid Reaction Corps (ARRC) LtGen Richard Shirreff. As BrigGen Heinrichs said, the aim of the meeting was to refresh the knowledge on Counter Insurgency (COIN) and to provide background knowledge; therefore views of different experts were confronted.

To stay tuned

The audience of the symposium was threefold – the first constituted external guests such as sister corps headquarters with chiefs of staff invited; the second were their affiliated and subordinated forces with commanders, deputy commanders and chiefs of staff, and finally the ARRC personnel.

In terms of external guests ARRC invited a lot of experts from different agencies, mostly British, who presented ideas for example how to implement the NATO comprehensive approach into COIN operations, especially the ISAF operations in Afghanistan. Other experts focused on development of doctrine including specific techniques and procedures. Moreover, there were also experts who represented the approaches of the United Nations, Non-Governmental Organisations and other agencies. The issue of use of private companies in COIN operations was raised, too.

Shared lessons of ARRC and HQ MNC NE

ARRC's members presented their experiences from the ISAF mission in Afghanistan. In fact, ARRC was a predecessor of the HQ MNC NE at the ISAF Headquarters in Kabul. BrigGen Heinrichs noticed that both ARRC and HQ MNC NE face the same kind of challenge, which is related to a high rotation of military personnel. This unavoidable process results in a decreasing number of staff with personal experience from ISAF. Therefore, any means to share experiences with newcomers is very important. As a matter of fact, one part of the symposium was prepared for the ARRC personnel only.

BrigGen Heinrichs summarized his attendance at the symposium as very useful because of a number of experts present there. Ideas discussed during the symposium as well as ARRC's experiences can be also used in the process of preparations for the upcoming exercise Crystal Eagle.