



**The targets included among other things simulated radar sites, columns of tanks, fighter aircraft or tank platoons...Aircraft flying over the range area hit such targets during the flying exercise "Tungsten Sword 2008" that took place from 4th to 11th April 2008 at the Air Live Firing Range in Nadarzyce.**

"Tungsten Sword 2008" was the follow-up part of the Close Air Support (CAS) Seminar organised by the Air Operations Co-ordination Centre, an air unit collocated with the Headquarters Multinational Corps Northeast. During the CAS Seminar held last week, the participants gained theoretical knowledge and exchanged experiences e.g. from Afghanistan as well as practised Close Air Support planning, requesting and tasking. That was not all prepared for them, though.

### **Real hot air strikes**

"Tungsten Sword 2008" was organised at the Air Live Firing Range in Nadarzyce. In the area of about 1,500 hectares different kinds of training and tactical targets were placed. It is important to notice that although aircraft F-16 only simulated bomb drops, SU-22 fighter bombers did it for real. Bombs up to 500 kg, rockets and guns were used to hit the targets. The cooperation between Forward Air Controllers (FAC) who directed the air strikes and pilots who dropped the bombs could be effectively practised. It seems that any occasion to train and practise these types of air attacks is very valuable. In a real operation coordinating actions of ground forces,

air-defence and air forces is the most difficult task, said Maj. Rogiński from the Polish Land Forces Command who trains and supervises Polish Forward Air Controllers – or in the American terminology Joint Tactical Air Controllers (JTAC). It is simply crucial for both a soldier on the ground and a pilot in the air to feel safe.

### **Visiting the range**

The exercise was a big draw to a group of the MNC NE personnel, headed by the Commander HQ MNC NE Lieutenant General Zdzisław Goral and the Chief of Staff Brigadier General Josef Heinrichs, who visited the range in Nadarzyce. The participants of the trip could see and even touch the equipment used by Forward Air Controllers "in the field". However, probably the most interesting point of the programme was climbing the range control tower in order to watch in silence how the FAC are working and cooperating with pilots. It was possible to observe from the distance the results of their work when SU-22 hit their targets. Later on while visiting the Świdwin airbase volunteers could even sit in a cockpit of such an aircraft and feel like a pilot for a while.

The MNC NE personnel also went to Miroslawiec, where a few months ago the aircraft CASA crashed. In order to pay a tribute to the victims a wreath was laid at the modest memorial. It is located right in the wood where the remnants of the crashed plane can be still visible.

*For more information concerning CAS Seminar, read the article "Victorious fighters win first and then go to war..." from 2nd April 2008.*

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