



Students of George C. Marshall European Center for Security Studies coming from 28 countries visited the Multinational Corps Northeast on 1st July 2008 to see how a headquarters like ours functions and what the basic way of doing business is.

Multinational visit to a multinational Corps

It does not happen very often that a group of 65 people coming from 28 countries of Europe and Asia visit the Baltic Barracks to listen about tasks, history and mission of the Multinational Corps Northeast. Students of George C. Marshall European Center for Security Studies in Germany were such a group. They found the Headquarters important and paid it an official visit. As a matter of fact, it was an excellent opportunity for the Corps to present its achievements to people of such national diversity.

Major General Justus Gräbner, Head of the delegation and at the same time Deputy Director of the Marshall Center in Germany, summarized that the reasons for the visit were among others "to get a feeling what NATO Force Structure is, what multinationalism is or what Poland as a host nation is providing here". In briefings prepared for the guests, these issues and many others were definitely presented. Moreover, in the context of visitors' diverse national background and the presence of a military from Afghanistan, discussions concerning for example the Corps' last mission in Afghanistan accomplished in 2007 could have been really

interesting to listen to.

It appears that the guests were pleased to observe how the Corps functions. General Gräbner mentioned not only great hospitality but also satisfaction of soldiers who serve here. He underlined the fact that officers and non-commissioned officers trained at the Headquarters would profit from such multinational experience, especially if they were sent to missions. Therefore, it is a good investment for the countries to contribute to such a Corps. It seems especially important for Poland, for which the next year brings the 10th Anniversary of involvement in the Corps and membership in NATO in general.

Spreading ideas

What is the role of George C. Marshall European Center for Security Studies located in Garmisch-Partenkirchen, Germany? Referring to its official mission statement, the Center “is to create a more stable security environment by advancing democratic institutions and relationships, especially in the field of defense; promoting active, peaceful security cooperation; and enhancing enduring partnerships among the nations of North America, Europe and Eurasia”. Similar centers focusing on other parts of the world are located in the United States.

Cmr. Andreas Hildenbrand is an instructor in one of the courses at the Centre. He explains in simple words that through such courses the Centre "exports democracy"; it trains people, especially from the former Soviet states in democracy, human rights, international law or cooperation with international organisations. Participants are nominated from their own states; they might be for example from Ministries of Defence, Interior, Foreign Affairs, or border guards. The usual number of participating states fluctuates around thirty – forty. As he underlines, activities of the Centre result in creating a valuable network of people who know each other and understand issues of global importance.

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