



**Command Sergeant Major Mario Ouellet from the Joint Forces Command Brunssum visited the Headquarters Multinational Corps Northeast (HQ MNC NE) on 20th October 2008 to introduce to the gathered HQ MNC NE personnel among other things the idea of professional development of non-commissioned officers.**

Brigadier General Josef Heinrichs, Chief of Staff of the Multinational Corps Northeast, warmly welcomed Command Sergeant Major Mario Ouellet from the Joint Forces Command Brunssum, who came to Szczecin's Headquarters with a visit. The intent was to present the role of Command Sergeant Majors as such and to promote the idea of career development of non-commissioned officers (NCOs). "Nobody has ever finished professional development", stated Brigadier General Josef Heinrichs, explaining the background of the visit.

Command Sergeant Major Ouellet presented the role of personnel occupying positions like his in a unit or a headquarters: "I am an advisor in all enlisted issues that can happen within the headquarters, unit, company or brigade". The function also encompasses talking to soldiers and providing the commander with "the feeling of the troops", such pieces of information that would help the commander to make the right decision. It might refer to various issues, for example accommodation.

Advising on the career development is another sphere of Command Sergeant Majors' activities: "You give a lot of advice to the NCOs in order to develop them as well as you can create your own NCO professional development concept within your organisation", explained the guest speaker. In fact, he is a leader of the Joint Mobile Training Team that consists of approximately 25 people coming from 13 NATO countries. Since 2006 until today they have trained about 300

non-commissioned officers from different countries. A typical training lasts up to 5 days and may be devoted to different topics, such as for example leadership training, NATO orientation course, training management or NATO current operations. The expected effect is to prepare a NCO to fulfil tasks and face NATO challenges in a better way.

As a matter of fact, the idea of professional development of non-commissioned officers was the main reason that brought Command Sergeant Major Ouellet to the HQ MNC NE. On the request of the HQ Chief of Staff and the NCO Committee, JFC Brunssum was asked to deliver some training to non-commissioned officers of this Headquarters to prepare them for the next ISAF deployment. This time it was the first meeting organised in order to coordinate future training and to present the Sergeant Majors' job.

The first training of the MNC NE personnel is going to start at the very end of this year, in December. For one week, three trainers from Belgium, Croatia, and the USA will conduct the leadership training. The subsequent parts of the training will be continued in the course of the year 2009.