



Brigadier General Josef Heinrichs, Chief of Staff of the Multinational Corps Northeast, attended the Chief of Staffs' Conference on 7th and 8th October 2008 in Milano, Italy.

Major General Antonio Satta, Chief of Staff of the NATO Rapid Deployable Corps Italy, hosted the Conference of Chief of Staffs from Graduated Land Forces Headquarters. It was the first meeting of that kind, organised with the major idea of coordination of efforts in different areas. Chief of Staffs represented their home headquarters from Multinational Corps Northeast, Allied Rapid Reaction Corps, Eurocorps, French Rapid Reaction Corps, NATO Deployable Corps Greece, 2nd Polish Corps, NATO Rapid Deployable Corps from Turkey, German-Netherlands, and the host – Italy.

The conference assumed a form of briefings and discussions, which provided the opportunity to exchange views and opinions. Several issues that have been of the Corps' level interests were raised, like for example mutual support for training and exercises. To avoid overlapping of training events, which in fact prevents from supporting each other, closer coordination will be implemented. Another topic referred to the concept of Deployable Joint Staff Elements, which is still to be developed. It is related to the reorganization of the NATO structure, which among others would result in creating such Deployable Joint Staff Elements also with the contribution of the Corps Headquarters. Finally, an interesting and useful discussion on the Effects Based Approach to Operations was conducted, giving a chance to present different understanding of the concept.

Apart from reaching a common agreement on several topics discussed in the course of the conference, it is important to mention that such meetings result in creating better understanding and establishing personal relations between the participants. As General Heinrichs said, fostering coherence and cooperation between Chief of Staffs is a precondition to make all staffs cooperate closer.

In order to follow this direction, conferences of Chief of Staffs will be organised twice a year, each time hosted by different Corps Headquarters. However, before the next meeting takes place, all Corps Headquarters have been asked to prepare their main points concerning all the three main topics discussed so that they could be distributed among all Corps Headquarters to create a basis for further discussions.