



**Since the involvement in the cultural life of Szczecin has always been a priority for Multinational Corps Northeast (MNC NE), two representatives of the HQ, Lieutenant Colonel Detlef Schachel and Master Sergeant Arnold Weber took part in the official opening of an exhibition called "Sorbs – History, Culture and Tradition", which took place on 13 February 2009 at the National Museum in Szczecin.**

About 50 guests who came for the exhibition were welcomed by Mr Lech Karwowski, Director of the National Museum in Szczecin, Mr Witold Jabłoński, Westpomeranian Vice Voivode and Mr Tomasz Nawka, Director of the Sorbian Museum in Bautzen. Then, everybody could see the extraordinary exhibition presenting culture and traditions of the Sorbs, including traditional wedding clothes, procession of disguised figures, folk musical instruments, archival photographs and documents, and many others. As a matter of fact, the Sorbs' distinctive culture has survived through ages creating a kind of mosaic together with German customs cultivated in the region.

For Master Sergeant Weber the most interesting elements of the exhibition were the Sorbian folk musical instruments as well as a visualization of so-called "Baby". Traditionally, it is a girl dressed in folk clothes. She wears a special headdress and has her face covered. In the right hand she holds a birch twig, whereas in the left – a bell. She appears in the Advent time and gives goodies to children and lashes the elderly to bring them good luck and the power of nature. It is said that a girl who is dressed up as the "Baby" is going to get married the following year.

Details concerning the Sorbian culture were presented to the MNC NE representatives by Mr Nawka himself who showed them around the exhibition explaining the uniqueness and curiosities related to the Sorbs' life. The meeting at the museum was finalized with a lecture "Sorbs – Slavik neighbours from over the Odra River" delivered by the Director of the Sorbian Museum.

*The Sorbs are the national minority that lives in the area of Brandenburg and Saxony in Germany. There are about 60,000 of them altogether. Even though they have never had their own independent country, they have their distinctive culture, language or even a national anthem.*