

## Polish Armed Forces' Day

Written by AG

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**On 17 August 2011, Polish community of the Multinational Corps Northeast (MNC NE) headed by Major General Ryszard Sorokosz, the MNC NE Deputy Commander, hosted multinational personnel of the Corps with families as well as honourable guests for annual celebration of Polish Armed Forces' Day.**

It is already a solid tradition in the Corps to share important moments with colleagues from other nations. One of these moments is for sure Polish Armed Forces' Day of 15 August when homage is paid to a Polish soldier and Polish uniform. Polish Armed Forces' Day commemorates the history of the Warsaw Battle of 1920, later called "the miracle on the Vistula River", which was the turning point of the Polish-Soviet war and eventually led to a ceasefire. It was a spectacular demonstration of braveness, fortitude and professional military skills of the Polish Army.

The highest ranking Polish officer in the Corps, Major General Ryszard Sorokosz, invited for this special event a number of honourable guests and the whole personnel of the Headquarters including the MNC NE Commander Lieutenant General Rainer Korff and Chief of Staff Brigadier General Morten Danielsson, as well as personnel of Air Operations Coordination Centre, National Support Elements and Headquarters Company. Among the invited guests there were

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the Commander of the German Army Forces Command (GARFCOM) Lieutenant General Carl-Hubertus von Butler, the Commander of 12th Mechanized Division Major General Marek Tomaszycycki and representatives of the uniformed services – the police, border guards, fire brigade, customs, city guards and the Polish Armed Forces. There were also representatives of the diplomatic corps, the world of art and science, friends of the Corps as well as regional and municipal authorities, among others the President of Szczecin Mr Piotr Krzystek Vice President of the Westpomeranian Parliament Mr Kazimierz Drzazga and President of Stargard Szczeciński Mr Sławomir Pajor.

*“Ninety-one years ago the Polish Army, created from scratches thanks to the great effort of all patriotic Poles, gaining experience in the fire of fighting on several fronts, prevented the Bolshevik onslaught planned not only to occupy the reviving Polish state, but also to spread the revolution throughout Europe. It was a moment of great national test, which the Poles passed victoriously”* – with these words Major General Ryszard Sorokosz recalled events of 1920. He emphasized the fact that the real heroes of those events were soldiers of the Polish Armed Forces *“who went into the battle for everything”*. General Sorokosz also referred to the present-day situation when Poland is celebrating Polish Armed Forces' Day as a member of NATO *“Multinational Corps Northeast constitutes a reflection of cooperation of countries associated under the aegis of NATO. It is a place where international forces cooperating with each other undertake challenges they face, sometimes very difficult,”* he said.

The importance of celebrating Polish Armed Forces' Day also recognized the Vice Marshal of the Senate of the Republic of Poland, Mrs Grażyna Anna Sztark: *“For this attitude, every day work you deserve works of thanks. Especially for your devotion, braveness and imagination necessary to perform the service in the country and abroad. Your capabilities and devotion saved lives of many people. Polish citizens shall be proud of Polish servicemen and Polish uniform. They may be proud of you,”*

she wrote in a letter addressing Polish personnel of Multinational Corps Northeast, which was read out during the ceremony. The Chief of General Staff General Mieczysław Cieniuch in his letter expressed his appreciation and respect for the soldiers' service and work.

*“Your experience, professionalism and diligence contribute to the creation of a good image of the Polish service member in international environment,”*

General Cieniuch wrote.

*“On this occasion, I wish to thank all service members and civilian employees of Multinational Corps Northeast for your attitude,”*

he continued.

The whole event was conducted in accordance with the military ceremonial with guards of

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honour, report given by Polish Senior National Officer Colonel Zenon Szczybyło to Major General Ryszard Sorokosz, running the Polish national flag up the pole and the national anthem played by the military band.

Since Polish Armed Forces' Day is an excellent occasion to recognize soldiers for their service, the decoration ceremony was also part of the ceremony. Polish officers received awards "For Longstanding Service", "Medals of Merits for Country Defence", "Medals of Armed Forces Serving for the Homeland" as well as "Stars of Afghanistan" and "Stars of Iraq" and congratulatory letters. Apart from national awards, selected Polish personnel received "Non-Article 5 NATO Medals" awarded by NATO Secretary General for the involvement in the mission in Afghanistan. These latter decorations were given by the MNC NE Commander Lieutenant General Rainer Korff together with the Deputy, Major General Ryszard Sokorosz.

The host of the ceremony, General Sorokosz, in recognition for excellent cooperation awarded President of Szczecin Mr Piotr Krzystek, Commander of GARFCOM Lieutenant General Carl-Hubertus von Butler, Commander of 12th Mechanized Division Major General Marek Tomaszycycki, Commanding Officer of the Westpomeranian Region Police Superintendent Wojciech Olbryś, the MNC NE Commander Lieutenant General Rainer Korff and MNC NE Chief of Staff Brigadier General Morten Danielsson with commemorative gorgets.

The military part of the ceremony ended up with a parade of troops. Afterwards, all guests visited the display of equipment presented by Command Support Brigade of Multinational Corps Northeast, 12th Mechanized Division, Police, Fire Brigade, Border Guards and Westpomeranian Voivodeship Training Centre for Drivers. That for sure was a highlight of the event.

Having experienced the feast for the spirit, all participants of the ceremony headed for the Jutland Garden where they could try traditional military meals specially prepared for this day during a military picnic.

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