


CER SENIN

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#WEARENATO

STRONGER TOGETHER

ENHANCED AIR POLICING IN ROMANIA

PAGE 6-7





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PHOTO: ADRIAN SULTĂNOIU
COVER III: ROMANIAN AIR FORCE DETACHMENT
AT ROMANIA'S NATIONAL DAY PARADE
PHOTO: ADRIAN SULTĂNOIU
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PHOTO: ADRIAN SULTĂNOIU

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Supreme Allied Commander Transformation visited Romania

Supreme Allied Commander Transformation (SACT), General Philippe Lavigne, paid a visit to Romania between 10-12 October, following the invitation of the Chief of Defence Staff, General Daniel Petrescu.

The working schedule of the NATO high official comprised a meeting with State Secretary for Defence Policy, Planning and International Relations, Simona Cojocaru, at the MoND Headquarters, on October 10. The two officials approached the main topics of the allied agenda which was also tackled during the reunion of the NATO Defence Ministers. In this context, the SACT presented the main concerns of the Allied Command Transformation/ACT, by emphasizing the importance of the steps made to implement the decisions adopted at the Madrid Summit.

During the meetings with the Chief of Defence Staff, the officials focused on the assessment of the security situation which had been significantly affected by the Russian Federation's war against Ukraine as well as on the consolidation of the deterrence and defence posture, especially on the defensive reconfiguration of the Eastern Flank. General Daniel Petrescu stated that "the significant allied presence from the Black Sea Region represents both a consolidation of the allied shield in this area and a vector of the enhanced national defence capacity, including the increase of the reaction capacity of the Romanian Armed Forces' force structure".

General Philippe Lavigne appreciated that Europe is currently facing the biggest security challenge after

World War II, by emphasizing Romania's commitment to NATO and stating that trans-Atlantic unity is more important than ever. "Our dialogue was an opportunity to share our perspectives with regard to several subjects. He helped me have a better understanding of the Romanian approach of the regional security context", SACT stated.

An important objective of General Philippe Lavigne's visit to Romania was the participation in the NATO Layered Resilience Seminar which took place at the National Military Club, between 10-12 October. During the working sessions of the seminar, SACT made a presentation of the fourth edition of the "NATO Innovation Challenge" Project, a competition open to the member states' companies whose innovative solutions contribute to the placing of the Alliance in the top of the technological development. In the context of the ACT's strategic interest for the NATO technological development, General Daniel Petrescu presented the ways by which our country can contribute to the initiative coordinated by this command, "Defence Innovative Accelerator for the North-Atlantic/DIANA", which implements innovative solutions for the military capabilities.

During his visit, SACT had a meeting with Romanian Air Force Chief of Staff, Lieutenant General Viorel Pană and Romanian Navy Chief of Staff, Vice Admiral Mihai Panait, at the Romanian Air Force Headquarters.

The Press Office



NATO FOREIGN MINISTERS MEETINGS



NATO foreign ministers ended two days of meetings in Bucharest on Wednesday (30 November 2022), with meetings focused on the long-term challenges posed by China, as well as on support for partners facing Russian pressure. "NATO is an Alliance of Europe and North America, but the challenges we face are global, and we must address them together in NATO," said Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg.



Foreign ministers considered China's ambitious military developments, its technological advances, and its growing cyber and hybrid activities. They also stressed the importance of meeting NATO's resilience guidelines, maintaining NATO's technological edge, and continuing to strengthen cooperation with partners in the Indo-Pacific region and with the European Union. Mr Stoltenberg said that the war in Ukraine demonstrated a dangerous dependency on Russian gas, and that "this should also lead us to assess our dependencies on other authoritarian regimes, not least China, for our supply chains, technology, or infrastructure." He added: we will continue, of course, to trade and engage economically with China, but we have to be aware of our dependencies, reduce our vulnerabilities, and manage the risks." Ministers also discussed terrorism, and agreed to continue efforts to counter this grave threat.

The Foreign Ministers of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Georgia and Moldova joined the final session of the ministerial. NATO Allies agreed to step up tailored support to these

three partners, including on capacity-building, reform, and training to improve their security and defence institutions.

On Tuesday, NATO Foreign Ministers met with Ukrainian Foreign Minister Dmytro Kuleba to address Ukraine's most urgent needs, as well as longer-term support. Allies agreed that continued military support for Ukraine is essential – in particular, additional air defences. Allies also announced additional contributions to NATO's Comprehensive Assistance Package, which is providing Ukraine with non-lethal aid, including fuel and generators.

Allies were joined by Finland and Sweden for all sessions at the ministerial, their first meeting of NATO foreign ministers as invitees to the Alliance.

Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg outlined the key decisions taken by NATO Foreign Ministers at their first meeting in Bucharest on Tuesday (29 November 2022), underlining that the meeting sent "a strong message of NATO unity, and of sustained support to Ukraine".

Despite Ukraine's bravery and progress on the ground, Russia retains strong military capabilities and a large number of troops. Faced with President Putin's attempts to weaponise winter, "to force Ukrainians to freeze or flee... and to divide all of us who support them," Mr Stoltenberg said that NATO will continue to support Ukraine for "as long as it takes". He added: "we will not back down." The Secretary General welcomed additional pledges made today to NATO's Comprehensive Assistance Package for Ukraine, which funds urgent non-lethal support including fuel and generators. He also welcomed the opportunity to participate in a G7 foreign ministerial "to secure commitments for the emergency infrastructure coordination mechanism to assist Ukraine."

Allies reaffirmed support for Ukraine's right to choose its own path. Mr Stoltenberg said: "we recognise and respect Ukraine's aspirations for membership. However, our focus now is on providing immediate support as Ukraine defends itself against Russian aggression." Ukrainian Foreign Minister Dmytro Kuleba will



take part in discussions with Allied foreign ministers later on Tuesday.

In closing, the Secretary General welcomed Norway's offer to host an informal meeting of NATO foreign ministers next year, to help prepare for the Vilnius Summit in July 2023.

Statement by NATO Foreign Ministers

29 Nov. 2022 - The NATO Invitees associate themselves with this Statement.

1. We are gathered in Bucharest, close to the shores of the Black Sea, at a time when Russia's ongoing invasion of Ukraine threatens Euro-Atlantic peace, security, and prosperity. Russia bears full responsibility for this war, a blatant violation of international law and the principles of the UN Charter. Russia's aggression, including its persistent and unconscionable attacks on Ukrainian civilian and energy infrastructure is depriving millions of Ukrainians of basic human services. It has affected global food supplies, and endangered the world's most vulnerable countries and peoples. Russia's unacceptable actions, including hybrid activities, energy blackmail, and reckless nuclear rhetoric, undermine the rules-based international order. We stand in solidarity with Poland following the incident of 15 November that led to the tragic loss of life as a result of Russia's missile attacks against Ukraine. We condemn Russia's cruelty against Ukraine's civilian populations and violations and abuses of human rights, such as forcible deportations, torture, and barbaric treatment of women, children, and persons in vulnerable situations. All those responsible for war crimes, including conflict-related sexual violence, must be held accountable. We also condemn all those, including Belarus, who are actively facilitating Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine.

2. We welcome Foreign Minister Kuleba today, stand in full solidarity with the government and people of Ukraine in their heroic defence of their nation and land, and pay tribute to all those lives lost. We remain steadfast in our commitment to Ukraine's independence, sovereignty, and territorial integrity. We will never recognise Russia's illegal annexations, which blatantly violate the UN Charter. We will continue and further step up political and practical support to Ukraine as it continues to defend its sovereignty and territorial integrity and our shared values against Russian aggression, and will maintain our support for as long as necessary. In this context, NATO will continue to coordinate closely with relevant stakeholders, including international organisations, in particular the EU, as well as like-minded countries. Building on the support provided so far, we will help Ukraine now to strengthen its resilience, protect its people, and counter Russia's disinformation campaigns and lies. Allies will assist Ukraine as it repairs its energy infrastructure and protects its people from missile attacks. We also remain resolute in supporting Ukraine's long-term efforts on its path of post-war reconstruction and reforms, so that Ukraine can secure its free and democratic future, modernise its defence sector, strengthen long-term interoperability and deter future aggression. We will continue to strengthen our partnership with Ukraine as it advances its Euro-Atlantic aspirations.

3. Finland and Sweden are participating today as states invited to join the Alliance. Their accession will make them safer, NATO stronger, and the Euro-Atlantic area more secure. Their security is of direct importance to the Alliance, including during the accession process.

4. Recalling that the Western Balkans and the Black Sea regions are of strategic importance

for the Alliance, we welcome our meeting with the Foreign Ministers of NATO partners Bosnia and Herzegovina, Georgia, and the Republic of Moldova, as NATO strengthens its tailored support to building their integrity and resilience, developing capabilities, and upholding their political independence. We firmly stand behind our commitment to the Alliance's Open Door policy. We reaffirm the decisions we took at the 2008 Bucharest Summit and all subsequent decisions with respect to Georgia and Ukraine.

5. NATO is a defensive Alliance. NATO will continue to protect our populations and defend every inch of Allied territory at all times. We will do so in line with our 360-degree approach and against all threats and challenges. We condemn terrorism in all its forms and manifestations and stand in solidarity with Türkiye in grieving the loss of life after the recent horrific terrorist attacks. We face threats and challenges from authoritarian actors and strategic competitors from all strategic directions. In light of the gravest threat to Euro-Atlantic security in decades and in line with the Strategic Concept, we are implementing a new baseline for our deterrence and defence posture by significantly strengthening it and further developing the full range of robust, combat-ready forces and capabilities. All these steps will substantially strengthen NATO's deterrence and forward defences. We remain committed to prepare for, deter, and defend against hostile attacks on Allies' critical infrastructure. Any attack against Allies will be met with a united and determined response. We stand together in unity and solidarity and reaffirm the enduring transatlantic bond between our nations. We will continue to strive for peace, security and stability in the whole of the Euro-Atlantic area.

Story by www.nato.int



Two F-16 Fighting Falcon aircraft of the Romanian Air Force escorted, for approximately 30 minutes, a TAROM aircraft that provided transportation to Bucharest of NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg and his retinue, told Agerpres.

"Special thanks to Romanian Air Forces MAPN Romania for welcoming the plane bringing Jens Stoltenberg, NATO delegation and allied ambassadors to Bucharest for ForMin Bucharest meeting starting in one day. Looking forward for consistent discussions, including for the security at Black Sea," Romania's Foreign Minister Bogdan Aurescu wrote on Twitter.

NATO'S ROTATIONAL DETERRENCE AND DEFENCE POSTURE IN ROMANIA DECLARED MISSION READY



FETESTI, Romania – During a ceremony at Borcea Air Base on December 9, 2022, NATO declared the Italian and Spanish fighter detachments deployed in Romania ready to execute the Air Policing mission alongside the Romanian Air Force.

Lieutenant General Fernando de la Cruz, Commander of NATO's Combined Air Operations Centre (CAOC) at Torrejón, Spain presented the Mission Ready Certificate

to the Italian Air Force detachment and the Spanish Air and Space Force detachment. All missions are fully integrated into the Romanian defence system. "They are controlled by the Control and Reporting Centre in Moara Vlăsiei, tactically commanded by CAOC Torrejón and their operations is overseen by NATO's Allied Air Command in Germany," said General de la Cruz, adding: "This is a clear example of the spirit of

cooperation and solidarity we share in the Alliance. NATO is now performing more missions to shield, assure and defend our nations," the general added.

On a daily basis, four Italian Eurofighters based at Mihail Kogalniceanu will fly together with eight Spanish F-18 jets and Romanian F-16 fighters based at Fetesti. Their mission is to protect the skies and to maintain the adequate level of training under

a NATO banner of enhanced Air Policing, Air Shielding and Assurance missions.

The two Allied fighter detachments arrived in country at the mid of November; the Italian deployment will last until July and the Spanish deployment will end in March. Both detachments support NATO's enhanced Air Policing and bolster the Alliance's deter and defend posture on the Black Sea coast. Allies continue to



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support this mission with rotational deployments.

"Today my appreciation goes to the Romanian authorities for your constant support and the Italian and Spanish Air Forces, including all of your personnel, for the high level of commitment that has allowed this enhanced Air Policing as part of the shielding missions as well as the assurance missions to happen. I am confident that you will accomplish the goal of safeguarding the integrity of the Romanian airspace as you have done in several previous years, whilst maintaining an adequate level training," General de la Cruz concluded.

Besides declaring the two fighter detachments mission ready, General de la Cruz also visited other NATO assets

deployed to Romania. He met with members of the French MAMBA surface-based air defence system that collaborates with Romania protecting the Air Base at Mihail Kogalniceanu and of the Spanish radar detachment that is tied into NATO's regional system of sensors.

The four detachments the Allies deployed to Romania are operating under NATO authorities and the CAOC at Torrejón is planning, coordinating and controlling these operations. Supporting NATO Air Shielding, they provide an increased and sustainable air and missile defence posture along NATO's eastern flank. The collective mission is designed to shield NATO territory against air and missile threats in the aftermath of Russia's illegal invasion of Ukraine.

**Story by Allied Air Command Public Affairs Office based on information provided by CAOC Torrejón
Photos by Laurențiu Turoi**





Crews from Peru - C-27J Spartan flight simulator training course

The 90th Airlift Base hosted, between October 7th and 18th, two crews from Peru that participated in the customized pilot training course on the C-27J Spartan simulator.

The flight simulator for the C-27J Spartan aircraft reflects, in a realistic manner, the way of executing a flight, through the three-dimensional representation of the geographical representation of the geographical base, the territory of Romania and Italy with important airports such as Otopeni, Bacău, Fetești.

It can simulate incidents ranging from the loss of one engine, both engines, engine on fire, the loss of hydraulic systems and the depressurization of an in-flight aircraft.

The course held at the 90th Airlift Base is the first of its kind, addressed to the specific needs of the Peruvian Air Force and included three academic days and seven days of



simulator training sessions. The Peruvian pilots were trained by two Romanian pilots who hold the Synthetic Flight Instructor certification, Colonel Emil TECUCEANU and Lieutenant Colonel Florin IANCULESCU. The two instructors have also trained crews from Greece, receiving requests from other partners as well, which reflects the high standards of 902 Squadron at the 90th Airlift Base.

Captain Fiorella SPONZA is a pilot with a flight experience of 250 hours on the C-27J Spartan aircraft and 1200 flight hours in total. At the end of the training period, Captain SPONZA declares herself satisfied, „the course was designed in accordance with our training needs, and the program was well established for a good learning”. The pilot had a pleasant experience, being in this flight simulator for the first time and feels that „she is much more prepared to face any type of emergency that may arise during the flight”. She was also impressed by the professionalism of the Romanian instructors, who shared their experience and training.

Captain Esteban MOSCA is the co-pilot, having 30 hours of flight experience on the C-27J Spartan aircraft and 1600 flight hours in total. „It was a real pleasure to be in Romania. I had the opportunity to try traditional food, I visited the Bran Castle and the Bucharest Old Town. At the same time, the 90th Airlift Base is properly equipped, and the simulator experience



was up to expectations.” About the course, Captain MOSCA says that „it was structured so that their training needs were met” and he assimilated knowledge, especially „procedures used in adverse weather conditions, as the weather in Peru is milder than in Romania”. The Peruvian co-pilot concludes by thanking the Romanian instructors whom he describes as „very well trained, being able to explain all the uncertainties I had”.

Romania and Peru are part of the Spartan User Group along with other countries that use this type of aircraft, such as: Australia, Bulgaria, Chad, Greece, Italy, Lithuania, Morocco, Mexico, Slovakia, USA, Zambia.

Lorena-Adelina NIȚĂ

High-level dialogue on the topic “Women, Peace and Security”, at the Land Forces Headquarters

On November 2, the Chief of the Land Forces Staff, Major General Iulian BERDILĂ, hosted the “Dialogue on Women, Peace and Security Agenda”. The activity was carried out on the occasion of the visit to Romania of H.E. Mrs. Jaqueline O’NEILL, the first ambassador of the Canadian government for “Women, Peace and Security”.

The event was organized by the Department for Defence Policy, Planning and International Relations. The activity was also attended by the Ambassador of Canada in Romania, H.E. Annick GOULET, the Secretary of State for Defence Policy, Planning and International Relations, Ms. Simona COJOCARU, head of the Research Center for CBRN Defence and Ecology, Romanian Soldiers and representatives of the contingents of foreign armies deployed in Romania. From behalf of Air Force Staff, colonel Pena Mihai, major Baciu Elvira, captain Gogoș Laurențiu and first lieutenant Niță Lorena attended this activity.

The dialogue focused on topics and challenges specific to the current global context regarding UN Security Council Resolution 1325 - Women, Peace and Security, adopted on October 31, 2000.

The UN Resolution no. 1325 addresses the impact of war on women and the importance of women’s full and equal participation in conflict resolution, peacebuilding, peacekeeping, humanitarian response and in post-conflict reconstruction and emphasizes the importance of the full participation and involvement of women in all efforts to ensure and promote peace and security.

During the bilateral meeting, State Secretary Simona COJOCARU presented the measures taken by Romania in order to implement the UN Resolution no. 1325, by emphasizing the excellent cooperation level between Romania and Canada.

The Romanian official pointed out the important role Ambassador O’NEILL had in this matter, being the first Canadian dignitary with a significant global activity in the field of “Women, Peace and Security”.

In her turn, the Canadian official thanked the Romanian party for the efforts made in the implementation of the UN Resolution 1325, by saluting the sustainability of the measures taken, especially in the field



of the crisis situations. The dialogue occasioned a significant exchange of opinions on the understanding of the gender issue, the increase of women’s role within organizations during peacetime and missions and operations conducted at all levels, as well as commitment of the member states in applying zero tolerance policy with regard to sexual exploitation and abuse.

The bulletproof vest prototype for women, innovated by the CBRN Research and Innovation Center for Defence and Ecology, was also presented during this event.

Locotenent Lorena-Adelina NIȚĂ





Multinational training according to NATO tactics, techniques and procedures - a German LJ-35 Jamkite Learjet complicated life for the fighter pilots during their Composite Air Operation drills



Multinational training according to NATO tactics, techniques and procedures - a Czech JAS-39 Gripen takes off as a Spanish Eurofighter taxis at Albacete Air Base, Spain

NATO'S TACTICAL LEADERSHIP PROGRAMME CONCLUDES 2022 TRAINING SCHEDULE

ALBACETE, Spain – The Tactical Leadership Programme (TLP) conducted its fourth multinational flying course with approx. 40 fighter and transport aircraft, Combat Search and Rescue (CSAR) helicopters, a NATO AWACS plane and surface-based air defence (SBAD) systems.

"Accomplishing our 2022 training schedule, the TLP hosted fighter jets from Belgium, the Czech Republic, France, Germany, Italy and Spain, to conduct multinational Combined Air Operations (COMAOs) including simulator and live-fly sorties," said Colonel Alberto Martinez, Spanish Air Force, Commandant of the TLP. "We added CSAR missions and realistic real and simulated threats from air defence systems on the ground enabling a complex environment for NATO pilots to prepare, plan, fly and de-brief combined missions that makes them ready for Alliance or coalition operations," he added.

"The TLP flying courses are built around COMAOs that require a lot of experience and coordination," said Colonel Martinez. "This time

almost 30 "friendly" fighter jets - Eurofighters and Tornados from Germany, F-16s from Belgium, Rafales and Mirages 2000Ds from France and Eurofighters from Italy - interacted with nine "opposing force" jets - F-16s from Belgium, EF-18Ms from Spain, Rafale Ms from France and JAS-43 from the Czech Republic. Tactical Air Transport provided by Spanish C-295 and Italian C-27 planes and CSAR capability ensured by Italian HH-101 choppers supported the missions and various SBAD systems and a German LJ-35 Jamkite Learjet complicated life for the fighter pilots," he added.

"The specialty of the TLP is to offer a complex programme of realistic training that is a mix of live-fly and simulator training from across the entire spectrum from planning to de-briefing - and all this in a truly multinational environment and in compliance with agreed NATO standards," he concluded.

A NATO Airborne Warning and Control System (AWACS) E-3A aircraft from Geilenkirchen, Germany, was also deployed at Albacete. The multinational crew of air surveillance and control specialists took off in

their E-3A regularly to provide airborne support during missions. The crew supported with provision of airspace surveillance and early detection of airborne threats, control of mission, fighter control, coordination SAR operation, airspace control and coordination and control of SBAD systems.

"Flying and aiding during a TLP Flying Course is a win-win for both sides," said Major General Thomas Kunkel, U.S. Air Force, NATO Airborne Early Warning and Control Force Commander. "Our crew has invaluable training in virtually all the roles NATO E-3A plays for the Alliance and the course participants get accustomed to what capability we can bring to the fight. Moreover, deploying to Albacete underlines our flexibility and resilience and helps the crew to come together with their fighter colleagues from the Allied air forces," he added.

**Story by Allied Air Command Public Affairs Office based on input provided by the Tactical Leadership Programme
Photo by Antonio Jiménez Santana.**



Multinational training according to NATO tactics, techniques and procedures - a NATO AWACS E-3A plane provided airspace surveillance and early detection, control of mission, SAR coordination and airspace control out of Albacete Air Base, Spain



Multinational training according to NATO tactics, techniques and procedures - pilots and ground crews in front of French Mirages and Rafales at Albacete Air Base, Spain

Italy and Spain continue support for NATO'S Enhanced Posture on Eastern Flank



Allied solidarity in action - the Romanian host team and the Italian Eurofighter teams pose for a group photo at Mihail Kogalniceanu, Romania. Photo by Italian Air Force

Four Italian Air Force Eurofighter Typhoon jets touched down at Mihail Kogalniceanu Air Base, Romania, and six Spanish Air Force F-18s landed at Fetesti Air Base, Romania, on November 25, to continue NATO's enhanced Air Policing mission securing the Black Sea coast.

"By deploying Italian fighters, the Alliance demonstrates a reliable, robust and effective capability for the NATO Air Policing and NATO Air Shielding missions along the eastern flank. Our national contribution in Romania underlines the Alliance's ability to resolve and to adapt swiftly to any changes in the international security environment, by defending every inch of NATO territory," said Colonel Michele Morelli, Italian Task Force Air "Gladiator" Commander.

The Italian fighter jets will be flying alongside Romanian fighters from December 2022 to the end of July 2023; dubbed Task Force Air Romania (TFA-R) "Gladiator" the detachment is comprised of personnel

and aircraft of the Italian Air Force Eurofighter Wings 4, 36, 37 and 51.

Spanish F-18 fighter jets also deployed to Romania on November 25. They landed at Fetesti Air Base and the detachment will conduct enhanced Air Policing and support Alliance enhanced Vigilance Activities and work with the Romanian and Italian Air Force securing the skies in the next four months.

NATO started conducting enhanced Air Policing out of the Mihail Kogalniceanu Air Base near Constanța on the Black Sea Coast in 2014 following Russia's illegal annexation of Crimea. Ever since, Allied fighter detachments have augmented the collective Air Policing posture in Northern and Southern Allies on the eastern flank ensuring population and deterring potential aggression. Italy has regularly supported this mission both in the North and the South underscoring its commitment to NATO collective defence and enhancing its interoperability with Allied air forces.

Story by Allied Air Command Public Affairs Office

One of four Italian Eurofighters is shutting down the engines after landing in Romania. Photo by Italian Air Force



Also on November 25, six Spanish F-18 fighter jets landed at Fetesti, Romania, providing an additional air shielding capability for NATO's defensive posture on the eastern flank. Photo by Spanish Air Force

NATO allies test Air and Missile Defences in Romania

RAMSTEIN

Germany – French MAMBA Surface-Based Air and Missile Defence system repelled a simulated air attack by Allied fighter aircraft in an exercise, November 23.

Deployed in Romania since May 2022, the MAMBA has been augmenting NATO's Integrated Air and Missile Defence (IAMD) system. Allied fighters including F-16s from Türkiye, Spanish Eurofighters - currently deployed in Bulgaria on a NATO mission -, US E/A 18G Growler electronic warfare aircraft and French Navy Rafale fighters flying from the aircraft carrier Charles De Gaulle participated in the routine test of the system.

"In response to Russia's war against Ukraine, we continue to strengthening our deterrence and defences in the eastern part of the Alliance", said NATO Spokesperson Oana Lungescu. "This includes significantly increasing our air defences with more fighter jets and surveillance aircraft on patrol, more ground-based air defences and air-defence-capable ships at sea. Exercises such as this one ensure that NATO forces are able to operate together and remain ready to respond to any threat from any direction".

The Surface-to-Air Missile Platform/Terrain (SAMP/T) system - also called MAMBA by the French military - is a theatre anti-missile system designed to protect the battlefield and sensitive sites, such as airports and seaports, against cruise missiles, manned and unmanned aircraft and tactical ballistic missiles.

"SBAMD systems like the French MAMBA currently supporting Allied Air Command's Air Shielding mission in Romania are a key part of the Alliance's IAMD system. Constant drills and training like this ensure crews are ready to detect and if required respond to air and missile tracks that



A French Navy Rafale fighter jet taking off from the Charles De Gaulle Aircraft Carrier during a previous exercise; this type of jet also took part in the exercise on Nov 23. Archive photo courtesy French Navy.

A French Navy Rafale fighter jet getting the all clear for take-off from the Charles De Gaulle aircraft Carrier during the NATO exercise on Nov 23. Photo courtesy French Navy.



The French Mamba system deployed in Romania since May 2022 repelled a simulated air attack by Allied fighter aircraft in an exercise, November 23. Archive photo courtesy French Air and Space Force

The French Mamba system deployed in Romania since May 2022 repelled a simulated air attack by Allied fighter aircraft in an exercise, November 23. Archive photo courtesy French Air and Space Force



Two U.S. E/A-18G Growler aircraft also participate in the training. For several weeks the U.S. jets have been supporting NATO's deterrence and defence missions in Europe. Archive photo courtesy French Air and Space Force.



may threaten their defensive area of operations", said Brigadier General Christoph Pliet, Deputy Chief of Staff Operations, Allied Air Command.

NATO's Integrated Air and Missile Defence System continuously guards and protects Allied airspace. In addition to French MAMBA system in Romania, Germany has deployed Patriot missiles to Slovakia the US has deployed Patriot missiles to Poland and the Spanish have deployed NASAMS systems to Latvia in response to Russia's invasion of Ukraine. NATO IAMD is an essential, continuous mission in peacetime, crisis and conflict, safeguarding and protecting the Allies in this context, contributing to the Alliance's indivisible security and freedom of action.

Story by Allied Air Command Public Affairs Office



A Spanish Eurofighter twoship taking off in parallel at Bezmer Air Base, Bulgaria. The Spanish jets are currently supporting NATO's enhanced defensive posture along the eastern flank. Archive photo courtesy Bulgarian Air Force

ROMANIAN AIR FORCE

2023



JANUARY

MONDAY

TUESDAY

WEDNESDAY

THURSDAY

FRIDAY

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The exercise, focused on a fictitious scenario, took place at Ex Mihail Kogălniceanu Air Base 57 and followed the verification and testing of the possibilities of boarding and landing HIMARS equipment in/from aircraft Airbus A 400 M, belonging to Royal British Air Force As part of this activity, an air infiltration mission of a HIMARS type launch facility and the crew serving it was executed.

The exercise entailed the use of diverse equipment, a HIMARS launch facility belonging to the Romanian Ground Forces, a C2 SHELTER special command and control autonomous vehicle belonging to the 8th ROT Brigade of the Romanian Ground Forces, as well as a military transport aircraft A 400 M. The exercise was organized with the involvement of the Joint Air Support Service for the Special Operations Forces (SOATG core) within the Romanian Air Force Headquarters in coordination with the State Ground Forces Command United States of America for Europe and Africa (USAREUR-AF) Command for Special Operations Forces - Europe, United States of America (US - SAUR) and a military team from the 1-14th Artillery Battalion of the United States 75th Artillery Brigade.

For Romania, the realization of the indirect fire support capabilities constitutes an essential security interest and contributes significantly to both the strengthening of the strategic partnership with the United States of America and employment fulfillment, the ambitions assumed by our country within NATO

Foto: Sg.may. Narcissus AUNTIE



Multinational training exercise "ATREUS" at Mihail Kogălniceanu Air Base 57



Royal Air Force and Romanian Army test Deployability of NATO Defensive Capabilities



Nov 17 2022 – Mihail Kogălniceanu, Romania

A Royal Air Force A400M Atlas transport aircraft conducted trials in Romania to rapidly deploy NATO capabilities, using a Romanian mobile artillery rocket system.

The week-long trials started on November 8 and involved an Atlas A400M aircraft crewed by 30 air mobility specialists that flew out of RAF Brize Norton to test the ability to load and transport the High Mobility Artillery Rocket System (HIMARS) weapons system. The expeditionary character of the test was underscored by conducting all activities at Mihail Kogălniceanu Air Base in Romania and using a HIMARS operated by the 8th Tactical Operational Missile Brigade of the Romanian Army.

The trials concluded with the weapons system being loaded, flown, unloaded to then fire a simulated missile strike, before reloading and returning to base. Also taking part as advisors were personnel from the United States Special Operations Command Europe.

"The greatest challenge is the initial assessment of any unfamiliar vehicle," said Flight Sergeant Tom Ellery from the Air Portability Section of the Trials Management Office at the United Kingdom's Joint Air Delivery Test and Evaluation Unit. "Gathering all the data required to clear it – what are its dimensions, tyre pressures, weight, dangerous goods contained within?" he added. "Then we can ascertain whether the vehicle physically fits, isn't going to strike any part of the aircraft as it's loaded, isn't going to overload the floor capacity or aircraft compartment and can be restrained sufficiently for flight," he concluded.

Currently in service with several NATO Allies, the M142 HIMARS is a light multiple rocket launcher developed in the late 1990s for the United States Army and mounted on a medium tactical truck. The system carries one pod with six Guided Multiple Launch Rocket System rockets.

"Moving around large vehicles is routine business for the A400M and its crew," said Sergeant Ben Worley who was the aircraft loadmaster overseeing the loading of the HIMARS. "In this case, however, it was highly valuable to be part of the initial assessment and to be involved in each step of the clearance process," he added.

The successful trial once also demonstrated that the RAF Air Mobility Force has the capability to operate at range with NATO allies to rapidly move unfamiliar equipment from other nations if called upon to do so. It also showcases NATO's



A Romanian Army HIMARS system being loaded into a Royal Air Force A400M transport aircraft at the Romanian Mihail Kogălniceanu Air Base on the Black Sea Coast. The trial comprised loading, deployment by air, unloading and firing a simulated missile, before reloading and returning to base



ability to draw on the Allies' cooperation and combined capabilities to safeguard and protect Alliance territory, populations and forces flexibly and responsively.

Story by Allied Air Command Public Affairs Office based on information provided by the Royal Air Force, Photos Crown Copyright.



Balkan Shield 22 Multinational Exercise in Greece

Participating in a multinational exercise abroad is always an opportunity to learn new things, but also to show other servicemen the level of readiness. That's the only way to build the foundations of trust to act together in a real situation.

From the end of October until November 11, the Romanian military will participate in the multinational Balkan Shield exercise held in Greece. Our country is represented by a detachment with two IAR-330 PUMA (M and L-RM) helicopters and navigator, technical and medical personnel from Mihail Kogălniceanu Air Base 57 and 90 Otopeni Air Transport, added to which special forces operators cuckoo. 250 participants, with 25 land vehicles and 11 helicopters, from seven countries (Albania, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Greece, Montenegro, Northern Macedonia and Romania) are involved in the exercise.

For the Romanian military, participation in the Balkan Shield brings a gain in the field of training in the line of standardization of techniques, tactics and procedures in relation to flight missions performed in support of the Special Operations Forces it's also for medical evacuation.

"This is the first international exercise during which we intend to integrate a helicopter drop-level structure for special operations into a similar structure belonging to another partner state."

Each exercise has its challenges, and now these have consisted of flying in a new area, with mountainous relief, the alert pace of missions, getting familiar with the operation area. Every participant has an important role and has something to learn for the future. For the technical team, the challenge was to dislodge the materials and equipment required to carry out the "fight" level maintenance, while using the facilities and infrastructure provided by the host country, through the agreements signed. Another gain in terms of 'competence development' comes from the fact that naval personnel are involved in all stages of the exercise, from planning, execution and analysing of missions on the spectrum of force operations sp and it's. All these steps help us to achieve the goal of detachment, to harmonize and validate our own techniques, tactics and procedures in an international operational environment." - said commander Cosmin Macsim, chief of the flight detachment.

On the occasion of the Visitor Day (DVDAY), which took place on Friday, November 4, at the Avlona/Greece Training Center, visitors and the press saw a demonstration exercise based on a tactical attack scenario, with the infiltration of troops as land and air, in which the helicopters of the Romanian Air Force, present for the first time in this exercise, they performed insertion by alternative means and evacuation (CASEVAC). On this occasion, the Chief of General Staff of the Greek National Defense, General Konstantinos Floros, stressed: "We have noticed excellent cooperation between the friendly and ally Balkan countries with which we share the same beliefs about the area, namely, peace, stability and security".

The Balkan Shield series of exercises began in 2007, on the initiative of Athens, and is an example of multilateral cooperation aimed at promoting peace and security in the Balkans.

**Text: Captain Mirela Viță
Photo: Sotiris Dimitropoulos/Eurokiniss, Air Base 57**



NATO EXERCISE LOYAL LEDA 2022 CONCLUDED AT JFTC

"A TRULY COHESIVE EVENT"



Approximately 700 NATO soldiers and civilian experts from 25 NATO and Partner Nations gathered at the Joint Force Training Centre (JFTC) in Bydgoszcz, Poland, to participate in Exercise LOYAL LEDA 2022. The JFTC-led Exercise Control (EXCON) formed in Bydgoszcz steered operations of thousands of troops taking part in the event across Europe. They all worked hand in hand to maintain readiness and cohesion of the Alliance.

"Cohesion is the centre of gravity for NATO and this was a truly cohesive event", said Major General Norbert Wagner, the JFTC Commander and the Exercise Director. "By accomplishing this exercise, we have contributed to strengthening NATO's unity and have helped increase the Allied interoperability both procedurally and culturally".

Exercise LOYAL LEDA 2022 (LOLE22) was a NATO Allied Land Command-sponsored land domain tactical-level Computer Assisted Exercise / Command Post Exercise. It was executed between 30 November and 9 December, following more than one year's meticulous planning, coordination and preparations. With JFTC as Officer Directing the Exercise, LOLE22 trained and evaluated NATO Rapid Deployable Corps-Türkiye in the NATO Warfighting Corps role for 2023. It also trained Headquarters Multinational Corps South-East and Headquarters Multinational Division South-East in planning for and conducting the execution phase of an Article 5 Major Joint Operation against a peer adversary.

The exercise was based on a compelling Article 5 scenario that encompassed a wide range of modern warfare challenges, to include those deriving from space and cyber domains as well as hybrid warfare. Its successful execution would not have been possible without tremendous support of various commands, such as Headquarters Supreme Allied Command Transformation, Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe, NATO Allied Air Command, Joint Force Command Brunssum, United States Army Europe, NATO Rapid Deployable Corps Spain, U.S. Army V Corps, NATO Communications and Information Agency, U.S. Navy Reserve, numerous MODs and more. LOLE22 was one of NATO's biggest exercises this year.



"Thanks to remarkable engagement of all participating Headquarters, the exercise was a great demonstration of NATO's warfighting capabilities", added General Wagner who observed the progress of the event at JFTC and also at other exercise locations, including the NATO Rapid Deployable Corps Türkiye in Istanbul and Headquarters Multinational Corps South-East in Sibiu, Romania.

Exercise LOYAL LEDA 2022 was this year's highlight in the Joint Force Training Centre's programme of work. The Centre was responsible for proper preparation and execution of the exercise and for ensuring that all requirements were fulfilled. JFTC experts also contributed significantly to the experimentation activities during the exercise.

15 people from Deployable Air Command Centre (DACC) located at Poggio Renatico,



Italy are participating in Exercise Loyal Leda 22 in Türkiye for the first time as an Air Support Operation Centre (ASOC) from 30 November to 9 December 2022.

The DACC was tasked to implement the ASOC at the NATO Command Structure level, building on their experience of delivering a vast range of courses such as Initial Functional JFAC Training, Specialized Heavy Air Refueling Course and Missile Defense Course, and on their direct experience meeting the Battle Groups during the Ramstein Dust exercises; further contributing to NATO's goal of assuring European stability and continuing to be at the centre of NATO's vital AirC2 capability.

Story by Story by Allied Air Command and Joint Force Training Centre, Photos by Joint Force Training Centre

"The completion of our permanent infrastructure is critical to achieving Full Operational Capability and realizing our vision as NATO's elite ISR organisation," said NAGSF Commander Brigadier General Andy Clark. Photo by Dion Houston.



A top view of the new ecologically sustainable complex including the NAGSF Headquarters building at Sigonella Air Base. Photo courtesy Webuild



NATO Alliance Ground Surveillance Force takes over critical infrastructure

SIGONELLA, Italy – On November 28, 2022, a handover ceremony took place at the Sigonella Air Base, home to the five Alliance Ground Surveillance (AGS) RQ-4D remotely piloted aircraft and the NATO AGS Force (NAGSF).

The event marked the successful completion of the infrastructure works – that started in July 2018 – for the expansion of the AGS Ground Operations Area and the Flight Area. Representatives from NATO, Host Nation Italy and NAGSF, gathered at Sigonella for a ribbon-cutting ceremony, and subsequently, had the opportunity to visit the new facilities.

Managed by the NATO Support and Procurement Agency (NSPA), commissioned and funded by NATO, on behalf of Host Nation Italy, the infrastructure works cover a total area of 26,700 square metres. The project encompasses the design and construction of new buildings for command and control activities, the new NAGSF Headquarters, three modern hangars, a new apron, and related workshops, warehouses, and offices. The works also included the renovation of existing warehouses for logistics and maintenance.

"The new infrastructure will improve efficiency, reduce energy consumption and CO2 emissions, while providing a comfortable place to work for all those contributing to the Alliance Ground Surveillance mission", said NSPA General Manager Ms Stacy Cummings. "This complex project demonstrates our ability to deliver efficient, effective, and responsive solutions to NATO and our Nations," she added.

"Today marks an important milestone for NATO and the Force," said Brigadier General Andy Clark, NAGSF Commander. "The completion of our permanent infrastructure is critical to achieving Full Operational Capability and realizing our vision as NATO's elite Intelligence, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance (ISR) organisation," he added.

The measures for energy-environmental sustainability adopted to ensure the long-term environmental and economical sustainability of the new infrastructure include advanced management of rainwater and wastewater, recycled materials, and 600 photovoltaic panels integrated on the roof of the largest building.

The NATO AGS system comprises five Northrop Grumman RQ-4D "Phoenix" remotely piloted aircraft, supporting fixed and deployable command and control elements, ground segments, and supporting communication architecture. The system provides the Alliance with a state-of-the-art capability that enables comprehensive ISR collection and distribution to NATO and Allied decision makers. In addition to being responsible for the infrastructure upgrade, NSPA also manages the full life cycle management of the system on behalf of the 30 NATO Allies.


Story by NATO Support and Procurement Agency Public Affairs Office



One of NATO's five RQ-4D remotely piloted aircraft in the newly build hangar at the Force's Main Operating Base in Sigonella, Italy. Archive photo by courtesy NAGSAF

Representatives from NATO, Host Nation Italy and NAGSF, gathered at Sigonella for a ribbon-cutting ceremony on the occasion of the handover of newly completed infrastructure at the Italian Air Base at Sigonella. Photo by Dion Houston.





The B-21 Raider was unveiled to the public at a ceremony December 2, 2022 in Palmdale, Calif. Designed to operate in tomorrow's high-end threat environment, the B-21 will play a critical role in ensuring America's enduring airpower capability. (U.S. Air Force photo)

WORLD GETS FIRST LOOK AT B-21 RAIDER

Northrop Grumman Corporation (NYSE: NOC) and the U.S. Air Force unveiled the B-21 Raider to the world today. The B-21 joins the nuclear triad as a visible and flexible deterrent designed for the U.S. Air Force to meet its most complex missions.

"The Northrop Grumman team develops and delivers technology that advances science, looks into the future and brings it to the here and now," said Kathy Warden, chair, chief executive officer and president, Northrop Grumman. "The B-21 Raider defines a new era in technology and strengthens America's role of delivering peace through deterrence."

The B-21 Raider forms the backbone of the future for U.S. air power, leading a powerful family of systems that deliver a new era of capability and flexibility through advanced integration of data, sensors and weapons. Its sixth-generation capabilities include stealth, information advantage and open architecture.

"The B-21 Raider is a testament to America's enduring advantages in ingenuity and innovation. And it's proof of the

Department's long-term commitment to building advanced capabilities that will fortify America's ability to deter aggression, today and into the future. Now, strengthening and sustaining U.S. deterrence is at the heart of our National Defense Strategy," said Secretary of Defense Lloyd J. Austin III. "This bomber was built on a foundation of strong, bipartisan support in Congress. And because of that support, we will soon fly this aircraft, test it and then move into production."

The B-21 is capable of networking across the battlespace to multiple systems, and into all domains. Supported by a digital ecosystem throughout its lifecycle, the B-21 can quickly evolve through rapid technology upgrades that provide new capabilities to outpace future threats.

"With the B-21, the U.S. Air Force will be able to deter or defeat threats anywhere in the world," said Tom Jones, corporate vice president and president, Northrop Grumman Aeronautics Systems. "The B-21 exemplifies how Northrop Grumman is leading the industry in digital transformation and digital engineering,

ultimately delivering more value to our customers."

The B-21 Raider is named in honor of the Doolittle Raids of World War II when 80 men, led by Lt. Col. James "Jimmy" Doolittle, and 16 B-25 Mitchell medium bombers set off on a mission that changed the course of World War II. The designation B-21 recognizes the Raider as the first bomber of the 21st century.

Northrop Grumman is a technology company, focused on global security and human discovery. Our pioneering solutions equip our customers with capabilities they need to connect, advance and protect the U.S. and its allies. Driven by a shared purpose to solve our customers' toughest problems, our 90,000 employees define possible every day.

On April 18, 1942, 80 men and 16 B-25 Mitchell medium bombers set off on what some said was an

impossible mission, to change the course of World War II. The actions of these 80 volunteers, led by Lt. Col. Jimmy Doolittle, were instrumental in shifting momentum in the Pacific theater and setting the stage for victory at the Battle of Midway.

These men, dubbed the Doolittle Raiders, launched 16 B-25s off the flight deck of the USS Hornet, despite the plane not being designed for carrier operations. The raid acted as a catalyst to many future innovations in U.S. air superiority from land or sea. That bold, innovative and courageous spirit of the Doolittle Raiders has been the inspiration behind the name of America's next generation bomber, the B-21 Raider, developed by the U.S. Air Force and Northrop Grumman.

Story by www.northropgrumman.com

Inside an Airbus A400M transport of the German Air Force during the Baltic Tiger 2022 binational military exercise over the Baltic Sea, October 24, 2022.



'Baltic Tiger' drill tests Berlin-to-Tallinn flow of reinforcements

Over the next eight hours, the service chiefs would observe their respective contingents run various force protection maneuvers together during the month-long "Baltic Tiger" exercise alongside Estonian forces.

Planned just two months before deployment, the drills saw over 200 German armed forces personnel and 40 vehicles train with over 80 Estonian troops to provide airfield and harbor security amid the backdrop of Russia's war on Ukrainian, ongoing now for eight months and counting.

It was the first time the German Air Force and Navy had trained together on such missions, and outside of their own nation, officials noted. "One of our main aims we achieved here is to work together with the Navy forces in a joint environment, to basically enhance our common understanding from force protection and also in a combined environment," said German Air Force Maj. Dirk P. — last name redacted, as requested by the service — who served as squadron commander for Baltic Tiger.

On the Navy side, forces involved included marine infantrymen specializing in harbor protection, including divers performing mine and improvised explosive ordnance counter-measures. Personnel specializing in the defense against attacks with chemical, biological and nuclear weapons as well as cyber-defense experts also took part, the major told reporters Oct. 24 at Ämari.

Members of the Air Force's "Friesland" airfield protection unit were deployed, providing snipers, fire support, air mobility protection and close target reconnaissance. Maj. Dirk highlighted the difference between working with a host nation like Estonia — a fellow NATO and European Union member — as opposed to the air force protection unit's prior work in other regions.

"We're not in Afghanistan. We're not in Mali. We have a NATO ally in a generally very safe

ÄMARI AIR BASE, Estonia — On a crisp October morning, nearly 30 miles from Tallinn Bay, two German Eurofighter Typhoon fighters taxied down the runway here, as an A400M transport aircraft carrying the nation's top Air Force and Navy officers touched down after a dawn flight from Berlin.



The logo of Baltic Tiger on a jacket during the Baltic Tiger 2022 binational military exercise at the harbor in Tallinn, Estonia, October 24, 2022.

environment where we arrive, and the thing we do is make it even more safe for our own troops" to come in, he said.

The unit is now "refocused" on finding its new role as Western nations pivot from 20 years of battling counter-terrorism in the Middle East and Africa to countering peer adversaries like Russia and China. Baltic Tiger also served as a "proof of concept" for the specialized unit to develop new air power protection procedures in the new threat environment, he added.

Speed is of the essence

Baltic Tiger took place at various military sites around Estonia, including Ämari Air Base, Tallinn Naval Base, Muuga Harbor, Klooga Training Area, Tapa Army Base, and Paldiski Barracks, per the German Air Force. A handful of U.K. Royal Air Force, Belgian Air Force, and Danish Army personnel also participated.

The training missions conducted during the month-long exercise included counter-intruder confrontations on the airfield, close-air support procedures, and harbor opening strategies to include mine-hunting and chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear (CBRN) decontamination.

Several real-world events melded into the exercise: When the German frigate Sachsen sailed into the harbor at the start of Baltic Tiger, German navy forces provided specialized maritime force protection, even though it was not expected to take part in the drills.

The Oct. 24 flight from Berlin to Ämari that transported senior German military staff and a handful of reporters also got in on the action — aboard were nearly a dozen Air Force protection unit members, in position to ward off an attack as the A400M touched down on the tarmac and opened its rear cargo ramp door, and two Eurofighters escorted the aircraft during its sunrise flight.

The forces also drilled in civilian areas, such as close-quarter combat in the nearby town of Klooga, a CBRN decontamination demo in Rummu, and a harbor opening in Muuga "where local workers were actually in the port area," Maj. Dirk said.

"Speed is of the essence," he added. Close coordination with multinational partners "has been a main focus of this exercise, to work together with our major partners within the alliance, and that went very, very, successfully." It was essential for German forces to practice

command-and-control (C2) procedures and develop common terminology with the Estonian troops, and also for the air force and navy forces to do the same, he noted.

During the distinguished visitors day in late October, Air Force Chief of Staff Lt. Gen. Gerhartz and Navy Chief Vice Adm. Jan Christian Kaack observed demonstrations of counter-intruder operations in the woods on base, along with close-quarter battle tactics. Two U.K. RAF Joint Terminal Attack Controller (JTAC) operators directed kinetic effects and provided on-the-ground reconnaissance to German Eurofighter pilots targeting a ground location for attack. In Tallinn harbor, Navy minehunters kayaked out from the bay to dive and perform explosive ordnance disposal (EOD), and then were subjected to intensive CBRN cleansing.

Although it was not demonstrated that day, forces at Tapa Army Base performed a CBRN decontamination demo for the NATO-allied Enhanced Forward Presence contingent based there, where a Danish Leopard 2A7 tank was decontaminated, Maj. Dirk said.

Throughout the demonstrations, it was clear that speed was at the top of everyone's

mind. While officials said the exercise was conducted against an "unnamed adversary," they also pointed out Ämari was just a 10-minute flight from the Estonian-Russian border.

A crucial location

Earlier this year at the annual NATO summit, Estonian leaders called on allies to help the state better protect itself from a potential attack by Russian forces. The Baltic nation has already been targeted by Moscow's cyber attacks and other hybrid and irregular warfare tactics. In early November, the United Kingdom announced a new agreement to provide short-range air defense weapons and multiple-launch rocket systems to its remaining troops based in Estonia.

The nation sits in a critical location atop the Baltic Sea, said Ben Hodges, a retired Army three-star and former commander of U.S. Army Europe. NATO members and allies are looking for ways to move forces and material across the sea from countries like Sweden — in line to become a NATO member alongside Finland — into Estonia, and protection of critical infrastructure will be key, he told Defense News.

"Control of the air over the Baltic Sea will be important, as well as sea control, in order to move cargo vehicles capability from up or across the Baltic Sea into Tallinn, or other ports in Estonia as well as Latvia and Lithuania," he said.

Speaking at a press conference at the end of the distinguished visitors' day, the two German military chiefs said they liked what they saw.

"Especially in the current times, it is very, very important that we show here in Estonia, but also in the Baltic States as a whole, that we stand by their side and, if necessary, if the crisis requires it, that we can reinforce our forces here within a very short period of time by deploying appropriate soldiers here," said Gerhartz.

"The message is that we don't need a lot of preparation time," he continued. "Even if we deploy with ships or aircraft, we can be here within hours to reinforce in case we're needed."

Kaack, the Navy chief, added, "NATO stands for its promise of one for all and all for one." He noted that he joined his sailors in celebrating Germany's Day of Unity in early October aboard the Sachsen-class frigate in Tallinn's harbor, "protected and secured by Baltic Tiger units."



German Air Force teams are getting ready for four weeks of combined joint drills with their Estonian counterparts during exercise Baltic Tiger. (Photo by German Armed Forces/NATO SHAPE)

He emphasized that the services were "very careful" not to employ any assets or elements that could trigger a reaction from adversaries and "contribute to an escalation of the situation" in Europe.

A larger Luftwaffe exercise

Now that Baltic Tiger is complete, the Luftwaffe is turning its focus toward planning a significantly larger multinational exercise next year.

Air Defender 2023, a joint aerial drill between the U.S. Air National Guard and the German Air Force, is scheduled to take place next June. Final planning is underway, with the full details expected to be finalized in December, Gerhartz said.

The Luftwaffe chief and his U.S. National Guard counterpart, Lt. Gen. Michael Loh, first announced plans for Air Defender just over a year ago. The scheme is intended to test interoperability between a variety of NATO allies in the European theater, honing in on C2

missions and interactions between intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance (ISR), cyber, and space assets, as well as aircraft.

The German Air Force wants to use all available air bases for this exercise, Gerhartz told reporters during Baltic Tiger. In particular, the service's Hohn and Lechfeld air bases are planned to be utilized for extra mobility and support in Air Defender, as well as future international exercises and deployments.

There are no longer any aircraft permanently stationed at Hohn, located north of Hamburg in Germany's Schleswig-Holstein state near the Danish border, and Lechfeld, located west of Munich in Bavaria. But both airfields still host small units responsible for air base infrastructure, or rudimentary base operation functions, according to the service. Additionally, parts of the German Air Force Technical Training Center are stationed at Lechfeld, while Hohn hosts parts of the Navy's Sea Battalion, an Air Force spokesperson told Defense News.

It's possible that other services will play a role in Air Defender 2023, Gerhartz said, noting that the U.S. Navy had "knocked on the door."

Hodges has long advocated for a multinational integrated air and missile defense exercise specifically focused on knocking down enemy aircraft alongside missiles and drones in the European theater. While Air Defender doesn't quite go that far, he lauded Germany's efforts to lead a large-scale air operations exercise. "Germany, because of its geography, is a logical framework nation to lead a lot of these types of exercises," he said.

These exercises should be focused on training troops "to the point of failure" in order to maximize military readiness, Hodges noted.

"Any exercise that has no mistakes, where nobody fails [and] everything gets ticked off, that's not an exercise. That's a demonstration," he said.

Story by Vivienne Machi (www.defensenews.com)

Spain to join NATO'S Enhanced Air Policing Mission in Bulgaria

The Bulgarian Air Force ensures 24/7 NATO Air Policing with their MiG-29 fighter jets. Photo courtesy: Bulgarian Air Force



The Spanish Air Force has deployed around 150 personnel and 6 Eurofighter F-2000 Typhoon aircraft. Archive photo by: Chavdar Garchev



RAMSTEIN, Germany - Spanish Eurofighters have landed in Bulgaria deployed under NATO enhanced Air Policing. The Spanish Air Force flies alongside their Bulgarian colleagues safeguarding the airspace along the eastern flank.

Bulgarian and Spanish fighter aircraft will jointly perform Air policing tasks from 14 November to 2 December 2022. The Spanish Air Force has deployed around 150 personnel and 6 Eurofighter F-2000 Typhoon aircraft. The mission will carry out measures on ensuring the security of NATO Allies and will fulfil the tasks incorporated in the Standing Air and Missile Defence Plan of the NATO Integrated Air and Missile Defence System (NATINAMDS).

"Joint deployments like this are a testament to the interoperability of our Air Forces within the Alliance and is a great success for NATO," said Major Zarza, Spanish detachment commander. The cooperation between Allies is paramount to maintaining a safe air space for all air users. Air Policing shows that the Allies are willing to combine and share capabilities for the benefit of collective defence.

"The Bulgarian Air Force will continue to provide its national contribution to the NATO Integrated Air and Missile Defence System. The combined employment of Bulgarian and Spanish Air Force equipment and personnel in NATO's Air Policing mission proves the capability of Bulgaria's combat aviation to act in an integrated manner with the Allies' forces; collectively, to patrol and protect the airspace of the member states of the Alliance," said Major General Dimitar Petrov, Commander of the Bulgarian Air Force.

The Bulgarian Air Force ensures 24/7 NATO Air Policing with their MiG-29 fighter jets; Allied detachments enhance this capability flying alongside the Bulgarian fighters. Bulgaria hosted several NATO fighter detachments at Graf Ignatievo Air Base under NATO's enhanced Air Policing arrangements since 2014, e.g. from Italy, Spain and the United States. The Bulgarian Air Force ensures NATO Air Policing with their MiG-29 fighter jets; Allied detachments enhance this capability flying alongside the Bulgarian fighters.

Story by Allied Air Command Public Affairs Office

TRI-NATIONAL HELICOPTER EXERCISE PROVES ALLIED COOPERATION IN THE NETHERLANDS

The Netherlands brought their NH-90 maritime helicopters, AH-64 attack helicopters, CH-47 and AS-532 transport helicopters to the exercise to fly alongside Polish Air Force Mi-8 helicopters and UH-60 Blackhawks, Apaches and Chinooks from U.S. 12th Combat Aviation Brigade. Close cooperation among the three nations and the Royal Netherlands Ground Forces enabled combined multi-domain action across the whole spectrum of airmobile missions.

All three nations' rotary wing assets were involved in large-scale operations practicing cargo and personnel transport and drops, underslung load missions, forward arming and refueling point operations and engagement of targets on the ground.

Week three of the annual exercise Falcon Autumn was focused on conducting complex air assault operations on the coast between Amsterdam and Rotterdam. The goal of air assault operations may be establishing a bridgehead and they are part of the basic skills of airmobile troops. Using a combination of firepower, speed and surprise, assault and transport helicopters are employed to drop airborne infantry troops e.g. to prepare extraction or rescue mission for own forces.

"I was impressed by the unity of effort we all demonstrated and by the variety of opportunities we exploited during this multinational exercise," said Lieutenant Colonel Hemmelder. "Opportunities that strengthen our ties, improve interoperability and increase combined effectiveness in a complex mission environment. Ultimately this exercise enables us as NATO Allies to react more rapidly and effectively when called upon to protect our security and values," he concluded.

Story by Allied Air Command Public Affairs Office



A mixed fleet of helicopters ready to embark ground forces for a mission during exercise Falcon Autumn. Photo by Royal Netherlands Air Force.

VREDEPEEL, the Netherlands – Helicopters from host nation the Netherlands, Poland and the United States today completed exercise Falcon Autumn after successfully testing and applying combined tactics, techniques and procedures in the conduct of joint airmobile operations.

"During Falcon Autumn 22, the Netherlands Defence Helicopter Command and the 11th Air Mobile Brigade staff have worked together in unison with the our colleagues from the Polish 1st Air Cavalry Battalion and the US 12th Combat Aviation Battalion. The scenario during the exercise was built around a simulated invocation of NATO's Article V, applying the principle of collective defence, which is at the very heart of the Transatlantic Alliance," said Lieutenant Colonel Roy Hemmelder, Commander Air Task Force during Falcon Autumn.



