

STARS INFORMER

MAY
2014

SOUTH EASTERN EUROPE BRIGADE REVIEW



SOUTH EASTERN EUROPE BRIGADE REVIEW // MAY 2014 // ISSUE VI



'ONE TEAM, ONE MISSION'

SEEBRIG
MEMBER NATIONS



NATION 1



NATION 2



NATION 3



NATION 4



NATION 5



NATION 6



NATION 7



STARS INFORMER

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Brigadier General Hakan ESER (Na-7),
Commander of SEEBRIG



Foreword



Dear readers,

As the Commander of Multinational Peace Force South Eastern Europe Brigade, I would like to welcome you to the 6th issue of "Stars Informer". Like in the previous issues, you will find comprehensive and reliable articles on SEEBRIG activities and some on issues related to Peace Support Operations, multinationalism, SEDM-CC and the PMSC Chairmanship's Priorities for 2013-2015, SEEBRIG Command Handover Takover, Communications and Information Systems, preparation for South-Eastern Europe Simulation (SEESIM) 14 Exercise, Public Diplomacy and SEEBRIG affiliated units.

Since the last issue, SEEBRIG, together with Host Nation Authorities, successfully conducted the Handover-Takover Ceremony for SEEBRIG Commandership as well as for Chairmanship of SEDM-CC/PMSC on the 11th of September 2013 in Camp Schina/Larissa/Nation 3.

Besides, evaluation visits to the units allocated to SEEBRIG were conducted with the aim of maintaining overall PSO capabilities of those units. During those evaluations; the Transportation Company in Metris, the RECCE Company in Tekirdağ, the Mechanised Infantry Battalion with Engineering Company in Çerkezköy, and the Artillery Battery in Saray (in Nation 7); the Mechanised Infantry Company in Štip and the Engineering Company in Skopje (in Nation 5); 525th Mechanised Infantry Battalion in Polikastro and Engineer Company of 723rd Engineer Task Force in Sindos (in Nation 3); the 9th Mechanized Brigade, the 341st Infantry Battalion, the 353rd Engineer Company, the Transportation Platoon, and the Recce Platoon (in Nation 6) were all evaluated by SEEBRIG delegations. All these evaluations showed us that the units are capable of and ready to take part in any PSO and achieve all its objectives. The achievements in those evaluation results honored us as well as our nations.

Some initiatives were taken to raise visibility of and public awareness on SEEBRIG. By taking the opportunity during some of the evaluation visits to the nations (Nations 7, 5, 3, and 6), several HQs, military and civilian organizations, and training schools and

centers were called by. For this purpose; the PFP Training Center, the Maintenance Command, and the Humanitarian Assistance Brigade in Ankara; the Joint Operational Command in Kumanovo and the office of Deputy Chief of General Staff in Skopje; NRDC-GR Command in Thessaloniki and Multinational Peace Support Operations Training Center (MPSOTC) in Kilkis; the Land Forces Staff HQ and Defense University "Carol I" in Bucharest; US Europe Command in Stuttgart; the OSCE FSC (Forum for Security and Co-operation) and AUTINT (Austrian Armed Forces International Center) in Vienna were paid official visits. During these memorable and fruitful visits; intentions for possible cooperation in future events and activities were emphasized, experiences and good wills were mutually shared, capabilities and proposals of schools and centers were examined on site.

We have already left 2013 behind and have started 2014, in which new challenges and experience are waiting for us. By continuously gaining experience year by year, SEEBRIG has become an important and well-known organization capable of participating in Peace Support Operations (PSO) wherever and whenever needed. In line with this in mind; we have been investing our best efforts to participate to upcoming SEESIM-14 and Combined Endeavor-14 exercises as a remote brigade with subordinate multinational units from Larissa and depending on pending approval of NATO Authorities, SEEBRIG will conduct exercise Seven Stars-14 nested in NATO Exercise Trident Lance (TLE)-14 or otherwise execute our Seven Stars-14 exercise in the field on Camp Schina to extend our expertise for real life situations. For these purposes, we have already made contact with disaster relief and humanitarian assistance organizations of UN, NATO, etc. and the member nations and have started talks and negotiations for possible issues of participation and cooperation in near future.

Apart from all these events and activities; SEEBRIG, with all its personnel from different nations, is considered as a big family. To sustain the welfare of and to increase friendship and affiliation among the members of this family, some cultural events and activities were organized. The SEEBRIG personnel, together with their families showed enthusiasm in participating to the SEEBRIG Establishment Anniversary Dinner in August 2013, Christmas Dinner in December 2013, and Study Tour to Athens which was held 19-21 November 2013.

I would like to express my gratitude and appreciation to all those whole HQ for their outstanding performance and contribution to SEEBRIG for all the events and activities. Meanwhile, I would like to spell out my sincere and warm welcome to the newcomers that would definitely add power to and extend the expertise level of SEEBRIG HQ.

With no doubt, SEEBRIG gets its power from our Nations' support. Using this opportunity, on behalf of SEEBRIG personnel, I would like to express a deep respect to all our national authorities for their continuous and valuable support.

Finally; I hope you will enjoy this issue and, as I do myself, appreciate the quality of the hard work performed by the SEEBRIG HQ personnel, during the preparation and publication of this magazine.



HE Valeriu NICUT (Na-6)
SEDM-CC and PMSC Chairman
(Since 20 March 2014)



THE Na-6 CHAIRMANSHIP'S PRIORITIES FOR THE SEDM-CC AND THE PMSC (2013 - 2015)

General overview

Na-6 took over the SEDM Chairmanship on 11th September 2013, at an important moment for the transformation of both the Initiative and the region. This is the second time when Na-6 assumes the Chairmanship, and we are committed to build upon the success already achieved, individually, by the countries in the region in promoting peace and stability and mutually developing the regional formats of cooperation.

The South East European region has overcome by significant historically, regional and international security challenges, but it is not yet free of uncertainties. The impact of the severe economic crisis on national defense sectors is not experienced just across our region, but along the whole European continent and the transatlantic community.

The Na-6 Chairmanship will focus on two fundamental dimensions: on one hand we will continue the work to enhance the effectiveness and the relevance of SEDM as regional player and, on the other hand, we will carry on the effort to persuade the international community to acknowledge SEDM as the most relevant and result oriented political-military regional initiative in the South-East Europe.

The Na-6 Chairmanship is committed to respect the principle of regional ownership and to actively contribute to building on our regional security capabilities by facilitating the debate on how better to transform, adapt and manage the changes our defense establishments are all facing.

The Na-6 Chairmanship's priorities

The Na-6 Chairmanship will focus on six priorities, aiming at building regional security capabilities, facilitating the integration process into Euro-Atlantic institutions, and enhancing Member States abilities to modernize, professionalize, reform and manage their defense establishments. As follows:

1) Consolidate the international perception on the relevance and effectiveness of SEDM as a valuable format for political-military cooperation in South-East Europe

The Na-6 Chairmanship will continue the efforts of the previous Chairmanships in order to establish functional mechanisms of cooperation with the international organizations (UN, NATO, EU, and OSCE).

Promoting SEDM as the most effective platform for discussing political and military issues intends to end the current process of duplications and proliferation of formats of regional political and military cooperation. At the same time, this approach will intensify the coordination process among the Member States regarding specific issues of common interest on the agenda of different international organizations.

2) Initiate the internal "clearing house" process, with the aim of improving the effectiveness of the initiative

The Na-6 Chairmanship will speed up this process, as all Member States have identified the need to increase the efficiency of the initiative as a priority. Thus, we will increase the political-military dialogue and encourage the experts at SEDM-CC and PMSC level to assume an active role in the decision shaping process.

Also closely related to the results of strategic review, the Na-6 Chairmanship will launch a stocktaking of the existing legal framework, with the final goal of streamlining the functioning of SEDM-CC, PMSC and MFPSEE. This will be achieved by activating the HLEG (High Level Expert Group).

3) Identify the best solutions for the future of MFPSEE / SEEBRIG, including the final decision regarding SEEBRIG HQ location (permanent or on rotational basis)

The Na-6 Chairmanship will make all the necessary efforts for achieving a final decision, in the best interest of the initiative, while respecting national positions of interested Member States to host the SEEBRIG HQ if a unanimous decision to give up the rotational system is made.

This will require a sound mediation process and dialogue at high level, given the existence of multiple candidates.

The Na-6 Chairmanship will spare no effort in mediating due to the fact that Member States have already agreed with the SEEBRIG Report that a permanent location for the Command is a more advantageous solution.

4) Endorse a new rotational chart for SEDM Chairmanship and SEEBRIG Command, starting with 2015

The Na-6 Chairmanship will support a speed-up process for creating a new rotational chart to ensure an agreed succession of leading nations for the SEDM initiative.

5) Stimulate the Member States' interest in supporting

current SEDM projects and in launching new projects in line with the existing regional and international security challenges approaches

The Na-6 Chairmanship will resume the process of analyzing the effectiveness of SEDM ongoing projects in order to promote only those that add value to regional cooperation and are closely coordinated with similar efforts at NATO, EU or UN.

The Na-6 Chair will promote a managerial approach of the on-going or future projects taking into account the objectives, the available resources and the end results.

6) Enlargement of SEDM and MPFSEE with new Member States, selected from the current Observers

The Na-6 Chairmanship will promote, based on the open-door policy, the principle of transparency as the core functional principle of the initiative in this matter. The Na-6 Chairmanship will encourage the States with observer status at MPFSEE to accede as full members, thus increasing the value of the initiative.

Regarding the acceding of other Member States, currently not affiliated to SEDM process, the Na-6 Chairmanship will respect the interests of all Member States, and consequently will launch projects in close coordination with the developments registered in other international organizations and regional formats of cooperation.





LTC Daniel NATU (Na-6)
CG-5



Change of Command

The change of command ceremony is a military tradition with ancient roots dated back to the times of the Roman Empire. In that period the Legions developed unit symbols (eagles with banners) that were unique to the organization with personalized colors and designs. When soldiers and their commanders engaged in battle, they kept sight of the flag, following and protecting it. If the banner still waved after the fight, it was an indication that their side had won. Having this position of importance, the flag exchange was incorporated into change of command ceremonies. The organizational banner was exchanged in public for all to see that the one who holds the flag is the leader of the troops. Modern day ceremonies are principally symbolic but they are still keeping up with the tradition.

11 September 2013 took its place among the memorable dates of SEEBRIG History as the day when the Commandership, along with SEEBRIG Flag as symbol of Multinational Peace Force South Eastern Europe, was

taken over by SEEBRIG's 8th Commander, BG Hakan ESER (Na-7) from BG Zdravko POPVSKI (Na-5), 7th Commander of SEEBRIG.

During the same ceremony, the PMSC and SEDM – CC Chairmanship Flag was exchanged between former the Chairman, HE Gioacchino ALFANO (Na-4) and the current Chairman HE Sebastian HULUBAN (Na-6). Also, SEEBRIG Accomplishment Medal was awarded to personnel of outgoing Na-4 SEDM-CC and PMSC Secretariat.

Both incoming and outgoing Commanders took the opportunity to express their feelings in their speeches delivered to an audience encompassing not only SEEBRIG Nucleus Staff and representatives of affiliated units but also high level political and military representatives from the Member Nations of SEDM and SEEBRIG.





BG Hakan ESER (Na-7)
8th Commander of SEEBRIG



Speech at SEEBRIG Command Handover-Takeover Ceremony, 11 September 2013

Excellence, Generals, Admirals, Ladies and Gentlemen, Dear guests, at the start of my speech, I would like to express how honored and thrilled I am in front of such distinguished guests and personnel like you. Also being here at the skirts of Mount Olympus, the vast fertile fields of beautiful Thessaly Region add up to my enthusiasm.

It is a great honor and privilege for me to take-over the command of SEEBRIG. And I am aware that commanding of SEEBRIG is full-size responsibility and challenge. As it is known, since its establishment in 1999, SEEBRIG has been playing a key role in regional and global peace, security, stability, and cooperation among nations and has made enormous progress towards it. I believe this is in great part the result of professional dedication of General POPOVSKI and his staff, excellent direction of PMSC Chairman, and outstanding support of all member and observer nations. For this purpose, I would like to express my gratitude to General POPOVSKI and his staff together with the former generals and personnel, who have contributed

we will continue the process of developing readiness and flexible, rapid deployable and sustainable capabilities of SEEBRIG in order to tackle emerging cases in their early stages and to contribute to preserving peace, security and stability. Also we will work hard to meet all requirements to get SEEBRIG ready for employment in conflict prevention and in other peace support operations, including peace-keeping, peace-making, peace-building and humanitarian operations under the mandate of United Nations, European Union, or NATO.

Shortly, our future efforts will be directed towards successful operation, effective management of SEEBRIG, and support for cooperation.

In order to achieve these goals, a number of outputs will be defined and linked directly to the objectives in SEEBRIG's plans. I believe from the heart that the responsibility and success of commanding such a brigade with so many important goals could only be achieved through mutual cooperation and understanding, high level of professionalism,



excellently to the well-being of this important organization. Besides, allow me to express my deep gratitude to the Host Nation civilian and military authorities for the excellent infrastructure, cooperation and support to this multinational military formation.

Also I would like to take this opportunity to thank once again my national authorities for their decision to assign me for this honorable mission.

In my two-year tour here, I would like to assure you that

the contributions of prudent and diligent SEEBRIG HQ personnel keeping the motto "One team, one mission" in mind, constructive directions of PMSC and fruitful support of all participating nations.

I am convinced that all capabilities and efforts directed towards achieving cooperation and harmony between nations will definitely set SEEBRIG as an example in ensuring regional peace and advancing mutual understanding. In the end, world peace and humanity will flourish.



MAJ Costel ȘTIUCĂ (Na-6)
CG-6



▣ Aiming For Interoperability

Interoperability represents the fundamental prerequisite for successfully conducting multinational operations within a coalition or a military alliance intended for a specific purpose.

The term is defined as the capacity of the military structures (usually belonging to two or more countries) to efficiently cooperate in order to fulfill their missions and it is emphasized that this is possible only when organizational structures compatibility requirements are met and common specific procedures are followed.

South Eastern Europe Brigade, as a multinational organization with affiliated subordinate units belonging to seven nations had to surpass a series of challenges raised from the different ways of action specific to each nation, from the rich diversity of nations' equipment and from the different rules and regulations governing the member nations' military activity.

The need for interoperability was most intensely felt in the field of communications and information systems, a very dynamic domain. Achieving interoperability process was started from the idea that any modern military action content has a significant informational character, based on analytic computing and decision making process optimization in a digitized environment and manifests itself in the following three main directions:

1. Technical compatibility;
2. Procedural interoperability;
3. Human interoperability.

Since 1999, when the organization was born, the technical compatibility between SEEBRIG HQ communication equipment and the subordinate units' communication equipment has represented a great concern for the member nations and our organization to the same extent.

In the beginning, due the fact that the equipment was entirely provided by the host nation signal company, it belonged to Na-2 and it consisted mainly of Ericsson MD110 switchboard, RT-7000, R-130, PRC-1088, and R-111 radios with servers and networking elements which provided the essential services for an unencrypted Local Area Network (LAN). It was a good start but still the analog communications equipment had a considerable share.

The need for proprietary CIS assets able to eliminate the drawbacks produced by the large variety of elements was more than obvious.

Discussions for SEEBRIG CIS Concept were started on the Expert Meetings one year before setting up the Brigade. There were proposals from Nation 2, Nation 4 and Nation 7. First draft of this Concept was prepared by SEEBRIG HQ in April 2000 and after two CIS Expert Meetings this Concept was improved and it was given to the PMSC for approval. It was approved during 3rd SEDM Meeting and represented the main document which would be used for giving SEEBRIG HQ initial operating capability using adequate, deployable, interoperable, robust and reliable CIS assets.

The SEEBRIG HQ requirements were implemented in 3 phases:

- Phase I - CIS equipment would meet the Initial Operating Capability (IOC) of MCP & RCP.
- Phase II - Integration and logistics of Phase I equipment for IOC of MCP & RCP and Equipment Integration and Logistics for the Engineer Task Force (ETF) and Combat Service Support (CSS).
- Phase III - Initial Full Operational Capability (IFOC) for the SEEBRIG HQ Command Posts

The concept was based on NATO requirements (C3) for command, control and communications and it was in full compliance with the final draft of the concept of CIS for the forces participating in Peace Support Operations and Disaster Relief Operations.

As a result of that joint endeavor SEEBRIG received in April 2003 CIS equipment fully integrated on mobile platforms, able to support two brigade command posts (Main Command Post and Rear Command Post) and some of the most advanced HF and VHF radio equipment designed to support Tactical Command Posts and Brigade's subordinate units.

Considering structural composition of the two brigade communication centers (MCP and RCP), the central element, for both voice and data transmissions is represented by CD141 switchboard, a very versatile equipment which provides analog and digital subscription, data channels and the possibility to extend the communications range through another PABX, trunked systems or other com-

munication media like satellites. This equipment is widely spread among NATO member countries and not only and more than this it uses protocols and line codes similar to most the equipment in its category so the compatibility criteria was completely met.

The network elements are concentrated around Zx Microsystems Series servers (DNS and Mail) and Power Vault 715N File Server. The system architecture provides the possibility to deploy a network composed of local clients, wireless clients and remote HF and VHF clients. It is interesting to be noticed that it allows to the users a very high mobility within the command post area but most important to the remote users. Basically, when using HF means, only the propagation conditions is the limit because the other limitation in connecting very remote sites, the emitting power, can be controlled by the operators. In the networking field, most of the equipment used by almost any other organizations was and still is developed following Open Systems Interconnection (OSI) model (ISO/IEC 7498-1) standard that making SEEBRIG's compatibility with other systems easier to achieve. Virtually, connecting a network to another is more a problem of a correct addressing, proper domains administration and choosing the right interface between devices so that the "responsibility" is switched from the equipment to the technician.

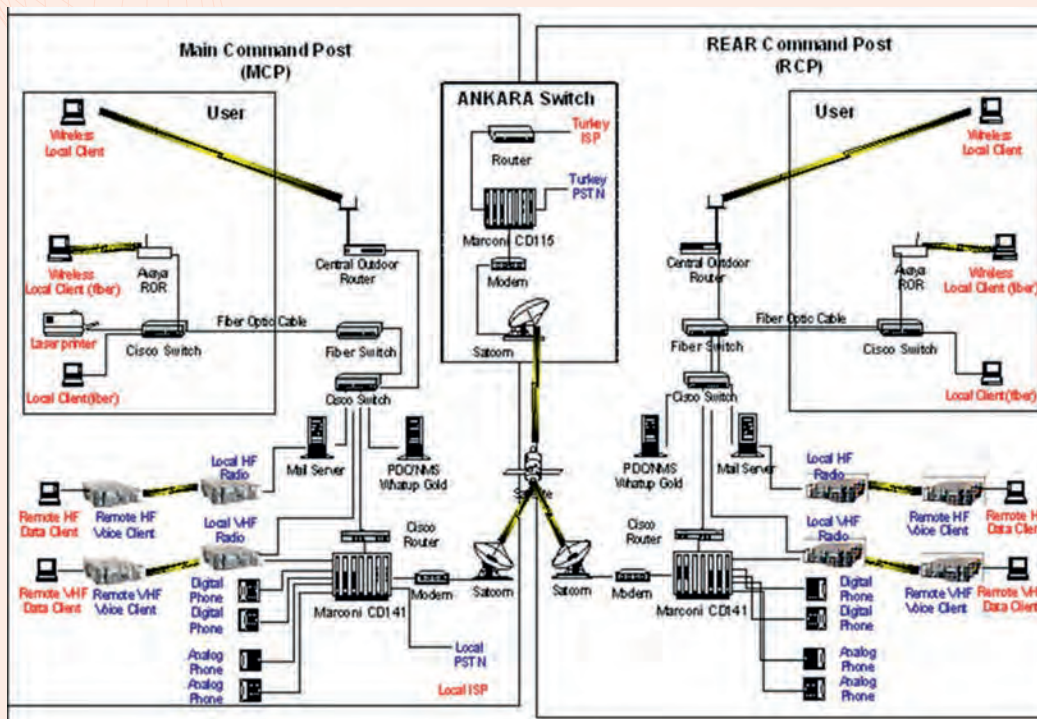
The radio capabilities are mainly represented by the Ku Band Anacom satellite transceiver paired with PSM 9600 modem and the Harris 5800 series (HF and VHF) tactical radios. The satellite transmission chain can use any Ku band transponder for exercises and tests purposes but for a real mission the TurkSat transponder is the designated one. This communication equipment is also widely spread among many military forces.

Referring to Harris 5800 series tactical radios, they include a multitude of standardization waveforms which make them the most interoperable radios available.

Considering that describing discrete CIS elements do not help the reader to assess a clear image about SEEBRIG communication system, the following architecture diagram could give all the necessary details about the overall display.

There is also a communication asset that entered in SEEBRIG endowment from the tactical requirement of a real mission, namely KMNb IX (Kabul Multinational Brigade -IX). In 2006, when SEEBRIG was deployed to Afghanistan under ISAF command, the telephony subscribers' (HQ personnel) need for mobility became stringent and SEEBRIG capabilities from that time could not fulfill the requirement. The problem was solved by ISAF support and shortly after that a terrestrial trunked system was ordered. After some time, a two nodes TETRA System based on Rhode&Schwarz equipment represented the newest SEEBRIG CIS asset. It can provide secure and unsecure connection to mobile subscribers within a 5 kilometers radius from the central points and the nodes can be installed up to 50 kilometers distance. It can also be connected to virtually any digital PBX (Private Branch Exchange) or PTSN (Public Telephone Switched Network) using the appropriate interface making the system a very versatile piece of equipment.

Now, after many years in which this equipment was used in exercises like Combined Endeavour, Seven Stars or Viking and also in KMNb IX Mission in Afghanistan, it is the right time to look forward and try to start the upgrading process so the whole SEEBRIG CIS to be in line with the latest technical achievements in this field.





LTC Jetnor BALLA (Na-1)
CG-7



SEEBRIG participation in Exercise Specification Conference for South-Eastern Europe Simulation (SEESIM) 14 Exercise.

The South-Eastern Europe Simulation 2014 (SEESIM 14) Computer Assisted Exercise (CAX) is the seventh in a series of exercises within the framework of the South-Eastern Europe Defence Ministerial (SEDM) process. SEESIM 14 is a multinational CAX.

The purpose of the Exercise is to promote cooperation, coordination and interoperability of civil-military operations and reinforce real world crisis response within and among the SEDM nations and the SEDM initiatives through effective use of computer modelling and simulation (M&S). The specific aim is to develop the capabilities and procedures of national and regional coordination, cooperation, and mutual assistance among the SEDM nations in the face of devastating emergencies, such as natural disasters or terrorist attacks.

The Exercise Specification Conference (ESC) related to SEESIM 14 was held in Zagreb, Croatia from 24 - 27 September 2013, hosted by the Croatian Ministry of Defence (MoD) and co-chaired by Nation 2 MoD.

Participation in this exercise is a good opportunity to train SEEBRIG HQ Nucleus Staff and prove its capabilities in a complex and challenging operational framework and SEEBRIG delegation contributed to Exercise Specification Conference with a presentation related to Lesson Learned for SEESIM 12 Exercise and Disaster Response Role for the training audience.

The SEESIM 14 ESC "Experts Group" was divided into Steering Group, the Operational Working Group, and the Technical Working Group. All participating nations and SEEBRIG HQ were required to provide appropriate Subject Matter Experts (SMEs) throughout the Exercise planning process to attend all planning conferences and actively contribute to the work of each of the three SEESIM 14 Working Groups. It was deemed critical for Exercise success that the same personnel to be involved throughout the SEESIM 14 planning process from the beginning to the end.

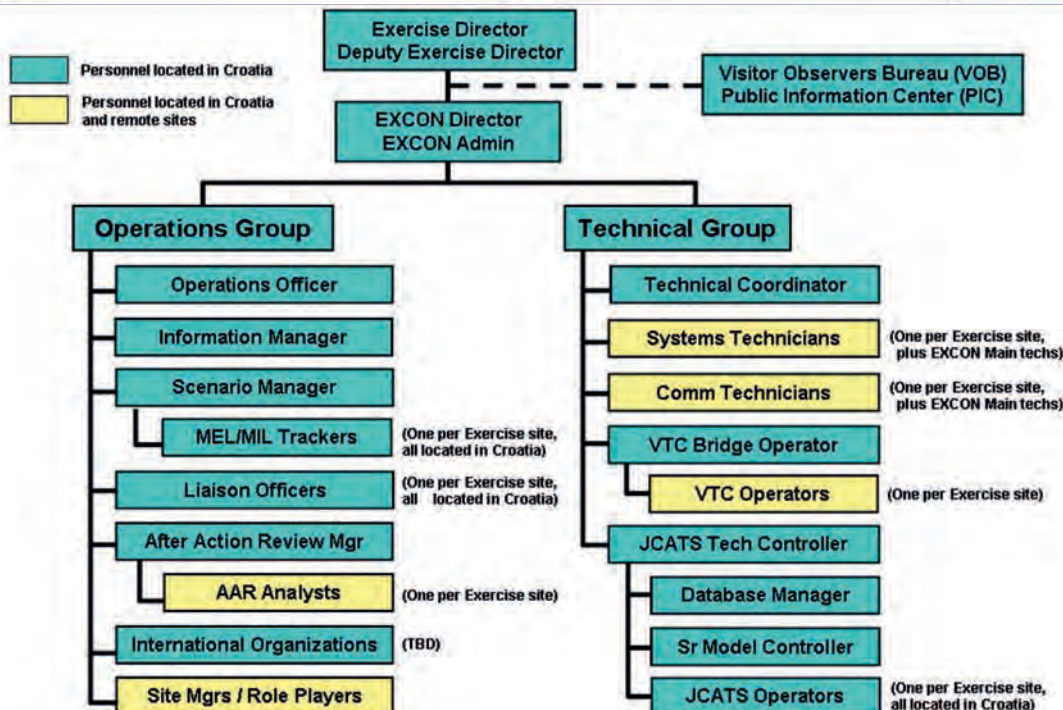
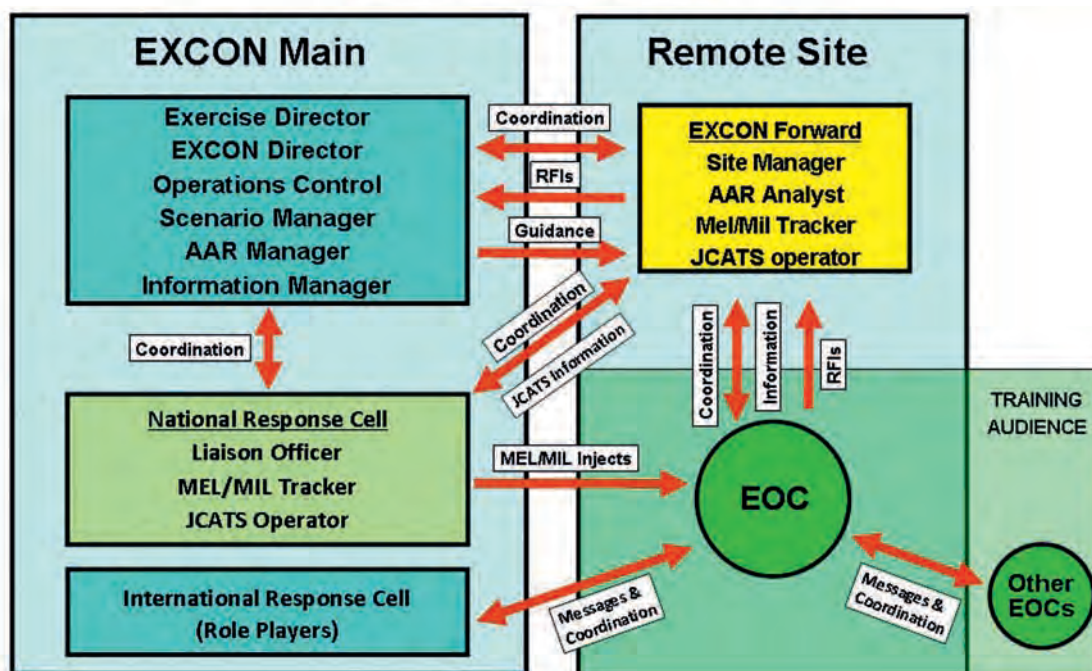
The Broad Scenario for SEESIM 14 was defined as: "A series of coordinated cyber attacks against the governments of South-Eastern Europe followed by biological and/or chemical terrorist attacks on several countries with transnational impact. A large natural disaster also occurs. These events result in a breakdown of communications and widespread destruction and loss of life. This

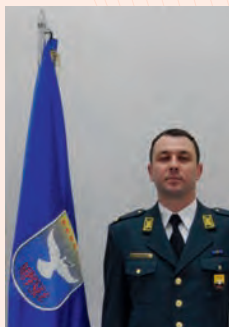
prompts a comprehensive civilian, military, and political approach by relevant Government and Nongovernment Organizations in the participating nations in performing essential tasks and exercising the responsibilities necessary to respond to national and regional emergencies. These tasks promote: Counterterrorism; Counter proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, their materials, technologies, know-how, and delivery systems; Transnational and regional cooperation in South-Eastern Europe; Border and energy security; Protection of critical infrastructure; Cyber defence capabilities; Emergency response capacities of participating nations; Disaster Relief Operations; Coordinated, effective responses to transnational threats; Consequence management; Intelligence and Information sharing, collaboration and interoperability; Global communications; and Realistic national training objectives." Planning Conferences and training for SEESIM 14 Exercise will be as follows:

- Initial Planning Conference (IPC): 21 - 24 January 2014, Zagreb
- Main Planning Conference (MPC): 1 - 4 April 2014, Zagreb
- Final Coordination Conference (FCC): 3 - 5 June 2014, Zagreb
- Site Manager and AAR Training: 10 - 12 September 2014, Zagreb
- Final setup and testing: 15 - 17 September 2014, Zagreb and Larisa
- JCATS Familiarization Training: 18 - 19 September 2014, Larisa
- Execution phase from 23-26 September 2014 in Zagreb and Larisa
- DVD Day, 25 September 2014, Zagreb

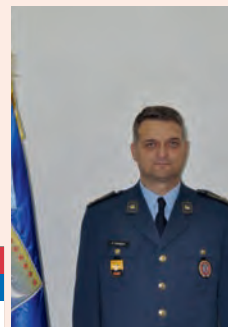
SEEBRIG HQ role will be to provide assistance (only for Disaster Relief Operations). Participation of SEEBRIG ETF in SEESIM 14 Exercise requires the approval of the SEDM Political-Military Steering Committee (PMSC). SEEBRIG HQ will have to provide all necessary equipment and software for the participation of the brigade in SEESIM 14 CAX, unlike in the previous SEESIM exercises in which it benefited from external support from the USA.

SEESIM 14 Exercise Design





MAJ Vlado GJERDOVSKI
Na-5, POLAD
and
LTC Velimir MANDIĆ
Republic of Serbia
Serbian Armed Forces Liaison Officer



☰ Fostering Partnerships and Cooperation

“Supranational” is the most appropriate word to describe the nature of Multinational Peace Force South-Eastern Europe (MPFSEE) when we take into the consideration its foundation and the way of functioning. By definition, a supranational organization is an entity where member states transcend national boundaries or interest to share in the decision-making and vote on issues pertaining to the wider grouping.

Under the umbrella of South East Defence Ministerial (SEDM), MPFSEE was formed with the basic characteristics of supranational organization. The idea was to share the leadership of an organization that is based on common understanding and purposes and respect of cultures and values, so we can learn from ourselves by developing the organization to a higher stage for reaching the final outcome - bridging the differences and generating trust among the members and partners. It is, by vocation, cooperation in the field of defence based on the current and future partnerships.

Leadership, common understanding and purposes, culture and values, development and generating trust are the key components of partnership. All the previous implies that fostering partnership and cooperation, as the basic process in a supranational environment, is vital for the existence and “evolution” of those organizations.

That is why SEEBRIG, as the most prominent part of MPFSEE Agreement, is constantly referring to proactive partnership with other organizations. The intention and its benefits are recognized and supported by the political leadership (Politico-Military Steering Committee - PMSC) by authorizing the Commander of SEEBRIG to

coordinate closely with other organizations in that context. Also at the last SEDM Meeting held in Brdo, Slovenia, on 03 October 2013 SEDM Ministers again encouraged SEEBRIG to continue with the partnerships and cooperation already established, and to seek additional multi-lateral exercise opportunities as possible methods for increasing SEEBRIG’s operational effectiveness.

In 2013 SEEBRIG stayed committed to pursuing its efforts towards enhancing its relations with relevant international organizations and also acted as an active focal point from which MPFSEE nations actively spread partnership and cooperation among them. SEEBRIG was also actively involved in annual political-military events in 2013 where important consensual decisions were made regarding the future of MPFSEE and SEDM initiative.

Partnership Towards Membership

Throughout its history, every nation has its collective experience and knowledge accumulated and communicated through proverbs and wisdom. All of that knowledge and wisdom that is accumulated, expressed in light sentences or text, is passed to the next, younger generations.

The point of such a work was to increase the national consciousness, level of knowledge, but all so to understand the importance of the world and the people who surround ones nation, country and region.

Folk wisdom where created for every part of the life of the individual, the nation and the state. Today, thanks to modern technologies, the entire collective wisdom of a nation, country, or region is available to everyone to interpret, read and be familiar with.



28 SEDM-CC and 29 PMSC Rome, Na-4, 14-16 May 2013



Study Trip to Peloponese, 25-29 June 2013



DCHOD Meeting, Batumi, Georgia, 04 July 2013



HO TO Ceremony, 11 September 2013

So, I decided to get those who will read this part of the article accustomed with a part of folk sayings related to relations with neighbors. Of course, this will be the sayings that are related to the individual. But if we understand that a nation is made up of many individuals, that share more or less the same characteristics, belief, culture, language, etc, we can reach the conclusion that the folk wisdom that has survived the trials and testing, applies also to the nation and its doings.

Therefore, I will share with you some sayings which are marking good neighborly relationship and the importance of it:

- “It is better to have one bad year, then to have bad neighbors.”
- “Better fenced with good neighbors than with a good fence.”
- “Good neighbors raise prices of home and good farm.”
- “Buy first good neighbors and after that the house.”
- “It is not hard to be good among the good.”
- “Better a close neighbor than a distant friend.”

Not to say that one’s policy is directed by sayings rather than good and analytical approach, but our way of rising and education in many respect reflects that what we are and who we can be.

The importance of enhancing the regional cooperation was promoted in the National Security Strategy and the Defence Strategy of the Republic of Serbia. Therefore, the policy of Republic of Serbia attaches great importance to regional efforts and regional cooperation. To answer the importance of the regional cooperation to the nation’s security, the state secretary in the Ministry of Defense Mr. A. Vučić, pointed out during the ministerial meeting in Sarajevo in October 2012 that regional cooperation is important for Republic of Serbia for several reasons, but most important that it represents the basis of existence of the EU and it is an important condition for the expedient and complete stabilization of the situation in the Western Balkans. Regional cooperation is the way and the key of implementation of good economic relations, social relations and institutional reforms in the Western Balkans. In addition, the development of good neighborly relations

and mutual understanding in the region is one of the obligations of Republic of Serbia defined in the Stabilization and Association Agreement signed with the EU. Accordingly, foreign policy of the Republic of Serbia is focused on resolving all issues of importance to good relations with its neighbors, through improved political, economical and security cooperation.

On the occasion, Mr. Vučić concluded that the South Eastern European countries can count on long-term peace and stability only if they apply and improve the principles underlying modern democratic systems. Therefore, R. Serbia will continue to promote regional co-operation with the countries of Southeast Europe as one of its primary tasks, through bilateral cooperation and cooperation within regional initiatives.

In that sense, regarding SEDM as one of the supporting initiatives in the region, the Republic of Serbia took active part in the work of the SEDM Coordination Committee, and as of 2012, in its capacity as an observing state, it has also attended the meetings of the Political-Military Steering Committee. Along with the engagement of the members of the Ministry of Defence and the Serbian Armed Forces in all the projects within the SEDM Process, Republic of Serbia has proven its commitment to further improving the capabilities of the region within the international security system.

The fact that in 2012 Republic of Serbia were granted the status of the observer within the scope of Multinational Peacekeeping Forces of South East Europe – MPFSEE, and that in August 2013 one liaison officer of the Serbian Armed Forces was deployed to the Headquarters of South Eastern Europe Brigade – SEEBRIG can certainly confirm our endeavors to be one active member of this initiative.

The promoting of regional cooperation is one of the priority tasks of the Ministry of Defence of the Republic of Serbia which is being conducted at the bilateral level as well with other member countries of this initiative. At the multilateral level, the confidence building, improving of the dialogues and promotion of good neighborly relations should be further continued through SEDM.



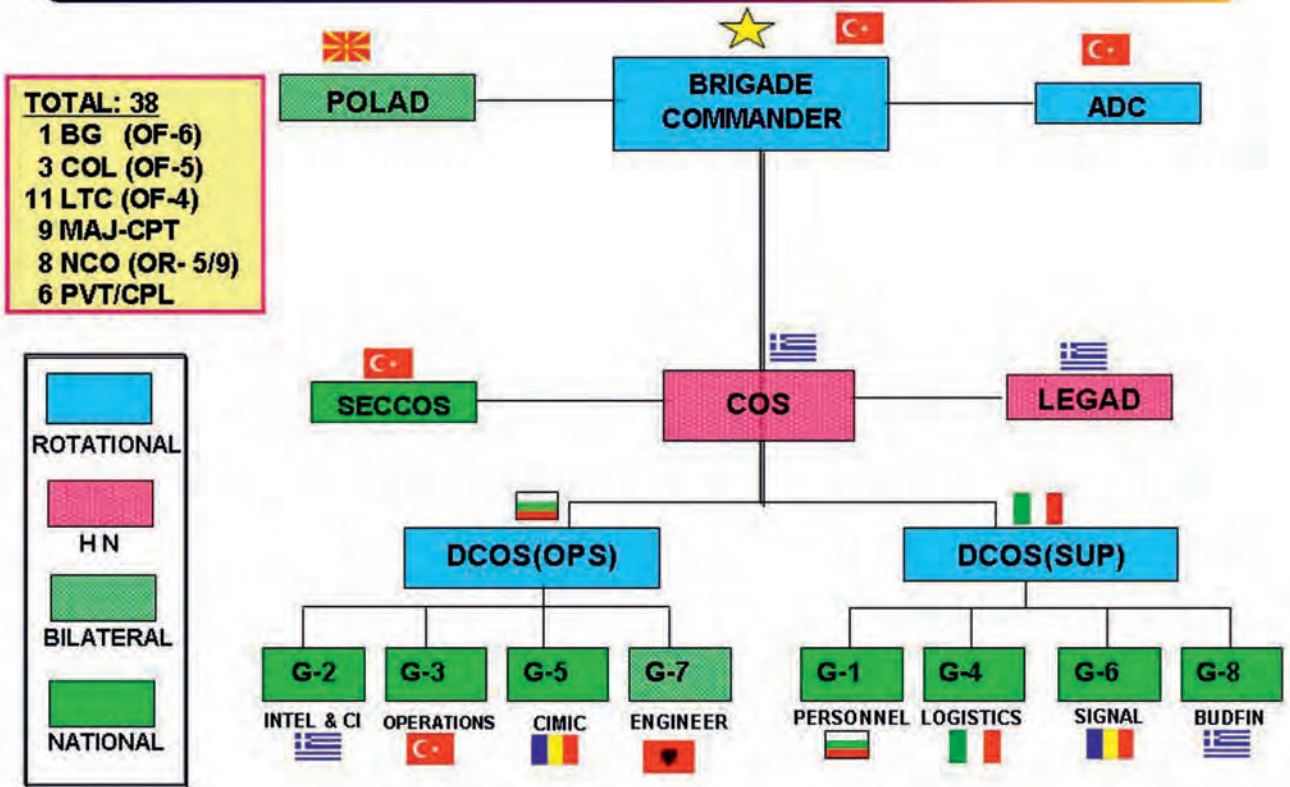
SGM Tayfun ARSLAN (Na-7)
G-5 Clerk



SEEBRIG HQ Main Activities, June –December 2013



SEEBRIG HQ (Peacetime Structure)



MPFSEE UNCLASSIFIED

30th Politico-Military Steering Committee (PMSC) Meeting, 17-18 September 2013



The SEDM-CC/PMSC Chairperson Hon. Sebastian HULUBAN welcomed the participants in the meeting, highlighting the importance of PMSC as a forum for discussion on strategic issues, regarding SEEBRIG future.

SEEBRIG delegation led by the Commander, Brigadier General Hakan ESER, presented the updates since the last PMSC meeting on:

- Training and Exercises Program Executed so Far
- FY 2014 Budget
- Specific Audit for SEEBRIG Properties
- Empty Slots in the SEEBRIG HQ PE
- Establishing a Higher Command Cell for "Seven Stars 2014"
- Additional Training for Units Assigned to SEEBRIG

Other topics of interest:

- SEEBRIG HQ Relocation after 2015
- HLEM on Agreement Revision
- PMSC Chairmanship Chart Rotation
- Update on Tax Exemption and Fiscal Regime
- 5th Additional Protocol to the MPFSEE Agreement
- MPFSEE Membership

29th South-Eastern Europe Defence Ministerial - Coordination Committee (SEDM-CC) Meeting, 19 September 2013



SEDM-CC Chairman, Hon. Sebastian HULUBAN welcomed the participants and stressed the fact that the Na-6 Chairmanship, will focus on the two main pillars: accountability and responsibility.

Agenda Issues Discussed:

- SEDM Future Development. National Views on SEDM Way Ahead.
- SEDM Projects Update and IO'S Projects
 - * SEDM Building Integrity (BI) Project
 - * NATO Building Integrity Tailored Programme for South-Eastern Europe
 - * Female Leaders in Security and Defence (FLSD)
 - * Interconnection of Military Hospitals
 - * SEESIM 14
- SEDM Strategic Review – Current Status and Way Ahead
- Status of the “Agreement on the Coordination Committee in the Framework of the SEDM Process”
- The Upcoming SEDM Meeting – Slovenia, Brdo, 3rd October 2013

SEEBRIG HQ Participation in Exercise Specification Conference of “SEESIM 14”, 24-27 September 2013



The Exercise Specification conference (ESC) related to SEESIM 14 was held in Zagreb, Croatia from 24 - 27 September 2013, hosted by the Croatian Ministry of Defence and it was co-chaired by Nat 2 MoD.

SEEBRIG delegation was composed by one Officer for Operational Working Group and one NCO for Technical Working Group

The South-Eastern Europe Simulation 2014 (SEESIM 14) Computer Assisted Exercise (CAX) is the seventh in a series of exercises within the framework of the South-Eastern Europe Defence Ministerial (SEDM) process. SEESIM 14 is a multinational CAX.

The purpose of the Exercise is to promote cooperation, coordination and interoperability of civil-military operations and reinforce real world crisis response within and among the SEDM nations and the SEDM initiatives through effective use of computer modeling and simulation (M&S). The specific aim is to develop the capabilities and procedures of national and regional coordination, cooperation, and mutual assistance among the SEDM nations in the face of devastating emergencies, such as natural disasters or terrorist attacks.

South-Eastern Europe Defence Ministerial (SEDM) Ministers of Defence Meeting, 03 October 2013

The Defence Ministers of the South-Eastern Europe Defence Ministerial (SEDM) met in Brdo, Slovenia, on 3rd October 2013, strongly determined to promote enduring peace, stability and security in the region of South-Eastern Europe (SEE) through the SEDM process.

SEDM Ministers declared that they will remain deeply committed to promote all initiatives aimed to improve SEDM efficiency and visibility, reduce unnecessary duplications, ensure maximum coherence, streamline structures and improve working methods in order to achieve more efficiency in future regional defence cooperation.

SEDM Ministers took note of the work done, and tasked PMSC/MPFSEE to finalize the chairmanship rotational chart by the next PMSC/MPFSEE meeting in March 2014. A formal approval shall be done by silence procedure.

SEDM Ministers appreciated the report of COMSEEBRIG, Brigadier General Hakan ESER, on SEEBRIG activities and achievements following the last SEDM Meeting, and they encouraged COMSEEBRIG to seek all available training opportunities as well.

PMSC/MPFSEE Ministers approved the HQ SEEBRIG Annual Plan (Main Activities, Training and Travel Plan) for 2014 and SEEBRIG's Budget for the Fiscal Year 2014.

SEDM Ministers appreciated the efforts and encouraged COMSEEBRIG to continue with the SEEBRIG – EUFOR staff talks, and to seek additional multilateral exercise opportunities as possible methods for increasing SEEBRIG's operational effectiveness.

MPFSEE Ministers tasked the PMSC/MPFSEE to establish a High Level Expert Meeting (HLEM) in order to review and amend all aspects related to the Agreement and its additional protocols, effective until 2015, and to develop a set of proposals on SEEBRIG's role, mission and structure.

SEDM Ministers confirmed their dedication to the 'open door policy' for the aspirant states that want to be part of the SEDM initiative and whose participation could help to fulfill the SEEBRIG recognized shortfalls and capability gap. In this regard the SEDM Ministers appreciated the appointment of a liaison officer from the Republic of Serbia to SEEBRIG HQ starting with August 2013.



Bilateral Meetings, 03 October 2013

Bilateral meetings were held in Brdo, Slovenia, between Commander of SEEBRIG, Brigadier General Hakan ESER, Deputy Chief of Slovenian Armed Forces General Staff Andrej OSTERMAN (photo 1-2) and US EUCOM Deputy Director Force for Political Military Affairs Strategic Plans and Policy Director G-5 MG Randy A.KEE (photo 3). During these meetings coordination and cooperation issues with USEUCOM and technical problems which experienced during Combined Endeavour 2012 were discussed beforehand Combined Endeavour 2014.



SEEBRIG HQ Evaluation Visit to Affiliated Units from Nation 7, 4-7 November 2013

The SEEBRIG Evaluation Team visited the Transportation Company in METRIS on 5 November 2013 (photo 1,2). The Transportation Battalion commander together with the Transportation Coy commander welcomed the delegation and briefed about the capabilities of the transportation company. After that the Evaluation Team went to TEKIRDAG garrison in order to visit Recce Coy (photo 3,4). Garrison commander, accompanied by Recce Battalion commander and Coy commander met the delegation in front of the HQ building. After explanations about the garrison and the structure of the units in the barracks by garrison commander, Recce Coy commander briefed about the organization, personnel, equipment, logistics and communication of the company, and the way the training of the company is being conducted. Later the units were observed and equipments were checked in the training field.

The SEEBRIG Evaluation Team went to Mechanized Battalion, Artillery Battery, and Engineer Coy located in Çerkezköy garrison on 6 November 2013 (photo 5,6,7,8,9). The Commander of the 3rd Armored Brigade Brigadier General Mehmet OZAN welcomed the delegation at Brigade's HQ. After that, the representative of the 3rd Armored Brigade presented a briefing consisting of information about the organization, personnel, equipment, logistics and communication of the units. Later, the units of the Mechanized Battalion, Artillery Battery, and Engineer Coy were inspected in the training field and the equipments together with the vehicles were checked on site.





Visit to PFP Training Center, Maintenance Command and Humanitarian Assistance Brigade in Nation 7, 08 November 2013

Part of the evaluation visit to Nation 7, the Evaluation Team also paid official visits to some units and organizations in Ankara on 8 November 2013. Upon arrival, the PFP Training Centre gave a briefing on their current courses being offered and presented their 2014 Annual Course Schedule. Moreover the discussions were focused on both face-to-face courses and receiving mobile training on the grounds of SEEBRIG (photo 1). In the Maintenance Command, the delegation received a briefing at the HQ and later discussed possible assistance to be delivered by the Command for the maintenance and handling of malfunctioning SEEBRIG CIS equipment. The visit to the Humanitarian Assistance Brigade gave the delegation an insight into the structure, functions and capabilities of the brigade and also some discussions were held on possible future cooperation in training and exercises (photo 2,3).



Visit of Nation 3 National Defence College, 18 November 2013



SEEBRIG HQ hosted the visit of Nation 3 National Defence College. The delegation, headed by College Commandant Lieutenant General Georgios BARKOUKIS, was welcomed by Commander of SEEBRIG Brigadier General Hakan ESER and briefed about tasks, structure and activities of SEEBRIG.

The visit was an opportunity to build relationship and promote SEEBRIG Public Diplomacy objectives.



Concept Development Conference of Combined Endeavor 2014, 18-25 November



SEEBRIG participated in the Concept Development Conference of Combined Endeavor 2014 with MAJ Alexandros LETSAS, NA 3, G3 TRG as the Delegation Chief and MAJ Costel STIUCA Na 6, CG6 in order to determine the requirements that SEEBRIG must fulfill in order to get actively involved in the exercise. The CDC took place in Ramstein between 18 and 25 November 2013.

The aim of the Exercise is to provide all the participants with opportunities to achieve and document Communications and Information Systems (CIS) interoperability of fielded or soon to be fielded systems and engagement activities to prepare and enable them to operate in a Federated Mission Network (FMN) within a coalition environment.

SEEBRIG delegation attended all the briefings in accordance with the CE 14 Concept Development Conference Plan and negotiated the SEEBRIG position within exercise ORBAT. Also, there were bilateral discussions with the exercise director, the chief of staff, the chiefs of the sections and especially C3, C5, C6 in order to investigate the participation of SEEBRIG at Brigade level.

SEEBRIG Evaluation Visit to Affiliated Units from Nation 5, 28-29 November 2013

A team of officers from SEEBRIG HQ led by Commander of SEEBRIG, Brigadier General Hakan ESER, conducted an evaluation visit to SEEBRIG affiliated units from Na-5 (1st Mechanized Company and the Engineer Platoon from Na-5 1st Mechanized Brigade).

In the first day of the visit, 28th of November, SEEBRIG evaluation team was welcomed by the Commander of Joint Operational Command (JOC) MG Metodija VELIČKOVSKI in Kumanovo Garrison. After the office call, SEEBRIG evaluation team departure to Štip Garrison where it was welcomed by Commander of 1st Mechanized Infantry Brigade, BG Pavle ARSOSKI (photo 1).

The Commander of 1st Mechanized Infantry Company, CPT Goran ŠUTEVSKI briefed the evaluation team about the organization, personnel, main equipment, logistics and communications means, the level of training, the participation in various PSO exercises and real operations of the Company. The briefing covered up all aspects of the assessment list, derived from the SEEBRIG Evaluation Standards and Procedures (SESAP).

The next part of the visit consisted of the inspection and evaluation of the unit. All demonstrated activities were very well organized, close to the real situation that the unit might face during a PSO. It was clearly observed that training of unit is very well planned and conducted and all personnel performed their duties with high level of professionalism.

The second day of the visit, 29 November 2013, SEEBRIG evaluation team visited Na 5 Ministry of Defence and General Staff where they had office calls with the Minister of Defence, Mr. Talat XAFERI (photo 2,3) and the Chief of General Staff, LTG Goranco KOTEVSKI (photo 4).

Minister of Defence, Mr. Talat XAFERI, emphasized the Na 5 dedication to SEDM process, and the importance of SEEBRIG in the regional security and stability.

LTG Goranco KOTEVSKI stressed the importance of SEEBRIG activities and good relationships among the SEEBRIG countries and expressed his readiness to support SEEBRIG in all future activities. The Commander of SEEBRIG expressed his gratitude to the Minister of Defence and to the Chief of General Staff for their warm hospitality and support.

After that, SEEBRIG evaluation team moved to "Ilinden" barracks in Skopje for the evaluation of the affiliated Engineer Platoon. After welcoming remarks by the Engineer Battalion Commander, LTC Dejan ČIPLAKOVSKI, the Engineer Platoon Commander, CPT JOVANOVSKI presented the mission, composition and capabilities of the platoon.

The next step was personnel and equipment inspection where the Commander of SEEBRIG and the evaluation team representatives also had the opportunity to talk with the troops. Based on SEEBRIG SOPs, the Engineering Platoon presented a mini exercise for repairing a damaged road. The exercise was very well organized and appeared that the unit is able to accomplish various engineer tasks regarding repairing the damaged roads in PSOs.

The Commander of SEEBRIG praised the professionalism and combat readiness of Na-5 Units, Commanders and their higher HQs.



Initial Planning Conference (IPC) for Exercise SEVEN STARS 14, 02-03 December 2013

In accordance with SEEBRIG Annual Plan 2013 – 2014, the Initial Planning Conference for Exercise “SEVEN STARS 14” was convened on 02-03 December 2013 in TYRNAVOS (Na-3).

Exercise SEVEN STARS 2014 will be a Command Post Exercise and will take place in TYRNAVOS (Nation 3).

The aims of the exercise are:

- To plan and conduct PSO activities.
- To improve the Staff work and cooperation in a multinational PSO environment.
- To plan and conduct Disaster Relief Operations in accordance with SEDRO concept.
- Comprehension of Command and Control System.
- Comprehension of logistic system within SEEBRIG structure.
- To train the deployable capabilities as well as test the Brigade’s field facilities and equipment
- To improve Civil-Military cooperation.

National Representatives (13 officers) from SEEBRIG member nations participated in the conference and contributed significantly to the planning process. The objectives of the conference were:

- To develop the final draft of Exercise Specifications (EXSPEC);
 - To develop a comprehensive understanding of the needs and requirements necessary to put in practice a Command Post Exercise on the field;
 - To initiate the discussion on the first draft of the Exercise Memorandum of Understanding and Technical Agreements.
 - To gather indications and commitments for exercise participation (Manning List).
- To update and fix the exercise planning timelines.



Visit of LGEN Abidin UNAL (Nation 7), Commander of 1st Air Force Command and CAOC 6, 02 December 2013

SEEBRIG HQ hosted the visit of Lieutenant General Abidin UNAL Na-7, Commander of 1st Air Force Command and CAOC 6. The visitor was welcomed by COMSEEBRIG Brigadier General Hakan ESER and briefed about tasks, structure and activities of SEEBRIG.

The visit was an opportunity to build relationship and promote SEEBRIG Public Diplomacy objectives.



SEEBRIG HQ Participation in Core Planning Team Meeting (CPTM) for the Exercise Trident Lance 14, 05-06 December 2013

Core Planning Team Meeting (CPTM) for the Exercise TRIDENT LANCE 14 (TRLE14) was held in İzmir, Na-7, 05-06 December 2013. The meeting was planned and conducted by NATO Allied Land Command.

TRLE14 will be conducted from 01-12 December 2014 with the aim to train, exercise, and evaluate LANDCOM headquarters in the role of land component command under a Joint Force Command JFC in a major joint operation involving multiple corps.

TRLE14 will be a computer assisted command post exercise (CAX/CPX) involving NRDC-GR, NRDC-TU, and selected headquarters.

SEEBRIG HQ was represented by MAJ Serkan KELES (CG3) and MAJ Raffaele Ascione (G3 Ops Officer) with the task to explore the possible SEEBRIG involvement in Exercise Trident Lance 14.

SEEBRIG Evaluation Visit to Affiliated Units from Nation 3, 09-10 December 2013

A SEEBRIG HQ delegation led by the Commander of SEEBRIG Brigadier General Hakan ESER conducted evaluation visits in the 525 Mechanized Battalion and Peace Support Engineer Company (HEPSEC) in their barracks in Polikastro/Kilkis and Sindos/Thessaloniki on 09 and 10 December 2013 respectively.

The aim of the Evaluation was to assess PSO capability of SEEBRIG units. The delegation verifies that both Units achieved the appropriate Training and Operational level for PSO, in accordance with SEEBRIG Directives, SOPs and Generic Operations Plans (GOPs) and meet the requirement within the appropriate time-frame of their readiness.





SEEBRIG Visit to Nato Rapid Deployable Corps-Greece (NRDC-GR), 11 December 2013

A delegation of SEEBRIG, headed by Commander of SEEBRIG Brigadier General Hakan ESER visited NRDC-GR on Wednesday 11 December 2013.

Commander of SEEBRIG mentioned that this visit is included at SEEBRIG's annual calendar, in pursuit to gain experience from NATO HQ to improve SEEBRIG capabilities.

The visit included an official call with COM NRDC-GR, LTGEN Devetzis NIKOLAOS (photo 3), followed by a detailed briefing about the structure, role, mission, capabilities and future plans of NRDC-GR HQ. SEEBRIG delegation had the chance to see some of the key installations and facilities of NRDC-GR related to the operational capabilities.

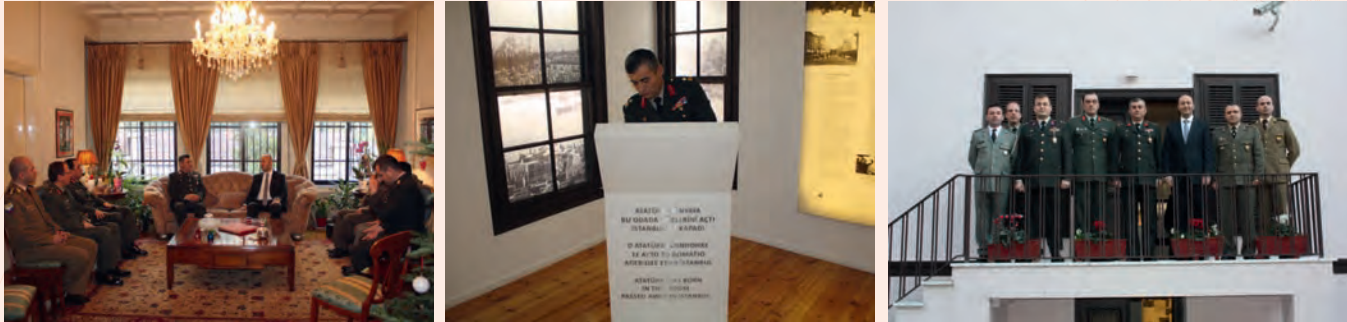
Commander of SEEBRIG also visited COS NRDC-GR, MGEN Leontaris ILIAS, in his office (photo 6).



SEEBRIG Visit to Nation 7 Consulate to Thessaloniki and Ataturk's House, 11 December 2013

SEEBRIG HQ delegation paid a visit to Nation 7 Consulate to Thessaloniki and Ataturk's House Museum on the same day.

Before the visit of the museum, a short briefing about the history of the consulate and the museum was given by Consul General, Mr. Tuğrul BİLTEKİN to the delegation.



SEEBRIG Visit to Multinational Peace Support Operations Training Center (MPSOTC), 12 December 2013

The evaluation visit program also included visits to NRDC-GR in Thessaloniki and to Multinational Peace Support Operations Training Center (MPSOTC) in Kilkis on 12 December 2013.

On Thursday 12 December 2013 a delegation of SEEBRIG, headed by Commander of SEEBRIG visited MPSOTC in Kristoni/Kilkis.

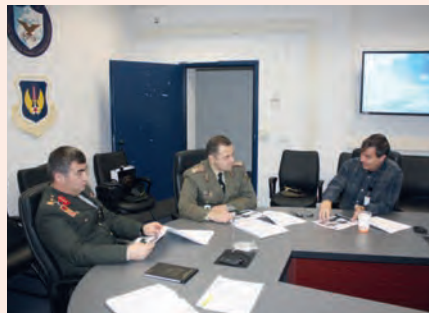
Chief of Academics at MPSOTC gave a short briefing about the mission and training activities of the center. Commander of SEEBRIG and Commandant of MPSOTC, COL Christos CHAIDEMENOS (photo3), had a productive discussion for closer future cooperation.



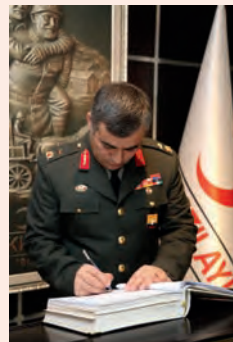
SEEBRIG Visit to US EUCOM, 18 December 2013

A delegation of SEEBRIG, headed by Commander of SEEBRIG Brigadier General Hakan ESER visited US EUCOM, Stuttgart/GERMANY on 18 December 2013. SEEBRIG delegation has sought opportunities to join COMBINED ENDAVOUR 2014 and ALLIED SPIRIT 2015 exercises. The main goal of this visit was to enhance SEEBRIG-US EUCOM cooperation.

The delegation had some meetings with EUCOM J6, EUCOM J5 Security Cooperation Division, Asymmetric Warfare Group, EUCOM Disaster Preparedness Specialist and NATO LNO to EUCOM. The visit included an office call to Brigadier General Kevin McNEELY and video tele-conference with USAREUR.



SEEBRIG Visit to Nation 7 Red Crescent, 23 December 2013



Commander of SEEBRIG Brigadier General Hakan ESER visited Nation 7 Red Crescent on 23 December. Commander of SEEBRIG was welcomed by Red Crescent Director General, Dr. Mehmet GULLUOGLU. Red Crescent was informed about SEEBRIG's role on Peace Support and Disaster Relief Operations. Future support and cooperation issues concerning SEEBRIG Exercises "Seven Star 2014" and "SEESIM 2014" were discussed between both sides.



SEEBRIG Visit to Nation 7 Disaster and Emergency Management Presidency, 27 December 2013



Commander of SEEBRIG Brigadier General Hakan ESER visited Nation 7 Disaster and Emergency Management Presidency on 27 December 2013.

Director General Dr. Fuat OKTAY and Head of Department of Response, Mr. Fatih OZER, welcomed Commander of SEEBRIG at the organization HQ.

Disaster and Emergency Management Presidency was informed about SEEBRIG's role on Peace Support Operations and Disaster Relief Operations.

Commander of SEEBRIG developed the perspective of future cooperation issues between both sides, focusing on SEEBRIG Exercises "Seven Star 2014" and "SEESIM 2014".





38th Mechanized Battalion and 3rd Engineer Platoon

Under the terms of the Agreement signed in Skopje on 26 September 1998, together with the establishment of the Multinational Peace Force South Eastern Europe a battalion and one engineer platoon 2nd Mechanized Brigade are included in SEEBRIG. The designated units from the brigade for SEEBRIG are 38 Mechanized Battalion and the 3rd Engineer Platoon from the Force Protection Battalion.

The 38th Mechanized Battalion and the 3rd Engineer Platoon are situated in the town of Stara Zagora, Na-2. Stara Zagora is in the central part of the country, just south of the famous Valley of the Roses.



Missions, history and participation in international military exercises of 38 Mechanized Battalion and 3rd Engineer Platoon.

38th Mechanized Battalion is a tactical level formation, directly subordinate to the 2nd Mechanized Brigade, designed to train forces and provide assets for combat and humanitarian assistance support operations – autonomously or in cooperation with other units and formations of the Na-2 Armed Forces. The battalion was created in 1998 in accordance with Na-2 ministry council decision.

The battalion's main tasks are derived from Na-2 Land Forces missions as follows:

- Participation in independent or joint Operations in support of the homeland defense;
- Operations in support of the international peace and security;
- Disaster relief operations in support of the civil population;

So far, the battalion prepared and deployed contingents for peace support operations in Bosnia - Herzegovina, Iraq and Afghanistan. The interaction with coalition partners and the lessons learned facilitate the improvement of key professional and leadership skills, changing the image of nowadays soldiers.

Since July 2013 a company from the battalion has deployed for a 6-month term as a force protection company of Kandahar Airport in Afghanistan.

Trough the years the battalion and the engineer platoon have participated in the following exercises:

- Under SEEBRIG command:
 - Staff exercises 2000, 2003, 2004, 2005, 2006, 2008, 2010 and 2012;
 - Special Tactics exercise with field deployment "Seven Stars" 2001 and 2002;

- Partnership for Peace program and as a NATO member:

- Exercise "Corner Stone" 2002 – with an SFOR platoon;
- Bilateral exercise in Na-7 – 2002;
- Multinational exercise in Georgia 2003 – with an infantry section;
- Multinational exercise in Ukraine 2005 – with an infantry section;
- International exercise "Cooperative Partner" 2004.
 - In 2004 the battalion and the platoon participated in "Mountain Guard" exercise, of which main topic was "Blockading and clearing a region out of paramilitary formations".

Since its establishment in 1998 there were a number of organizational changes in the 38 Mechanized Battalion and since 01 July 2012 it has the following structure:

1. Battalion Command Group;
2. Headquarter;
3. Supporting units;
4. Combat units;
5. Combat Service Support units.

The Engineer Platoon has the following structure:

1. Commander;
2. Deputy Commander;
3. NCO Logistics;
4. Sections:
 - a. Engineer-pioneer section;
 - b. Road - building section;
 - c. Machines section.





Info about the commander of the battalion and of the platoon and data about the personnel:



Commander of the Battalion since 01 June 2006 is Lieutenant Colonel (NA 2 ARMY) Tichomir DIMCHEV. He was born in 1969 and has a wife and one child. He graduated from Officers' School in Veliko Tarnovo as a cavalry officer and later in 2006 from the Na-2 Military Academy in Sofia. He is battalion commander since 2011.



Logo of 38th Infantry Battalion



Na-3 Peace Support Engineer Company (HEPSEC)

HISTORY

HEPSEC was established in Aug 2000.

FORMATION

HEPSEC is formed, as an independent company, by order of the Na 3 Army General Staff (HAGS), on the base of the Horizontal Construction Coy of an Engineer Battalion, located near Thessaloniki.

SUBORDINATION

After activation, it is placed under the command of the Multinational Peace Force South-Eastern Europe (MPFSEE) Engineer Task Force (ETF). Operational and Command subordination is defined in the formation order.

MISSION

To support humanitarian “first priority” needs and natural disasters relief, in the area of SE Europe [in the vein of South East Defense Ministerial (SEDM) countries’ decisions], by executing small-scale ENG tasks and to participate Peace Support Operations PSOs under MPFSEE.

LOGISTIC SUPPORT

According to SEEBRIG Logistic Support Concept the support and sustainment of HEPSEC is a national responsibility. HEPSEC is rendered self – sustainable with the NSE platoon support.

STRUCTURE

The basic structure of HEPSEC comprises of 4 platoons:
1 HQ platoon.
2 Heavy Machinery and Construction platoons.
1 NSE platoon.

MANNING

Basic personnel strength is 11 Officers and 83 NCOs and Privets.
Additional personnel can be assigned, depending on the mission (is to be defined in the formation order).

EQUIPMENT

The basic equipment, such as heavy machinery, vehicles, weapons etc is being maintained by the above mentioned ENG Bn. Additional equipment can be provided, if needed, for the mission accomplishment.

MAINTENANCE

Maintenance capability is upgraded to level 3, with the NSE platoon technical support.

CAPABILITIES

- > Earthmoving works.
- > Land improvement and reclamation works.
- > Initial road cutting and road maintenance (paved roads not included).
- > Limited technical projects design.
- > Construct observation posts, check points, command posts, refugee camps.
- > Construct and maintain temporary field helipads.
- > Modify, repair and maintain existing facilities.
- > Provide limited power supply.
- > Create barriers/obstacles and perform FoM tasks.
- > Conduct mine-clearing operations (limited capability).
- > To take under command troops from other SEDM member-nations, within the ETF or give troops to other ETF Engineer units, for a specific task execution.
- > To provide its own force protection and safety for its equipment and installations.

PARTICIPATION IN EXERCISES AND PSOs

From 2001 to 2006 participated in several Peace Support Operations (PSO) Engineer Task Forces (ETF) and Exercises.

- > EX CORNERSTONE 2001 (Lac – Na 1, from 03 Apr to 06 Jul 2001)
- The exercise was conducted under the command and responsibility of the exercise Co – Directors (SEEBRIG – US NAVY Engineers - HN).
- The aim of the exercise was to construct / repair 2,7 Km of road-way along the Milot river. The project included multiple culverts and groins to protect the road from degradation.
- HEPSEC worked on the East side of the construction with the following personnel – equipment:

Personnel

- √ Officers: 6
- √ NCOs: 35

Main Equipment

- √ Bulldozer: 1
- √ Dump Tracks: 5
- √ Excavator: 1
- √ Grader: 1
- √ Loader: 1
- √ Rollers: 1



Road along Milot river (before)



HEPSEC Engineers at work



Works to protect the river bank from degradation



Road along Milot river (after)

> NA 3 FORCE IN NA 5 (Oct – Nov 2001). HEPSEC assisted the Disarmament Operation by executing loading and transportation of the withdrawn weapons, with the following personnel and equipment:

Personnel

- √ Officer: 1
- √ NCOs: 8

Main Equipment

- √ Dump Trucks: 2
- √ Loader: 1
- √ Grader: 1
- √ Air compressor: 1

> ISAF (Kabul – Afghanistan, from Feb to May 2002)
 • HEPSEC deployed the following personnel and equipment as part of the Na 3 Force of ISAF Eng Coy:

Personnel

- √ Officers: 2
- √ NCOs: 9

Main Equipment

- √ Dump Trucks: 4
- √ Loader: 1
- √ Backhoe Loaders: 2
- √ Grader: 1
- √ Air compressors: 2
- √ Generators: 2
- √ Water pumps: 2
- √ Other Vehicles: 18

- The platoon carried out a wide variety of important infrastructure projects:
- Road Engineer Reconnaissance



Reconnaissance at "PEGASUS" route

Road construction and maintenance



Loading aggregate in a quarry



Road maintenance works

Force protection projects



Banker construction made of sandbags



Constructions within barracks

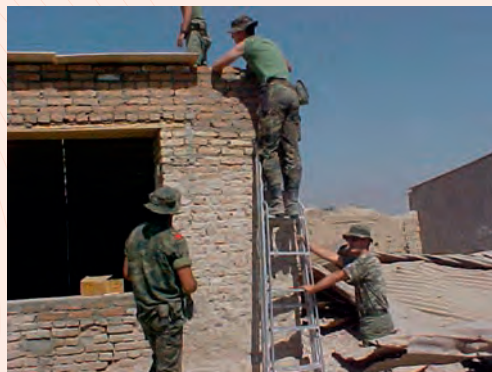


New shed construction at camp "INVICTA"



Concrete-pad construction at camp "INVICTA"

Reconstruction and repair works at schools



Reconstruction works at a school in the suburbs of Kabul

- > EX CORNERSTONE 2002 (Plovdiv – Na 2, from 01 Jun to 31 Jul 2002)
- The exercise was conducted under the command of the exercise Co – Directors (SEEBRIG - US - HN). HEP-SEC worked in all the project sites with the following personnel – equipment:

• **Construction of Sinitevo bridge**

Personnel

- √ Officer: 1
- √ NCOs: 8

Equipment

- √ Backhoe Loader: 1



Construction of the bridge deck

• **Repair of Ognianovo bridge**

Personnel

- √ Officer: 1
- √ NCOs: 12

Equipment

- √ Dump Trucks: 2
- √ Air Compressor: 1
- √ Generator (mobile): 1



Local authorities and media visit

• **Renovation of Bradzigovo orphanage**

Personnel

- √ 6 NCOs



Internal refurbishment

- > EX CORNERSTONE 2003 (Constanta – Na 6, from 10 May to 18 Jul 2003)
- The exercise was conducted under the command of the exercise Co – Directors (SEEBRIG – US - HN). Comprised four projects. HEPSEC worked in two of them as follows:
- Airport Base “Mihail Kogalniceanou”. Construction of 2 helipads and 1 aircraft parking area.

Personnel

- √ Officer: 3
- √ NCOs: 20

Main Equipment

- √ Bulldozer : 1
- √ Grader: 1
- √ Backhoe Loader: 1
- √ Loader: 1
- √ Excavator: 1
- √ Rollers: 2
- √ Dumb Trucks: 5
- √ Water Tank: 1



Civil engineering works



Helipad construction



Aircraft parking area construction



Earthmoving works at the airport site

- Corbu Village. Construction of a school and the connection road to the village.

Personnel

√ NCOs: 3

Main Equipment

√ Roller: 1

√ Grader: 1

√ Water Tank: 1



Road from village to school

- > NA 3 FORCE IN KOSOVO (15 Sep 2003 – 15 Dec 2004)

Participated with 1 Officer and 5 NCOs.

- > ISAF (Kabul – Afghanistan, from Nov 2005 to Apr 2006)

√ HEPSEC deployed personnel of one Eng Platoon to the Eng Coy of the Na 3 Force of ISAF.

Personnel

√ Officers : 2

√ NCOs : 20

- The platoon personnel participated in several Eng tasks in the vicinity of Kabul.



Snow clearing works at the “RADAR HILL” and Airport of Kabul



Construction of a playground



Reconstruction of a school



Construction of a protective berm inside “KAIA”

EPILOGUE

The numerous missions undertaken and carried out with success, deployed in multinational environment, under difficult conditions, has rendered HEPSEC Engineers, experienced and ready to carry out any Engineer task, wherever and whenever they are asked to, having in hand some of the most reliable equipment.

Author: LTC Sotirios BAKAOUKAS



151ST Infantry Regiment



The 151ST Regiment was established in Sinnai (Cagliari) on the 1st of March 1915 and since the 1st of January 1976 is located in Cagliari, the main city of Sardinia.

On July 1915 the Regiment received the so called “war flag” and soon after reached the front line where the heroism of its Sardinian soldiers shone. On August 12, 1916, the flag was awarded a Gold Medal, the first of two, as a second followed on November 4, 1918, when the 151st Regiment had a large part in blocking and repelling the Austrian-Hungarian Army in the battle of VITTORIO VENETO.

Furthermore, the Regiment got four special mentions in the Supreme Headquarters Official Gazette, for its outstanding contribution in the fighting and for the heavy losses sustained.

The modern era sees the Regiment being awarded a third gold medal, on January 2007, for its superb behaviour in operation “Antica Babilonia 3” in An Nassiryah, Iraq.

From an historical point of view, December 1, 1988, marked a pivotal point for the 151st Regiment as it joined the “SASSARI” Brigade and in 2000 it also became part of the SEEBRIG.

The modern history of the 151st Regiment is a long list of both NATO and UN framework operations in which it has taken part from the Balkans up to the present engagement in Afghanistan.

Everything started on 1996 in Bosnia Herzegovina when the Regiment joined JOINT ENDEVOUR Operation in (IFOR) and JOINT GUARDIAN Operation (SFOR), followed on 1997 by the engagement in Na 1, “ALBA” Operation kicking off in the city of FIER and ending in KUCOVE BERAT.

From November 1998 to May 1999 the Regiment was deployed once again to Bosnia Herzegovina to conduct CONSTANT FORGE operation. The Balkans were home for the Regiment also in January 2000, “JOINT GUARDIAN” operation in Kosovo, in October 2001, “ESSENTIAL HARVEST” operation in Na 5, soon followed by “JOINT FORGE” in 2001 to end with “JOINT GUARDIAN – CONSISTENT EFFORT” operation, in KOSOVO in the city of Dakoviça on June 2002.

Just the time to regroup and from October 2003 to January 2004 the Regiment deployed to IRAQ for “ANTICA BABILONIA 3” in the City of AN NASIRIYAH, responsible for the province of DHI QAR and again from January to June 2006 one Company plus of the Regiment deployed along with the 152nd Regiment during “ANTICA BABILONIA 9”.

In 2007 for the first time the Regiment was deployed in Afghanistan with “ISAF”, in the province of HERAT as a Provincial Reconstruction Team.

The second and third deployments to Afghanistan were with “ISAF” as well: from October 2009 to April 2010 as TASK FORCE NORTH (TFN) the Regiment secured the provinces of HERAT and BADGHISH throughout Counterinsurgency (COIN) operations aimed to foster the SHAPE-CLEAR-HOLD-BUILD process within its Area of Operation.

During the third tour to AFGHANISTAN from October 2011 to April 2012 the Regiment deployed again as TFN in BALA MURGHAB.

Being the TFN in AFGHANISTAN was a great experience for the Regiment and in particular for those elements placed in BALA MURGHAB at HYPERLINK "http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Forward_operating_base" Forward Operating Base (FOB) Columbus sharing the battlespace with units of the 82nd Airborne U.S. Division, with the Afghan National Security Forces and with U.S. special forces (MSOT 8222).

FOB COLUMBUS was a quiet and small detachment of Na 3 and U.S. Forces where the units focused on protecting this tiny and vulnerable outpost from the swarming Enemy of Afghanistan (EoA) in the valley.

All of this changes when two 82nd Airborne Paratroopers tragically drowned in the mudding Murghab River while trying to retrieve vital supplies from an air drop that had gone terribly wrong. In this one moment, the focus and purpose of the friendly forces at FOB Columbus is altered forever. In a massive attempt to recover the two lost soldier's bodies, the residents of FOB Columbus with the assists of MSOT 8222 penetrate outside of the small and fragile security bubble into EoA held villages. This was called "Operation Hero Recovery" and became one of the most massive and lengthy Personnel Recovery missions in the history of the whole AFGHANISTAN Operation.

The momentum generated by "Operation Hero Recovery" to execute an extensive and complex clearing campaign of the BALA MURGHAB Valley turned into operation BUONGIORNO forcing the EoA to fight throughout the freezing Murghab winter if they wanted to retain any hope of keeping control over the valley and its vital drug and smuggling routes instead of being on winter rest from the heavier fighting in the southeast of the country. Besides the CLEARING, also the HOLDING-SHAPING and BUILDING were conducted all at the same time within the population centric framework. This means that all the operations were agreed in advance with the local elders through a village Shura (meeting) and followed by the support to the population in terms of medical assistance and humanitarian aids.

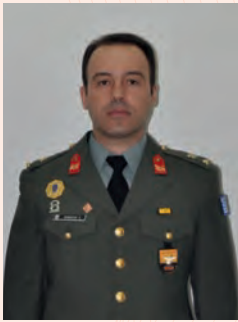
In the following years the MURGAB valley have seen the 151st Regiment being crucial in the transition process, focused to hand over responsibility to the Afghan National Security Forces, not before the security bubble was enlarged to the whole AOO. The combination of kinetic and no-kinetic actions resulted key for gaining the Freedom of Movement along the ring road and Lithium Road, finally linking the Regional Command West with the Regional Command North and with Turkmenistan.

This was achieved thanks to a consolidated experience and hard training the Regiment went through since 1996. Every deployment comes after a long process that faces all different aspects from the anti riot training to the physical training, from the shooting training to the Counter Improvised Explosive training, from the planning to the organization and conduct process that together with a cultural and historical preparation makes our soldiers ready to face what soldiers are not meant for but that only soldiers can do.

Soldiers of the 151st Regiment are highly motivated always able to achieve what planned in advance and the large experience stored by the Regiment during training Exercises and operations give the opportunity to carry out the actual and as well the future engagements with the maximum professionalism and resolution.

92% of the troops joined the Army more than 24 months before deployments and for this reason they can be considered "Complete fighter", well trained and with the right skills to act in all combat environments.





MAJ Athanasios KRANIOTIS (Na-3)
Plans Officer (CIMIC) & Public Information Officer



☰ Social Activities of SEEBRIG HQ

Study and cultural trips gave the opportunity to SEEBRIG HQ nucleus staff and their families to learn more about Host Nation's history, economy, geography and culture.

SEEBRIG HQ Study Trips objectives are as follows:

- To promote SEEBRIG mission, role and the contribution of its Member Nations to regional peace and stability;
- To promote military cooperation by establishing relationship with major units and HQs;
- To contribute to professional development of SEEBRIG HQ staff by better understanding of the work and achievements of major military units and HQs;
- To provide SEEBRIG HQ staff and their families with an opportunity to experience and learn about the history, traditions and values of the Member Nations.

According to SEEBRIG Annual Plan 2013, a study trip was conducted from 19 to 21 November 2013, including visits to HNDGS, Na 3 Red Cross HQ and social cultural objectives in the area of Athens. The aim of the visit to Na 3 Red Cross was to be informed about the humanitarian role of Na 3 Red Cross, to enhance cooperation for future exercises and to foster good relationship. The president of Na 3 Red Cross Mr. Doukas welcomed SEEBRIG delegation. Then, SEEBRIG HQ personnel and their family members visited Delphi museum and the archaeological site, the Acropolis museum and archaeological site. On the way back to Larissa, the city of Chalkida was visited.

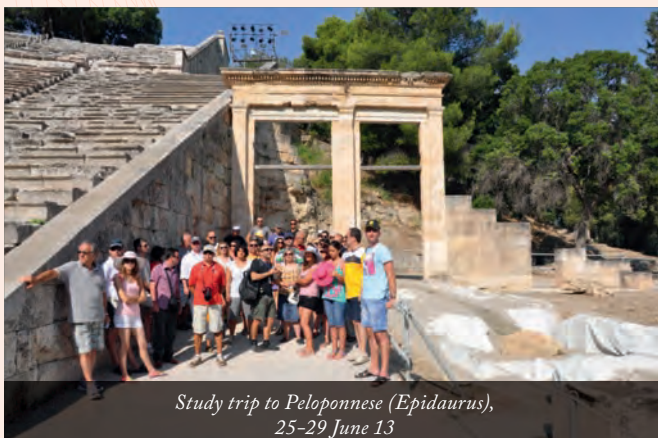
Other social activities of SEEBRIG HQ included; Christmas Dinner on 14 December 2013, Christmas Gift Presentation on 13 December 2013, Greek Language Course between 23 October 2013 – 13 March 2014 and Greek Dance Course on 24 February 2014.



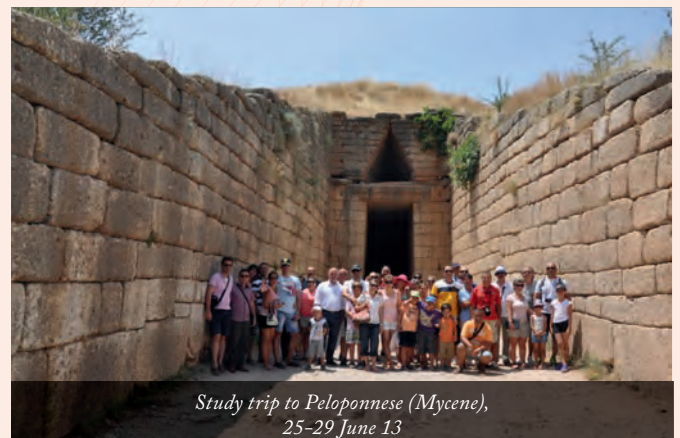
COMSEEBRIG Farewell Dinner
12th September 2013



COMSEEBRIG Farewell Dinner
12th September 2013



Study trip to Peloponnese (Epidaurus),
25-29 June 13



Study trip to Peloponnese (Mycene),
25-29 June 13



Christmas Dinner, 14 December 2013



Christmas Gift Presentation, 13 December 2013



Greek Dance Course, 24 February 2014



Greek Language Course, October 2013–March 2014



*Study trip to Peloponnese (Epidaurus),
25–29 June 13*



*Study trip to Peloponnese (Hydra),
25–29 June 13*

Study Trip to Athens



*Study Trip to Athens (Acropolis),
19–21 November 2013*



*Study Trip to Athens (Acropolis Museum),
19–21 November 2013*



*Study Trip to Athens (Acropolis Museum),
19-21 November 2013*



*Study Trip to Athens (Delphi),
19-21 November 2013*



*Study Trip to Athens (Delphi),
19-21 November 2013*



*Study Trip to Athens (Delphi),
19-21 November 2013*



*Study Trip to Athens (HNDGS)
19th-21st of November 2013*



Study Trip to Athens (HNDGS) 19th-21st of November 2013



*Study Trip to Athens (Na-3 Red Cross),
19-21 November 2013*



*Study Trip to Athens (Na-3 Red Cross),
19-21 November 2013*



Believing that cooperation and dialog among the countries of South-Eastern Europe must be further developed and considering their commitment to contribute to regional security and stability, and to foster good neighborly relations, among the countries, an Agreement on Multinational Peace Force South-Eastern Europe (MPFSEE) was signed by the Ministers of Defense of the seven participating countries in Skopje on 26 September 1998.

In accordance with MPFSEE Agreement, the South-Eastern Europe Brigade (SEE-BRIG) was established and activated by seven participating Nations, on 31st of August 1999 in Plovdiv, Na-2 and was then hosted in Constanta, Na-6, then in Istanbul, Na-7 and is currently located in Tyrnavos (Larissa), Na-3.

The current structure of the MPFSEE is a brigade-sized force of about 5000 troops and is known as South-Eastern Europe Brigade (SEEBRIG).

Units allocated to the SEEBRIG will remain at their permanent home base locations and will be committed under a task force principle for exercises and operations upon the decisions of the participating Nations and appropriate joint direction and coordination of the "Politico-Military Steering Committee (PMSC)".

In accordance of the provisions of the Agreement :

The Brigade will be declared to UN and OSCE. It will be available, commensurate with its capabilities, for employment in conflict prevention and in other peace support operations, including peace-keeping, peace-making, peace-building and humanitarian operations.

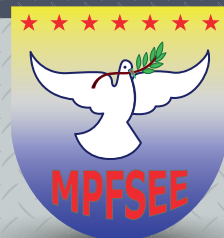
The force will be available for possible employment in UN or OSCE-mandated NATO-led or EU-led conflict prevention and other peace support operations. It could also participate in "coalition of the willing" type international initiatives. The Force will also function "within the spirit" of PfP.

STARS INFORMER

SOUTH EASTERN EUROPE BRIGADE REVIEW



WE ARE READY TO SUPPORT PEACE



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"ONE TEAM, ONE MISSION"