

# HQ NRDC-ESP

Journal II — 2022

#TwelveNationsOneTeam

## WORKING TOGETHER FOR PEACE, SECURITY & FREEDOM



# ANNIVERSARY



## COVER PHOTO

We celebrate this year the 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of **NRDC-ESP**. It was the 23<sup>rd</sup> of September 2002, when the Kingdom of Spain, NATO and the Participant Nations officialised the creation of this headquarters, with the signature of the Memorandum of Understanding. Since that moment, the men and women of this HQ not only committed to the NATO values - individual liberty, democracy, human rights, and the rule of law -, but also to be in NATO's front line.



## #TwelveNationsOneTeam

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### **3 COMMANDER'S FOREWORD**

Lieutenant General Fernando García-Vaquero Pradal (ESP-A)  
Commander HQ NRDC-ESP

### **4 INTERVIEW**

Interview to SFC Aaron Welch (USA-A)

### **7 NATO WARFIGHTING CORPS: THINKING, ADAPTING, ANTICIPATING**

Major Robert Payne (USA-A)  
HQ NRDC-ESP G5 PLANS

### **10 PERSONNEL ACCOUNTABILITY IS THE RESPONSIBILITY OF EVERY LEADER AT ALL TIMES**

Major Kerman Rodriguez (USA-A)  
HQ NRDC-ESP G1 PERS

### **12 FEEDBACK OF UKRAINE CRISIS TO CIMIC IN WARFIGHTING CORPS ROLE**

Lieutenant Colonel Jean Pierre Conjeaud (FRA-A)  
HQ NRDC-ESP G9 CIMIC

### **15 THE OSINT JUNGLE**

Sergeant Major Roberto Ramil Lage (ESP A)  
HQ NRDC ESP G7 TRG&EX

### **18 2002-2022 ROBUST CAPABILITIES ACHIEVED: FOUNDATION FOR SUCCESS**

Lieutenant Colonel Ángel José Garrido Álvarez (ESP-A)  
HQ NRDC-ESP G7 TRG&EX

### **20 NATO-EU SEMINAR. "NATO-EU COOPERATION AND RELATIONSHIP:...AND WHAT'S NEXT?"**

Colonel Jaime V. Mena Redondo (ESP A)  
Spanish High Readiness Land HQ (CGTAD-Valencia)

### **22 BROTHERS IN ARMS – THE UNITED STATES CONTINGENT WITHIN NRDC SPAIN**

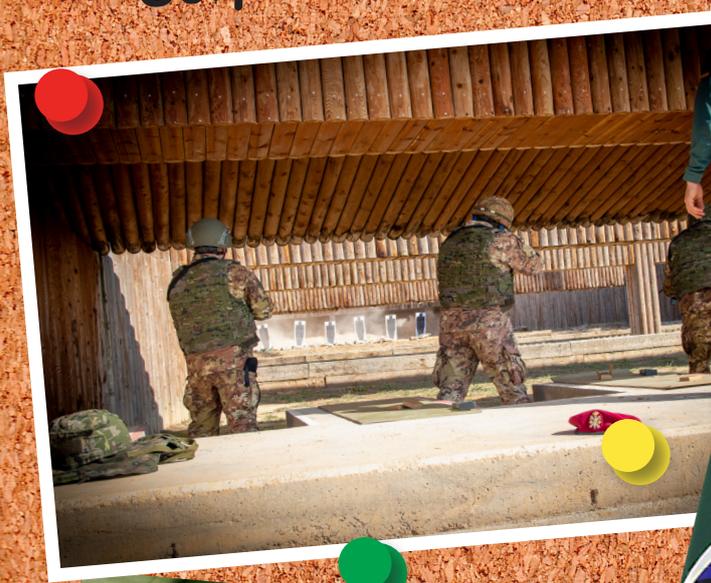
Major Ken Dougher (USA-A)  
HQ NRDC-ESP G3 AIR

### **24 20TH ANNIVERSARY HQ NRDC-ESP**

Command Sergeant Major José Juan Ríos López (ESP-A)  
CSM HQ NRDC-ESP

### **26 SUMMARY OF MAIN ACTIVITIES 2022**

# NATO Warfighting Corps 2022



# Commander's Foreword

Lieutenant General Fernando García-Vaquero Pradal (ESP-A)  
COMMANDER HQ NRDC-ESP

## Dear reader.

2022 was a special and incisive year for NRDC-ESP. This edition of our Journal is a flashback to the events of the year that is drawing to a close. I would like to highlight a few of them but not to forget the challenging times we live in.

On October 8th we commemorated the 20th anniversary of our Headquarters. That celebration shall remind us today and in the future of our strength which we gain out of our comradeship and team spirit. In addition to that we were very honoured by the visit of His Majesty King Felipe VI in May, which has underlined the importance of our contribution for peace and freedom not only in Spain, but also in Europe and the World. Also the visits of the Chief of the Portuguese Army and the Chair of the NATO Military Committee emphasized the role of our Headquarters.

We are also very proud, that we could host and support the annual ACO Management Board and the Key Leader Training – STEADFAST PURPOSE 2022 in Valencia, conducted by SHAPE. This event has shown the significance of a synchronization across all domains.

Besides visits and celebrations, we have been involved in a lot of exercises with our personnel. I'm proud of the performances of which I was able to convince myself personally.

With the hand over of the Warfighting Corps Guidon to NRDC-TUR on December 9th, we came to the end of our role as Warfighting Corps in stand by. But we must not forget our Warfighting skills and capabilities, we have acquired during the period as WFC and it is crucial to maintain and improve those skills in 2023 and beyond as well.

We are closely following the consequences of the Russian war against Ukraine at the tactical level. Thus we are monitoring the different lessons identified in order to derive our own lessons learned as a Warfighting Corps out of this conflict.



In 2023 we will continue with our efforts on different projects such as the implementation of a new command post concept, digitalization, information environment assessment, air-land integration, cyberactivities, multidomain operations, southern flank activities and Grey Zone.

To sum it up, this Headquarters is to be a learning organization. With its personnel as keystone, we are dynamic, positive and innovative. We know, we want and we can. Hence, we are fully capable and available, as part of the Land team.

I am convinced, that the success of this Corps is based on a special spirit throughout all branches and ranks. Thank you all for that spirit, your loyalty and morality in these challenging times.

**“Twelve Nations, One Team”**

Enjoy the magazine and I wish you and especially your families Merry Christmas and a successful and peaceful New Year 2023.



Sergeant First Class Aaron M. Welch  
HQ NRDC-ESP G3 OPS

Sgt. 1st Class Aaron M. Welch, a G3 operations noncommissioned officer who hails from Coeur d'Alene, Idaho, was selected to receive the award by a panel of judges based on his impact on his organization during the previous year.

Some highlights of Welch's impact include providing counsel and mentorship while supporting the establishment of Spain's first officially recognized sniper school, mentoring sniper teams from the Spanish Parachute Brigade and Special Operations School, and sharing information on his combat experiences in Afghanistan during the Allied Land Command's Command Senior Enlisted Leader Conference.

Welch has had a varied military career serving as a sniper with the 10th Mountain Division, an infantry platoon sergeant with the 101st Airborne Division, a senior drill instructor at Fort Jackson, S.C., and a team leader and first sergeant with the 1st Security Force Assistance Brigade. He has deployed five times to Iraq and Afghanistan.

Welch attributes much of his recent success not only to his training and combat experiences, but also to a new Allied Land Command program called NCO Empowerment Enabling Decisions or NEEDs. The purpose of NEEDs is to encourage and enable noncommissioned officers to accomplish more for their commanders and officer counterparts than what traditional NATO staff uses their NCOs for.

The award ceremony took place during the LC3 (Land Corps Commander's Conference) on 6 July in London. It is the first time that this award has been given to the NRDC-ESP and therefore it is a source of pride and satisfaction for all **HQ NRDC-ESP** components and because it says a lot in favor of the excellent NCOs that our HQ has.

**A U.S. Soldier assigned to the NATO Rapid Deployable Corps Spain in Valencia was granted the 2021 NATO Force Structure Top Soldier of the Year.**

**The NATO Force Structure Top Soldier Award was established by the LANDCOM Commander in order to recognize superior performance, professional excellence and significant contributions to NATO from junior officers and Non-Commissioned Officers.**

**1. How do you feel about winning the NATO's Force Structure Top Soldier of the Year award? Did you expect to win it?**

It feels great to represent my Army, my unit, and especially my family. We all know that when a Soldier leaves it places a lot of responsibility on our families and mine was no exception. My wife cared for three small girls while I was participating in voluntary activities that benefited NATO and the Spanish Armed Forces. I did not expect to be awarded anything actually. I do this level of work because I love my job and enjoy seeing the results of my effort. To me that's award enough.

**2. What does this award mean for you?**

This award is a great honor, actually. I have been able to really represent to NATO the commitment of our HQ in Valencia. By receiving the award, I have been able to get our name out to the public and show them the quality of work we do here in NRDC ESP and to be the face of that commitment is humbling but also an honor.

**3. Are you going to celebrate this award? If that is the case, how?**

Well, the celebration has been happening since February when I was notified of winning. My wife and I shared a nice bottle of Marques de Riscal Reserva. But within the HQ I have been celebrating for about six months. I have met many Generals from NATO and was even honored to meet His Majesty the King of Spain. I was flown to London to receive the award this month and visited Windsor castle as well so I can say I am now ready to get back to work.

**4. Why are you in the military? Can you describe briefly the beginning of your career?**

I joined in 2002 because of the attack on



America. After that all I can say is I have always sought ways to continue my service to not just my country but wherever I go. As a young paratrooper all I wanted to do was jump out of airplanes and fight the enemy.

**5. Could you describe, briefly, your time in Iraq?**

I was sent to Iraq three times since 2004. I can say each time was very different. In the beginning I was a machine gunner always on 24-hour patrols near Baghdad. I then supported convoy operations in southern Iraq and eventually transitioned to become a Sniper. This was the most demanding and interesting time of my life. Afghanistan after Iraq was a totally new experience, and I was deployed as a Sniper there as well and again as an advisor to a Brigade Command Sergeant Major. I have had many very different experiences.

**6. What is the best memory you have within in the army?**

My best memory in the Army has always been

coming home to my daughters and wife. Work is fun but to me the joy I see on their faces is what keeps me motivated to keep doing what I do. Because to be honest most of the places and things I have seen are not enjoyable, so my family makes it worth continuing.

**7. What does NATO mean to you as a United States citizen? And from the perspective of a United States' sergeant?**

For me I never really knew anything about NATO except when I was assigned to ISAF in Afghanistan. I didn't really know what the purpose was. Now after working in a CORPS HQ and seeing what the mission is I can say I really think it is an important alliance and it only works if all the individuals in the assignments give their best efforts every day. As an American NCO I can really see the difference in how the different nations use their NCO's and I have had the great honor to work with some really intelligent and amazing NCOs since I've been here. I can say that even though all nations use their NCOs in a different way we are still the Backbone of the organization.



**8. How is your time in the NRDC — ESP going? Are you enjoying Spain? What would you outline about the country?**

My family and I enjoy Spain very much. We placed our daughters in local schools and sports, and they love it as well. The culture here is amazing and so different from north to south. We have been to almost every region so far and the amount of history that is preserved here is amazing. For me to have an ancient castle next to a house and shops, is something that you cannot find in America. And the biggest thing we love is that family is so important here. The work hours and quality of life is just perfect for raising children.

**9. You have been here in Bétera since 2020. How much longer do you plan to stay?**

Life in the Army is never constant. However, we have been approved to stay a few additional years than my original assignment. If I am promoted then we will see what the future holds, but we have had serious discussions to retire in Spain.

**10. How is Spain seen, from a military perspective, from the United States?**

Well, I don't think I am quite qualified to answer that from a high-level perspective but, from the units I have worked with like BRIPAC and the Special Operations School, I can say it is very professional and steeped in tradition.

**11. Do you see any difference in how the Army is perceived in the United States and Spain? And any similarity?**

Once again, I don't want to get into comparisons but, I can say the fact that the Military is a career that you can stay in until you are 60 years old or more is very interesting to me. I will have to leave my service before I am 50 in my case.

**12. If you had to highlight something about the Spanish Army, what would it be?**

I would like to say it is nice to see that it seems to me that everyone views it as a professional career. And there seems to be a lot of pride in wearing the uniform here.



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# NATO Warfighting Corps: Thinking, Adapting, Anticipating.

**Major Robert Payne (USA-A)**  
**HQ NRDC-ESP G5 PLANS**

As the world watches the military conflict taking place in Ukraine, NATO (OTAN) is preparing for a hostile Russia to continue its aggressive actions with designs on member nations. NRDC-ESP spent all of 2021 thinking through the critical tasks associated with being a tactical warfighting corps headquarters (WFC). Now, after certifying to assume the role of WFC, NRDC-ESP is focusing on anticipating what comes next. This anticipation has resulted in recognizing an opportunity to evolve beyond yesterday's battlespace and today's operational environment to tomorrow's engagement space where the G5 must learn to plan within.

The WFC's primary role is to command and control subordinate divisions through large-scale combat operations. NRDC-ESP transformed from a Joint Task Force HQ (JTF) focused on the command and control of stability operations into a WFC by placing special emphasis on battlespace management (Deep, Close, Rear, and Narrative space) and multi-dimension (physical, virtual, and cognitive) effects in the operational environment. Now, with observations coming out of Ukraine combined with evolutions in allied concepts and capabilities NRDC-

ESP can rethink how it approaches combat and ask, "Is there a more efficient way?"

Currently NATO doctrine provides just one approach to combat, the manoeuvreist approach. This approach to combat focuses on setting terms in time and space for combat to shatter enemy cohesion. Can a WFC find an enemy in cyber-space? Can a WFC fix the enemy in outer space? Can an enemy be enveloped in the narrative space? These questions and more have led NRDC-ESP to speculate that perhaps today's modern battlefield requires a new outlook that frames the combat operating environment more accurately.

It is not enough to succeed in the deep, close, and rear area. WFC's G5 must plan maneuvers in the cognitive dimension and physical dimension simultaneously, in synchronization with each other. The cognitive dimension is information-dominated. It exists in the realm of the human mind and is observable through behavioral outputs. The goal of maneuvering in the cognitive space is to entice the enemy actor(s) to behave in a way that is favorable to friendly forces. To manoeuvre in it requires synchronizing efforts on achieving specific behavioral actions from the enemy.

A synthesis of traditional battlespace management with the reality of critically significant cognitive dimensions is needed to account for everything on the modern battlefield. This new synthesis focuses on achieving desirable behavioral outputs rather than simply shattering cohesion. These behavioral outputs are not happening in the deep, close, or rear, but rather in the “engagement space.” Engagement space is the all-dimension tactical battlefield and it is where the WFC’s G5 must become more active at planning in to achieve the WFC’s military objective.

How does this look in practice? First, the G5 planners must initiate the Operation Planning Group understanding the reality of the engagement space. Second, it is critical to remain intelligence driven. In the engagement space this means understanding the cognitive dimension that exists such as the enemy’s command cultural and personal details and the local population’s key influencers as much as the enemy’s order of battle and capabilities. The G9 and G10 play as much part of this as the G2. Third, a dedicated G10 staff section focused on putting the same amount of energy into analyzing the cognitive dimension as the G2 puts into analyzing an enemy’s most likely and most dangerous courses of action. Lastly, a targeting cycle that pulls all the work together into actionable

tasks by synchronize lethal and non-lethal effects across the engagement space to set conditions for the subordinate units.

Next, the WFC’s G5, working with the G10, must produce a mission narrative that is internally accepted by its organization and subordinate units and externally focused on achieving behavioral outcomes from the enemy. This requires synchronizing the words coming from the WFC (OPORDS, press release, media posts) with the military actions that are observable and imagery that attains an emotional response from the enemy. When that is achieved behavioral outputs from the enemy are achievable and the WFC has just concluded a successful maneuver in the engagement space.

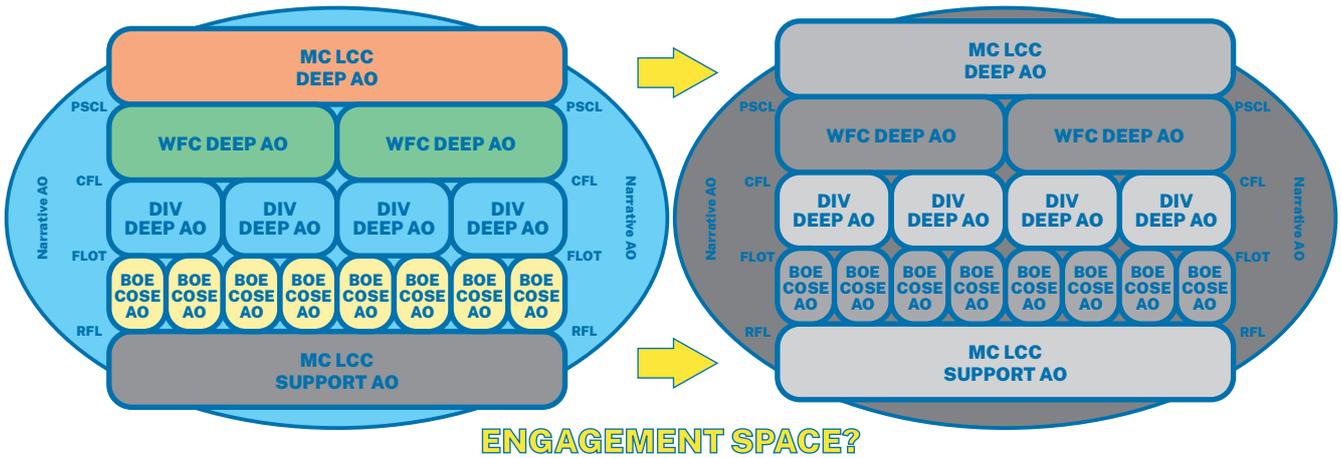
NRDC-ESP spent a year thinking about what it takes for a JTF to transition to a WFC. Then it adapted what it was doing yesterday to what it can do today. Now, anticipating what a WFC will need to do in the future demands a need to evolve the current approach WFCs have available to them in doctrine. This will focus a WFC on plans that win in the engagement space through physical, virtual and cognitive manoeuvre. The manoeuvreist approach to combat is not gone, it is simply not enough. It must evolve to allow for more actions and acknowledge that cognitive maneuver is taking place alongside physical and virtual maneuver in the engagement space.



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# Personnel accountability is the responsibility of every leader at all times

“Accountability breeds response-ability”. Stephen R. Covey

Major Kerman Rodriguez (USA-A)  
HQ NRDC-ESP G1 PERS

**Personnel Accountability** can be defined as the by-name management of the duty status and location of every person assigned to a unit. It is simply taking care of soldiers as it affects their safety and readiness. It can also be used to reflect the combat power of a unit at any given time, and it supports the personnel replacement process during combat operations.

As a career Personnel Officer, I have often found myself in a room where leaders are questioning the accuracy of the personnel accountability numbers that are been reported by the G1 Branch. During these times I always reflected on what my section could do to improve the accuracy of this critical information? To answer the above question, I believe it is important to clarify the difference between “function” and “responsibility”. The reporting of personnel accountability is a “function” usually led by the G1 Branch; it consists of identifying the

reporting procedures already established by commanders and coordinating with subordinate units in order to provide the Personnel Status Report (PERSREP) to the Commander. The “responsibility” is the duty of each individual to account for the status of themselves or their team members.

Often, my experience is that people believe that the inaccuracy in the PERSREP must be fixed by the G1 Branch, however, I argue that the real improvement will come if leaders at all levels are involved in making sure the information reported up the channels is accurate. In the context of personnel accountability, I believe that leaders not only refer to commanders, sergeant majors, and senior leaders, but actually means every single person in the unit. If we understand the significance that personnel accountability has to the commander’s decision making process, and to operations, we will be more willing to improve the accuracy of this report. By keeping proper accountability of



personnel, leaders know the condition of their subordinates at all times, and can effectively employ the full potential of their unit's abilities.

Certainly, there will always be instances where accountability cannot be accurately reported such as natural disasters or during enemy attacks, but in reality these represent a small percentage of the inaccuracies. In my experience, most mistakes come from a lack of overseeing the accuracy of the information being reported.

Personnel accountability becomes an even more critical and complex task while units are deployed for NATO exercises or during real combat operations. While units are deployed, PERSREP becomes one of the top two functions of any G1 Branch with the other one being Casualty Reporting. For this reason, in addition to the already available personnel to execute this task, some units allocate additional personnel to support the reporting of personnel accountability throughout the Area of Operations (AO).

Besides the accuracy of the report, we need

to also consider "timeliness"; is the PERSREP readily available to commanders at all times? Well, let us first consider that the PERSREP is a snapshot of a specific moment of the status of the NATO troops, and this can change by the hour. Additionally, we have to consider other factors such as location, communications, and current operations. Imagine the complexity of performing PERSREP during the current conflict in Ukraine, where communication between units maybe lost for days due to enemy attack and damage to critical infrastructure. However, under normal or more stable conditions, I believe there are ways to improve the timeliness of PERSREP.

Currently most NATO organizations report their personnel status to higher headquarters via email using the traditional Excel spreadsheet. This process is very time consuming and therefore the final report presented to commanders is usually 5 to 6 hours out of date. The implementation of a NATO accountability software used by all nations within the Alliance while deployed to exercise and real operation, would allow leaders access information that is closer to the actual situation of their troops.

PERSONNEL STRENGTH REPORT (PERSREP)																			
PERSREP		Name of Exercise / Operation										DD1700ZMMYY							
UNIT		LOCATION			REPORTED PERIOD		from:		to:										
Formation/Unit	Required Strength (SOR)	Last Reported operational Strength	Org attached from another CC/Unit	Org detached to another CC/Unit	Battle Casualties (BC)*						Non Battle Casualties (NBS)*			Total NBC	Admin Losses	Gains	New operational strength	Percentage	Remarks
					KIA	WIA	C/MIA	D/UN W	DOW	Total BC	NBD	NBI	Disease						
a	b	c	d	e	f	g	h	i	j	k	l	m	n	o	p	q	r	s	t
WFC HQ	1000									0				0			0	0	
	1000									0				0			0	0	
	1000									0				0			0	0	
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<b>TOTALS</b>																			

Legend:

- a. Name of the formation/Unit
- b. Operational Establishment Strength
- c. Current Operational Strength of the previous PERSREP sent
- d. Strength from another unit jointed to this unit
- e. Strength from this unit jointed to another unit
- f. Killed in action
- g. Wounded in action
- h. Captured/missing in action
- i. Duty status unknown
- j. Died of Wounds
- k. Summary of all Battle Casualties
- l. Non battle dead
- m. Non battle injured
- n. Any illness which causes a non availability in the unit for at least 24 hrs
- o. Summary of all non battle casualties
- p. Soldiers on leave
- q. Return to duty
- r. Total new operational strength
- s. Percentage

Percentage: >=90 >=75% <75%

Drafter: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone number: \_\_\_\_\_

Shortfalls & remarks

\* Indicate gender and nations in casualties

Commander's assessment

In conclusion, the accuracy of personnel accountability will be reciprocal to the level of leader's involvement. Every person in our organization can contribute to produce a PERSREP that reflects the true picture of the unit's personnel status. There will always be situations affecting the accuracy and timeliness of this report, however, deliberate efforts should be made to overcome these limitations. Personnel accountability is taking care of soldiers as affects their safety and readiness.

# Feedback of Ukraine crisis to CIMIC in Warfighting Corps role

Lieutenant Colonel Jean Pierre Conjeaud (FRA-A)  
HQ NRDC-ESP G9 CIMIC

## INTRODUCTION

Recent military operations carried out from the Nineties until now and led by United Nations, NATO, and the European Union or “ad hoc” coalitions have demonstrated the importance of the civil environment as a key factor to be taken into account in all phases of a military campaign, starting from the planning process. This context gave birth to concepts that have become familiar for all military staff, such as Civil Military Interaction (CMI), Comprehensive Approach (CA), Resilience or Cross Cutting Topics (CCTs): in all of these, the role of CIMIC is a key enabler for their implementation. As the outbreak of the Ukrainian crisis is bringing us closer to the eventuality of an article 5 operation, we can look through this lens at the role of CIMIC in war fighting operations.

The aim of the author in this article is to discuss how the recent events are reinforcing the role of CIMIC core function<sup>1</sup> in support to the force. With the purpose of preserving freedom of movement, freedom of action, and credibility of the Force, early synchronization effort with

the Host Nation (HN) and Non-Military Actors (NMAs) is paramount and in fact the high operational tempo and changing situation demand continuously updated, comprehensive situational awareness at all times.

## DECADES OF NON-ARTICLE 5 OPERATIONS LEGACY

Firstly, we must remember that although the Comprehensive Approach principles apply to all types of NATO military operations, Non-Article 5 Operations are more specifically population-centric. Thus, military forces are often engaged roles other than the traditional military ones, such as stabilization or capacity building. For the CIMIC function that means focusing on supporting the civil environment and NMAs and this is not without consequences. In some cases, in order to better fit their expected role in the major Non-Art. 5 Operation that NATO has carried out, which is the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) in Afghanistan, the organic structures of the G9 CIMIC branches have been significantly adapted. In addition, some new concepts were born during that period (CMI, Resilience, CCTs), aiming at a better response to a situation where military strength



MAR2022 - People fleeing from Ukraine arrive at the train station in Przemysl, Poland

<sup>1</sup> According to AJP 3.19 Ed.A V1 NOV. 2018 CIMIC core functions are: Civil-Military liaison, support to the force, support to the Non-military actors and the civil environment.



**MAR-2022 Ukrainian soldiers and militia evacuating civilians on the outskirts of Kyiv**

strength alone does not guarantee an advantage against the enemy, but also tends to deviate from the tasks more directly related to the mission accomplishment. As the CIMIC function is a key enabler for those tasks that are not typically within the traditional scope of military capabilities, there might be a sensation of losing some of its essence, distracting energies, and even questioning how effectively the military are performing it. The question is: do CIMIC operators and the military in general have the proper training to take part into discussions with NMAs about governance, economic development, or judicial systems, for example?

According to the point of view and in many cases to the contingency of each particular military operation, there is no unconditional answer. However, we can consider that, as a legacy, we have now all the tools allowing us to deal efficiently with multiple NMAs in complex situations, and this is invaluable. Even more so after 24th February 2022, when the Russian invasion of Ukraine started. In line with the NATO concept issued during the 2022 summit in Madrid, enhancing collective defence and crisis management in a challenging strategic environment, CIMIC in a Warfighting Corps (WFC) context takes a new perspective.

## **WFC CHALLENGES FOR CIMIC THROUGH UKRAINE WAR LENS**

This event and all the previous ones bring us back to the grey zone concept, in a competing situation prior to the confrontation in which there is no certainty of reaching war, our adversary tries to challenge our instruments of power by influencing, intimidating, and manipulating risk perception. All this shows



**APR2022 - ICRC convoy attempting to enter Mariupol for civilian evacuation**

how much the civil environment plays an active role throughout the conflict continuum, from peace to war. Russia, just as it did successfully in 2014 with the annexation of Crimea, tried to exploit social and cultural links as well as Ukrainian state vulnerabilities (corruption, lack of politic credibility) and internal divisions before launching its attack. Then the Russian invasion provoked several millions of refugees and internally displaced persons, thousands of civilian casualties, billions of euros in civil infrastructures damage as well as the involvement of the international community raising funds to supply hundreds of humanitarian organizations of all types. In this context, synchronization between physical and cognitive effects appears to be a key factor in setting the conditions to convert any individual into a circumstantial ally, an obstacle for the adversary's manoeuvre, or an informational weapon transmitting the selected message. The permanent presence of media is a catalysing environment for hybrid warfare, and the Ukrainian civil environment is now both a source and a target for information operations capable of producing effects up to the strategic level.

As of now, there is no way to predict the future and even less what the outcome of this crisis will be, but some challenges have been identified. The first one, general and valid for any functional area, is about anticipation that is key to adapting to an evolving situation. Permanent knowledge and situation awareness is paramount and it begins with the first steps of the planning process that is the common understanding of the operational environment



**MAR2022 - Distribution of humanitarian aid from the International Committee of the Red Cross in DONETSK**



**APR2022 - A media crowd covering destruction of Russian equipment's during a trip to Bucha, near Kyiv, organized by the Ukrainian authorities**

covering holistic domains. The second one, more specific to CIMIC, is to prepare the engagement of the human network in order to interact not only with the friendly and the neutral, but also with the hostile. Taking and keeping the initiative is the guarantee of having the flexibility required to actuate across the whole spectrum of conflict and to effectively control the achieved effects.

### **WHICH DIRECTION TO TAKE?**

While true that comprehensive approach principles are valid in a WFC scenario, this does not mean forgetting about the heritage of the last 20 years, but instead using gender perspective, children in armed conflicts or protection of civilians as an angle of analysis, but with the primary purpose of supporting the force and its mission. The CIMIC functional area coordination role as the interface between civil environment and military force is also part of this legacy and, in a WFC role, the best contribution that CIMIC can provide is to strengthen it while acting as a military force without ambiguity. The lead on “civil issues” must be left to the HN or to the relevant civil agencies, which have extensive knowledge and experience in their area of expertise.

Ensuring credibility, in particular within the international community, protecting our freedom of movement and freedom of actions at every level, and throughout the conflict continuum has to be the CIMIC's main concern. It's about carrying out activities such as: gathering, assessing and reporting information about the civil environment; identifying and assessing civil key indicators and sensitive factors having a critical

impact on the planning and conduct of operations; promoting force acceptance and transparency; contributing to informing the civil society in the mission area in line with the communication effort led by strategic communications; and facilitating access to non-military resources, and displaced people management, in order to ensure at any time the full availability for example of roads and main supply routes, or other key infrastructures.

In this regard, keeping focused on the support to the military force, the civil military liaison function is the main facilitator, and the knowledge of the civil environment is paramount. Both need to be implemented from the very beginning of the planning process and throughout the execution phase. The earlier and the better connected we are with the civil environment, the better our understanding of it will be, and the more effective our actions in convincing our partners, deterring our potential contradictors, countering the opponent's narrative, and protecting our legitimacy, credibility, freedom of movement and action will be.

### **CONCLUSION**

*In its new version, NATO CIMIC doctrine on civil-military cooperation (AJP 3.19) defines CIMIC as the joint function that integrates the understanding of the civil factors, which starts with analysing the operating environment. The change of paradigm from the typical peace/war situation illustrated by the Ukrainian crisis highlights the need for readiness. Adaptation of the doctrine, focusing more on core activities rather than generic functions might be needed, as well as the allocated resources and specific training to carry out the permanent tasks.*

# The OSINT jungle

Sergeant Major Roberto Ramil Lage (ESP A)  
HQ NRDC ESP G7 TRG&EX

## INTRODUCTION

The term OSINT (Open-Source Intelligence) began to be used in 1941 in the United States, by the organization FBIS (Foreign Broadcast Information Service). This organization aimed to collect or generate intelligence from tracking and analysis of foreign broadcasts for war propaganda purposes. It is even believed that they anticipated Japan's intention to go to war. The concept has been evolving, and nowadays the term is used in all aspects of cybersecurity. Today the acronym OSINT refers to the system for collecting information from open sources, especially on the Internet.

## WHAT ARE OPEN SOURCES?

Any way we can obtain data that is accessible on public domains. It can be free to use or have some cost, but it is not encrypted and is in the public domain (any citizen can see it). The key to this system is to obtain information.

The OSINT process consists of:

- Scanning the enormous amount of information that is available through open sources.
- Selecting the one that interests you.
- Processing and analyzing the information.
- Putting it in a document.
- Drawing conclusions based on the information.

## WHAT IS OSINT USEFUL FOR?

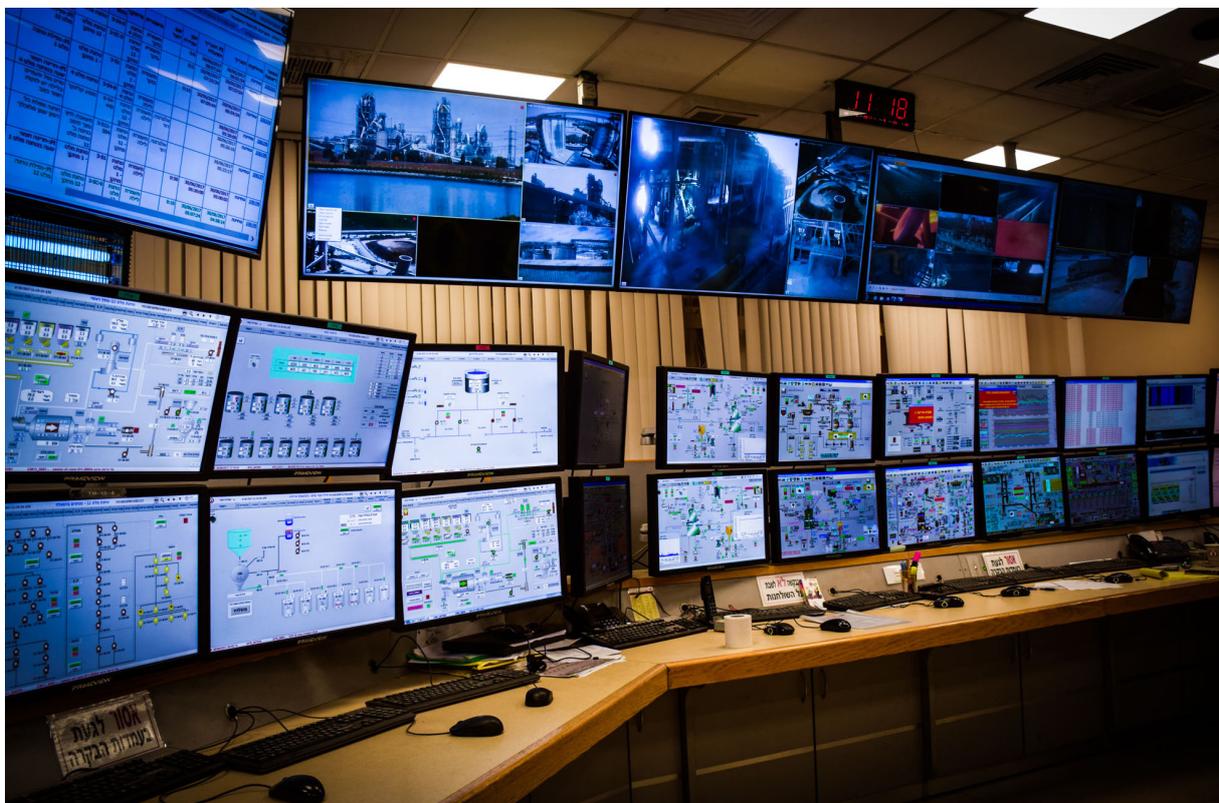
Open-source intelligence allows you to obtain data that you would not obtain otherwise; but you need to determine if it is reliable information. We need to compare the information to verify its validity.

## ASPECTS

Three main aspects have contributed to the rise of OSINT's importance in recent times.

### The first aspect:

The significant expansion of the spectrum of security threats over the four decades of the Cold War were dealt with by the Intelligence Services. The central task was to discover the intentions and abilities of the Soviet Union and the Warsaw Pact.





Since the fall of the Berlin Wall, however, the interests of the intelligence services have been focused on terrorist threats, the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, organized crime, internal conflicts, regional crises, illegal immigration, and energy security. All these new aspects have increased the area of interest of government agencies overwhelming the intelligence needed. With this growing demand for information on a wide range of topics, the need for OSINT has become imperative.

### **The second aspect:**

The information revolution has radically changed the intelligence environment. This has led to a vast amount of information and a wide range of intelligence sources becoming available, which has made the world more transparent and accessible. Google Earth, for example, offers more geospatial intelligence today than is available to many current governments. Other Internet services such as Wikipedia, Twitter, Instagram, are also increasingly used as relevant sources to exploit intelligence.

Today's social networks feed on information that is free and voluntarily provided by the users themselves. In many cases, they are not aware of the information they release on the network, and it is seen by thousands of anonymous users.

### **The third aspect:**

The failure of the intelligence services concerning the terrorist attacks of 9/11 and the war in Iraq, prompted a thorough review of how information analysis was collected and used in the political decision-making process.

### **OSINT STRENGTHS**

The most important advantage of OSINT is that the acquisition is less expensive than the conventional method. In addition, the information is publicly accessible, open, and can be found everywhere. Moreover, managing all this information is less complicated.

Compared to classic intelligence services, OSINT facilitates the transmission and publication of results, and we are able to check their reliability through many other ways.

Advantages and disadvantages of investigating using OSINT: It is clear that everything that involves obtaining more information is an advantage. Let's look at the pros and cons of using this research system.

Advantages:

- It involves less risk: you can collect information from a desk, the office, or your home. You do not need to do field work or travel anywhere.
- It is less expensive: since in most cases it is possible to obtain the information for free.
- Ease of access: These are open sources that anyone can access.
- Constant updating of information: using this system you will never come across obsolete information.

Disadvantages:

- An excess of unclear information: the amount of information on the Internet is overwhelming. One of the main problems for anyone who is dealing with OSINT is that they are unable to filter or rank it without a good training.
- Unreliable sources: open sources also accumulate a quantity of erroneous or untrue information, so you have to learn to discern what is true from what is false.

## OSINT LIMITS

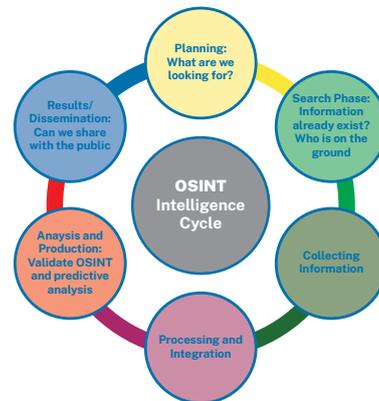
Open-source information accounts for 80 to 95 percent of today's intelligence needs. The use of open-source information for intelligence purposes, also has its limits. It is difficult and time consuming to filter the information obtained, because of its abundance. Such information can often only be verified and challenged using traditional intelligence tools. The fact that the same information is located in different media, does not increase its objectivity or its veracity. In many cases it has to be corroborated by field agents (HUMINT). In addition, data protection laws in many countries severely limits the ability to obtain information.

## DIFFERENT NEEDS

Two conclusions can be drawn from the above analysis. First of all, it must be clear that the use of OSINT is necessary, feasible and promising. The second point is that in the intelligence cycles, OSINT should be used as an addition to other collection methods such as HUMINT, SIGINT and IMINT that will complement these approaches.

## QUESTIONS WE HAVE TO ASK OURSELVES (INTEL):

- Do we know why we are obtaining the information?
- Is the information that we get what we really need?
- Does it cover our information gaps?
- Is it reliable?
- Are we capable of evaluating it, analyzing it, integrating it with other types of information and interpreting it?
- Do we know how to analyze it by applying different analysis techniques?
- Does it confirm or deny our hypotheses?
- And the most important point: Is it what our analyst needs to make the most appropriate decision?



Use of OSINT, as a technique to obtain information and to develop intelligence, is a combined learning of other disciplines. Although, in the preparation of the final report, we must consider it from a multidisciplinary point of view. And in the case of internet, OSINT learning becomes necessary for our own protection.

## CONCLUSION

The challenge is to educate analysts, who still have prejudices about the use of open sources. The use of OSINT to obtain information is complementary to the traditional one and it provides a new window into the world of intelligence gathering. All the information is on the network, you just have to find it, analyze it and verify it. It would be desirable to strengthen and invest in OSINT capabilities, in training of Analysts as well as in the technological area.

Link to OSINT tools and other useful Intel info (for beginners) by the author:

*"La Jungla OSINT por Ra1000"*

web: [start.me/p/ELqnRr/la-jungla-osint-por-ra1000](http://start.me/p/ELqnRr/la-jungla-osint-por-ra1000)

# 2002-2022 Robust capabilities achieved: Foundation for success

Lieutenant Colonel Ángel José Garrido Álvarez (ESP-A)  
HQ NRDC-ESP G7 TRG&EX

Every year, **HQ NRDC-ESP** issues the Commander's Directive, giving guidance to its staff members about: the areas on which they must focus their activity; professional or functional relationships with peer or higher echelons; doctrine development; experimentation; and cooperation and preparation. The Cdr's Directive is released together with the Training Directive, an annex stressing the priorities given to the different exercises that will drive the staff to accomplish the Cdr's intent.

During 2022, the stand-by year for the **HQ NRDC-ESP** as War Fighting Corps (WFC), the HQ has joined several exercises playing this role, as the best way to keep and improve the standards achieved during the main certification event, Steadfast Leda 2021.

The Major Joint Operation exercises (MJO+) that this HQ supported were Steadfast Jupiter (STJU) and Loyal Leda (LOLE) 2022, playing a tactical role in both of them, by

providing a WFC Response Cell (RC) and supporting the evaluation teams that would certify 1GNC HQ as NRF LCC, and HQ NRDC-TUR (our successor) as WFC HQ.

The international situation created by the Russian invasion of Ukraine meant a substantial change to the STJU22 design, maintaining our support to the evaluation team but with the WFC RC becoming ineffective.

At the time of writing, the STJU22 has just finished on October 21st, moving to the LOLE22 Phase IIIb to be played in Bydgoszcz from November 21st to December 9th. Among others, our main contributions were to the Mutual Training Support (MTS), Gordian Knot 2022 exercises, again as WFC RC, and Common Tenacity 2022 (CT22), mainly supporting the Eurocorps (EC) Joint Logistic Support Group (JLSG); this last one gave us the opportunity to demonstrate our robust standards as Joint Task Force HQ (JTF HQ), twice certified, in 2015 and 2019, and to accomplish another Cdr's objective: to retain our capabilities to be able to adapt to whatever role may be assigned, or



EX Steadfast Leda 2021 (Vitoria, Spain)



NATO-EU Seminar 2022 (Valencia, Spain)



Seminar with UCV 2022 (Bétera, Spain)

to respond to any NATO request. Common series exercises are the EC exercises defined to prepare its evaluation as JTF HQ within the exercise Steadfast Jackal 2023. **HQ NRDC-ESP**, mainly through its Support Division, supports the JLSG provided by Spain as one of the EC framework nations. Our support has become effective by joining Phase IIb and Phase IIIb with a pool of experts, the same ones who will join the different training activities in 2023, to finally achieve the certification in late November and December 2023. This support demonstrates not only the HQ NRDC-ESP's full commitment with our sister HQs, but also the support that Spain provides to NATO by sourcing the JLSG with the ESP Logistic Brigade, as main stakeholder.

And we can emphasise this strong linkage between Spain and NATO not only by joining and supporting NATO Training, but also by playing an active role in the different initiatives taken, derived from the new international situation, this time for real.

Our support and mentoring of the Multinational Division Centre (MND-C) will reach its peak next year, by carrying out the Strong Bastion 2023 (STBA23) exercise to provide a decisive role within his geographical area of interest from then on. This clearly states and emphasises our Cdr's main objective - to be ready for whatever NATO may request.

**HQ NRDC-ESP** planners from our PLANS branch, led by SHAPE and directed by the



EX Common Tenacity 2022 (Strasbourg, France)

©HQ RRC-FR

Joint Commands, are supporting the regional planning efforts as well as the standing plan updates that allow the Organization to be ready to alert and activate the necessary response that the current crisis might demand.

All the mentioned training activities allow us to guarantee an effective response, but this wouldn't be enough if we didn't join with the NATO community in a wider vision to improve the necessary common understanding. That's why the **HQ NRDC-ESP** assumed, under LANDCOM guidance, a main role in regard to the Grey zone concept development. This drove us to host the second LANDCOM (LC) Teaming Group meeting last July, and to organize the NATO-EU Seminar to extend information sharing and common understanding within the European Union. Looking within our borders, the HQ NRDC-ESP exercises a lead role spreading the latest and coming concepts from NATO to the Spanish Armed Forces. The "NATO Emerging Concepts" Seminar met for its third edition last February. However it is not the oldest info-sharing seminar this HQ hosts annually. From the beginning it has sought the contribution of the civilian knowledge community, and the seminar with the Catholic University of Valencia hosted last May was the 11<sup>th</sup> edition.

**HQ NRDC-ESP** shows a broad array of tools for NATO readiness, to share our knowledge with our partners, and to tighten our links with the whole national and international community, military and civilian. Our robust standards achieved since 2002 have driven us to be ready.

# “NATO-EU cooperation and relationship:…and what’s next?”

Colonel Jaime V. Mena Redondo (ESP-A)  
SPANISH HIGH READINESS LAND HQ (CGTAD-Valencia)

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The multiple and evolving security challenges that NATO and EU Member States face from the East and the South make its continued cooperation essential. They are committed to deepening its cooperation and relationship further within common proposals. It is now important to focus on practical implementation. The more hostile security environment requires both organizations to increase their capacity and willingness to act, strengthen their resilience and ensure solidarity and mutual assistance. The current crisis in the eastern flank has shown again how important NATO-EU cooperation is. More importantly, it has demonstrated how well EU and NATO already cooperate. The approval of the European Strategic Compass last March clearly stated the importance of the EU strategic partnership with the Alliance. The need to ensure coherence, close coordination and mutual complementarity of efforts is even more evident today, under current circumstances. At the Madrid Summit in June, NATO Leaders agreed the new Strategic Concept. It defines the security challenges facing the Alliance and outlines the political and military tasks NATO will carry out to address them. By linking both NATO and EU Security Strategies, this Seminar, led by the HQ NRDC-ESP, reflected on how to jointly tackle future threats and challenges in the world we are facing, that is changing rapidly and drastically, so what’s next?

## 2. THE AGENDA

On January 1, 2022, the HQ NRDC-ESP assumed the role of NATO’s Warfighting Corps for a year. Since the second semester, the Spanish side of this HQ has been ready as Operational Headquarters (OHQ) and it may also be engaged in support of the European Union. Within the framework of EU and NATO new Security Strategies, HQ NRDC-ESP has developed a thorough understanding of both documents, and their outcomes have been shared with the community of interest through seminars like this one.



To that end, the agenda of the Seminar contained the following conferences and panels:

- A Seminar Opening Conference, where LTG. GAN PAMPOLS (former HQ NRDC-ESP Commander 2017-2019) briefed the audience (in-person and online personnel) providing “A vision of the current and future international security framework and its influence in NATO/EU”.
- Three panel discussions, scheduled in a logical order: the first one titled “How Europe should face current and future challenges in the New Security Framework”; a second one titled “How to really expand NATO-EU cooperation”; and, finally, the third panel discussion focused on “EU Strategic Compass vs. NATO Strategic Concept: ... what’s next”. Several military and civilian experts, coming from different organisms of NATO, EU and University, took part in these panel discussions. Each panel discussion was moderated by a recognised expert on the topic.

### 3. SEMINAR MAIN CONCLUSIONS

NATO and the EU are and will be affected by the impacts of the same global developments, and they must jointly face current and future threats and challenges in a New Security Environment.

Cooperation between NATO and the EU must be understood as part of an evolution and within a VUCA (Volatile, Uncertain, Complex

and Ambiguous) context. Although there is still a long way to go, cooperation has proven its achievements at both technical and ground levels. Therefore, moving towards further cooperation implies political cooperation. To be effective, Alliance and Union Member States must have, in addition to the political will, the intention to provide the internal means to support cooperation.

The EU and NATO clearly have common strategic values and interests and face common threats. Moreover, shared multi-layered threats require a shared multi-layered response, and it is necessary to do more to accelerate the response – a statement that is equally true for the EU and for NATO, given the Alliance’s challenges of delivering credible Deterrence and Defence.

Close cooperation and a strong relationship are needed among the all International Security Organisations, but in the case of the EU and NATO this is a must. The EU has expressed this necessity clearly in its Strategic Compass. NATO Strategic Concept highlights the same vital requirement for cooperation. There is no doubt about this.

This Seminar was an excellent opportunity to head up some of the challenges NATO and EU might face and to discuss some of the solutions that might make the NATO-EU cooperation easier and more dynamic. To this end, it is necessary to avoid competition, duplication, and the inefficient use of resources, as well as to agree on the shared risks.



# Brothers in Arms-The United States contingent within NRDC-Spain

Major Ken Dougher (USA-A)  
HQ NRDC-ESP G3 AIR

**“We few, we happy few, we band of brothers;  
For he to-day that sheds his blood with me,  
Shall be my brother.” –William Shakespeare**

September 1945 marked the end of WWII and the immense bloodshed that accompanied the Allied victory. From the ashes rose a phenomenal beacon of hope for the future of the European continent, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). Spain joined NATO in 1982 and quickly made a positive impact. By 1999, a growing NATO required a more robust and established headquarters, which was expertly fulfilled by NRDC-Spain. Following the HQs 2002 accreditation as ‘Full Operational Capability’ (FOC), U.S. and fellow NATO personnel assembled at ‘Jaime I’ military base in Betera, Spain. This October we celebrate the 20th anniversary of NRDC-Spain and the continued presence of the U.S. Army and U.S. Air Force working and living alongside our Spanish brothers and allies. This year especially marked by our efforts to counter Russian aggression and guarantee NATO’s territorial sovereignty. The U.S. contingent assigned to NRDC-Spain complements its allies through constant training and exercises, providing a wide variety of both land and air domain

expertise to the Land Component Commander. The U.S. contingent within NRDC-Spain is composed of 17 highly skilled and dedicated professionals. Of the 17 positions, 13 are officers, and 4 are filled by non-commissioned officers (NCOs). These personnel span much of the expertise in the Army and consist of the following military specialties: Air Defense Artillery, Aviation, Field Artillery, Foreign Area Officer, Human Resources, Infantry, Information Operations, Information Technology, Intelligent Analyst, Logistics, Military Intelligence, Signal, Simulations, and Supply Specialist. Additionally, the contingent has one U.S. Air Force Officer whose specialty is Electronic Warfare and liaison with NATO AIRCOM. A National Support Element manned by four U.S. and Spanish civilians, one U.S. Army NCO and a U.S. Navy Medic providing the administrative and logistical support from U.S. Naval Station Rota and U.S. Army NATO Brigade in Naples, Italy and Sembach, Germany. The normal tour of duty in NRDC-Spain is three years, but everybody wishes it was longer due to the opportunity to be a part of NATO’s mission, the camaraderie with our allies, the beautiful location, and the high quality of life for our families. Below are some of the thoughts on serving within NRDC-Spain.

NATO Rapid Deployable Corps Spain



US Contingent with partners around the NATO emblem, “a four-pointed star representing the compass that keeps us on the right road, the path of peace, and a circle representing the unity that binds together the countries of NATO.” -NATO Secretary General Lord Ismay



“It is a real privilege to serve as the G3 OPS Branch Chief as well as the U.S. Senior National Representative at NRDC-Spain. The U.S. Army footprint in Spain is very small, about 25 officers and NCOs of which 17 are assigned to this HQ. Thus, being the Senior officer of the majority of U.S. Army and one Air Force military personnel in Spain is a rare luxury. I’m a Foreign Area Officer (FAO) by trade, in charge of 30 officers and NCOs from seven countries in G3. My boss, the DCOS Operations is a Brigadier General from the Hellenic Army. This job is operational without a doubt, but I employ my FAO skills 100% of my days in Betera. Serving in NATO during this time of uncertainty in Europe adds a special flavor and a real professional satisfaction to know that the U.S. contingent and our allies make a difference every day to protect our values, freedom and keep the Russian threat at bay.” –COL Zubr.

“While new to NRDC-Spain, it was immediately apparent that this is a special organization. Throughout my career I have had the opportunity to work with partnered nations closely, but this is on another level and particularly unique. The feeling of camaraderie as we all work together to thwart real and immediate threats is rewarding and refreshing. The most professionally rewarding aspect of being a part of this headquarters is the unique perspectives of our partners. Each of us join together, share ways to approach a problem set, and develop a solution that none of us individually would have developed—it gives hope that together we will keep the world safe.” –MAJ Dougher

“I have the chance and opportunity to work with our allied partners in a way that is mutually beneficial. Throughout an average military career, most people are assigned to the Continental United States, with the exception of Hawaii or Alaska. Others get lucky with being stationed in South Korea, Italy, Germany, or those lucky few that get Japan! Even fewer/rarer are the



positions available/open at NATO headquarters. Up until this point in my military career, I had only heard about people getting NATO assignments, or even luckier, SHAPE. So, to be selected to come work at NATO HQ

Spain has seriously made me feel the most blessed in my military career so far. This is an opportunity for me to get to see how our allied nations’ armies work together, in support of the bigger mission. When allied partners are able to work together cohesively, all are able to walk away with a better understanding, a new perspective, and method of accomplishing a common goal. Besides, the location doesn’t hurt either!

What I hope to be able to take away from my time here is the ability to understand the strategic level of cooperation that you don’t usually see in any conventional unit, and bring that back with me when my tour here is over. Being a member of NATO means having the ability to see the bigger picture, and to gain a better understanding of what we, and our allied partners, do on a large, global level.” –SFC Ho

The aforementioned statements merely echo what all 17 members of the U.S. contingent know and believe. We are grateful to be part of the NRDC-Spain team and to Spain and the Spanish Army for becoming our home away from home. Twelve Nations-One Team!

# 20TH Anniversary HQ NRDC-ESP

**Command Sergeant Major José Juan Ríos López (ESP-A)  
CSM HQ NRDC-ESP**

In mid-1999, NATO defined a new strategic concept, given that new challenges had been faced.

From this new concept, the Alliance began a process of revision of its Force Structure, and the need arose to have a permanent series of forces and, above all, headquarters - already established, easily deployed, with high availability, and capable of assuming missions of all kinds, from conventional war to humanitarian aid operations. Accordingly, it launched an offer of participation to all its member countries.

The Spanish Government considered it of great importance to have a Headquarters of this type to lead multinational operations inside or outside NATO territory. Thus, at the beginning of 2001, the Land High Response Forces HQ HRF(L) HQ was established.

For this purpose, personnel assigned to the Manoeuvre Force Unit were added to the Jaime I Military Base in Bétera to create what was initially called HRF (L) HQ, Land High Response Forces Headquarters.

Once the FOC (full operational capability) was approved in 2002, it was renamed HQ NRDC-ESP (NATO designation).



**HQ NRDC-ESP Commander receives the NATO flag after the signing of the MOU (25/09/2002)**

It was a multinational HQ placed under NATO C2.

In September 2002, the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) was signed between Spain and the member countries of NATO. At the same time, an agreement was signed to place this Headquarters under the command of SACEUR (Chief of the Supreme Allied Command in Europe).

From its creation to the present, the CGTAD / HQ NRDC-ESP has been continuously evolving, in order to reach the highest degree of preparation to carry out the possible missions that Spain or NATO may entrust to it. Throughout these intense 20 years, the NRDC-ESP has successfully obtained a series of certifications (HRF (L), NRF5, NRF12, JTF HQ, WFC HQ) to be prepared to fulfil the different NATO missions assigned to it and was able to assume the following roles:

- Land Component Command of the NATO Response Force 5 (NRF5) where HQ NRDC-ESP was deployed to Pakistan until January 6th, 2016, being the first deployment of this new force structure.
- Land Component Command of the NRF12 in 2009.
- Joint Task Force Headquarters (JTF HQ) for small joint operations land heavy at the NATO Force Structure from 01 July 2014 to 30 June 2015. The HQ NRDC-ESP was certified as the first deployable Joint Task Force Headquarters.
- Land Component Command of the new NATO Response Force 2016 (enhanced NRF).
- Joint Task Force Headquarters (JTF HQ) for small joint operations land heavy at the NATO Force Structure during 2020.
- Warfighting Corps Headquarters 2022.



The HQ NRDC-ESP may also be engaged in support of the EU, within the framework of collaboration of this organization with NATO.

In addition, its continuous participation in numerous activities (e.g. exercises, seminars, working groups...), both NATO and national, has served as a link between NATO doctrine and Army units.

Two of the milestones to highlight during these 20 years of history are the activation as NRF 5 in 2005 in response to the earthquake that devastated Pakistan, and the deployment in two six-month rotations at the IJC (ISAF Joint Command) HQ in 2012 as part of the International Security Assistance Force in Afghanistan (ISAF).



**NRF 5 Pakistan 2005**



**IJC (ISAF) 2012**

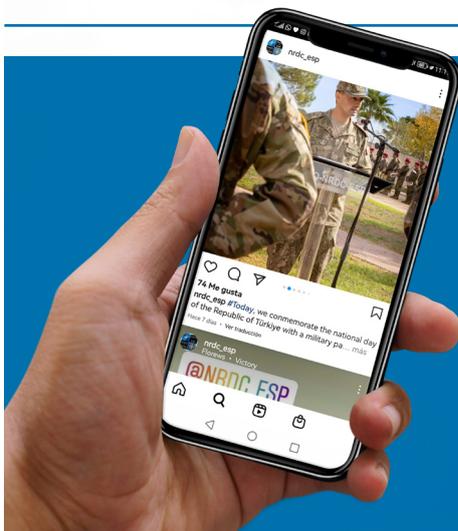
These short but intense 20 years have been reflected in the NRDC-ESP Historical Room, which opened on January 11, 2022



**NRDC-ESP Historical room**

With Spain as framework nation, currently twelve nations are part of the HQ: Czech Republic, France, Germany, Greece, Italy, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Turkey, the United Kingdom, the United States and Spain. This multinational environment provided by its approximately 350 military personnel from different nations is the key factor that enables this Headquarters to successfully carry out all its assigned missions and tasks.

## **Twelve Nations- One Team!**



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#WeAreNATO**

## The Spanish Defence Public Affairs Course visited HQ NRDC-ESP.

Students and teachers of the Spanish Defence Public Affairs Course visited the headquarters of the NATO Rapid Deployable Corps Spain (**HQ NRDC-ESP**) in Bétera, on 7 February.

Once they had been officially welcomed by Lieutenant General Fernando García-Vaquero Pradal, Commander of the HQ, they participated in a series of lectures, which were given by the staff of the Communication Division of the HQ NRDC-ESP. The first one was about the concept of STRATCOM (Strategic Communication), its procedures, and Information Environment Assessment, while the following one was about the structure and missions of the Military Public Affairs area, and the new digital media and social media analysis tool, DIGIMIND.

The Defence Public Affairs Course is held every year and takes place at the Centre for Higher Defence Studies (CESEDEN) premises,

in Madrid. It is organised by the Directorate of Institutional Communication of the Spanish Ministry of Defence, in collaboration with the Directorate General of Recruitment and Military Education. In addition to the educational content, the course is complemented by workshops, monographic panels, and some visits such as the one to HQ NRDC-ESP.

It is an inter-branches course comprising students from the Army, Air Force, Navy, and the UME (Military Emergencies Unit), who are working in, or will soon be assigned to the public affairs offices of their respective units or to the spokespersons of the international missions in which Spain participates.

The aim of the course is to train their officers in communications tasks, an increasingly important assignment within the Spanish Armed Forces and in international missions.





## The NATO Rapid Deployable Corps Headquarters Spain organized the seminar “NATO Emerging Concepts” at the War College of the Spanish Army (Madrid)

The **HQ NRDC-ESP** organized a seminar on NATO Emerging Concepts at the Army War College (Madrid) premises on February 15 and 16. The seminar analysed the strategic environment and the threats identified by NATO, presenting new concepts under development to face them.

During the seminar, the main doctrinal developments dealt with within the Atlantic Alliance were presented, as well as the experiences acquired by this HQ in its new role as Warfighting Corps Headquarters for High Intensity Operations (WFC), the new commitment for which the headquarters was certified during exercise Steadfast Leda 2021 last year, and for which it is on standby throughout the whole of 2022.

The objective of the seminar was to share with

and inform the Spanish Armed Forces - not only the first level commanders of the Army, Navy and Air Force, but also the personnel of the Spanish Ministry of Defence, Spanish CESEDEN (Higher Centre for National Defence Studies), Spanish Joint Cyberspace Command (MCCE) and the Spanish Defence Staff (EMAD and MOPS) - about several new concepts. These included, among others: Hybrid warfare, multi-domain operations, defence and deterrence in the Euro-Atlantic area, the increase of information/disinformation activities and the concept of cyber and electromagnetic activities, all framed within the concept of Warfighting Corps for High Intensity Operations (Warfighting Corps - WFC). All these new concepts are applicable to the experimentation phase of Spanish Force 2035 concept of the Land Component Command - Army Corps level.

## The HQ NRDC-ESP Deputy Commander participated in the NATO Lessons Learned Conference 2022.

HQ NRDC-ESP participated, from 03 to 05 May 2022, in the NATO Lessons Learned Conference 2022 (NLLC22), organized by the NATO Joint Analysis Lessons Learned Centre (JALLC) in Lisbon. The main theme of this year's Conference was: "A flashback of two decades of learning, to gain insights for the next five years".

In particular, Major General João Pedro Rato Boga de Oliveira Ribeiro, Deputy Commander HQ NRDC-ESP, participated as key speaker

with a presentation entitled "Overcoming challenges in learning recurrent lessons in Operations", providing a keynote speech on Lessons Learned challenges in 20 years of NATO Operations. This edition of the event was hosted by the JALLC in a hybrid format so as to maximize audience participation while at the same time being mindful of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. As such, it included 75 participants on-site, as well as over 330 online attendees.





## HQ NRDC-ESP hosted the NATO Information Environment Assessment Tiger Team (NIEATT) meeting.

The NATO Rapid Deployable Corps Headquarters Spain (HQ NRDC-ESP), with the support of the Spanish Joint Headquarters (EMACON), hosted the NATO Conference on the Information Environment Assessment Tiger Team (NIEATT) in Valencia, from May 3 to 5. The meeting was organized by NATO HQ, Supreme Allied Command Europe (SHAPE) and NATO Allied Command Transformation (ACT).

The meeting was attended by more than 80 civilian and military experts of different nationalities working in the information environment, including personnel from NATO, the European Union, the United States Command in Europe, military representatives from various countries, as well as personnel

from the academic and business worlds. These three days served to share the procedures and tools available to carry out the assessment of the information environment, as well as to analyze its trend and future needs.

During the opening session, Lieutenant General Fernando García-Vaquero Pradal, Commander of HQ NRDC-ESP, welcomed all the participants, highlighting the crucial importance of the cognitive domain today.

This type of meeting is held annually, and for Valencia it was the second of its kind to be held in recent years, the previous one being the NATO Information and Communicators Conference held in 2017.

# Students from the Catholic University of Valencia were trained at the HQ NRDC-ESP in Bétera, in crisis management and resolution in the area of operations.

Around 60 students from the Catholic University of Valencia participated in the XI Course on “Communication, Security and Defence” organized by the Institute of Strategic and International Studies of the Catholic University of Valencia and the NATO Rapid Deployable Corps Headquarters Spain (**HQ NRDC-ESP**), in collaboration with the Defence Delegation of Valencia, during May 12 and 13.

This seminar, which was attended by students from various disciplines such as medicine, nursing, psychology, veterinary medicine, criminology, economics, law, and institutional communication, aimed to maintain a channel of communication and mutual knowledge between the academic world and the Armed Forces.

The course was divided into two sessions: first a

theoretical session, on May 12, at the premises of the Catholic University of Valencia, where several experts in communication, security, and defence explained what National Defence is and analysed the role of NATO, on the 40th anniversary of Spain’s incorporation into the Atlantic Alliance.

Subsequently, during the morning of May 13, the students travelled to the Bétera Military Base, home base of the **HQ NRDC-ESP**, where they carried out a practical simulation exercise. The students were integrated into a crisis resolution planning team led by military personnel from the headquarters itself, and where each group of students had the opportunity to give their vision and advice in relation to their respective academic area. The morning ended with an exhibition of material by the Military Police Battalion I, also based in Bétera.





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## His Majesty King Felipe VI visited the NATO Rapid Deployable Corps Spain Headquarters.

His Majesty the King of Spain, Felipe VI, visited the NATO Rapid Deployable Headquarters (HQ NRDC-ESP), at the “Jaime I” base in Bétera (Valencia), on May 25.

On His Majesty’s arrival, honours were paid to him and after the welcome address by the military authorities and the command staff, Felipe VI moved to the Kabul Room, where he was briefed about the organisation and operation of the NRDC-ESP HQs. Felipe VI was then able to see the capabilities of the headquarters by visiting both the main and tactical deployable Command Posts, the Operations Centre and the Situation Centre, from where operations are controlled and monitored, as well as the videoconferencing capability between these two centres, which normally deploy thousands

of kilometres apart, in the area of operations and national territory. In addition, His Majesty the King toured other cells such as the Joint Air Ground Integration Cell (JAGIC), Information Environment Activities (IEA) and the Cyber Electromagnetic Operations Center (CEMOC).

His Majesty also had the opportunity to see first-hand the resources and personnel of the 1st Spanish Information Operations Regiment (ROI) through an exhibition set up for the visit, given that the ROI is based in the city of Valencia.

The visit to the HQ NRDC-ESP concluded with the traditional group photo, the signing of the Unit Book of Honour and a meeting with military personnel.

# The Chief of the Portuguese Army paid a visit to the NATO Rapid Deployable Corps (Spain) Headquarters in Bétera

General José Nunes da Fonseca, Chief of the Portuguese Army, visited the NATO Rapid Deployable Corps – Spain Headquarters in Bétera last 27th June. He was accompanied by his Spanish counterpart, General Enseñat y Berea, Chief of Army Staff.

During the visit he was briefed on the HQ NRDC-ESP's composition, organization, and capabilities as NATO Warfighting Corps 2022, followed by a tour of the Operations Centre (OPSCEN) and the Planning Room, which have the means and capabilities to conduct and plan a real operation.

The party then moved to the deployed HQ NRDC-ESP tactical command post in collective tents, where General Nunes had the opportunity to learn about this new concept of command post, which is currently managed with fewer personnel and with innovative technology. The visit ended with the signing of the Book of Honour.

General Nunes also had the opportunity to meet the Portuguese contingent stationed at the HQ, composed of four military men that are currently serving at the NRDC-ESP, among them the Deputy Commander of the Headquarters.





## Admiral Rob Bauer, Chair of the NATO Military Committee, visited HQ NRDC-ESP

Admiral Rob Bauer, Chairman of the Atlantic Alliance Military Committee and therefore the highest-ranking member of the Alliance's military structure, visited the NATO Rapid Deployable Corps Headquarters (HQ NRDC-ESP) at its two locations, in Valencia and at the Jaime I Military Base in Bétera, on July 1. He was accompanied, among other dignitaries by the Spanish Chief of Defence (ChoD), Admiral General Teodoro López Calderón.

On his arrival at Santo Domingo Barracks, he was received by Lieutenant General Fernando García-Vaquero Pradal, Commander HQ NRDC-ESP, and there he gave a brief lecture followed by an extensive question and answer session on the current situation of the Alliance, marked by the then-recent NATO Summit in Madrid.

Afterwards, the delegation moved to the Bétera Military Base, HQ NRDC-ESP

premises, where the Chairman was briefed about the HQ organization and operation, followed by a tour of the Operations Center (OPSCEN) and the planning room, as well as the tactical command post deployed in collective tents (COLPRO) inside the military base. Some military capabilities were shown, in which the HQ NRDC-ESP plays a leading role, as a result of its multinational experience, preparation and permanent adaptation to new scenarios and threats. His visit ended with the signing of the Unit's Book of Honor.

Admiral Bauer's visit was a recognition of Spain's important contribution to the Alliance as a reliable partner, as well as the outstanding work of HQ NRDC-ESP within the NATO Force Structure (NFS), as shown by the stand-by period as Warfighting Corps Headquarters (WFC) in 2022.



## Guardian Angel 22

Exercise Guardian Angel 2022 was carried out in July. It was planned and conducted by the Military Police Battalion I (BPM I), belonging to the Spanish High Readiness Land Military Staff HQ (CGTAD in Spanish), and its multinational side, the HQ NRDC-ESP. The BPM is the only battalion of its kind in Spain.

This is the most important multinational military police exercise in NATO and its aim is to provide the participating units with scenarios similar to those they might encounter in operations, and to increase mutual knowledge, train together and exchange knowledge and experience.

Guardian Angel 22 took place between 3 and 8 July in the training areas of the “Jaime I” base in Bétera and the “General Almirante” base in Marines. More than 650 Military Police, 150 vehicles and 31 dogs from the Army, Navy, Air Force, the Military Emergency Unit, the

Royal Guard and the Civil Guard took part in this edition, with the participation, in addition to Spain, of representatives from Germany, Hungary, Bulgaria, Canada, Estonia, Greece, Ireland, Lithuania, Portugal and Romania.

Special emphasis was placed on the Military Police functions of security, detention, and support for police mobility and stabilisation, within an environment of support to the force during a crisis response operation, raising various incidents such as crowd control, protection of authorities, marking and escorting, investigation of incidents involving explosives, and the management of camps for displaced persons, as well as the holding of a cynological seminar.

The BPM I, a reference unit within the Spanish Army, has extensive experience in operations such as those conducted in Afghanistan, Lebanon, Iraq, Mali and the Central African Republic.

## The NATO Rapid Deployable Corps Headquarters Spain celebrates its 20th Anniversary.

NATO Rapid Deployable Corps Headquarters Spain (HQ NRDC-ESP) celebrated the 20th anniversary of the Headquarters at its base in Bétera (Valencia) with a 20-kilometre march and a military parade in the presence of military representatives from the twelve countries that are currently members of the headquarters.

On the morning of Thursday 6th Oct, nearly 200 Spanish and Allied military personnel completed a 20-kilometre walk around Bétera to commemorate 20 years since the creation of the headquarters in October 2002.

At the end of the march, tribute was paid to those who have given their lives for Spain and NATO by raising the NATO flag and the flags of the member nations.

This event marks 20 years since the headquarters was officially established in October 2002 and placed at the disposal of the Atlantic Alliance with the signing of the Memorandum of Understanding, reaching full operational capability.

The ceremony was presided over by Lieutenant General Fernando García-Vaquero Pradal, head of HQ NRDC-ESP/ CGTAD (Spanish High Readiness Land Headquarters), and was attended by various civilian and military authorities including the mayors of towns near the military base.

From its creation to the present, HQ NRDC-ESP has been constantly adapting to the needs of a continually evolving environment to achieve the highest degree of readiness to fulfil the different missions entrusted to it by both Spain and NATO.



# Seminar on “Cognitive Maneuver” presented by U.S. TRADOC at HQ NRDC-ESP

From September 19 to 23, Colonel (retired) Randall Munch and Sergeant Major (retired) Sohail Shaikh of U.S. Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC) presented training at NATO Rapid Deployable Corps-Spain (HQ NRDC-ESP). They have been working for about four years as a training team within the U.S. TRADOC.

The team trained participants from HQ NRDC-ESP and other Spanish units on “Cognitive Maneuver”, which is a concept that is not yet in U.S. doctrine. Cognitive Maneuver training focuses on how to understand and influence the human dimension of the operational environment through methods such as developing and deploying compelling narratives that are aligned from strategic level down to tactical level. The U.S. TRADOC training team has been presenting an annual course and an annual seminar on Cognitive Maneuver to senior officers and government officials at the U.S. Army War College. Earlier this year, they co-developed a related course on Information Advantage at the U.S. Joint Special Operations University. In doing so, they learned that the terms Cognitive Maneuver and Information Advantage are very similar, with the main difference being the focus of effort.

Although Cognitive Maneuver is not yet defined in doctrine, it could be described as “efforts to gain a position of cognitive advantage over an

adversary by creating cognitive effects, using integrated and synchronized physical power and informational power.” “Information Advantage”, as recently defined in U.S. joint doctrine, is gaining “operational advantage through the use of information for decision making and its ability to leverage information to create effects on the information environment (IE)”. Based on that, it seems that the two terms have many similarities, but also have subtle differences in focus.

An important element of the success of TRADOC’s two-person training team is the fact that they support their teaching points about the principles of Cognitive Maneuver with a real-world example of an operation that exemplified those principles—Operation Voices of Moderate Islam (VoMI). Sergeant Major (SGM) retired (ret) Shaikh was a key participant in a unique operation VoMI, which was planned and conducted by the 173rd Airborne Brigade Combat Team (ABCT) in 2009 in Afghanistan.

In planning VoMI, the commander’s intent was to replace the Taliban’s anti-Coalition narratives with a more compelling narrative that reflected positively upon the U.S.-led Coalition. The Taliban was spreading a narrative that the Coalition was in Afghanistan to replace the Muslim faith with Christianity.





Additionally, it was revealed to U.S. forces that many fighters in the operational environment (OE) were motivated by the Taliban's narrative that 30 days of fighting in Afghanistan would earn fighters the rewards of completing the Hajj, and that they could also earn the rewards of Hajj for others by fighting 30 days for them. The Taliban used these narratives to create negative perceptions of the U.S.-led Coalition and to motivate fighters to take up arms against the U.S.-led Coalition.

To overcome the effects of the Taliban narratives, the 173rd ABCT developed a higher level and more compelling narrative that Muslims and Christians can not only live and work together in peace, but they can also prosper in doing so.

They deployed this narrative by hand-selecting 33 key communicators from communities in Afghanistan. Then, using U.S. aircraft, they took all 33 key communicators to Jordan to see the narrative being applied in real life and to Saud Arabia to earn the right of Hajj. In other words, the U.S.-led Coalition deployed a compelling narrative to influence key communicators by exposing them to words, deeds, and images that aligned with the narrative.

Then they returned the 33 key communicators to their communities so they could tell their stories to others. Unfortunately, despite its success, Operation VoMI was never replicated. But the ability to use the example of Operation VoMI to reinforce Cognitive Maneuver training enhances its effectiveness.

Whether discussing the concept of Cognitive Maneuver or the doctrinal term Information Advantage, the U.S. training team and the HQ NRDC-ESP participants in the training during September quickly realized that they share a common thought process about the need to adjust the approach and mindset for planning and conducting military operations to focus on positively influencing human perceptions and behavior, which occurs in the cognitive dimension of the information environment. Doing so effectively is key to successful Cognitive Warfare.

The foundation for the common thinking between the U.S. training team and HQ NRDC-ESP is a document they have both studied—The Joint Concept for Operations in the Information Environment (JCOIE), which was published by the U.S. Joint Staff in 2018. The JCOIE focuses on the need to further develop non-kinetic military capabilities that enable military forces to create influence on human actors in the OE by leveraging the effects of operations in the information environment (OIE).

The JCOIE has guided development of the training presented by the U.S. training team and the development of a Regiment for OIE (ROI) within the Spanish Army.

This common thought process contributed to the success of the training engagement during September at HQ NRDC-ESP. As NATO continues to increase its focus on Cognitive Warfare, the concepts of Cognitive Maneuver and Information Advantage could play an important role in NATO's future success.

## “Moral & Welfare program 2022”

The Moral and Welfare Team is comprised of designated members from nations represented in HQ NRDC-ESP and the staff, and it acts under the chain of the Deputy Commander HQ NRDC-ESP Major General João Pedro Rato Boga de Oliveira Ribeiro.

In military organizations, the morale and welfare of personnel represents an element of primary relevance to cement the cohesion and corps spirit in any military unit at any level.

In this regard, the current year is showing a strong push in the organization of recreational activities in favour of Bétera headquarters (HQ) Morale & Welfare (MW) community. After the restrictions imposed by the pandemic during the previous two years, there is finally a new impetus to organize new and diverse activities in accordance with the operational and training commitments of NRDC-ESP HQ.

The year began, in February, with the implementation of all the organizational activities to guarantee that the staff and their families were able to spend a cheerful period skiing in the splendid ski resort of Astun. The personnel who, on a personal basis, decided to take advantage of this opportunity were able to benefit from the use of the military residence of Mallo Blanco, in Jaca, thanks to the availability

of its director, also taking advantage of the particular agreements in place.

In April, as in every year, the “International Historical Recreation of the Battle of Almansa” took place. The event represents the historic recreation of the battle fought on April 25, 1707, between an army loyal to Philip V of Spain, Bourbon, claimant to the Spanish throne, and one supporting his Hasburg rival, Archduke Charles of Austria. The result of the confrontation was a decisive Bourbon victory that reclaimed most of Eastern Spain for Philip.

Thanks to the organization put in place and to the fundamental support of the HQ Support Battalion, several HQ’s families were able to attend, in a warm and friendly atmosphere, the recreation of the battle in which several historical groups, coming from different regions of Spain, Italy, France and more, took part.

The day started with a visit to the Almansa Castle, the Battle Museum, a tour around the several stands assembled for the occasion, and a social lunch before reaching the place of the historical recreation.

In the same month, HQ members and families were able to visit the “Lladro factory museum and showroom”, where most of the world’s finest porcelain art is produced.

In May, at the “Palau de la Música” in Valencia, one of the most important cultural events in





Valencia took place, in which an important portion of the HQ Morale and Welfare community was able to enjoy the splendid notes of the 1st act of the Richard Wagner musical drama, “The Valkyrie”.

Also in the month of May, the first “Padel Tournament” took place. Padel is a sport that is gaining a large following of fans in Spain, much as in other European countries, and, as it’s of interest to many members of Bétera HQ, the Moral and Welfare organization is trying, in accordance with work commitments, to organize mini-tournaments on a weekly basis, involving as many people as possible.

In September, the “Visit to Morella” took place. The event, attended by an significant

number of HQ personnel and families, touched several sites of interest such as: the “Villa del Consell”, a beautiful building dating back to the 14th century; the “Morella Aqueduct”, a gothic style structure, which recounts how the water was supplied to the town in medieval times; the “Morella Castle”, a 13th century fortress, declared a monument of artistic and historical importance and relevance; and many others historical sites.

In addition, in October, the “HQ Family Day” was held at NRDC-ESP HQ, at the military base “Jaime I”, where the staff of the headquarters and families, between games and pleasant convivial moments, were able to further strengthen the spirit



## Commander HQ Multinational Division Centre visits HQ NRDC-ESP

Major General Denis Tretinjak (HVR AR), Commander HQ Multinational Division Centre (MND-C) visited HQ NRDC-ESP. The visit took place on 07 and 08 November at the HQ NRDC-ESP premises within Bétera Military Base (Valencia). MG Tretinjak was accompanied by his chief of staff, Brigadier General Ernő Péter Siposs.

After being welcomed by Commander HQ NRDC-ESP, LTG Fernando García-Vaquero Pradal, high on the agenda was the demonstration of HQ NRDC-ESP organisational and Command and Control capabilities as a War Fighting Corps (WFC). The visit also included exhibitions by the HQ

Support Battalion and the Military Police Battalion.

On the second day of the visit, MG Tretinjak travelled to Marines Military Base, home of the 21st Signal Regiment, where he was briefed about WFC C2 CP, Wireless TAC CP, and had the opportunity to learn about the unit's main assets and capabilities.

The Headquarters Multinational Division Centre (HQ MND-C) is located in Székesfehérvár, Hungary, and has reached a new level of Improvement, having the status of International Military Headquarters and becoming part of NATO Force Structure on 03 May 2022.



# Moral & Welfare activities 2022





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