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The Standby High Readiness Brigade for United Nations Operations Annual Readiness Training in Norway



On Monday 26 November 2007 at 12.30 pm, inside the main briefing room of the Østerdal Garrison in Rena, the Startex briefing for Exercise White Dove 2007 was presented to Brigade General Franciszek Kochanowski, Commander of the Standby High Readiness Brigade for United Nations Operations (COMSHIRBRIG), the SHIRBRIG staff and to the Norwegian Exercise Directing Staff (DISTAFF).

The SHIRBRIG that is formed by 16 permanent member Nations and 7 observer Nations, has its' Headquarters located inside the Royal Lifeguard Hoveltekaserne in Høvelte, near Copenhagen, in Denmark. The Headquarters is represented by a Planning Element (PLANELM) permanently based in Denmark and by Non Permanent Staff that periodically gathers during the year to train and merge into their assigned staff branches at least twice a year.

This was the first official exercise gathering of Permanent and Non Permanent SHIRBRIG members for Exercise White Dove 2007, which concluded the SHIRBRIG 2007 training cycle, an event that was hosted and perfectly organized by Norway. As part of the African Capacity Building (ACB) program, three representatives of the Eastern African Standby Brigade (EASBRIG), located in Nairobi Kenya, were incorporated into the SHIRBRIG Staff.

The aim of the exercise was to evaluate and confirm SHIRBRIG's readiness to perform an assigned integrated UN peacekeeping mission as the nucleus of a Force/Division Sector level HQ based on a robust mandate. The Commanders basic exercise objectives were to improve information management and coordination with civilian and police components of the UN mission. The training venue provided an excellent opportunity to strengthen the SHIRBRIG-EASBRIG team work spirit which had developed through previous collective training opportunities.

The Norwegian team responsible for the conduct of the exercise, created a "Fully Integrated" UN mission which was established under Chapter VII of the UN Charter in two fictitious countries (Maserati and Olivia) effectively located in the Northern part of Norway.

The UN Security Council had appointed COMSHIRBRIG as the Force Commander of the Military Component within the integrated mission structure. The UN Force was created by nations contributing over 4000 total troops. To achieve exercise aims and objectives, the theme was based on Force employment starting at D+31 (31 days after the deployment), of the United Nation Mission in Maserati and Olivia (UNMIMO).

On Tuesday 27 November, while the exercise was developing, Major General Robert Mood, the Chief of Staff of the Norwegian Army, visited the training area.

MGen Mood was provided briefings from the various elements responsible for the overall conduct of the exercise, principally, TRADOK, DISTAFF and by Brigadier General Kristin Lund, the Østerdal Garrison Commander and XO of the Norwegian Army Forces. Vice Admiral Giovanni Vitaloni, the Chairman of the SHIRBRIG Steering Committee, addressed the personalities followed by Brigade General Franciszek Kochanowski, COMSHIRBRIG, who presented an introductory SHIRBRIG briefing and an operational exercise briefing.

On Friday 30 November, after the SHIRBRIG Chief of Staff, Col. Christof Tatschl, presented the HOT WASH UP briefing to COMSHIRBRIG, it was the time for the training audience to receive the First Impression Report presented by Col. Johannes Nytroen Chief of the EXCON.

The aim and objectives of the exercise had been successfully achieved. During the exercise the SHIRBRIG command and staff had fully managed operational developments in the assigned area of responsibility. The Staff worked well together, having clearly defined their staff responsibilities; decision making procedures, information management, and operational briefings being professionally executed. All SHIRBRIG personnel displayed an excellent multinational teamwork capability.

The SHIRBRIG command and staff proved fully prepared to perform its exercise mission as the nucleus of an UN Force/Division Sector level HQ within the UN mission integrated structure.