

# Q & A

*Mr Tomasz Krolikowski, the Chair of the Civilian Staff Association (CSA) in Stavanger, took some time to talk to PAO about the mission and recent activities of the organization, giving us some insight into their plans for the future.*

Interviewed by Inci Kucukaksoy, JWC PAO

**Mr Krolikowski, you are both the Chair of the CSA in Stavanger and you manage the databases for JWC's Real Life Support (RLS) Branch. Please tell us a bit about your primary role first.**

— I work in the RLS Branch, which is under the Mission Support and Sustainment Directorate. RLS is responsible for all logistic support for participants attending exercises, conferences and workshops hosted by the JWC. Despite being a small Branch, we are a great team with effective procedures and tools. In my view, we have one of the best systems for reception, in-processing and sustainment of exercise participants. Normally, NATO headquarters would spend both time and resources when building exercise environments, but thanks to JWC, these environments are readily available here, something which makes our exercises attractive and cost-effective for the NATO countries. Thanks to our good relation-

ship with the Host Nation, our Branch offers reasonably priced accommodation and meals, which allows participants to focus only on the exercise, not on cost and logistics.

**You have an interesting combination of roles. What does the Chair of the CSA do and who are the members?**

— According to Article 88.1 of the Civilian Personnel Regulations, all NATO International Civilians (NICs) in each NATO body are automatically members of the CSA. Each CSA is organized according to its own constitution. The executive agent of each CSA is the Civilian Staff Committee, elected by all NICs during the Annual General Meeting (AGM) for a period of two years. During the last AGM, I was re-elected as the Chair of CSA. In Stavanger, the CSA consists of four persons: chair, vice-chair secretary and treasurer. As the Chair of CSA, I represent JWC CSA in the



"I have experience in seeing things from both a civilian and a military perspective," Krolikowski says. "After university, I volunteered to join the Military Academy for Reserve Officers. I finished specialization as a mechanized infantry commander. When Poland joined NATO, I seized the opportunity to use my knowledge and language proficiency to work for NATO in my military capacity. I enjoyed working for NATO so much that when my contract had expired I gave up my uniform to be able to apply for a NATO civilian post."

Confederation of NATO Civilian Staff Committees. Locally, I am involved in protecting the professional interests of the staff, making proposals relating to the collective interests or conditions of employment of NICs. I advise on matters submitted to CSA by the administrative authorities and promote social, cultural and athletic activities.

**What influenced you to apply for the Chair position?**

— Several colleagues encouraged me to apply for the position. They said my qualities, such as honesty, discretion and courtesy make me suited for the role. I have always enjoyed helping others and work *pro bono* public, that is, for the public good. I studied International Relations and I know exactly how important it is to understand other cultures in order to achieve expected goals. While working for NATO, I have always promoted the NATO Code of Conduct values of integrity, impartiality, loyalty, accountability and professionalism.





**What are your current priorities?**

— My current priorities will be the promotion of civilian staff efforts in JWC's mission that is providing NATO with the best place for exercises and training. Additionally, I am involved in the set-up of a new performance management system, the implementation of the single spine salary structure and the Defined Contribution Pension Scheme (DCPS). In particular, the DCPS is a priority because it has flaws which have not been corrected, generating unnecessary concerns among the civilians.

**NATO is a unique organization with its civilian and military workforce working together on a day-to-day basis. Would you agree that we can achieve the best results by merging the civilian thinking and the military thinking?**

— Soldiers on the battlefield need a special way of thinking, which I like to describe as a warrior mind-set: toughness, endurance, aggression, discipline, total subordination to the

group and orders. This mind-set is promoted and sharpened through military education and exercise, which means that in peace time there might be a gap in the way how military and civilians see different tasks, situations and objects. It is important to take into consideration that civilians and military have different paradigms and both of them have advantages and disadvantages. Civilians should understand that the military system is developed and maintained for an important common purpose: keeping country and population safe and secure. And the military should know that without civilian support (manpower, resources, knowledge, technology etc.) soldiers are not able to achieve military objectives in their operations. Therefore, genuine dialogue, cooperation and confidence among staff are key to building a successful team in NATO. Of course, some officers still don't believe that civilians add positive value to the art of war. Then, I smile and cite the famous French

statesman Georges Clémenceau: "War is too serious a matter to entrust to military men."

**Do you view this a successful collaboration?**

— Some people like to depict NATO as an ineffective organization. They joke about it saying NATO means "No Action Talk Only". I strongly disagree with this. If you analyze European history during more than 60 years, you realize that the main goals of NATO were achieved. All borders of NATO countries have been successfully protected by the organization. Nowadays, we have different, more complex challenges: terrorism, possibilities of proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, mass migration, economic crisis and cyber-attacks. What makes the situation even worse is that some decision-makers believed that the age of wars is over and that a military conflict in Europe or North America is impossible. This has led to thinking that spending on defence is a waste of resources, which should be used in



a better way. In my view, this is naïve thinking because countries without protection tend to be the first victims of war and countries well prepared for war are rarely attacked. The Latin saying "Si vis pacem para bellum", *if you want peace, prepare for war*, is still valid.

**There are more than 6,000 civilian staff employed by NATO worldwide. Is there an umbrella organization for all of NATO in which JWC CSA is also represented?**

— As I mentioned, each NATO body (headquarters or agency) has a Staff Committee (SC) to serve as the executive agent on behalf of all NICs. SCs are part of a bigger entity called the Confederation of NATO Civilian Staff Committees (CNCSC). The role of the CNCSC is defined in Chapter 18 of the Civilian Personnel Regulations and includes discussing matters affecting NICs, offering advice, making proposals and electing spokespeople to represent personnel within the organization. What might be interesting to know is that NATO is part of a group of several international organizations (e.g. the Council of Europe, the European Space Agency, the Organization of Eco-

conomic Cooperation and Development, etc.) that have a common system of remuneration and pensions. CNCSC is actively involved in the coordination process on issues concerning salaries and allowances, taking part in the Coordination Committee on Remuneration (CCR) and the Committee of Staff Representatives (CRP).

**If you could highlight one event during your time as the CSA Chair, what would it be?**

— I think I would have to say my first ever CNCSC meeting, where I realized how global and sophisticated an organization NATO is, spread across two continents. I met many long-standing, enthusiastic people and I have had the opportunity of sharing my thoughts with representatives of other NATO bodies, compare our issues and concerns and take away best practices. I realized JWC civilians are not alone in the world and that I can rely on support and advice from other headquarters. Despite NATO being one entity with one NATO legal system, I see significant differences between bodies. I honestly can say that JWC's culture, relations among staff and co-

operation with the administration and Command Group is one of the best in the whole NATO organization.

**So, in your view, what is the most significant characteristic of our organizational culture?**

— "One Team" culture does not mean that we should be the same. It means that everybody is inclusive to our mission and important for the whole of NATO. "One Team" means a common vision and goal, taking into account that staffs come from different cultures, hierarchy of values and habits. "One Team" culture promotes paradigms of interdependence described by Stephen Covey in his books: we achieve the best results if all staff will genuinely support and share their knowledge and coach each other.

**Is there anything else you would like to add?**

— I would like to take this opportunity to thank my colleagues from the CSA: Ms Nicola Lloyd, Ms Hildegunn Sivertsen and Mr Uwe Sprenger for their involvement and support to our civilian community. Without their advice and support it would have been difficult for me to succeed in my new role. ✦

**Below:** Culture shaping programmes for both civilian and military personnel have been conducted at JWC since 2013. PHOTOS: JWC PAO

