

Written by Inci Kucukaksoy, JWC PAO
Friday, 17 June 2011 16:18



French Army Major General Jean Fred Berger assumed command of NATO's Joint Warfare Centre today in a Change of Command ceremony, replacing German Army Lieutenant General Wolfgang Korte, who is retiring after a 42-year military career in the German Army. (Photos by MSgt Herbert Berger)

Polish Army General Mieczyslaw Bieniek, Deputy Supreme Allied Commander Transformation, based at Norfolk, Virginia, USA, presided over the Change of Command ceremony. The historical day brought together many civilian and military authorities, Joint Warfare Centre's international staff and family members as well as several dignitaries and media from Stavanger. Mr Roger Ingebrigtsen, State Secretary of the Ministry of Defence, was the honoured guest representing the host nation.

Prior to assuming command of the Joint Warfare Centre, Major General Jean Fred Berger served as General Officer for International Relationships at the Chief of the Army Staff HQ in Paris.

"It is a privilege for me to be in charge of this command, which is recognized for its high professionalism, efficiency and adaptability," said Major General Berger. "I would like to stress the outstanding way men, women, civilians, soldiers, officers and non-commissioned officers of

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22 Nations serve on a daily basis to complete the missions received from the Alliance and Nations."



Major General Berger commented on the Joint Warfare Centre's important role in NATO's transformation and tremendous impact on the battlefield through its operational level pre-deployment training. He said: "I know that training and preparing HQs, teams and individuals to be sent to Afghanistan or to be set up as deployable HQs on a high-readiness posture in the NATO Response Force framework are very challenging tasks, which require a permanent and full involvement at individual as well as collective levels. Each of you is fully aware and conscious of the responsibilities that the Joint Warfare Centre faces in preparing

NATO's future on behalf of HQ Supreme Allied Command Transformation."

The General continued to say: "It is called 'Train as you fight'... preparing realistic exercises, conducting challenging scenarios, controlling, analyzing and mentoring objectively the Training Audiences from soldiers to high-ranking officers. In my mind, and history has proven, it is the best way, maybe the ONLY way, to enable individuals, troops and HQs to complete their Comprehensive Approach-based missions and finally to save the lives of soldiers and civilians alike."

He then thanked Lieutenant General Korte for his outstanding leadership and assured him that he would continue to uphold Joint Warfare Centre's legacy of excellence. Major General Berger said: "During the last four years, day after day, step by step, firmly, with an endless watchmaker's patience, you have been shaping this Centre, this team, and contributing to forge its reputation based on outstanding results."

At the end of his keynote speech, Major General Berger praised Norway's exceptional support to the Joint Warfare Centre. He said: "Thanks to Norway for providing support to the Joint Warfare Centre by way of outstanding facilities here in Jatta, Ulsnes or Madla as well as personnel. Thanks for the hospitality extended to us, not only here in this working area, but also in our daily lives, and to our families. We already share more than the 'three swords' and I intend to strengthen our friendship."

In his last formal address, Lieutenant General Wolfgang Korte welcomed the new Commander and thanked the Joint Warfare Centre's multinational staff for their competence and loyalty and praised Norway for her support as Host Nation. He explained the importance of the Centre in supporting the needs of the Alliance. Lieutenant General Korte said: "We have always done our best to meet the expectations of our customers and Training Audiences. But, success is not a good pillow to rest on. Nothing is as volatile as success. New challenges keep emerging, asking for innovative ways to deliver innovative solutions. With new challenges, new tasks appear and with new tasks, new training needs. New challenges and new concepts already impact our training, such as Comprehensive Approach, cyber war, space operations and Theatre Ballistic Missile Defence. Our Allies rightfully request to better cover Collective Defence and High Intensity Warfare in our exercises. Dear comrades and colleagues, I know you are aware of these challenges and stand ready to master them."

Honoured guests observing the transfer of authority from NATO included, but were not limited

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to, Lieutenant General Karlheinz Viereck, HQ SACT Deputy Chief of Staff Joint Force Training; Lieutenant General Manuel Mestre Barea, Deputy Commander Joint Command Lisbon; Major General Pavel Macko, Commander Joint Force Training Centre, Bydgoszcz; Major General Werner Kullack, Deputy Commander 1 (German/Netherlands) Corps, Münster, and Brigadier General Roy Hunstok, HQ SACT.



Representing Norway, honoured guests included, but were not limited to, Mr Roger Ingebrigtsen, State Secretary, Ministry of Defence; Mr Harald Thune, Acting County Governor of Rogaland; Mrs Bjørg Tysdal Moe, Deputy Mayor of Stavanger; Mr Hans Vik, Chief of Police of Rogaland; Ms Brigitte Augestad, representing the French Honorary Consul of Stavanger and Mr Jacky Morelet, representing Lycée Français de Stavanger. Some of the other honoured guests were Rear Admiral Haakon Bruun-Hansen, Commander Norwegian National Joint Headquarters; Rear Admiral Bernt Grimstvedt, Chief of the Naval Staff; Lieutenant General Bertrand Clément-Bolleé, representing Chief of Staff of the French Army; Major General Jean-Jacques Bart, representing French Chief of Defence; Capt (N) Yves Cuny and Lt Col Rolf Becker, French and German Defence Attachés in Oslo, respectively.

As directed by Supreme Allied Commander Transformation, the Joint Warfare Centre promotes and conducts NATO's joint and combined experimentation, analysis and doctrine development to maximize transformational synergy and to improve NATO's capabilities and interoperability.

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The Joint Warfare Centre provides the best training support possible for the collective training and certification of NATO's joint operational and component level Headquarters. In doing so, the Centre's priority is to support current operations. The Joint Warfare Centre uses its unique and direct link to NATO's operational and component level Headquarters to support HQ SACT efforts in concept and doctrine development as well as experimentation.

Major General Jean Fred Berger's assignments include Chief CJ5 at HQ ISAF, Kabul, Afghanistan (April 2009-February 2010); Deputy Chief of Support at 1 (German/Netherlands) Corps in Münster, Germany; Auditor at the Centre for Advanced Military Studies (CHEM) and the Institute for Advanced Studies in National Defence (IHEDN) in Paris, France; Head of the Office for General Studies, Plans and Policies at the Army HQ in Paris, France; Chief Engineer at HQ EUROCORPS in Strasbourg, France; J2/Chief Assessment at HQ SFOR in Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina; Deputy Chief Engineer at HQ KFOR in Pristina, Kosovo; Commanding Officer of the 17 (FRA) Airborne Engineer Regiment; Military Assistant to the Chief of the Army Staff. In an earlier assignment, he was in Saudi Arabia, participating in "Opération Daguet" (1990-1991), also known as the Gulf War or "Operation Desert Storm".

The General's military awards and decorations include the title of Officer of the Legion of Honour (1998); Kuwait Defence Medal (1991); Saudi Defence Medal (1991); SFOR Medal (1998); KFOR Medal (2000); National Defence Medal (1984); and ISAF medal (2010).