



NORTH ATLANTIC TREATY ORGANIZATION

**SUPREME ALLIED COMMANDER
TRANSFORMATION**

SACT's REMARKS to

**Change of Command Ceremony
Joint Warfare Centre**

Stavanger, 21 JULY

Général d'armée aérienne Denis MERCIER

Change of Command ceremony between Major-General Reinhard Wolski (DEU-A) and Brigadier-General Andrzej Marek Reudovic (POL-A)



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Generals, Admirals,

Distinguished Guests,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Major-General Wolski, Brigadier-General Reudowic,

It is an honour and great pleasure for me to be here with you for this change of command ceremony.

Let me start by expressing my gratitude to the national and local Norwegian authorities for the enduring and outstanding support offered to the Joint Warfare Centre as host Nation. It is a token of your strong commitment to the Joint Warfare Centre and to Allied Command Transformation, and I immensely appreciate you honouring us with your presence here today.

I also want to express my deep gratitude and appreciation to the staff of the Joint Warfare Centre for your tremendous efforts to move the Alliance's Transformation forward.

These efforts are a vital component of this Centre's reputation and the respect for its professionalism expressed by many Allies and Partners.

They recognize the value you add to the preparation of their forces and Headquarters in a rapidly evolving security environment.



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You are a key player in the Alliance's transformation and this is undoubtedly the main reason why the Secretary General chose to visit the Centre last year.

A couple of days ago I addressed my staff in Norfolk and shared some thoughts with them on where we stand right now – definitely, as you know, on the crossroads of transformation for NATO.

Allow me to share some of these thoughts with you too.

Two weeks ago, the Warsaw Summit was held at a defining moment for the Alliance, a moment where our security and our values face significant challenges.

The new security environment triggered the Alliance, not only to adapt, but also to deliver! NATO has decided to respond decisively to this more dangerous and unpredictable global environment.

The main theme of the Warsaw Summit was the building of a renewed and robust defence and deterrence posture and the projection of stability across NATO's borders. Decisions have been taken to expand our efforts to reinforce our protection against a full range of threats thus consolidate the Alliance's centre of gravity, its cohesion and unity.

A fundamental factor of our responsiveness will rely on the Alliance adopting the right posture, a posture based on conventional, nuclear and



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missile defence forces, that is credible at both the political and military levels – with a deterrent effect as well as other Military Strategic Effects.

In Warsaw, the posture the Alliance has decided to adopt is comprehensive and expands defence and deterrence to hybrid warfare, relations with EU and a wide range of partners, resilience, cyber, and many other areas that form the basis of our adaptation.

A robust exercise programme, is a clear and visible demonstration of our ability to deliver the appropriate strategic effects in different environments, but also a demonstration of force. It assures NATO maintaining a high state of readiness across a full mission spectrum: it serves as the cornerstone of the Alliance's credible deterrence.

This is precisely why JWC's work is so important and contributes immensely to the core tasks of the Alliance.

Here in the JWC, you have already paved the way to adapt the Alliance. You did not wait to respond to the changed security environment, and proactively followed the path of adaptation and innovation to improve the numerous exercises you plan and conduct.

Doing the right things right, for you means doing the right exercises and doing them right. However, there is always room to improve and your insights were and are of great value!



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The focus on interoperability, the integration of experimentation, the balanced use of Command Post or Computer Assisted Exercises through a variety of realistic scenarios are all tools you have skilfully used to improve and to adapt to the changing requirements.

Following the changed security environment, you also applied a rebalance in the mix of our exercises to meet the requirements of the three core tasks, Collective Defence, Crisis Management and Cooperative Security.

You focussed on assisting the operational commanders to acquire a comprehensive strategic awareness in hybrid warfare, through new scenarios comprising state and non-state actors.

In the context of the Readiness Action Plan, you encouraged very ambitious exercises to test the readiness and responsiveness of forces against the current operational realities, at the Northern, Eastern or Southern periphery of our Alliance.

With a warfare mind-set, you used more conceptual experimentations in our exercises and enhanced the demonstration qualities of our exercises. Your media simulation platform is a top-notch structure, able to train NATO leaders by building proactive and credible narratives for the Alliance.

All these achievements were possible because Nations assigned personnel with high levels of experience, motivation and commitment to the Centre.



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You clearly formed “one Team”, and we need to expand to NATO as a whole.

Only a cohesive team as yours can handle such an overwhelming agenda. The exercise tempo was unprecedented in the Centre’s record. In 2015 alone, you were actively involved in 7 Trident series exercises and especially in Trident Juncture 15, the biggest strategic exercise of the last two decades.

These exercises were successful thanks to your individual and collective commitment to quality and the high ambitions you set for NATO’s strategic exercises. And you did all this while implementing, without a hitch, a new trial organization.

It demonstrates the agility and flexibility of your structures and culture and your ability to respond best to the requirements of operational commanders.

It is also a shining example on how to make the most of the Human Capital in line with the Mission.

General, dear Reinhard,

You were the leader behind all these successes. When on the 24th September 2014 my predecessor General Palomeros welcomed you as the new commander with the words : “ ...both your operational experience in

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NATO missions and your past responsibilities in defining policies, doctrine and training for your national forces, will make you an invaluable asset for the JWC and ACT”, he was spot on – I can say today, he even underestimated what you would be able to achieve, because you have by far overstretched the objectives you had fixed for this command.

Reinhard,

For the people that know you well, you are a professional operational mastermind. I always appreciated your advices (you always think strategically) – we spoke mostly over VTC, but you were always very tactful and at the same time frank, straightforward and loyal. You also demonstrated an innovative mind-set, recognizing problems but always looking for solutions. And I particularly appreciate your team spirit, essential for the JWC. Reinhard, I am pleased to say your leadership was remarkable in everything you did at the head of the JWC.

There is no doubt that you will demonstrate the same qualities you did here in any future assignment. And all great leaders rely on outstanding partners in life, whose role may be little known but nonetheless essential. Allow me to address your wife Ingrid, and to thank her, as well as the rest of your family, in the part they undoubtedly played in your success as a commander. Your family certainly deserves as much credit as you do ! We will miss you but remember that you will always be part of the ACT family!



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As one door closes another opens and we are also very pleased to welcome MG Wolski's successor, Brigadier General Reudowicz.

General, dear Andrzej,

We are very fortunate to have a Commander with such an operational and forward-looking experience joining our Command Group.

I am very much looking forward to working with you, Andrzej, as a new member of the now famous "penta-J" in this new and exciting professional endeavour. I can of course assure you of my full support, and that of my headquarters. I know that you are eager to continue the innovating work of your predecessor, and we will do this together, also with Major-General Grün in Bydgoszcz, who took command of the JFTC yesterday.

In closing, I would like to quote General Douglas MacArthur whose memorial is located close to ACT in Norfolk.

"In no profession are the penalties for employing untrained personnel so irrevocable as in the military"

We want to thank the JWC for doing all it can to avoid this ever happening to the Allied forces we commit to operations.

You are the enabler of the Alliance's future and you make the difference.

Thank you for your attention.