

DEU/NLD Common Army Vision on Future Co-operation

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Introduction

Germany and the Netherlands share an extensive history in military co-operation between their respective armies. Already in the early fifties of the last century, Dutch forces trained in Sennelager. The General Defence Plan placed 1st Netherlands Corps amidst German Army formations and led to the 'Budel-Seedorf Treaty', thus stimulating common training and 'Patenschaften' at all levels.

In the nineties, several multinational formations, like the ARRC (Allied Command Europe Rapid Reaction Corps) and the MND(C) (Multinational Division Central) were established with German and Netherlands participation. Most notable, however, was the founding of the bi-national I (GE/NL) Corps Headquarters in Münster (1995) which later evolved to a multinational, NATO-certified HRF-HQ(L) (High Readiness Forces Headquarters - Land Operations), ready to be deployed in the full mission spectrum.

Along with this process, SOPs, budgets and juridical regulations, much more has been harmonised within the bi-national framework of I (GE/NL) Corps.

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KFOR at Kukesch (Albania) (Foto P.J.E.J. van den Aker)

In addition, common procurement projects, first considerations on improving military effectiveness by making use of synergetic effects, co-operation in the field of training and exercise and efficiency in system management contributed to a deeper integration.

Common deployments

Yardsticks for this ever-increasing co-operation between both armies have been our common deployments on the Balkans and in Afghanistan. If one thing has become clear throughout these more than fifty years, it is the

smoothness and notable results (not only, but especially) at the *working level*; it will be very difficult to find two other nations where bi-national co-operation in the daily practise has proven to be as successful.

Nevertheless there is a vast potential for further improvement, including a comprehensive approach to cover all the potential fields through widened co-operation and integration. Up to now, co-operative activities are still case-by-case decisions in separated areas, instead of deliberate building blocks of an overarching master plan.



A Leopard-tank creates a cross over in the river (Foto P.J.E.J. van den Aker)

The implementation of the German Netherlands Army Steering Group (ASG), headed by representatives of both Army Staffs on one-star level, in 2004 was an important step into that direction and will be the primary forum to co-ordinate future efforts of both armies.

This article is aiming at giving some insight in the ongoing processes, still keeping in mind that the author does not necessarily reflect 'official' positions in all cases.

Common Army Vision

At the High Level Army Staff meeting of 7 July 2004, the 'Inspekteur des Heeres' and the 'Bevelhebber der Landstrijdkrachten' directed both Army Staffs to develop a comprehensive vision on the future of the DEU/NLD Army Co-operation. This vision document, referred to as the 'DEU/NLD Common Army Vision on Future Co-operation' (short: Common Army Vision) frequently challenges

today's structures and opinions, though without losing touch with reality.

Although the Common Army Vision is not legally binding, it provides direction by indicating both armies' intentions for the next decade.

Common goal of both armies is to strive for intensified co-operation and deepened integration to gain synergetic effectiveness and efficiency of both armies. By doing so, a role model for further European integration of defence efforts might evolve, as well as a strengthened common contribution to NATO.

Objective of Future Army Co-operation

The objective therefore is to migrate from the current co-operation, characterised by:

- event-driven, combined activities between both armies
- and common structures within the framework of the 1 (GE/NL) Corps, into a more comprehensive co-operation, characterised by:
 - a systematic and institutionalised approach,
 - integrating all possible areas of co-operation to achieve synergetic effects,
 - with a general view to harmonising national administrative decision-making procedures
 - covering processes from early conceptual phase onward.

Success Criteria

However, possible areas of co-operation should be measured against the following criteria:

- *Effectiveness* – enhance the quality of national and/or bi-national military capabilities;

- *Efficiency* – increase either the current output or save costs;
- *Reciprocity* – provide balanced benefits for both armies (not necessarily by every single measure, but with regard to the sum of effects).

It will not always be possible to meet the requirements of the given criteria immediately. As usual, certain costs will occur before the profits can be achieved within a foreseeable timeframe. These costs must be defined and shared according to a common decision.

Influencing Factors

Both armies also recognise that a number of both national and international organisations and documents at political and military-political level are providing a framework, which defines the extent and direction of future co-operation. Essential factor for success will be the commitment of

the Joint Armed Forces level towards these developments and the inter-service ambition to strive for joint solutions wherever possible.

At the same time both armies are well aware of possible restrictive effects that may come with intensified co-operation and deepened integration, like reduced national military autonomy and long lasting commitments.

Lines of Operation

To 'streamline' the process of investigations, five main areas of co-operation have been identified, being Concepts & Doctrine (C&D), Armament & Equipment (A&E), Training & Exercise (T&E), Decision-making Process & Communications (DMP&CIS) and Bi-national Participation in Operations (OPS).

These five areas are referred to as 'Lines of Operation' (LOPs) and are

broken down into short, medium and long-term measures. The implementation of long-term measures requires fundamental changes, whereas short and medium-term measures can be implemented with only limited changes to the current procedures. These measures within the five lines of operation are those deliberate building blocks towards structural co-operation – or more.

Given the fact that possible success is all about first of all motivating people, especially the short-term measures have a very important spin-off-function. That's why these measures are sometimes also referred to as 'Lighthouse Projects' in the bi-national negotiations.

1: Concepts & Doctrine

Common concepts, policy, doctrine and procedures are the essential basis for a systematic approach towards all subsequent areas of co-operation. Although within the NATO doctrinal



NLD Leopard II near Busovača (former Yugoslavia) (Foto P.J.E.J. van den Aker)

framework, currently, land forces' doctrine and procedures are developed purely nationally, with the exemption of bi-national concepts within I (GE/NL) Corps.

The bi-national Working Group 'Concepts & Doctrine' (WG C&D) concentrates on the so-called higher level doctrine, while focusing on philosophy and principles. Lower level doctrine, which concentrates on tactics, techniques and procedures, would then have to be handled by the other Working Groups (see the other 'Lines of Operation'), while maintaining close contact through already installed liaison organisations within both countries' armies.

Common Interests

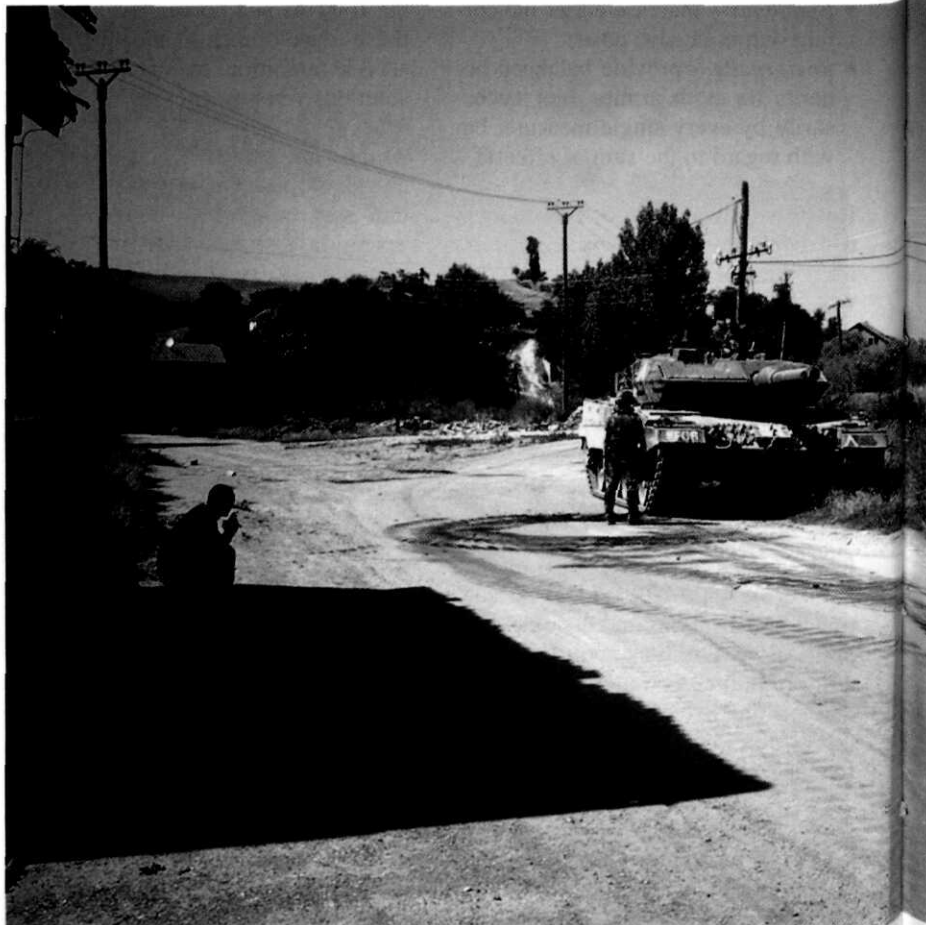
Given the fact that there is a nearly infinite amount of topics that could be covered in this field, the WG C&D tries to identify short, medium and long term measures, which NLD and DEU regard to have good chances to be realised in due time.

Looking at the close future these fields of action have been found:

- COIN (Counter Insurgency) in an urban environment: NLD will participate in the USA/DEU simulation experiment on COIN in an urban environment, which is known as a DEU 'Schwerpunkt' project, but being just as important to the NLD's developments in the field of land forces operations.
- Land forces doctrine: examination of subjects suited for combined doctrine development.

On the longer run, DEU and NLD Army Staffs regard these improvements to be feasible:

- Close co-operation of both Army concepts and doctrine branches.
- Common doctrine development, including fundamental doctrine for operations.
- Co-ordination of concept development.
- Exchange of information on CD&E (Concept Development & Experimentation) and transformation.



Grow Markets

More specifically, these activities will have impact on a number of ongoing processes:

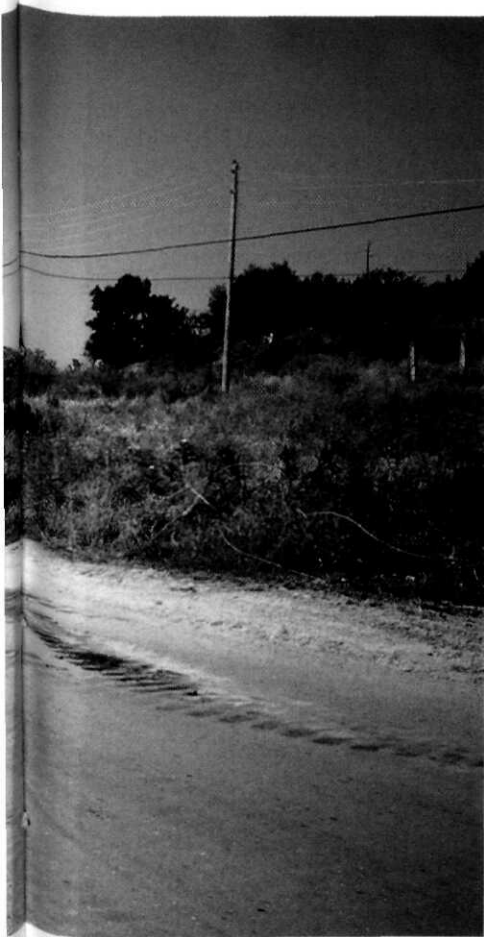
- The interoperability within the NATO Response Forces Concept (NRF): Although a large part of this field will be related to the Line of Operation 4 'Decision Making Process and Communications', the concept of how to operate bi-nationally within the NATO/NRF framework should be formulated within this field of common developments.
- The development of a concept and doctrine for IS(TA)R-units (Intelligence, Surveillance, Target Acquisition, Reconnaissance), including a concept of operations and doctrine for such type of unit.
- Conceptual development for air manoeuvre brigades: this includes formulating a concept of operations

and doctrine for a formation consisting of combat and transport helicopters and light (infantry) units.

- The development of a concept for joint fires: the activity focuses on a bottom-up approach for the development of a concept for the use of fire support within a joint force integrating all (joint) means of fire support into ground operations.
- Experiments for the development of a NBO/NEC doctrine (Network Based Operations / Network Enabled Capabilities): experiments will be conducted on company and battalion level to support the development of doctrine for NBO/NEC.

Focusing on the more 'strategic' horizon, it is not impossible to even...

- establish a bi-national committee on matters of common army concepts and doctrine,
- develop DEU/NLD bi-national con-



**NLD Leopard II during
a peace-operation
in Mamusa (Kosovo)**

(Foto P.J.E.J. van den Aker)

process); i.e. price reductions by bi-nationally raising the amount of to be procured systems, easing the process of doctrine development by procuring 'identical' systems or just getting out of the way of interface problems when deploying in a combined setting.

Fields of Mutual Activities

To give an idea of possible fields of co-operation these are examples of current WG 'Armament & Equipment' activities.

Bridge Laying Tank (PSB2 = Panzerschnellbrücke 2): NLD and DEU are developing a new bridge laying tank, being able to cope with the military load classes of a modern army. Procurement is scheduled for 2007. Moreover, both nations are also interested in co-operation for educating and training the personnel for the PSB2.

Mobile armoured *B-Detection Capability ('Bio-FUCHS')*: NC-protection is an example of very close co-operation between DEU and NLD. The number of equipment in NLD is too small to design and construct own platforms. NLD is therefore using DEU knowledge in this area.

The NLD mobile biological decontamination detection technology will, on the other hand, come into service in 2006 (armoured mobile analysis capability in 2007), thus being ahead of all other parallel developments in Europe. Synergetic effects by combining both countries expertise are obvious.

Other examples are the activities in the field of *ammunition and storage*. Two meetings were conducted last

year between DEU and NLD Ammunition Test Centres. At small calibre weapons the problem has been identified that, although the ammunition types are very often the same, the weapons on both sides differ in some cases.

Type classification however, is a combination between ammunition and weapon. For this reason it is difficult to carry out tests for another country and to compare the results. Nevertheless, tests in both countries will have to be carried out in the same way to lay a basis for further going interoperability examinations.

For future testing of ammunition, there are opportunities with regard to these weapon-systems: Leopard-2A6, Panzerhaubitze (PzH) 2000 and (hopefully) the Boxer-system. In the future, testing, however, should not only focus on the procurement phase but also on the 'in-service phase'. This especially goes for ammunition and weapon systems being used during common missions, such as NRF (NATO Response Force) and EUBG (European Battle Group), ISAF, etc.

NLD and DEU will create a databank that tells which types of ammunition (given certain identified conditions) would be interoperable with our respective weapon-systems.

But also interoperable *CIS systems* will be investigated (not only with regard to the NRF 10). Besides, bi-national research on *strategic lift* (air and sea), *future soldier combat gear, command post equipment, tracking and tracing, identification friend/foe (IFF), ISTAR, Unmanned (Aerial) Vehicles (UAV), protected field encampments* or even *Water Drilling Systems* deliver sufficient topics for (near) future co-operation.

On a mid-term basis it should be considered to be realistic to install a routine mechanism, so that national armament projects can be harmonised with each other first (should also include all other equipment), this implies the need for mutual participation in the earliest possible stadium.

cepts and doctrine for land forces,
- fully integrate national NBO/NEC capabilities within the framework of I (GENL) Corps,
- further develop a bi-national CD&E and transformation process.

2: Armament & Equipment

The co-operation in the field of Armament & Equipment enhances interoperability, but also saves resources and logistic efforts. Currently, armament processes are basically national, with co-operation only on a case-by-case basis (Leopard, FENNEK, PzH2000).

Although this process will (in the end) still remain subject to national decisions – and not to forget national funding – it is beyond discussion that positive side-effects could be derived from bi-national activities (especially when launched in the very early phases of the planning and procurement

Besides that, the mutual use of infrastructure such as training areas, airports, ports, (munitions) depots and encampment facilities are possible fields of co-operation. But also the national developments in the field of Joint Logistic Support are matter to investigation. So this subject will have to become part of the DEU/NLD Common Army Vision as well.

3: Training & Exercise

Materiel co-operation further increases interoperability and efficiency, thus having positive side effects on the training framework. Currently however, training is conducted under national responsibility with common training only within 1 (GE/NL) Corps, or linked to common armament projects. Training systems of both armies are widely incompatible (language, career regulations and other obstacles).

Numerous fields for training co-operation on a short-term basis have, nevertheless, already been identified:

- such as the so called 'Lighthouse projects' (maintenance personnel FENNEK, PzH 2000; ARTY fire-support training and others currently under investigation),
- training, seminars, terrain-walks and exercises with assigned and dedicated troops (including troops on corps-level) within 1 (GE/NL) Corps,
- harmonised NRF and EU-BG training and exercise procedures,
- training with common weapon systems,
- participation at each others career courses at all levels (NCO and OFF), incl. exchange programs for officer-candidates,
- and – not to forget – high level exchanges (such as FÜREX = High Level Leadership Training or mu-

tual participation in General Staff Courses).

However, before existing compatible NLD and DEU courses will be replaced, they will have to be transferred into new bi-national courses in the English language (with non-compatible parts given in a national supplement). So for example, the first bi-national fire support officer-training course was successfully conducted from 17 January till 11h February 2005 and was attended by one German instructor and three students.

As of the 1st of May 2006 two-turret trainer PzH 2000 will be installed at the Artillery school in IDAR-Oberstein, from 1st of June on the Dutch training division in DEU will be manned until 1st of October 2006 the students will follow. The current training course for German Fennek mainte-



International 'Show of Force' near Roadblock (Foto P.J.E.J. van den Aker)



DEU 'Fuchs' near border crossing with Albania (Foto P.J.E.J. van den Aker)

nance personnel in Aachen will be shifted to Soesterberg/NLD. In return, training of PzH 2000 maintenance personnel in Aachen is depending on the training simulator – 'training equipment maintenance chassis' which will be provided by NLD.

Future Training Objectives

On the medium term the common NRF- and EUBG-activities could be used as a test bed for increased common training and exercises (including HQ 1 GE/NL Corps as LCC NRF and enhanced co-operation between the DEU 'Division Luftbewegliche Operationen' and 11 Air Manoeuvre Brigade).

A side effect then may be that a systematic 1 GE/NL Corps troops at corps-level training could be achieved. Besides the 'operational' gains out of common mission-preparation first steps have already been taken to

implement own (national) branches within each others schools for selected training projects (e.g. linked to common equipment).

In parallel training and exercise standards will have to be co-ordinated and training & exercise policy (training cycle and goals, link with mission cycles) to be harmonised. On this basis a co-ordinated, mutual use of simulation systems and the mutual use of training facilities and areas will achieve decisive efficiency advantages.

On the long, especially when aiming on synergetic effects and cost efficiency, it must not be taboo to execute bi-national courses at each others, national schools or to found bi-national schools. However, all long-term measures will require substantial harmonisation of doctrine, SOP (Standard Operation Procedures) and administrative procedures (e.g. career

regulations) and the preparedness to give up purely national training capabilities (not to forget: the language problem, the necessary common training and exercise standards, and a common training & exercise policy.)

Success Stories in Training Land

To make clear that all the efforts in the field of common training and exercise are key to all other 'lines of common co-operation' here are some very concrete examples of already achieved 'joint ventures':

Infantry

NLD has participated in the FRA-DEU company commander seminar in October 2005. NLD on the other hand investigates the participation of DEU at the NLD tactical refreshment. Furthermore a common course for company and battalion Cdr's will be another

project. A pilot in the English language will be developed by the end of 2005.

UN Training centre/peace support

DEU UN observer course, train the trainer course and multinational staff preparation course will be converted into international courses by 2006 in English language.

Combined development of the multinational staff preparation course on battalion level by 2006.

Already in October 2005 DEU will participate in an UNMO-course in NLD, thus compensating timely shortfalls at the DEU Peace Support Training Centre. Besides, permanent NLD instructor will be established at DEU UN Training Centre.

Signal

Plans have been developed to create a bi-national training course 'Interoperability of IT-systems' at the German Signal School. In return, the Dutch Signal School has offered bi-national IT-courses in English.

Air ground operations

NLD offers Forward Air Control (FAC) Course, Advanced FAC Course, Laser Operator Course, Air Operation Course Ground Liaison Officer Course and several courses to DEU Army, Navy and Air-force personnel.

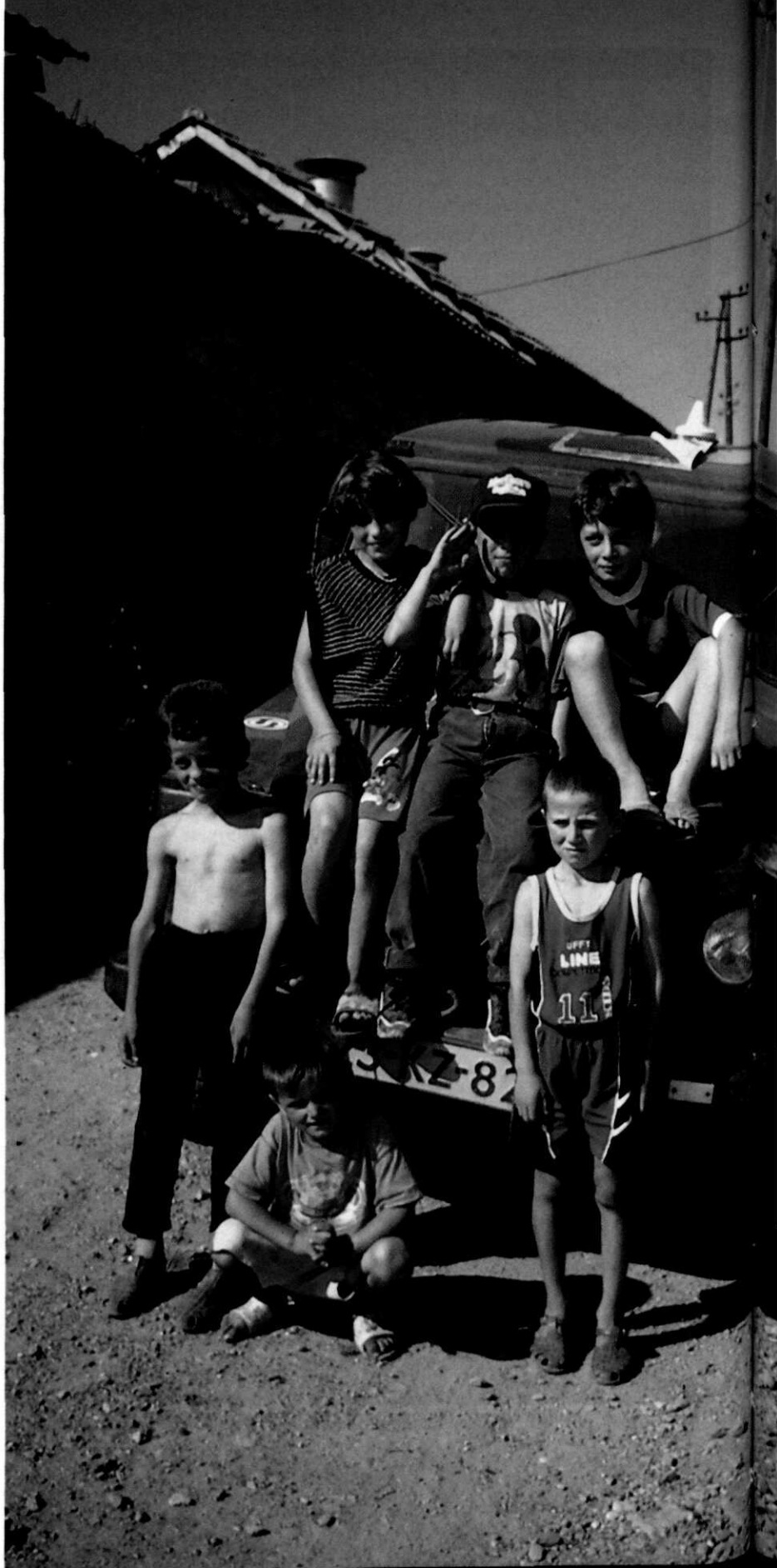
Artillery

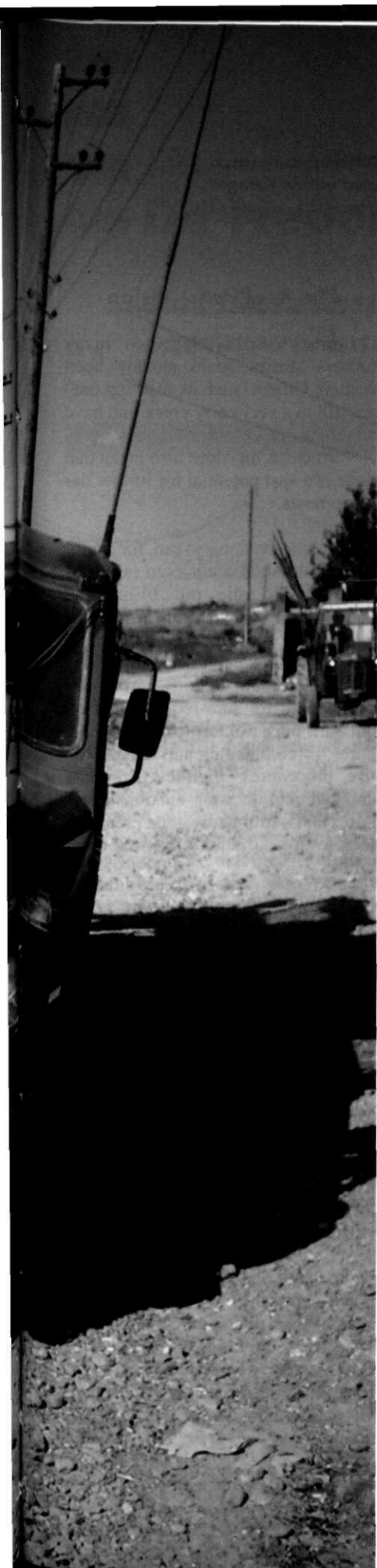
The exchange of liaison-officers at both schools (currently finalising DEU/NLD Memorandum of Understanding – MOU) has been established. The Conversion of ADLER software is being examined / as well as cost sharing with NLD, thus shaping options for possible future deployment of combined artillery groups.

Under the bottom line both nations envision deep mutual integration of Artillery schools by giving the more material-heavy courses in IDAR – Oberstein (DEU) and the more theoretical ones in NLD.

Engineers

From September 2005 the training





A future in Kosovo...

(Foto P.J.E.J. van den Aker)

course 'Engineer Reconnaissance in Theatre' will, for the first time, be conducted in English and in return, the NLD Engineer School has offered a 'Terrain Characteristics' training course. NLD force protection course (scaffolding) will be attended by DEU students, in return, demolition training courses will be given in DEU, whereas road construction training courses will take place in the NLD for both of the armies.

Logistic/maintenance

Training of Fennek maintenance personnel was agreed to be given in NLD and trainings of PzH 2000 maintenance personnel in DEU as of 2006. Other ambitions are the realisation of the studies on Fuchs, Leopard II recovery vehicle, BoxerR, Leopard II A6, Fennek and PzH 2000 and to align the maintenance concepts for the Boxer and the armoured vehicle launched Bridge.

Drivers training

On the one hand it has been agreed that the DEU Fennek driving training and the Leopard I Recovery course in the will be held in the NLD. On the other hand the PzH 2000 driving course will be conducted in Baumholder (DEU). The same is intended to go for Leopard II and I driving courses.

At the moment NLD investigates stationing driving simulator in DEU to be co-used with DEU. Additionally, Dutch personnel will take part in the German 'Hazardous Material Driving Instructor' training.

4: Decision making Process & Communications

Currently, decision making processes (DMP) of both army staffs are co-ordinated through the DEU-NLD Army Steering Group, high-level meetings I (GE/NL) Corps Committee and related SWG (Sub-Workinggroup) and ad-hoc co-ordination (NRF, EUBG).

Still, streamlining national DMPs remains a difficult type of sport; decision making processes very much

depend on joint processes at higher levels, the will and ability of the other services and agencies to participate and the respective political agendas which are in most cases more complex than just weighing Army efficiency matters against effectiveness. So, linking national Army DMPs to each other is very much about establishing effective communications.

On the more technical level, this mainly means to overcome interface problems. The ideal platform to be used remains the HQ I (GE/NL) Corps HRF-HQ(L) in Münster. Especially with an eye to the planned mission co-operation in EUBG and NRF10, many challenges have already been met.

However, many of the 'problems' the WG DMP&CIS has faced up to now, could have been avoided by co-ordinating procurements and doctrine bi-nationally in a very early conceptual phase.

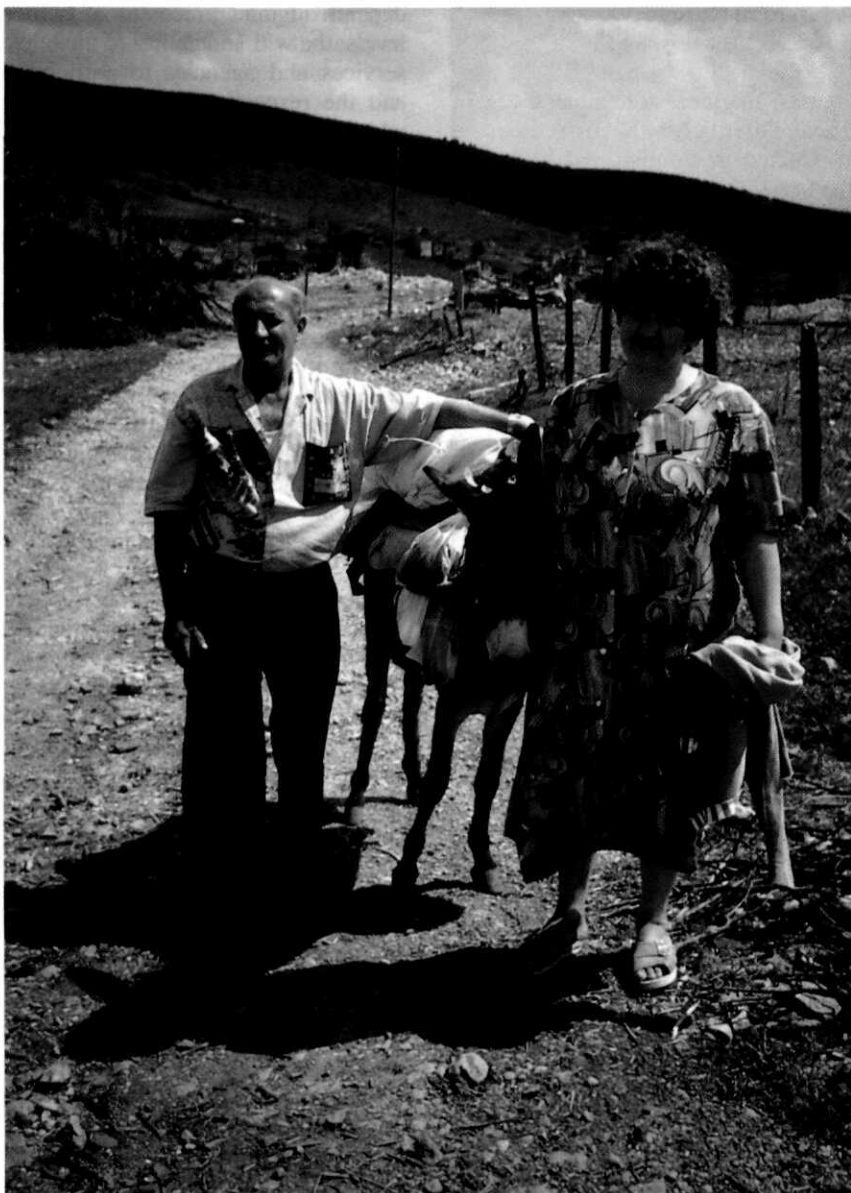
Bi-national DMP

Noting this, the efforts of the WG DMP&CIS will have to be closely linked to those of other WGs. First of all, a common understanding on NEO (Network Enabled Operations) / EBO (Effect Based Operations) has to be developed in the very near future. This process is to be accompanied by implementing a routine mechanism of information exchange and consultation on all relevant levels.

In the future even implementing a 'bi-national decision making procedure' on top army level, similar to the DEU 'Mitzeichnungsgang', is not totally unrealistic. However this will require full support on political and joint level, but will be essential for real deep integration and the exploitation of a maximum of possible savings.

5: Bi-national participation in operations (Planning & Deployment)

This area of co-operation is the ultimate yardstick for effectiveness of



**Different cultures,
also within Europa**

(Foto P.J.E.J. van den Aker)

The Real(-istic) Vision

On some 'Lines of Operation' many success stories could already been written. Others (such as DMP and OPS) are still in a very early phase and have therefore not yet the necessary body. Nevertheless, this does also mean that there is a vast potential for further developments.

On the long (visionary) run, for example WG OPS should not even (a priori) conceptually rule out bi-national pools of forces and even bi-national units and capabilities, with the full spectrum of capabilities only being available if both nations participate. This would for sure require substantial harmonisation of doctrine, procedures, force-planning and administrative procedures, high-level military and political decision-making procedures and – ultimately – the preparedness to give up purely national capabilities.

Although this scenario seems closer to fiction than to realistic steps to be taken within due time, people, involved in the process of formulating a Common Vision, should be given the freedom to make this Vision truly visionary, rather than just dealing with every days problems.

The famous sentence 'We have never ever done it that way!' is allowed; not to rule out new procedures but to trigger investigations on what has to be done (in touch with reality) to make it happen.

Or, to quote one of the founders of the concept of the 'DEU-NLD Common Army Vision on Future Co-operation': 'The sky is the limit!' (Let me add: when we, DEU and NLD, take the time respecting each others way of thinking and acting.)

DEU/NLD army co-operation. Recent missions have proven this effectiveness in Task Force Fox (06.-12.2002, Macedonia), ISAF 3 (Afghanistan 2004) and NRF4 (2005). They underlined that a combined approach increases flexibility and the range of possible mission deployments for both nations.

At the moment, WG 'Operations' (WG OPS) is to establish closer consultations for future army employments and co-ordinated policy development processes (Balkans, ISAF, NRF, EU-BG).

DEU and NLD are busy discussing the options of setting up another common EUBG, maybe in 2011. Besides, both nations see opportunities in possibly again engaging HRF HQ(L) 1 (GE/NL) Corps in the ISAF mission, somewhere in 2009 or 2010. Therefore the exchange of mission-related information and consultation will have to become a routine activity. In order to be able to smoothly cooperate in missions, rotation systems, mission periods (length & rhythm) and training cycles will have to be harmonised.