

A Step Forward in the Fight Against Improvised Explosive Devices: The Establishment of the CIED Centre

Written by U.S. Navy Petty Officer 1st Class Carla Burdt
Thursday, 24 June 2010 00:00

Headquarters, Supreme Allied Commander Transformation (HQ SACT) held a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) signing ceremony June 24, officially establishing the Counter Improvised Explosive Device Centre of Excellence (C-IED COE), which will be located at the Engineer School Military Base in Hoyo de Manzanares, Madrid.

This centre especially aims to concentrate on the areas of including defeating the system, the technological side of defeating the device and in the education and training of experts. It will support other C-IED efforts currently underway.

“We all know how much those opposed the resurgence of a free and prosperous Afghanistan have come to rely on this method of killing and maiming civilians, Afghan security forces as well as our own sons and daughters,” said French Air Force General Stephane Abrial, Supreme Allied Commander Transformation, who chaired the ceremony. “We also know that ruthless enemies will use similar methods again and some of their tactics may make their way to our homelands. We therefore need to respond this challenge and continue development of a specific expertise.”

“It is for me an honour to be the new Director of this Centre, where we will make every possible effort to contribute to increase the security of our deployed troops, particularly in the C-IED field,” said Spanish Army Colonel Santiago San Antonio, new appointed CIED COE Director.

The COE will become a multinational reference point in the fight against IEDs and seeks to provide this service to Alliance and Partner Nations. In order to meet this goal, the COE will provide an intervention against asymmetric challenges based on the Comprehensive Approach (CA) using a wide spectrum of civilian and military resources.

“The CIED COE will be at the forefront of a broad and comprehensive effort not only to neutralize the devices themselves but to defeat the whole IED system from its planners to its logistical and financial enablers,” said Abrial.

The COE will also encourage practical cooperation with industry, the field of specialised investigation, the principle Allied bodies and other actors on the world stage, in particular the EU and the UN and other Partners, especially those of the Mediterranean Dialogue Initiative.

“The first MOU (Operational) establishes the COE and the second (Functional) describes the functional relationship with NATO,” said Tony Wedge, Allied Command Transformation (ACT) Integration Team. “The documents represent the negotiated agreements between the sponsoring Nations and NATO. The signing puts those agreements into effect.”

A COE is a nationally or multinationally sponsored entity, which offers recognised expertise and experience to the benefit of the Alliance, especially in support of transformation. It provides opportunities to enhance education and training, to improve interoperability and capabilities, to

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assist in doctrine development and/or to test and validate concepts through experimentation.

“I believe the development of our networks of centres of excellence is one of the most encouraging developments of the past few years for NATO in general and transformation in particular,” said Abrial.

Spain is the framework nation and will receive support from Germany, France, Hungary, the Netherlands, Portugal, Romania and Turkey. For more information about the C-IED COE please visit <http://www.coec-ied.es/>.