



CO-OPERATIVE KEY 2002 (CK'02) was the sixth in a series of live air exercises first held in 1996, and the first to be hosted by France. Scheduled by Admiral Gregory G Johnson, Commander-in-Chief Allied Forces Southern Europe (CINCSOUTH), and conducted by Lieutenant-General Ronald Keys, Commander Allied Air Forces South (COMAIRSOUTH), its aim was to allow NATO and its partner nations to practise and refine interoperability in the air and limited land operations in support of a Crisis Response Operation (CRO).

Previous exercises had shown that use of a single main location aided workshop training, planning, and social interaction among the participants, allowing each one to become an integral member of a cohesive combined team. After 14 months of planning and preparation, Base Aérienne 113 Antoine de Saint Exupéry - better known as St-Dizier airbase - was selected to host CO-OPERATIVE KEY 2002, held from September 22 to October 4. This is still by far the largest of the NATO/PARTNERSHIP FOR PEACE (PIP) exercises and ten NATO countries took part in the 2002 event: Canada, France, Greece, Hungary, Italy, the Netherlands, Poland, Turkey, the United Kingdom and the United States of America. Also involved were the PIP countries of Azerbaijan, Bulgaria, Croatia, FYROM (Macedonia, or more formally the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia), Latvia, Lithuania, Moldavia, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Sweden and Switzerland. Seven of these nations were aiming to become full members of NATO and were awaiting a decision on their entry to be made at the NATO summit in Prague in November. (On November 21 NATO announced that Bulgaria, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia had been invited to join the alliance).

The Force Offering by the Troop Contributing Nations (TCNs) totalled some 29 fighters, 12 transport aircraft, 20 helicopters and one French Airborne Warning and Control System (AWACS), nearly reaching the maximum allowed by the constraints of the air base. The long-awaited AC-130H Spectre gunship was deployed to Ramstein Air Base in Germany, but made a brief appearance while awaiting new instructions. For

CO-OPERATIVE KEY 2002



Marnix Sap and **Carlo Brummer** of MIAS attended the sixth multi-national NATO Partnership for Peace CO-OPERATIVE KEY exercise hosted by France.