



# Tierra

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## *Trident Juncture*



**SPAIN,  
“SPEARHEAD”  
OF NRF 2016**

# NATO GETS READY FOR NEW CHALLENGES

Nearly 36,000 troops from over 30 countries have taken part in exercise Trident Juncture, which took place in Spain, Italy and Portugal

MIGUEL RENUNCIÓ / Madrid

Trident Juncture has been the largest exercise carried out by the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) in the last few decades, and a significant part of it has taken place in Spain. Nearly 36,000 troops from over 30 countries were involved in the training and certification of NATO Response Force (NRF) 2016, whose Land Component Command is led by the Headquarters of NATO Rapid Deployable Corps in Spain (HQ NRDC-ESP), located in Bétera (Valencia).

The Land Component Command is made up of three multinational brigades, one of which is the first Very High Readiness Joint Task Force (VJTF), the bulk of which comes from the 7<sup>th</sup> Light Infantry Brigade "Galicia". VJTF will be the spearhead of NATO throughout 2016, able to deploy at very short notice anywhere in the world. That is only one of the reasons why Trident Juncture is among the

most ambitious exercises of the Alliance in its 66 years of history.

Trident Juncture took place from 3 October to 6 November under the supervision of German General Hans-Lothar Domröse, Commander of the Allied Joint Force Command (JFC) in Brunssum (the Netherlands). This HQ will be responsible for NRF 2016, just as the JFC in Naples (Italy) was responsible for NRF 2015 – they take one-year turns in the role of operational command. Nevertheless, the person ultimately in charge of any NRF is the Supreme Allied Commander in Europe, currently US Air Force General Philip M. Breedlove.

The first phase of the exercise (from 3 to 16 October) served several purposes, foremost among them evaluating the command and control elements of NRF 2016 and showcasing NATO's ability to work with external actors, notably the European Union, the International Committee of the Red Cross and the African Union. This phase



## THE FIGURES

NEARLY **36,000** TROOPS  
FROM OVER **30** COUNTRIES

OVER **230** MILITARY UNITS

OVER **140** AIRCRAFT

OVER **60** WARSHIPS

NEARLY **12** INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATIONS

took place in Germany, Belgium, Canada, Spain, Italy, Norway, the Netherlands and Portugal as well as the Atlantic Ocean and the Mediterranean Sea.

The second phase (from 21 October to 6 November) consisted of an exercise with units deployed in different points around Spain, Italy and Portugal as well as wars-

hips sailing in the Atlantic and the Mediterranean. Out of the nine locations of Trident Juncture in our country, four belong to the Army: the training centres "San Gregorio" in Zaragoza and "Chinchilla" in Montearagón (Albacete); the training field and shooting range "Álvarez de Sotomayor" in Viator (Almería); and the base "Coronel

Sánchez Bilbao" in Almagro (Ciudad Real).

Spain was also the country with more troops taking part in the exercise, nearly 8,000. 4,700 of them were men and women from the Army, which also contribu-

The HQ in Bétera leads NRF Land Component Command

ted 23 tanks, 93 armoured vehicles and six helicopters (two for attack and four with support and transport roles). According to the commander of HQ NRDC-ESP, Lieutenant General Rafael Comas, the exercise enjoyed wide visibili-

 **SPAIN**

- 1 "San Gregorio" TC
- 2 "Chinchilla" TC
- 3 "Álvarez de Sotomayor" TFSR
- 4 "Coronel Sánchez Bilbao" HB
- 5 "Sierra del Retín" TF
- 6 Albacete AB
- 7 Son San Juan AB
- 8 Torrejón AB
- 9 Zaragoza AB

 **PORTUGAL**  **ITALY**

- 10 "Santa Margarida" TC
- 11 "Pinheiro da Cruz" TF
- 12 Tróia NB
- 13 Beja AB
- 14 "Teulada" TC
- 15 Decimomannu AB
- 16 Poggio Renatico AB
- 17 Trapani AB

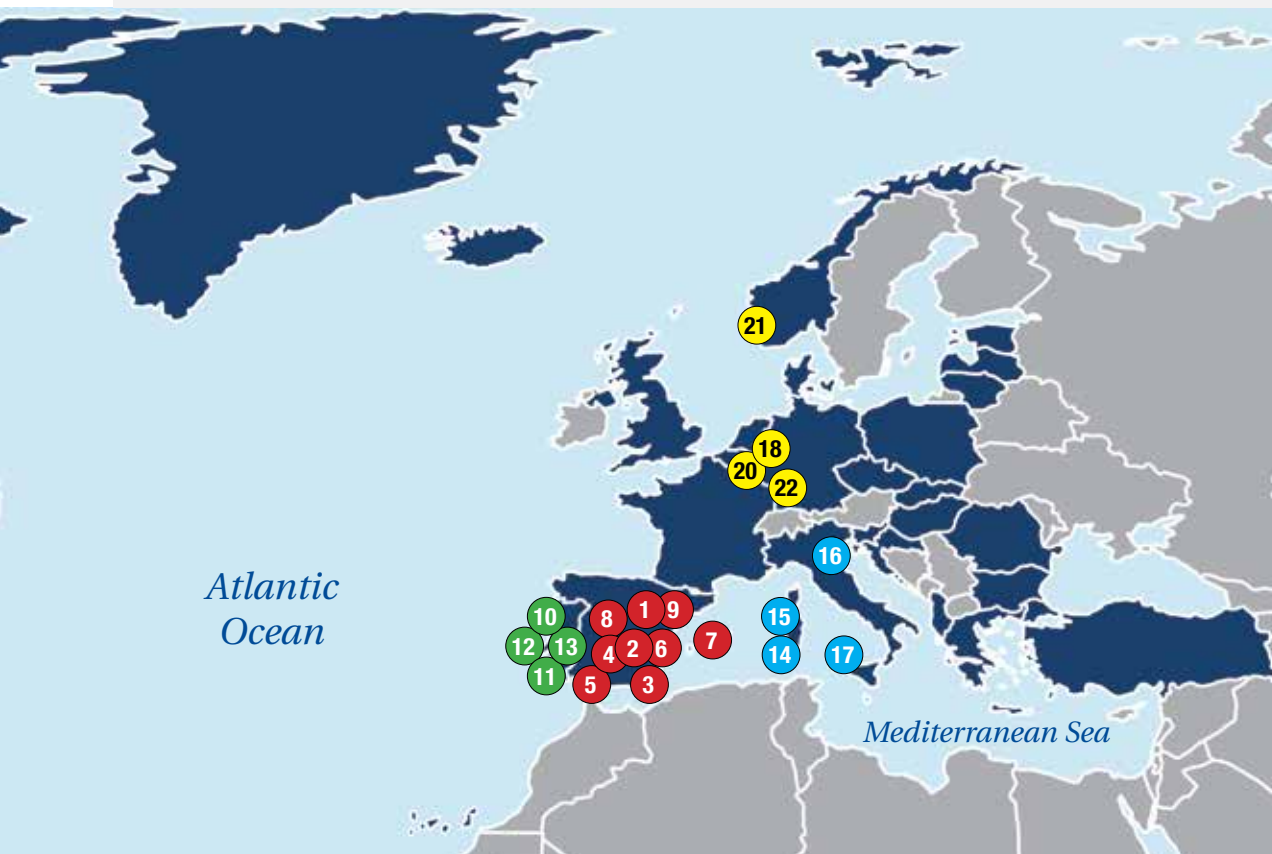
**OTHER COUNTRIES**

- 18 Brunssum (the Netherlands)
- 19 Meaford (Canada)
- 20 Mons (Belgium)
- 21 Stavanger (Norway)
- 22 Stuttgart (Germany)

**AND...**

THE WATERS OF THE ATLANTIC OCEAN AND THE MEDITERRANEAN SEA

TC: Training centre. TFSR: Training field & shooting range. HB: Helicopter base. TF: Training field. NB: Naval base. BA: Air base.



**ARMY UNITS**

- HQ NATO Rapid Deployable Corps in Spain
- HQ Operational Logistic Force
- 7<sup>th</sup> Light Infantry Brigade "Galicia"
- 6<sup>th</sup> Light Infantry Parachute Brigade "Almogávares"
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Cavalry Brigade "Castillejos"
- Signals Brigade
- Logistic Brigade
- Medical Brigade
- Balearic Islands General Command
- Army Helicopter Forces
- Engineer Command
- Special Operations Command
- 1<sup>st</sup> Intelligence Regiment
- 1<sup>st</sup> NBC Defence Regiment "Valencia"
- 1<sup>st</sup> Military Police Battalion
- 1<sup>st</sup> Civilian Affairs Battalion
- Opposition Force (Training & Doctrine Command)



Angel G. Tejedor / DECET

Soldiers from different countries worked together in exercise Trident Juncture

ty "not only within NATO, but also among potential adversaries", and showed "the capabilities of the Alliance and its resolve to face any risk or threat, wherever it might come from". He recalls that VJTF was created at the Wales Summit of 4 and 5 September 2014 to res-

pond to new challenges to NATO from the south (due to instability in the Middle East and North Africa) and the east (notably the crisis in Ukraine).

The fictitious scenario which provided the setting for Trident Juncture began with a hypothe-

tical UN Security Council authorisation for NATO to act in East Africa to protect two states whose territory was under attack from a third and safeguard freedom of navigation and energy supplies, while dealing with the threat of terrorism and cyberattacks.

**COMMUNICATIONS AT THE READY**

Throughout the exercise, the Transmissions Brigade made possible communications between the different Command Posts and Headquarters. To that end, the 21<sup>st</sup> Signals Regiment – supported by the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Signals Regiments – established tactical networks at each of the locations and set up over a thousand computers, five hundred telephones, twenty servers, thirteen satellite terminals and other equipment.

One of the main challenges was connecting networks with different levels of security. For the first time in the tactical field, this was achieved with a data diode, a unique device exclusive to the Army. In addition, they used "the most innovative, state-of-the-art equipment in the Army in terms of information systems, VoIP and satellite communications", explains Captain Jacobo Palomino, commander of the Signals Unit assigned to NRE.

The contribution of the Signals Brigade also included personnel from the 31<sup>st</sup> Electronic Warfare Regiment.



BRITTRANS

# FREEDOM FOR TYTAN

The multinational exercise Trident Juncture culminated with a joint-combined operation in several locations in Spain, Italy and Portugal

BEATRIZ GONZALO / Madrid

Kamon and Tytan are two neighbouring states engaged in an unresolved conflict since the former invaded the latter. Although Tytan has managed to recover most of its territory, foreign conventional troops and terrorist groups still remain in certain areas. The aim of the NATO operation is to put an end to their presence in the country.

This fictitious scenario provided the setting for the joint-combined offensive which culminated the exercise Trident Juncture and involved more than 12,000 soldiers from over 30 countries. The location of enemy strongholds was made to coincide with that of military installations in Italy, Portugal and Spain.

The exercise field of the training centre "San Gregorio" was the main land setting; over 8,000 troops assembled there. The multinational brigade led by Spain included battalions from the armies of Germany, Belgium, the Baltic states (Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania) and the US, as well as a company from Croatia, alongside Spanish soldiers. From 1 to 5 November a three-pronged attack unfolded, with one battalion consisting of Baltic soldiers, another of Belgians and Spaniards, and a third of Germans; the American battalion was kept in reserve. The troops converged to launch the final assault. The advance involved combat, territorial control, stabilisation, air raids, helicopter transport and fire support.

## NATO's Connected Forces Initiative has gathered momentum

The role of the enemy was played by an Opposing Force created ad hoc for the exercise. It was led by the Cavalry Brigade and incorporated members of the training centre and an American company.

At "Chinchilla", where around 2,400 soldiers were deployed, the Brigade was led by the United Kingdom and included Danish, Italian and British battalions. During the operation they engaged in offensive, defensive and delaying actions. In addition, the operating teams of the 4<sup>th</sup> Group from Spe-



Towed L118 light guns being fired at the "San Gregorio" training centre

cial Operations Command carried out reconnaissance tasks and direct actions, combining helicopter insertion and extraction with transport in tactical vehicles. In this setting, the opposing forces were two companies of the 47<sup>th</sup> Infantry Regiment "Palma" and a third from the US army, which took the lead.

Similar actions took place in Santa Margarida (Portugal), location of the brigade led by Canada, and Capo Teulada (Sardinia), where that role was performed by the Italians. Thanks to their joint efforts, the enemy was defeated and driven out of Tytan.

### NATO connected forces

During the Livex phase before the final operation, an integration period was organised so that the troops from the nations taking part would be able to fight together in a cohesive manner. That period lasted from 21 October to 1 November and involved different exercises, most of them with live

fire, to promote interoperability and coordination.

The activities during that time included a jump by Belgian paratroopers from a Canadian aircraft in Spain and their subsequent transport to a Ukrainian base; a mine-sweeping exercise by German mechanised troops at the "San Gregorio" training centre; an amphibious assault by the Dutch army in Portugal; Spanish, American and Czech troops practising fast roping (which consists of sliding down a thick, plaited rope), from American and Czech helicopters; and Spanish troops embarking and disembarking from Czech helicopters.

Three Army soldiers from the 11<sup>th</sup> Field Artillery Regiment, qualified as Joint Terminal Attack Controllers (JTACs), were at "San Gregorio". Among other tasks, they led an attack by Belgian helicopters and American Black Hawks and Apaches during which Spanish and American Joint Fire Observers (JFOs) took turns.



A member of the Baltic battalion fires a machine gun during a live fire exercise



American and British troops at the "Álvarez de Sotomayor" training field and shooting range

Mikis Uzans / NATO

## VISIT BY FELIPE VI



Karl Schoen / NATO

The King visited the HQ and attended a tactical exhibition

The head of State did not want to miss the largest military exercise Spain has ever hosted and visited the "San Gregorio" training centre on 30 October. He first toured the command

post of the Land Component Command and then was taken to the Tres Poyetes observatory for a tactical exhibition. Finally, he met some of the personnel taking part in the exercise.



German Leopards took part in the exercise

Laszlo Kertesz / NATO

## SHOW OF STRENGTH

B. G. / Zaragoza

During the development of the operation, an exhibition to showcase the military might of the Alliance was prepared for a large number of civil and military authorities, headed by NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg and Spanish Defense Minister Pedro Morenés, and journalists from over 30 countries. It was held on 4 November opposite the Cerro del Pájaro observatory, at the "San Gregorio" training centre.

For the exhibition, the spearhead of the Very High Readiness Joint Task Force (VJTF) had planned a four-phased attack against enemy positions dug in at the "Casas Altas" urban warfare training ground. Units from Germany, the Baltic states, Belgium, the Czech Republic, Spain, the US, Italy, Poland and Romania took part in the simulated attack. The equipment used included Hellfire missiles;

Black Hawk, Apache, Tiger and Mi-171 helicopters; F-18 and Alca fighter jets; the B-52 strategic bomber; Light Gun howitzers; Leopard, Leopardo and Abrams tanks; Centaur, Pandur and APC Sisu XA-188 vehicles; and the Keiler mine clearing vehicle.

The demonstration included sappers opening passages; cavalry protection; artillery fire; heli-transported personnel descending fast ropes; the insertion of Special Operations teams; and assaults on the enemy position. It ended with the jump of 500 parachutists from the US 82<sup>nd</sup> Airborne Division alongside a section of the Spanish Parachute Brigade (known as BRIPAC).

They had all flown for over 10 hours from the 82<sup>nd</sup> Airborne's base at Fort Bragg in North Carolina in order to jump in three waves in the skies of "San Gregorio". The 82<sup>nd</sup> Division was one of the main actors of Operation Overlord on D-Day in Normandy during World War II.

### Paratroopers from the 82<sup>nd</sup> Division and BRIPAC jumped in three waves



Slim Tecler / NATO



Angel G. Tejedor / DECET

The paratroopers who jumped at "San Gregorio" flew in from the United States

# A COMPLICATED BACKSTAGE

Logistic support to the exercise involved an important deployment of personnel and resources, as well as refurbishment work and careful planning

CLARA BENI / Madrid

Trident Juncture required a massive deployment of forces, which involved considerable work before, during and after the exercise. Such work may not be eye-catching, but it is critical nonetheless. It is the backstage of the exercise, which in the case of a host nation like Spain meant a significant effort.

The Functional Staff of the Host Nation Support Coordination Joint Command (known as EMF HNSC) came from Operation Logistic Force (FLO) HQ and were

housed at the "Atocha" garrison in A Coruña. It included the following departments: planning & operations; joint logistics; medical coordination; movement & transport; financing; force security & protection; information & communication systems; communication office; liaison officers; and legal counsel.

One of the consequences of this logistic challenge has been that FLO HQ has become a forerunner within the Spanish Armed Forces in the use of the tools developed by NATO for the planning, control and execution of operational military logistics, dubbed Logistic Functional

Area Services (LOGFAS). In addition, FLO units have planned and managed housing for 9,000 personnel in 22 garrisons and 11,000 more in exercise areas, over 400 chemical toilets and 16,000 showers; over 325,000 meals were served in the dining areas; and vehicles were provided with 2.6 million litres of fuel.

Regarding transport and movement of convoys, EMF HNSC has managed movements by sea, of 30 vessels with over 750 containers and 2,500 vehicles; by air, of 80 aircraft transporting 9,000 soldiers; and by land, of around 4,000 vehicles and 250 buses.



During the exercise, over 325,000 meals were served in the dining areas

BRILOG

## IMPLEMENTATION BY THE LOGISTIC BRIGADE



A vehicle is towed at the "San Gregorio" training centre

For its part, the Logistic Brigade (BRILOG) has been the core of the Joint Logistic Support Group (JLSG) HQ, contributing around one third of its more than one thousand members, as well as taking part in the planning carried out by EMF HNSC. Implementation was the task of three logistic units made up of members of the Logistic Support Groups and the terminal units of the Projection Support Groups.

BRILOG has contributed over 600 soldiers to carry out those tasks. JLSG HQ was characterised by its joint and combined capabilities. It brought together personnel from 14 other countries, including from the navies and air forces of a dozen.

In addition, the Logistic Brigade set up the Logistic Unit of the NATO Response Force for 2016. That

Logistic Unit is also the National Support Element (NSE) of the Brigade which will constitute the Very High Readiness Joint Task Force (VJTF) in 2016. The bulk of its troops come from the 7<sup>th</sup> Light Infantry Brigade "Galicia". The participation of this Logistic Unit in the LIVEX phase of Trident Juncture served both to provide support to the VJTF Brigade and as training for its upcoming assignment.

One of the main duties of BRILOG during the exercise was accommodating the personnel taking part and the equipment which would be used. A task which cannot be improvised and demanded that the Brigade get down to work on 24 August, nearly a month and a half before the start of the Command Post Exercise (CPX).

BRILOG

# REFURBISHING THE SETTING



"SAN GREGORIO" TRAINING CENTRE

The 11<sup>th</sup> Engineering Specialties Regiment and the 12<sup>th</sup> Pontonier & Engineering Specialties Regiment worked throughout the summer to improve and refurbish the part of the exercise area used for the military exhibition.

Angel G. Tejedor / DECET



"CHINCHILLA" TRAINING CENTRE

The 1<sup>st</sup>/11 Roads Battalion of the 11<sup>th</sup> Engineering Specialties Regiment cleared a 17,600 m<sup>2</sup> esplanade for a living area and a parking lot for heavy vehicles, and another measuring 6,600 m<sup>2</sup> for a fuelling centre. For its part, the 2<sup>nd</sup>/11 Camp Building Battalion of the same Regiment repaired and conditioned the living quarters at the training centre.

NATO

"ÁLVAREZ DE SOTOMAYOR" TRAINING FIELD & SHOOTING RANGE



C. Artigues / NATO

The Mechanical Section of the Sappers Battalion, which belongs to the Legion Regiment, worked for a week refurbishing passages and improving the roads in the training field.

## MEDICAL SUPPORT

The forces providing medical support came from the General Medical Inspectorate supported by the Army, the Navy, the Air Force and the Ministry of Defence.

Regarding the Army's contribution, it deployed a unit able to deliver Role-1 medical care equipped with a first-aid post bolstered by a 10-bed field hospitalisation unit at both training centres, "San Gregorio" and "Chinchilla". It also installed an assisted ground evacuation unit made up of four ambulances to provide advanced life support, and four others for basic life support, in addition to an assisted air evacuation unit with two HT-27 helicopters from the Army Helicopter Forces medicalised by the Medical Brigade (BRISAN).

On the other hand, a medical unit able to provide Role-1 care was deployed at the training field and shooting range "Álvarez de Sotomayor" (Almería).

**150 soldiers from the Medical Brigade were deployed**

It included a first-aid post, an assisted ground evacuation unit with an ambulance able to provide basic life support, and a hospital support unit. Furthermore, a medical logistic support unit based at the cantonment "General Arteaga" (Madrid) was assigned the task of providing medical resources.

Moreover, another unit served in an advisory capacity on issues of pharmacy, veterinary, nursing and psychology. Its personnel came from Medical Brigade HQ and it was based at the garrison "Cavalcanti" (Madrid). The veterinary unit was located at the service base "San Jorge" (Zaragoza), together with other units such as the 3<sup>rd</sup> Medical Group. Finally, members of the Medical Brigade were deployed at the Medical Support Coordination Centre. All in all, 150 soldiers from BRISAN were involved.



Air evacuation assisted by an HT-27 helicopter

BRISAN

# THE PERSONAL STORIES OF A LARGE EXERCISE



José León

## EMBARKED WITH THE ROYAL NAVY

For 40 days, Lieutenant Colonel José León changed the corridors of the Palacio de Buenavista, in Madrid, for the passageways of the HMS Ocean of the Royal Navy. The Army soldier was the only Spaniard aboard the British warship. He had to learn to walk on the left, even when the sea was “mischievous”. He also had to get used to sleeping under the flying deck, where the murmur of the sea was substituted by the roar of the helicopters, and to live without natural light for most of the time, because the work stations did not have portholes. However, he insists that “living conditions were luxurious compared to those in the training field”.

## GENERAL MOBILISATION!

When the Rapid Deployable Land HQ launched Trident Juncture, Private Saskya Fernández Duncum and her husband, Corporal Enrique Villena, packed their bags and equipment to travel to “San Gregorio” and “Chinchilla”, respectively. At the same time, another logistic convoy travelled from Abengibre (Albacete) to Valencia to look after their two children, who are eight and two. The second convoy was composed of her husband’s parents, reporting for duty for 40 days at Saskya and Enrique’s home.



Ángel G. Tejedor / DECET

**Lieutenant Colonel León was aboard a British warship acting as liaison officer between the Land and Maritime Component Commands**

**When Private Duncum and her husband go out to fulfil their duty, another team made up of her in-laws goes into action to look after the little ones who stay behind**

## HIGHLY OPERATIONAL MULES

For the first time in such a large NATO exercise, an equine unit was deployed: The 23<sup>rd</sup> Mountain Infantry Brigade of the German Army. The mules arrived in Spain in specially-designed containers, ready to show their worth. They can carry more than 100 kg a day for over 50 km at an elevation of 1,800 m, in terrain no vehicle or helicopter can tackle. Quiet and hard-working, these highly operational mules are used to being deployed in missions.

## ALL THE COLOURS IN THE RAINBOW

The living area at the “San Jorge” base, which was set up by the Support Battalion of Bétera HQ, presented an unusual image during the exercise: Dozens of uniforms of different colours and designs next to one another, hanging from the ropes installed in the laundry area. The service, which received dozens of bags each day, allowed the commanding officers at HQ to keep their attires in perfect condition in spite of the nearly 40 days many of them spent away from home.



Alexander Markus / NATO

The German mules transport weapons, water, food and medicine



Iván Jiménez / DECET

The laundry shelves were more colourful than usual