

## U.S. Army Europe and 7th Army

contact: paoci@eur.army.mil  
phone: 49-6221-57-5815 / DSN 370-5815  
fax: 49-6221-57-6376 / DSN 370-6376



RELEASE #2007-10-24-01

Oct. 24, 2007

### U.S. ARMY, EUROPE ARTILLERY SOLDIERS COMPLETE FINAL PHASES OF 'PROOF OF PRINCIPLE' EXERCISE

By Sgt. Aimee Millham

U.S. Army, Europe Public Affairs Office

**MIHAIL KOGALNICEANU AIR BASE, Romania** -- Joint Task Force East's "proof of principle" exercise here gave U.S. Army Europe artillerymen a chance to learn infantry skills from the experts.



SGT AIMEE MILLHAM

Soldiers from U.S. Army Europe's 1st Battalion, 94th Field Artillery, based in Idar-Oberstein, Germany, train on squad and team procedures alongside Romanian infantrymen at Romania's Babadag Training Area during the final phases of the Joint Task Force-East "proof of principle" exercise there.

"The Romanian men we're training with are infantrymen; we're artillery," said Lt. Col. Thomas Matsel, commander of "Task Force Deep Steel" and the 1st Battalion, 94th Field Artillery. "They are the experts," he said, adding that most of the Romanian troops they trained with are also combat veterans.

Task Force Deep Steel, made up of the 350-Soldier-strong 1-94th and 100 of Romania's 341st Infantry Battalion infantrymen, finished its last full cycle of training here Friday. The exercise ended with closing ceremonies Monday.

The three-month-long training event allowed 1-94th Soldiers – who last deployed as a unit in 2003, during the first phase of

Operation Iraqi Freedom – the opportunity to go through the entire deployment process as a training event.

“The benefit of training at JTF-East is that the unit gets the opportunity to deploy; move to a different location; set up, and go out to the various training areas, which is similar to what they do in support of the Global War on Terrorism,” said Maj. John Elrich, JTF-East operations officer.

Task Force Deep Steel Soldiers were divided into three companies and rotated between three weeklong exercises at the air base and nearby Babadag Training Area. The training allowed the 1-94th troops, based in Idar-Oberstein, Germany, to train in territory away from the familiar grounds of Baumholder, Grafenwoehr and Hohenfels, Matsel said.

“Normally when you go to war, the first time you step on that piece of terrain is when you fight. So this gives us that aspect of training somewhere unknown,” he said.

While the training combined troops from two different countries, cohesion was not hard to come by.

“We learned that all armies are the same. We do speak the same language, and we can conduct the same mission together,” said Romanian Maj. Gherghe Gheorghe, acting chief of staff of the 341st.

Spc. Jeremy Raulinaitis, 1-94th machine gunner, who said he made plenty of Romanian friends through the common language of soccer, also noted the ease with which the two units conducted training.

“We came together as a whole instead of just two different countries. It’s a pretty good feeling to know that you can put two different cultures in there and train as one,” he said.

The U.S. and Romanian troops were also given the opportunity to qualify on each other’s weapons and were rewarded for their qualifications with certificates and badges in a ceremony Friday.



SGT AIMEE MILLHAM

Soldiers from U.S. Army Europe's 1st Battalion, 94th Field Artillery practice medical evacuation procedures at Romania's Babadag Training Area during the final phases of the Joint Task Force-East "proof of principle" exercise there.

