First of all, I want to congratulate all Allied Force Command Madrid personnel for the outstanding performance and the satisfactory achievements of the second semester, 2010. I am especially proud of the results of Exercise Steadfast Juno 2010. After this exercise, our HQ is the first – and only – HQ to have two full DJSEs certified for NRF, which means we are now fully operational and ready to accomplish our mission, providing NATO with a unique and very much needed capability. Of course, this is not the end of our work, and we must stay on this path in order to maintain and improve our readiness status.

I also want to mention the excellent job our two Joint Logistic Support Groups have done in Kosovo. They have provided the required logistic knowledge to a mission that is quite demanding. I received very good reports on their performance when I visited Kosovo last November.

In 2010 we also completed the process of adapting to the new structure, implementing, with minor changes, a functional layout based on the operational structure. This greatly facilitates the management of our daily activities and allows our HQ to honour its commitment to the important Framework tasks we have been assigned. All this has been done without disrupting our dedication to the operational tasks of both DJSE’s.

Now, we face 2011 with new challenges. We have started making preparations to deploy our personnel to ISAF HQ in 2012 and 2013. This future deployment is becoming our first priority, and I am sure that the whole HQ will put all its effort into achieving the highest degree of preparation and readiness for such a mission. I will ensure that this HQ as a whole will fully support its deployed personnel and their families. We must pay special attention to Family Support in order to minimize the difficulties that a deployment like this may bring to our soldiers’ families and relatives.

While we prepare for ISAF, our JLSGs will continue with their deployment in Kosovo, and we will keep up our commitment with NRF 16 and 17 as JHQ FE on standby. Within this commitment, we are preparing for exercise Steadfast Joist 2011 (SFJT 11), where we will test – for first time – the handover of the operational JHQ Main from JFC Naples to JFC Lisbon.

To sum up, the excellent work done throughout 2010 must serve to show us the way to success through the challenges that lie ahead. Now, it is up to us to make it happen.
Many efforts have been made throughout 2010 at all levels to find solutions for the needs and aspirations of NATO Non-Commissioned Officers. Now, I am pleased to inform you that all these endeavours have begun to bear fruit.

In October 2010, Supreme Allied Commander Europe, Admiral J. Stavridis, and Supreme Allied Commander Transformation, General Stephane Abrial, signed the NATO Non-Commissioned Officer Bi-SC Strategy and Recommended Non-Commissioned Officer Guidelines. This document recognizes NCOs as fully integrated team members, acknowledges their leadership qualities and values the work these professionals bring to the Alliance. These new Guidelines also include an analysis of the current state of affairs of the NATO Non-Commissioned Officer Corps, identifying its shortcomings and recommending actions to enable a more rational use of NCOs in the future, in a multinational, changing environment in which the success of any mission depends largely on the skills and adaptability of these professionals.

One of the needs pin-pointed in this document is to institutionalize the role of Senior Enlisted Leader (Senior NCO to a command) and to establish an informal communication network between Command Senior Enlisted Leaders in the Alliance. This network should also reach SNCOs in posts of responsibility (Chief of Defence, Ministers of Defence, etc.) within the national structures of member states and partner nations, with the object of sharing ideas and lessons learned and to promote capacity building activities for NCOs both within the alliance as well as in their respective nations’ Armed Forces.

The Guidance, therefore, recommends that unfilled posts are covered, to avoid severe setbacks in the professional development of NCOs.

A further item on the list of needs identified, in addition to filling posts of responsibility as described above, is to reinforce training programmes for those NCOs designated to take up those posts. To this end, NATO School in Oberammergau is offering a new course as of September next year which aims to enrich the professional skills of NCOs selected as Senior Enlisted Leader next to the Commander, in national posts or within the structure of the Alliance.

Another major step forward, in my view, is the official ACT accreditation granted in June 2010 to the courses given at the NATO Swiss Army School. Such formal accreditation for Preliminary, Intermediate and Advanced NCO Orientation courses eliminates obstacles while it diversifies training opportunities and provides incentives for NCOs both within NATO and in PfP countries.

Despite the progress we have made, and although there is still a great deal to be done, we must persevere with optimism. In my opinion, we have cleared the highest hurdle, and this new document clearly reflects the will of the Alliance to forge ahead in the right direction.
CHIEFS OF STAFF HANDOVER
Lieutenant General Cardona recognized the key role that Major General Carvalho had played during his stage as a Chief of Staff in HQ FC Madrid during three years and extended the warm regards to his wife Fernanda. The Commander also emphasized that Maj. Gen Carvalho had to lead with the difficult task of initiating the Deployable Joint Staff Element’s concept (DJSE) starting from the former CC-LAND structure.

“To ensure that our deploying Headquarters and personnel are to be adequately prepared and ready to be deployed whenever and whichever part of the world if required, is the main task that requires determination, tact and experience and you have to deal with” were dedicated words to draw attention in the new Chiefs of Staff, taking into account the new challenges that they have to face from now on.

In the last part of his speech, HQ FC Madrid’s Commander wished Major General Carvalho all success for him and for his family in the upcoming appointment in the Portuguese Army.

For his part, Major General Carvalho warmly thanked all the personnel that here in FC Madrid had supported him in all challenges that he had to face during his stage in this Headquarters.

During the official Handover/Takeover for the posts of Chief of Staff, Major General Carvalho, as outgoing Chief of Staff gave the respective DJSEs’ flags to Lieutenant General Cardona, HQ FC Madrid’s Commander. Then, the Commander delivered the flags to the new DJSEs’ Chiefs of Staff inferring that there is no other way of obtaining the Responsibility but through the Commander.

Finally, the act was concluded when Brigadier General Savaresse (Italian Army), as Commander of the Parade dismissed the personnel in formation.
The first NATO Bi-FC Corps Commanders Conference took place in Headquarters Allied Force Command Madrid (FCMD). Its Commander, Lieutenant General (Spanish Army) Alfredo Cardona Torres, hosted the conference.

This high-level Conference is an annual meeting co-chaired by the Commanders of the two Allied Force Commands (Madrid and Heidelberg), to which all NATO Corps Commanders are invited to attend. The purpose of the Conference is to create a forum for high-ranking Army Officers to debate on the latest issues on policy, organization, operations, and exercises regarding Land Forces.

The strong participation - seven Lieutenant Generals, out of twenty Flag Officers -, and the productive discussions over topics of the highest interest for NATO Land Forces, resulted in a very successful event.

Opening the meeting, Lieutenant General Cardona invited the participants to take advantage of the Conference to: “…identify which areas we must focus on to continue fostering mutual understanding and promoting standardization on Land issues and interoperability in NATO operations[...] between Land Component Commands in the NATO Force Structure, Corps Commanders and the NATO Command Structure, ISAF and NRF”.
BI-FC COMMANDER’S CONFERENCES
JFC NAPLES
COMMANDER VISIT
Admiral Samuel J. Locklear III travelled to the Allied Headquarters Force Command Madrid on his first visit as Allied Joint Force Command Naples’ Commander. At the arrival to the Base, Admiral Locklear was officially received by Lieutenant General Alfredo Cardona Torres, Allied Headquarters Force Command Madrid’s Commander in a regular military parade.

After the official parade, Admiral Locklear was briefed on how HQ Force Command Madrid is dealing with the new concept of NATO’s structure, and more specifically with its two Deployable Joint Staff Elements.

Once updated in the two DJSEs current status, JFC Naples’ Commander was directed to the facilities of multipurpose hall to greet the headquarters components.

In his speech, Admiral Locklear stated his main goals for the short term; above all those related with NATO Response Force to be deployed in ISAF. He didn’t forget to mention with warm words the personnel currently deployed in Stavanger (Norway) who is carrying out the Exercise Steadfast Juno.

As an important part of the visit, JFC Naples’ Commander inaugurated the new Building 101. This project has been designed to house a complete Forward Element with all technological means required for accomplishing its important mission when this unit is to stay in standby or training status in Force Command Madrid.

An official lunch hosted by Lieutenant General Cardona followed the official photo of the Admiral Locklear in the honor signing book was the clasp of the Joint Force Command Naples’ Commander first visit to Headquarters Allied Force Command Madrid.
The Capability Package 9A1101 Project started at the beginning of 2009. After a few Users Group Meetings (NAMSA, FC Madrid and FC Heidelberg) to discuss the need for an Operational Liaison Reconnaissance Team (OLRT), the design of vehicles and trailers began on March 2009.

In January 2010, the Ricardo and Penman Company finished the First-off OLRT PVRT special vehicle and trailer (First Article). First Article Factory Test (FAFT) was performed by NAMSA. During the FAFT process, OR-7 Juan Francisco Grande Diaz and OR-5 Jezabel Garcia Gutierrez from HQ FC Madrid, along with OF-4 Heinrich Aldag and OR-8 Jorg Schigowski from HQ FC HEIDELBERG, provided their advice to the chain of production. Everything regarding the user’s point of view was taken into account in reaching the final design.

At the end of March 2010, vehicles and trailers arrived at Madrid and Heidelberg Headquarters. This new demanding concept, the Operational Liaison and Reconnaissance Team, now had the proper means for deployment.

Now, in late June 2010, this entire equipment package is fully installed in both vehicles and trailers, rendering all the OLRT’s transportation assets fully operational and available for use by the Leader, Support & Administrative Cell and, subsequently, by the Group of Experts when and where they are required to deploy anywhere in the world.

These 4x4 vehicles are destined to play a dramatically important role as the very first step in the JFC’s decision-making procedure.
Headquarters Allied Force Command Madrid supports NATO Headquarters Medical Advisors NATO Operations Medical Conferences at the initiative of Allied Command Operations (ACO) and in collaboration with Allied Command Transformation (ACT).

Attendees include physicians and medical staff of different units within the NATO Command and Force Structures, NATO countries’ national Health Services, and groups from the Partnership for Peace (PfP) nations together with other countries belonging to the Mediterranean Dialogue (MD) share their experience at these conferences.

Most of the sessions at these conferences are dedicated to a wide range of topics covering the planning and conduct of operations from a medical viewpoint, with the double aim of sharing experience and operations procedures, on the one hand, and on the other, of improving both preparation and planning for deployment of medical personnel and the quality of support given.

Conferences working groups analyze current operations with a view to extracting lessons learned that will lead to improving pre-deployment training campaigns and conduct of operations, and to updating doctrines.

It is a custom at these conferences to include a visit to military health unit or facility, to give nations the opportunity to display their health services capability. Personnel from Spanish Medical Units offered its experience and lessons learned on operations.

The Forward Surgical Station and NBC Decontamination Station under AGRUSAN I of the Spanish Army Health Services Brigade, located in Pozuelo de Alarcón (Madrid) offered a visit and a static exhibition of the Health Services Units arranged on the unit’s own premises.

These kind of meetings that HQ Allied Force Command Madrid wants to support, generate deep interest among attendees who are provided with a very wide-ranging view of the means and capabilities of the Spanish Army Health Services and of the work carried out by Spanish Military Health Services Corps personnel within the Spanish Armed Forces and in NATO operations.
FRANCISCO DE VITORIA University and more specifically his Robert Schuman Institute visits our Headquarters as a part of his background program. The two Political Advisos usually present an interesting overview about the ALLIANCE as a live organization. It was a kind of travel through the time in which the students discovered how NATO is continuously updating when History requires it.

In the coffee-break, HQ FCMD’s Commander, Lieutenant General Alfredo Cardona joined the group and gave a warm welcome to the group. He wanted to express to the pupils that these kind of meetings let him remember his old times in the Law’s Faculty.

After the short break, detailed briefing took place in the HQ’s AUDITORIUM room. That time, the lecture was devoted to the current missions and policy in FCMD’s structure.

Both briefings concluded with a round of questions which gave students and teachers the opportunity to ask for further details regarding many aspects mentioned in the preceding briefings.
As an annual event, FCMD hosted a friendly group of students and professors from the University Institute “Carlos III” and Spanish War College from Madrid on last November.

After Lt General Alfredo Cardona Torres’s welcome to the visitor, Political Advisors from DJSE1 and 2 as well as PAO Chief offered the group a series of interesting briefings on NATO’s environment and its new recent structure based on the Deployed Joint Staff Element concept.

The eager pupils were absolutely interested on the last NATO’S concept. Thus, the round of questions resulted tremendously amazing and fruitful for both the teachers and the students. FCMD’s CDR took the compromise of hosting the University and War College’s students once again with pleasure next year.
Headquarters Allied Force Command Madrid was the venue for a Media Training event organized by the Force Command Madrid DJSE1 Public Affairs Office. The activity was held in consideration of the increasing role of the Media in achieving awareness and understanding of NATO’s role and mission, and was characterized by a factual and practical approach. Based on the concept that anybody can potentially act as a spokesperson, the training was dedicated to key leaders, experts and the members of the Operational Liaison & Reconnaissance Team (to be deployed prior to any operation with the mission to assess and evaluate its needs) in view of the upcoming Exercise STEADFAST JUNO to be performed next month. The event was conducted over a two-day session, and was attended by about 50 people selected among the Headquarters. The workshop consisted of collective briefings – focused on the Media landscape, the role of the spokespersons and interview techniques – and individual interviews and press points, given by a selected training audience. Every single activity was videotaped and publicly commented, so that all participants could share as much feedback as possible. To make the whole training event more realistic, several role-players from the Headquarters acted as journalists asking questions to the trainees. A prestigious military journalist – Mrs. Carol Saynisch – provided the necessary professional supervision and mentoring, therefore making the entire training utterly effective and profitable. The activity was remarkably successful, both for the effective way in which it was conducted and for the benefits it has provided. All participants have treasured this valuable experience allowing them to improve their professional background and acquiring greater awareness on how to deal with the media whenever required to by the circumstances. The multifaceted scenarios where NATO is increasingly called to operate, and the crucial role of the Media in supporting the Alliance in the pursuit of its aims and objectives, make this kind of training a crucial tool for the success of any mission.
Headquarters Allied Force Command Madrid hosts Battle Staff Trainings (BST) with the aim of familiarizing the Deployable Joint Staff Element (DJSE) with exercises Steadfast in order to obtain the NRF capability certification through Exercises performed in wherever NATO training place.

The scenario is set in a fictional World regions where NATO Response Force could be deployed as an entry force to conduct a Crisis Response Operation. In that context, Madrid DJSE acts as Forward Element of the Joint Main Command. These exercises are focused in dealing with numerous and challenging domains typical of a Peace Support Operation.
This past fall, FC Madrid participated in a Joint Expert Team Meeting (JETM), which was led by JFC Naples, to the country of Mauritania. These JETMs occur through the program of Military Cooperation and are designed to offer training opportunities for non-Nato countries. The JETM is a formal discussion between the specific partner country and NATO to determine how NATO can support or assist this country with training requirements.

As a poor African nation, Mauritania’s training needs are many as their country currently struggles against a variety of bad actors to include among others, Al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb. With vast areas of inhospitable desert, large portions of Mauritania are difficult to control by the government. Further, with limited natural resources available, Mauritania remains an impoverished nation.

The JETM spent three days in the capital city of Nouakchott, meeting with Mauritanian military leaders. The formal meetings were conducted in French. The Mauritanians were very generous hosts and were eager to discuss possible training opportunities with NATO. Perhaps in the future, a Mobile Training Team from FC Madrid will travel to Nouakchott to work with the Mauritanian military.
The STEADFAST Series Exercises are recurrent drills aimed at developing NATO expeditionary capabilities. One of the most significant activities of this type is a Command Post Exercise focused on training and certifying the NATO Response Force rotation (NRF) Command and Control structure, through the Deployable Joint Staff Element (DJSE) concept.

The Exercise is performed at three levels: Strategic (Allied Command Operations), Operational (Joint Force Command) and Tactical (Component Commands). Such multiple levels implied multiple locations.

Considering the aim, extent and characteristics of these Exercises, the training audience for SFJE is definitely robust and well articulated. In accordance with the DJSE concept (one Headquarters, two locations) Joint Force Commands led the whole activity through its Main and the Forward Element, which is provided by Allied Force Command Madrid. The Land, Maritime and Air Component Commands are respectively involved in the crisis and conflict’s management. Along with the above mentioned Components, Madrid Joint Logistic Support Group provides assets for the Exercises.

Despite the fact that “Steadfast” exercises are not actually the first NRF Exercise for the training audience, some new elements contribute to make the whole event far more challenging and exciting.

First, the scenario, fictitious as usual, and placed in an Eastern African region, envisaged the deployment of the NATO Response Force (named NATO Interim Multinational Force, NIMFOR) as an entry Force in charge of performing a UN-mandated Crisis Response Operation (CRO), under Chapter VII of the Charter.
Then, the mission, aimed at stabilizing the region and at enabling the efficient delivery of humanitarian aid. Such a context implies specific, demanding tasks, such as land and sea patrolling, weapon registration, process implementation monitoring, reacting to airspace violations, Search and Rescue, humanitarian assistance, natural and artificial disaster response, emergency management and crisis communications.

In all these missions, the entire training audience is called upon to respond to the numerous injections the Exercise Control provided through several skilled role-players. Madrid DJSE, as a Forward Element of the Joint Force Command, has to react to a multifaceted spectrum of activities: The Joint Coordination Centre, by appropriately planning and tasking; the Situation Cell, by constantly providing situational awareness; and the Theatre Engagement Cell, by effectively interacting with the regional authorities, such as institutional, political and military leaders and International Governmental and Non-Governmental Organizations. In such a hectic context, any injection, any reaction, any posture, and any decision drive participants to deal with every ramification of a political, legal, and communicative nature, therefore forcing the Special Staff, a team of skilled personal advisors to the Force Commander, to bear a continuous and heavy workload.

Besides the training and operational points of view, the experience prompts a noteworthy logistical remark: The Forward Element works throughout the whole Exercise in the Capability Package 156, an innovative structure conceived to house a Headquarters deployed for more than six months in the most extreme conditions.
International Women’s History Month was recently observed at Headquarters Allied Force Command Madrid, a Spanish Military Base located in the township of Pozuelo de Alarcon. This celebration was unique, because for the first time, the event was truly and international one. The event brought this community together to celebrate women’s history. Women’s spirit was encouraged to not only support the event but be an active participant as well. Women participants from different countries read poems, about famous women leaders from their own country; while others entertain us with beautiful music, one told her what it means to be a hero from a woman’s perspective, and finally, a young student from the American School of Madrid created a premier women’s history music and slideshow presentation.

Headquarters Allied Force Command Madrid commemorates the 100th anniversary of International Women’s Day Observance and pays homage to its strong women who have paved the way for us, we pause to remind everyone, that women’s history cannot be summed up in an hour, or one day, or a week, not even a year; but everyday women are making history. In nowadays, women are leaders of their country, military and civilian women members alike are proudly leading and serving alongside their male counterpart, Guardia civil, securing our military installations and career educator molding and teaching our children, particularly our girls that education is paramount for success.

Mrs. Joanne Reykdal, guest speaker for the occasion, of the American School of Madrid, said it best when she stated that girls can be mathematicians, scientist, and chemist, and that they should pursue the hard core subjects for future benefits. Furthermore, she stated that although much progress has been made by women all over world, women; just as capable; and doing the same job as their male counterpart still lags behind their male comptemporary in the political, economic and social realm.

In conclusion women all over the world are making history every day. Today’s program provided you only a small snapshot of some of the many contributions of extraordinary women.
HQ FC – Madrid’s members have participated in the last Athens classic Marathon. A team of volunteer runners participated in the 2,500th Anniversary Race remembering the famous Battle of Marathon. Three runners from FC Madrid’s marathon team from two countries were able to finally complete their training program and finished the 42.2 kilometer (26.2 mile) run between 3 hours and 37 minutes and 5 hours and 09 minutes.

Sport is one of the main concern for Force Command Madrid’s Commander. Gym, running tracks, football and rugby field, annual competitions are part of the everyday life in our Base here in Retamares (Madrid).

The privileged location of FCMD’s Headquarters offers the possibility of enjoying with the practice of the sport, whatever it was.

Everybody here looks for a moment in which practice its favorite sport. Therefore, it’s not unusual to see FCMD members participating in important sportive events such as the International Marathon in Madrid (MAPOMA) even in the homeland of the Marathon, Athens (Greece) as well as organizing annual competitions.

Another facet that HQ Allied Force Command Madrid carries out is its continuous concern by promoting celebration of championships such as Triathlon, hiking and the like, all included in Moral and Welfare’s annual activities.