



## Press Release

Joint Task Force-East

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July 23, 2009

Release No. 20090723-1

### US Army Europe deputy oversees build up of Joint Task Force-East in Bulgaria

By Sgt. 1st Class Oswaldo P. Sanchez, JTF-E Public Affairs

**NOVO SELO TRAINING AREA, Bulgaria** – U.S. Army Lt. Gen. Gary D. Speer, deputy commanding general of U.S. Army Europe and 7th Army, paid a visit to the Novo Selo Training Area on July 21 to review the progress of the Joint Task Force-East mission this year.

Speer was welcomed by the Bulgarian Base Commander Lt. Col. Peter Zhelev. The lieutenant general was accompanied by the U.S. Embassy to Bulgaria Deputy Chief of Mission Ms. Susan M. Sutton and two Bulgarian officers, Cols. Iavor Mateev and Valentin Tzvetanov of the Bulgarian defense staff.

Personnel from both U.S. and Bulgarian forces and contractors have been working diligently to setup the Joint Task Force-East training site since late June for arriving elements of the U.S. Army Tennessee National Guard 1-181st Field Artillery Battalion and U.S. Army 2nd Stryker Cavalry Regiment from Vilseck, Germany.

The administrative and logistical support is being staffed by more than 200 U.S. service members and nearly 100 local hires. Various headquarters staff members consist of active and reserve component Soldiers from the U.S. and Europe. Additional support comes from U.S. Air Force and Navy personnel, Department of the Army civilians, Bulgarian and U.S. contractors, and Morale, Welfare and Recreation personnel. These organizations are the life support programs that maintain the best training environment available for incoming Soldiers.

Elements of the field artillery battalion and stryker cavalry regiment are scheduled to arrive in August to start training at Novo Selo. Approximately 1,000 U.S. troops and more than 500 Bulgarian forces are expected to be at the training area near Sliven, Bulgaria, this year.

Joint Task Force-East is a U.S. European Command Theater Security Cooperation Program that provides the U.S. and its partners with a training venue to demonstrate their capabilities and how each contributes to the collective defense of the region. This training helps build interoperability and military relationships that are vital to coalition success in contingency operations.

Joint Task Force-East is a combination of concurrent operations being conducted at both Bulgarian and Romanian training areas between August and October 2009.

If there are any questions or concerns regarding these operations, the public is welcome to contact the Joint Task Force-East Public Affairs Office at +35 944 645 025.

For more information regarding JTF-East, please contact the Public Affairs Office; U.S. PAO, Maj. Mannoel Gorospe; [Mannoel.Gorospe@eur.army.mil](mailto:Mannoel.Gorospe@eur.army.mil); 1st Lt. Michael Meyer; [Michael.Meyer@eur.army.mil](mailto:Michael.Meyer@eur.army.mil).

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NOVO SELO TRAINING AREA, Bulgaria – Bulgarian Land Forces Lt. Col. Peter Zhelev, base commander of Novo Selo Training Area, greets Lt. Gen. Gary D. Speer, deputy commanding general of U.S. Army Europe and 7th Army, during his visit to the Bulgarian training site July 21. Speer flew in to receive an update on supporting staff and status on training facilities being built for U.S. and Bulgarian forces during this year’s Joint Task Force-East operations. (U.S. Army photo by Sgt. 1st Class Osvaldo Sanchez, Joint Task Force-East Public Affairs)

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NOVO SELO TRAINING AREA, Bulgaria – U.S. Army Capt. Jennifer Gonser, left, Joint Task Force-East headquarters commandant, and Bulgarian Land Forces Lt. Col. Peter Zhelev, right, base commander of Novo Selo Training Area, guide U.S. Army Europe and 7th Army Deputy Commander Lt. Gen. Gary D. Speer around the training area July 21. Joint Task Force-East is a U.S. European Command Theater Security Cooperation Program that provides the U.S. and its partners the opportunity to engage in and demonstrate the continuance of peaceful and friendly international relations through combined training. (U.S. Army photo by Sgt. 1st Class Osvaldo Sanchez, Joint Task Force-East Public Affairs)