Exercise Saber Strike 2012 demonstrates international cooperation in action

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By U.S. Army Europe Public Affairs

HEIDELBERG, Germany – Saber Strike is a U.S. Army Europe-led, multi-national exercise scheduled for June 10- 22 at multiple training areas in Estonia and Latvia. The exercise promotes regional stability and security, strengthens international military partnering and fosters trust while improving interoperability between participating nations.

"This is a great way for us to train together before we deploy and operate together," according to Col. Bill Williams, director of Training and Exercises for U.S. Army Europe. Williams emphasized the Latvian, Estonian and Lithuanian militaries, have all contributed greatly to the ISAF, KFOR missions and other international operations.

Saber Strike 2012 involves approximately 2,000 personnel from eight countries. This, the second year of the Saber Strike exercise program, is part of an ongoing cooperative training effort primarily focused on the three nations of the Baltic States: Latvia, Lithuania, and Estonia. This exercise prepares participants to operate successfully in a joint, multinational, integrated environment with host-nation support from civil and governmental agencies.

Saber Strike 2012 will consist of situational training exercises and a field training exercise taking place at the Adazi training area, Latvia. A command post exercise will be conducted at various sites in Estonia, including one near Tapa. In addition to the U.S. Army Europe, Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania, other participants include: Canada, Finland, France and the UK.

Units from U.S. Army Europe include the 21st Theater Sustainment Command, the 2nd Cavalry Regiment and the Pennsylvania Army National Guard is participating with a company of Strykers which will be flown into Latvia. The Michigan Air Guard is participating with KC-135 and A-10 aircraft providing close air support. An infantry company of the 4th Marine Division will also be there, and a Joint Terminal Air Controller team from the Washington Air Guard. This year marks the 20th anniversary of the state partnership program between the Michigan Air Guard and Latvia.

Media day for Saber Strike 12 is scheduled for June 12 at Tapa, Estonia, and June 13 at Adazi, Latvia. Interested outlets will have the opportunity to see multi-national operations and various training events. Please RSVP to brian.f.carlin.mil@mail.mil or +49 (0) 6221-57-6262 by June 9.

About us: U.S. Army Europe is uniquely positioned to advance American strategic interests across Eurasia and has unparalleled capability to prevent conflict, shape the environment and, if necessary, win decisively. The relationships we build during more than 1000 theater security cooperation events in more than 40 countries each year lead directly to support for multinational contingency operations around the world, strengthen regional partnerships, and enhance global security.