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Naval Postgraduate School - Moldovan Military Academy Representatives begin Collaboration with NPS

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Moldovan Military Academy Representatives begin Collaboration with NPS

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Article by Maggie Spivey

Representatives from the Military Academy of the Armed Forces of Moldova (MMA) visited the Naval Postgraduate School (NPS), the designated U.S. Partnership for Peace Training and Education Center (USPTC), the week of 23-27 May as the two institutions begin a collaborative relationship together.

The focus of the visit was for the MMA Representatives to learn how NPS structures, fosters, and accomplishes research. As the Military Academy was recently given the charter to expand from an undergraduate institution into one that also includes postgraduate degrees, the need to develop robust research capabilities and capacities is a priority.

"NPS has huge experience that, I would say, we need to learn from," stated Academy President, Col. Mihail Buculis. Along with Head Researcher, Lt. Col. (Ret.) Igor Sofronescu, and Researcher, Ms. Diana Gudiuc, the group met with various faculty, staff, and students; toured the campus; and had the opportunity to walk-through a variety of labs, such as the Hastily Formed Networks lab.

According to Buculis, "To receive an accreditation for the Academy, we need help from NPS in research and overall activities and the opportunity to participate in international projects—projects with regard to cyber security. Special interests for us [at NPS] represent the curricula of the [Research] Institutes and the didactic techniques of faculty members."

The Moldovans' showed an interest in a variety of topics covered during the Graduate School of Engineering and Applied Sciences (GSEAS) Brief presented by Meteorology and Oceanography (METOC) Program Officer Capt. (Sel.) Rebecca Stone, who was instrumental in setting up additional lectures on Cyber Center/cyber curriculum and the NPS Center for Autonomous Vehicle Research (CVAR).

Stone also set up a lecture with Dr. Joseph Hooper of the Naval Surface Warfare Center Division regarding explosive ordnance. "The Academy is open towards the kind of initiatives that have a crucial role in the state, in general," stated Buculis. Moldova is looking at ways to safely diffuse the large number of unexploded ordnance in country, and this brief provided needed insight into this topic.

Following the visit to NPS, Sofronescu joined fellow MMA Head Researcher, Lt. Col. Sergiu Plop, in Munich, Germany, from 30 May – 1 June. Along with Graduate School of Operational and Information Science (GSOIS) Associate Professor, Dr. Alex Bordetsky, and Research Associate, Mr. Steven Mullins, the group met with faculty and staff from the University of Bundeswehr (a German military university) and the Emerging Security Challenges Division of NATO Headquarters.

The purpose of these meetings was to develop the proposal, "Integrating Moldova into the Global Test-bed for Experimental Studies in Emerging Network- Enabled Operations." This proposal laid out the criteria and measures of success needed to set up an MMA Applied Research Center.

With the Munich trip building on the success of the NPS visit, both events contributed to the NPS and MMA collaboration.

According to Buculis, "The new government is interested in strategic defense, and the National Ministry directs initiatives at the school, including participating in activities with the [Partnership for Peace] PfP program." These two PfP events contributed to the Academy's increased capacity and capability and should, ultimately, bolster the nation's defense institutions.

Posted June 9, 2011



Photo credit: Javier Chagoya