

Future Forces Exhibition & Conference: International Advanced Technologies in Defence & Security

Stephen Barnard

The most recent Future Forces Exhibition and Conference took place in October 2014 in Prague, Czech Republic, under the auspices of the President of the Czech Republic, the Prime Minister of the Czech Republic, the Minister of Defence and the Chief of the General Staff.

Supported by LOM Praha as Prime Sponsor of the whole event, and Cisco as Conference Partner, Future Forces 2014 was organised by the organisers and gained some spectacular statistics...

In addition to extensive support from NATO and the Czech Permanent Delegation, three Czech ministries were behind the event, along with various senior dignitaries from the city of Prague, and the Czech Chamber of Commerce.

From the further education / training field were the Czech University of Defence, the Military History Institute, the Czech Technical University and the Military Research Institute. The Police Academy of the Czech Republic, the Armed Forces Academy of Gen. Milan R. Štefánik, the Technical University of Liberec and Masaryk University also supported the event.

NATO HQ, the NATO Joint CBRN Defence Capability Development Group and the NATO JCBRN Defence COE were joined by the Multinational Logistics Coordination Centre in attending the conference and exhibition. At the Exhibition some 134 companies from 21 countries displayed their products and capabilities, with representation of over 200 companies and brands ranged throughout an attractive and professionally-presented show arena. In addition to the professional exhibition there were several live demonstrations and trials in two Live Demo Areas – a 240 m² indoor space and 5000m² outdoors.

Almost 7,500 visitors attended the event, including nearly 600 from 33 national Ministries and Departments of Defence, with 48 official delegates and nearly 20 international / multinational organisations.

Over 40 General Officers attended, from as far afield as Brazil, Korea, the Philippines, Australia, Jordan, the UAE and the USA.

In addition to the conference and exhibition, for two days a series of workshops was undertaken. Some of the 14 Expert Work-

ing Groups attended these workshops, as did over 400 attendees from more than 40 countries: 89 Speakers represented 17 countries and 4 international institutions, and 15 Industry presentations were also given. Representatives from some 25 different NATO and SHAPE components were in attendance.

All in all, the event proved yet again to be an outstanding venue for constructive networking and the active creation and pursuit of specific, concrete business opportunities – and of course, from the opposite perspective, a unique chance to learn about the in-

terests, capabilities, goals and technologies on show, and to explore ways to dovetail all of these with one's own requirements. EUROPEAN SECURITY & DEFENCE (ESD) was present in a modest supporting role – and looks forward to elaborating upon that role in 2016.

The event concluded with the now well-established Prague Military Days, offering a wide programme for the general public, enjoyed by more than 3,000 visitors. The next Future Forces will take place in Prague from October 19th-21st 2016, with ESD in close support!

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