



# PRESS RELEASE

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## **Dragoons and Panzers Partners in GTA**

Story and photos by: Sgt. Jerry Wilson

2CR Public Affairs

**VILSECK, Germany** – The ground in Grafenwoehr Training Area erupted Thursday, Dec. 8 as the Wolf pack Troopers of 3<sup>rd</sup> Squadron, 2<sup>nd</sup> Cavalry Regiment joined forces with their German partners of 4<sup>th</sup> Company, 104<sup>th</sup> Panzer Battalion for operation Iron Panzer. Iron Panzer is a combined live fire exercise that incorporates both the German Leopard II tank and the Stryker Mobile Gun System vehicle.

“This is the first combined live-fire operation our two battalions have conducted in three years,” said Maj. Kenneth Reed, 3<sup>rd</sup> Squadron Operations Officer, “and the first with the MGS system and the Leopard II tank.”

As more and more countries continue to work side-by-side in places such as Iraq and Afghanistan, cooperation between partners like 2CR and the 104<sup>th</sup> Panzers has become a vital cog in the mission machine. According to Reed, it is exercises such as Iron Panzer that help units develop a better understanding of each other.

“It gives us a chance to see how the Bundeswehr operates and gives them an opportunity to see how we operate,” Reed said. “It really validates the security and cooperation mission here in Europe.”

“We can’t succeed without our allies,” Reed continued. “Our countries have to work together downrange and it has to start here at home station with the fundamentals that make us successful in battle.”

The importance of combined training was equally felt by the Soldiers of the 104<sup>th</sup>.

“This exercise gave us the opportunity to be prepared to link up with any American forces in Afghanistan and work with them,” said 1<sup>st</sup>. Lt. Michael Meiser, acting Commander of Headquarters Company, 104<sup>th</sup> Panzer Battalion. “We don’t have time to train like this downrange.”

According to Meiser, missions such as these help German Soldiers improve their communication skills with their coalition partners.

“It forces us to speak English,” Meiser said. “This is what we are lacking in the German Army, the ability to speak it fluently in order to understand each other during a mission.”

The partnership between the Wolfpack and their 104<sup>th</sup> counterparts began in 2009. Through a series of team building events and training exercises both units have established strong bonds that are expected to last for many years to come.



**On Target:** An MGS Variant Stryker vehicle from the 2<sup>nd</sup> Cavalry Regiment sends a round downrange during the Iron Panzer training exercise held Thursday, Nov. 8 in the Grafenwoher Training Area.



**On the Move:** Soldiers from the 104<sup>th</sup> Panzer Battalion maneuver their Leopard II tank towards their next firing position during the Iron Panzer training exercise held Thursday, Nov. 8 in the Grafenwoehr Training Area.

