

“Every man a Tiger” !



NATO Tiger Meet 2019

The NATO Tiger Meet this year was hosted by the French unit *Escadron de Chasse 3/30 'Lorraine'* from 13 to 24 May at the French airbase Mont de Marsan in south west France. This exercise is not merely about team spirit and traditions which are being propagated but it also imparts quality skills in defence personnel required to tackle modern encounters during various conflicts. Mont de Marsan is the most important knowledge centre for the Dassault Rafale deployment in France. Operational tactics with this type and the Dassault Mirage 2000D are performed daily at the airbase. There are also few operational units on Mont de Marsan that are part of *Escadron de Chasse 30*.

With the aim of “sharing experiences, increasing interoperability,” exemplary values and team spirit as a guiding principle, the NATO Tiger Meet has developed into an important exercise within NATO over more than 50 years. The tradition teaches that participating squadrons, whether they are flying airplanes or helicopters, are always present in well-known tiger colours. The squadron emblem of all these participants is the ‘tiger’. The NATO Tiger Association is a collection of military units

from NATO member states. Since 1961, the organisation has been conducting the NATO Tiger Meet every year.

The story of the Tiger Meet began on 19 July 1961, when three Tiger squadrons met at the British airbase RAF Woodbridge which was used at that time by the US Air Force. The units that participated then were the Royal Air Force No. 74 Squadron with

the Lightning, EC 1/12 *Cambresis* with the Super Mystère B2 and the 79th Tactical Fighter Squadron with the F-100 Super Sabre. During the Cold War, in context of international tensions, the French Minister of Defence Pierre Messmer had held a meeting to promote solidarity between the NATO units and to improve the quality of operational deployment.



Rafale of EC3/30, painted as a ‘Dark smoking Tiger’