

By Major General Chiffolleau, new Commander EATC

Your Excellency, Dear Chairman of the Multinational Air Transport Committee, Dear MATRAC members, Dear Generals, distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen.

What a feeling, what an outstanding and unbelievable sight with everybody gathered and well apportioned in the floors of this tremendous cathedral lookalike building. What an honor for me, to have been vested in such conditions.

Thanks to MG Badia for that brilliant idea to schedule the ceremony inside our premises.

Many thanks again to our Host Nation, The Netherlands to offer to EATC and its Participating Nations this huge and majestic infrastructure. No doubts, you know how to welcome Partners.

Thanks to the MATRAC chairman and its members to have approved my assignment by France as the next Commander of EATC. Thanks to French Air Force Authorities to have posted me to that position, most likely my last one in the military forces.

After being Air base Commander, Air Mobility Commander and EATC Chief Of Staff, what a better end of career than to become the Commander of the European Air Transport Command when you are a Transport Pilot. I will do my best to deserve the confidence you placed in me.

While receiving the EATC Flag from Lt. General VECCIARELLI and handing it over to the flag guard, I had a thought for all my predecessors.

I did not forget the Implementation team, which paved the way and had to jump so many hurdles to ease and foster the start and official opening of the EATC. They also deserve our warmest thanks.

MG Both was the first commander, and he overcame the challenge to change the mind, the habits and the way of doing of the founding Nations Air transport stake holders.

Thanks to MG Valentin who internally stabilized the EATC, made it accepted and recognized by Participating Nations counter parts, travelled as much as necessary to get EATC better known abroad and started the process of enlargement.

Congratulations to MG Badia for his 3 years tour at the head of EATC. As COS, I was in first line to witness and testimony why he deserves to be congratulated.

I want to underline the full and perfect completion of Spain's and Italy's integration inside EATC. He achieved to make EATC worldwide well-known and acknowledged as an Air transport center of excellence and as a center of expertise regarding Air to air Refueling. Keeping the pace will be challenging but I will benefit from the momentum.

However none of my predecessors could have done what I just mentioned without you the EATC personnel, and it's the reason why now, I want to address you.

As your Chief Of Staff during these 3 previous years, I exactly know what is your work load and even sometimes, your burden. I am fully aware of your commitment for the success of the EATC, whatever your division and Nation membership. I had fruitful talks with most of you and I understood what EATC enhancement owes to you.

Please give me the same performance and privileges and I will do my best to deserve it, our common goal will still remain the benefit of the 7 Participating Nations and finally, the EATC.

As you all know many challenges still need to be faced with, be it the A400M full interoperability, MRTT fleet implementation, Air to Air Refueling center of excellence goal and New OPS Process benefits, to quote the main ones. This is why we enjoy working and being at EATC, and I will be proud to be your Commander.

To conclude, I would like to warmly thank my wife and my personal friends and guests to attend and support me in such a tremendous event.

My last thought now will be for somebody who should have been there with us. He was a fan, a pro EATC from the very beginning of its opening ceremony in 2010. He has been a MATRAC member, he was my friend and I had the honor and the pleasure to work under his command twice, but Lt. General Soulet died the 21st of May 2017 at 55. I'm convinced that his memory will inspire and help me to be a better Commander.

Thanks for your attention.