Colonel Alan Cate Discusses the United States National Support Element Operations in Hungary

By the fall of 1995, the United States Army had started planning for deployment to Bosnia. During this process, it recognized the need for a secure base from which to conduct its operations. The Army’s senior officers chose a site near the neighboring Hungarian cities of [Kaposvar](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kaposv%C3%A1r) and [Taszar](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tasz%C3%A1r) as an intermediate staging base due to the cities’ strong transportation infrastructure that featured roads, railways, and airports as well as a substantial military presence.

The United States military came to the region in November 1995, and for the next two months, soldiers established facilities in these two cities. Originally called the Implementation Force, the group eventually received the title U.S. National Support Element. The proximity of its support bases to the theater of operations allowed military leaders to perform reception, staging, and onward movements. Intelligence-gathering missions were also prioritized. Since its creation, the U.S. National Support Element has maintained its presence in Hungary while establishing new bases around the world.

About the Author: For a quarter of a century, Colonel Alan Cate served the United States military. During his tenure with the armed forces, Colonel Cate performed as Chief of Operations for the U.S. National Support Element Operations in Taszar, Hungary.