

KFOR KΦOP CHRONICLE

April 30, 2007

KFOR

Edition 4

1328

Fire Fighters



KFOR Chronicle needs you!

KFOR Chronicle is a magazine for **all KFOR soldiers!**

We are publishing this magazine for 35 nations and more than **16,000 soldiers!**

Our main intention is **to improve the KFOR Chronicle** all the time!

Therefore KFOR Chronicle team needs your help.

We need **your** feedback!

What part of the KFOR Chronicle do you like best?

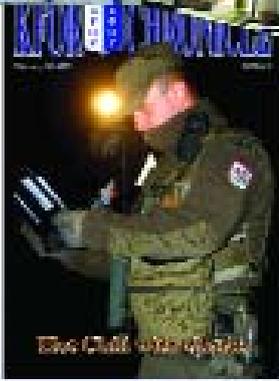
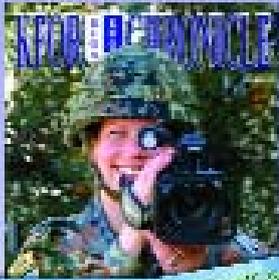
What part of the KFOR Chronicle don't you like and think should be improved?

Do you have any ideas, proposals or remarks to improve the KFOR Chronicle?

Send your feedback to kforchronicle@hq.kfor.nato.int

Thank you!

Major Alexander Unterweger
Chief Editor



KFOR CHRONICLE



Cover photo by Armend Aqifi

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Nations within KFOR:

HQ KFOR

Argentina
Estonia
Hungary
Netherlands
Norway
Portugal
United Kingdom

MNTE (S)

Germany
Austria
Azerbaijan
Bulgaria
Georgia
Switzerland
Turkey

MNTE (C)

Czech Republic
Finland
Ireland
Latvia
Slovakia
Sweden

MNTE (W)

Italy
Hungary
Romania
Slovenia
Spain

MNTE (N)

France
Belgium
Denmark
Greece
Luxembourg
Morocco
Estonia

MNTE (E)

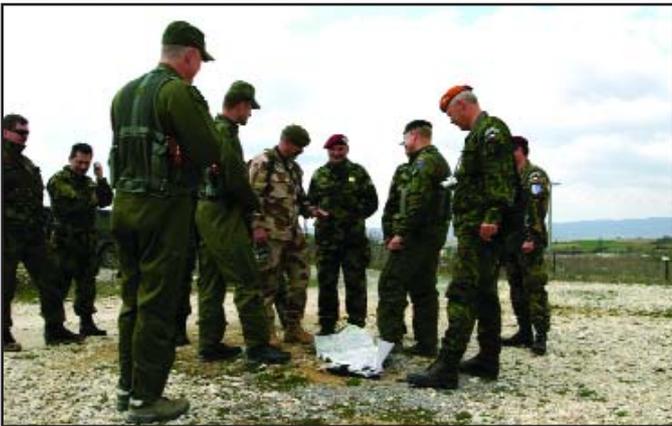
United States of America
Armenia
Greece
Lithuania
Poland
Romania
Ukraine



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TOA MNTF West page 8 - 9



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Standing Against Fire page 22 - 23



Vision of faith page 26 - 27



THE VISITS KOSOVO, KFOR

THE NORTH ATLANTIC COUNCIL PAID A VISIT TO KOSOVO AND KFOR ON APRIL 2



Text by OR-6 Christin Michaud, photos by Combat Camera and NATO

Jaap de Hoop Scheffer, the NATO Secretary General led the Council, the senior decision-making body of NATO, comprising the 26 NATO Permanent Representatives, during a visit to Kosovo on April 2.

During the visit, they met with the members of the Unity Team: Prime Minister Agim Ceku, the President of the Assembly, Kolë Berisha, Hashim Thaçi and Veton Surroi.

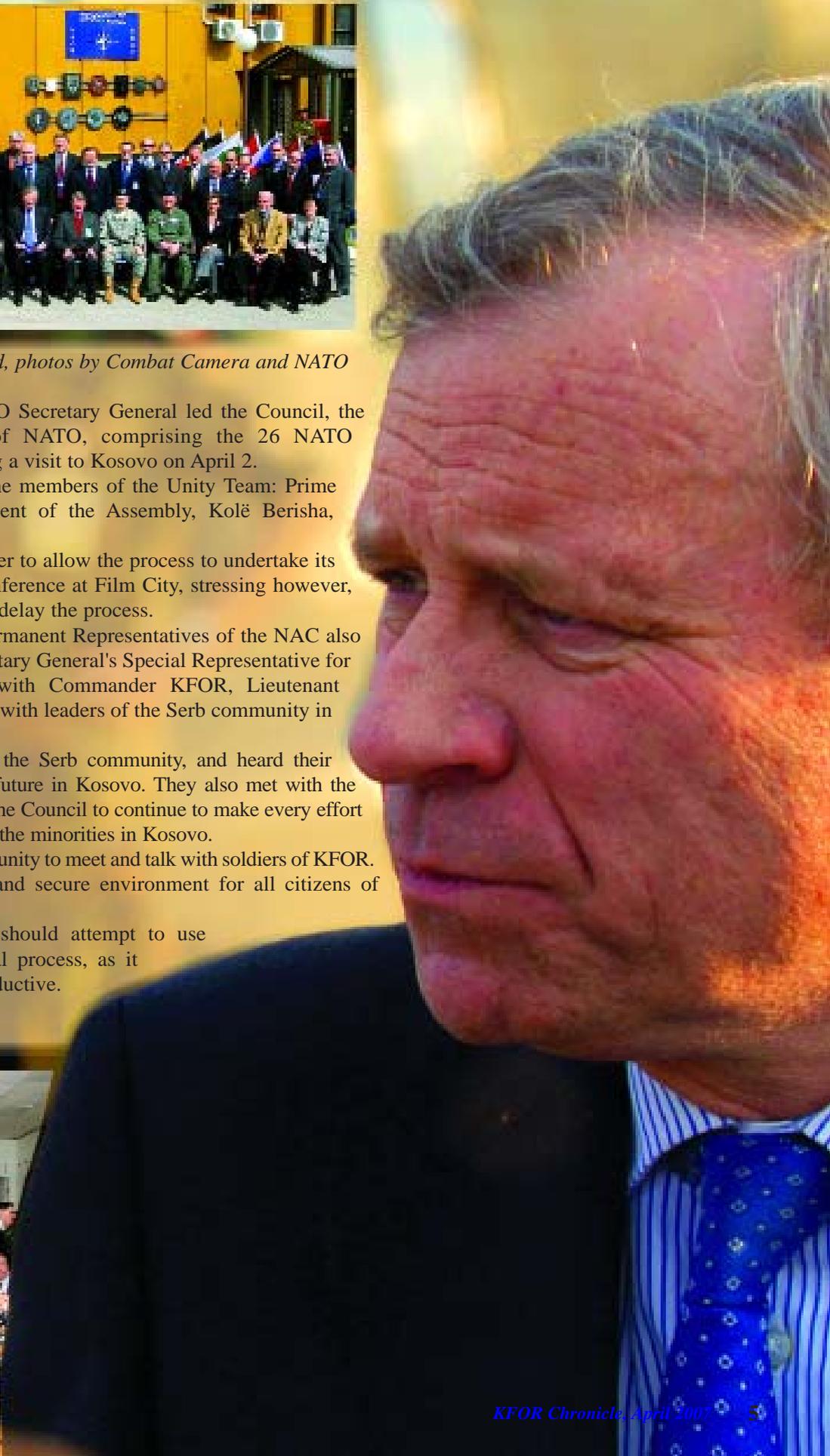
"I hope for a full resolution in order to allow the process to undertake its road", said Scheffer at a press conference at Film City, stressing however, that the UNSC should not rush or delay the process.

The Secretary General and the Permanent Representatives of the NAC also met with the United Nations Secretary General's Special Representative for Kosovo, Mr. Joachim Rucker, with Commander KFOR, Lieutenant General Roland Kather, as well as with leaders of the Serb community in Kosovo.

The Council met with leaders of the Serb community, and heard their concerns about their security and future in Kosovo. They also met with the 'Unity Team', which committed to the Council to continue to make every effort to protect the rights and security of the minorities in Kosovo.

During the visit, they had the opportunity to meet and talk with soldiers of KFOR. KFOR is here to ensure a safe and secure environment for all citizens of Kosovo during the status process.

Scheffer reiterated that no one should attempt to use violence to influence the political process, as it would be fruitless and counterproductive.



ON TOUR COMKFOR

NAC visit to Kosovo

APR 2 Briefing in HQ KFOR during North Atlantic Council visit, accompanied by Jaap de Hoop Scheffer, NATO Secretary General, General John Craddock, SACEUR and Lt. Gen. Karl W. Eikenberry, Deputy Chairman of the NATO Military Committee.



EU Parliament member's visit

APR 4 The Dutch member of European Parliament Mr. Joost Langendijk met with General Kather to gain information for the European Parliament.



Visit by German Protestant Bishop

APR 4 COMKFOR Lt. Gen. Roland Kather met German Protestant Bishop Dr. Johannes Friedrich in HQ KFOR.



Turkish Generals delegation visit to KFOR

APR 4 COMKFOR General Kather met with Turkish generals, led by Lt. Gen. Hasan Memisoglu.



Argentinean Flag-Lowering Ceremony

APR 5 COMKFOR bids farewell to the last Argentinean Contingent leaving Kosovo.



USAREUR Commander's visit

APR 5 COMKFOR General Kather met with General David D. McKiernan, U.S. Army forces in Europe Commander in HQ KFOR.

Trilateral meeting in HQ KFOR

APR 5 COMKFOR General Kather hosted the trilateral meeting with Mr. Joachim Rucker, UN SRSG in Kosovo and Mr. Agim Ceku, Kosovo Prime minister.



Civilian Easter reception

APR 6 General Kather at the civilian Easter reception at HQ KFOR.



Visit of Belgian MoD

APR 9 COMKFOR General Kather met with Belgian Minister of Defense, Mr. Andre Flahaut during his visit to KFOR.



our with KFOR



Visit to HQ MNTF S

General Kather visited the new Field Hospital in Prizren, accompanied by MNTF S Commander Brig. Gen. Erich Pfeffer.

APR 10



COMKFOR visit to HQ EUFOR

APR 12

General Kather met with EUFOR Commander Rear Admiral Hans-Jochen Witthauer during his visit to Sarajevo.



Visit by the German Federal Academy of Security Studies delegation to HQ KFOR

APR 13 COMKFOR General Kather met with the delegation, led by Dr. Rudolf Adam.



KPC generals seminar

APR 16

COMKFOR General Kather took part in the KPC generals seminar at HQ KFOR.



Lithuanian Undersecretary of the Ministry of Defense visit to Kosovo

APR 16 Renatas Norkus, Lithuanian Undersecretary of Defense met with COMKFOR General Kather in HQ KFOR during his participation in the KPC generals seminar.



Loyola School's anniversary

APR 16

General Kather took part in an anniversary celebration of Loyola School in Prizren.

Meeting with Norwegian Ambassador

APR 17 COMKFOR General Kather met with Mr. Kai Eide, Norwegian MFA Director of Political Affairs in Slatina/Sllatinë Airport.



COMKFOR's visit to the ORF Battalion

APR 24

General Kather met with soldiers from the German ORF Battalion in the AOR of MNTF C.



Visit by Members of the UN Security Council

APR 27/28 COMKFOR with the members of the United Nations Security Council during their visit to Kosovo.



Welcome to our K

Text by Maj. Ihor Levchenko, Ukrainian Army, photos by Armend Aqifi

On the pleasant sunny morning soldiers from Italy, Spain, Slovenia, Hungary and Romania were prepared to say goodbye to the outgoing and salute the incoming MNTF W commander on April 23.

During the transfer of authority ceremony, which took place in Camp Villaggio Italia in Pec/Peje, Brigadier General Antonio Venci replaced Brigadier General Attilio Claudio Borreca.

The ceremony was presided by COMKFOR Lieutenant General Roland Kather in presence of Mr. Agim Ceku, Kosovo Prime Minister, Mr. Scott Anderson, UNMIK Police Deputy Commander, Major General Tommaso Ferro, Italian Joint Command Deputy Commander and civilian and religious authorities.

During the last six months, MNTF W under authority of Brig. Gen. Borreca has conducted the mission of providing a safe and secure environment, stability and freedom of movement in their area of responsibility. General Kather personalized the ceremony by thanking Brig. Gen. Borreca and his soldiers for their service and dedication to KFOR: "I thank you, and your soldiers for your outstanding humanitarian efforts and sincere generosity toward the Kosovo people",



KFOR family

and added in Italian: "It has been a great pleasure to me to have worked with you as a member of our KFOR family".

When Brig. Gen. Borreca passed on the symbolic flag signifying the end of his tour of duty to Brig. Gen. Venci, forces saluted the outgoing and incoming commanders by a parade of different armored vehicles on the ground and helicopters in the sky above the parade square.

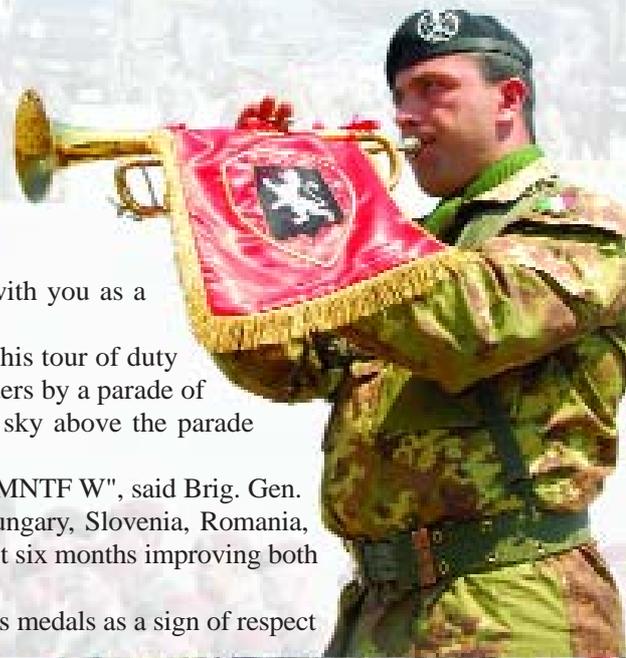
"I want to thank the remaining and outstanding personnel of MNTF W", said Brig. Gen. Borreca to his troops: "All contributing nations, Spain, Hungary, Slovenia, Romania, and Italy have working hard, side-by-side, during these last six months improving both MNTF W and the KFOR image".

The outgoing TF Commander was awarded with various medals as a sign of respect from different countries for the work well done, during the TOA ceremony.

"Brig. Gen. Venci, welcome on board, welcome to our KFOR family", said COMKFOR. General Kather told the new TF Commander in his speech: "The mission in MNTF W is far from finished.

We must maintain constant vigilance and be prepared for any response required. Antonio, you will have to devote your full attention to providing a safe and secure environment in the days and months to come".

Brigadier General Antonio Venci, welcome to our KFOR family!



KFOR bids farewell to Argentine



ARGENTINEAN ARMED FORCES
FROM 1999 TO 2007, ONE ARGENTINEAN ENGINEER
COMPONENT WAS DEPLOYED IN THIS BEAUTIFUL PLACE

OUR WISH FOR THE FUTURE...

"PEACE IN KOSOVO"

PEC-PEJA / KOSOVO / CASA DEL CAZADOR / ARGENTINA

rewell to ntineans

*Text by OR-6 Christin Michaud,
U.S. Air Force
Photos by MNTF W PIO*

The lowering of the Argentinean Flag in a ceremony at MNTF West's Villaggio Italia on April 5 was an emotional experience. It was the end of almost a decade of service from the nation to NATO and Kosovars. As the Argentinean contingent withdrawals, it leaves behind only two officers at the KFOR Headquarters.

The 45 officers and NCOs from the Navy, Air Force and Army of the 14th Joint Engineer Platoon were the end of a long line of 750 Argentinean soldiers that have supported the KFOR mission since 1999, said COMKFOR Lieutenant General Roland Kather during the ceremony.

Argentina was the only South American country here in Kosovo in support of NATO.

Their unit, an Engineer Compound was deployed in the vicinity of Pec/Peje at the Rugova Valley entrance. Their

predecessors started in Djakovica/Gjakove and then moved to Camp Hunter's House before being assigned to their current location in Pec/Peje.

The Argentineans were instrumental in providing a safe and secure environment in Kosovo as well as giving back to the communities through their many CIMIC projects since 1999.

"The support the Argentinean Government has given to KFOR over the years by your participation in this mission has been a great benefit to us all", said Lt. Gen. Kather. "Your departure is made even more significant because you will not be replaced and so Argentina will no longer be a contributing nation to our great family in Kosovo", he added.

Each contributing nation, no matter how long they stay in Kosovo leave a legacy behind. Thank you Argentina for being part of KFOR.



TITO'S BUNKER

*Text by Maj. Claudio C. Cervigni, Argentinian Army
Photos by Armend Aqifi*

From September 1999 to April 2007, the Hunter House has been the place where the Argentinian Engineer Compound was settled. The House was built in 1958 as a weekend resort for the Former Yugoslavian Government VIP's. These people use to come often for hunting or fishing and spent their holidays there. Even Marshall TITO, President of Yugoslavia, was here several times.

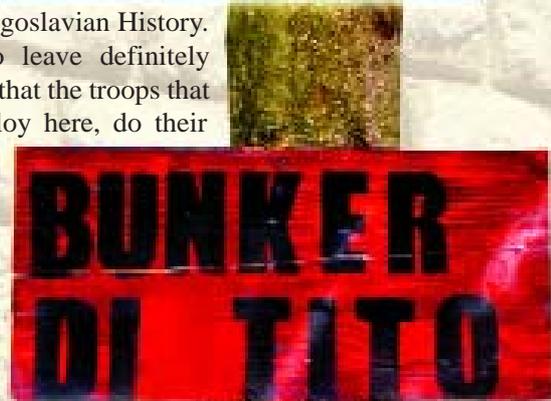
During normal days, this place was occupied by a Platoon from the Former Yugoslavian Army, just for security and guard. After Tito died in 1980, the place was progressively abandoned and occupied for NATO troops during the war in 1999. In September 1999 an Argentinian Engineer Platoon was deployed in the House until the contingent departed this month.

Although it is a beautiful house, maintaining the typical structure and architecture of Alpine Houses, the particularity of this one, is the Bunker that is situated underground close to one of the main entrances. Very significant are the paintings and symbols that cover the Bunker walls - probably made by Yugoslavian soldiers.

Hunter house and the Tito's bunker are historic places. Many people have already visited them and for sure will visit in the future. As KFOR soldiers, one of our duties is to preserve cultural and historic heritage. The Argentinian Engineers managed to protect and to take care of these very important



symbols of the Yugoslavian History. We are about to leave definitely Kosovo, we hope that the troops that are going to deploy here, do their best to preserve this monument in the proper way. And now Tito's bunker is guarded by 45 Italian soldiers from 3d Battery of TF AQUILIA.



Easter service in the cathedral of Prizren



*Text by Capt. Ariane von Groß
German Army*

*Photos by Sgt. Marco Büchl,
Austrian Army*

Close to 200 soldiers of the 16th German contingent took the opportunity to celebrate mass together in the Catholic cathedral on Easter Sunday.

COMKFOR Lieutenant General Roland Kather as well as Brigadier General Erich Pfeffer took part at the festive mass. The Bishop of Prizren, Dode Gjergji, delivered a sermon especially for the KFOR soldiers completely in German. He expressed his thanks to the soldiers and stressed: "Due to your presence here in Kosovo you want to ensure that

peace spreads out, as well as to bring the ethnicities and religions on a table in order to create a future for the coming generations full of hope. Your military mission to strengthen the peace is an Easter mission. It contributes considerably that our world will become a little bit more holy".

For OR-3 Robin Benedikt Easter Sunday was something special. During the mass he was baptized by the Catholic military priest of field camp Prizren, Klaus-Peter Lehner and confirmed by Bishop Dode Gjergji afterwards. The day before OR-5 Naomi K. was admitted to the Catholic church by Jesuit Father Walter Happel, head of the Loyola high school.



Jesus has risen

*Text by Col. Theodoros Panas,
Hellenic Army*

Easter in Greece is by far the holiest of the Greek Orthodox Church's holidays. The whole idea of Christianity is the victory of Jesus over death. Easter is also the most festive holiday, a celebration of the arrival of spring. Greeks leave the cities for mass to spend Easter in the countryside, near their own ancestral villages, where they witness the eternal rebirth of nature, the perpetual triumph of life over death.

According to the tradition of the Greek Orthodox Church, a 40-day-long fast is required by the faithful Christians before the day of Easter. This is a strict fast, an equivalent of a vegan diet, a demanding exercise of will. No animals or animal products may be consumed. Prayer and religious meditation culminate the week before Easter, the 'Holy Week' which was celebrated at Camp Rigas Fereos with all its magnificence and traditions from April 2 to 7.

Wednesday was devoted to the anointing the faithful with holy oil. On Thursday the churches were decorated and priests read bible passages from the Last Supper. Later, the Holy Communion was offered. In the evening, passages from the twelve gospels describing the Passion of Christ were read. This day was marked by the observance of Jesus' crucifixion.

On Good Friday, Christ was brought down from the cross and was placed on the epitaph. On Friday evening, the bier of Christ decorated with fresh flowers was carried out of the church at the camp. It was paraded through the streets in a lengthy funeral procession. The whole Greek

military community observed the service with devoutness. It symbolized the inevitable pain and despair, which we as helpless humans may experience on this earth when tragic events, lacking any explanation or meaning may hit upon us. The loss of her only child on the cross was the worst pain Virgin Mary could experience and since then, countless people from all over the world identify with her when hurting is so unbearable that even tears dry. Jesus is then returned to the church and mourned the whole night until dawn.

On Saturday, everyone went to church late in the evening, each carrying his own unlit candle. At midnight, the priest read the passage of resurrection and then announced the resurrection of Christ ('Christos Anesti'). He then lit the people's candles with the Holy Flame taken from Christ's nativity cave in Jerusalem.

The people embrace and kiss each other reciting: "Jesus has risen, truly he has risen"! Death, pain, and despair have been defeated. There is hope. They then tapped the tops of their red eggs - which symbolize Jesus' shed blood - and break their fasts, enjoying specially prepared dishes. The preparations were done in the traditional way; arrangements started the day before. Early



en!!!



in the morning the lambs were placed out over the burning coals and they were slowly roasted for several hours. Taking turns turning the lamb is another time-honored tradition of the Greek Easter. It was a picture of collective unanimity and enchantment, centered on the most honored unit of the Greek society, the family! And then the music and the traditional Greek dances began. The dancers formed a big circle, held each other's shoulders and started dancing. Soon, everyone was experiencing the unique feeling of shared euphoria.

May the spirit of Easter bring the long awaited peace and harmony on earth, and make this planet what it was at first: a paradise.



Thun



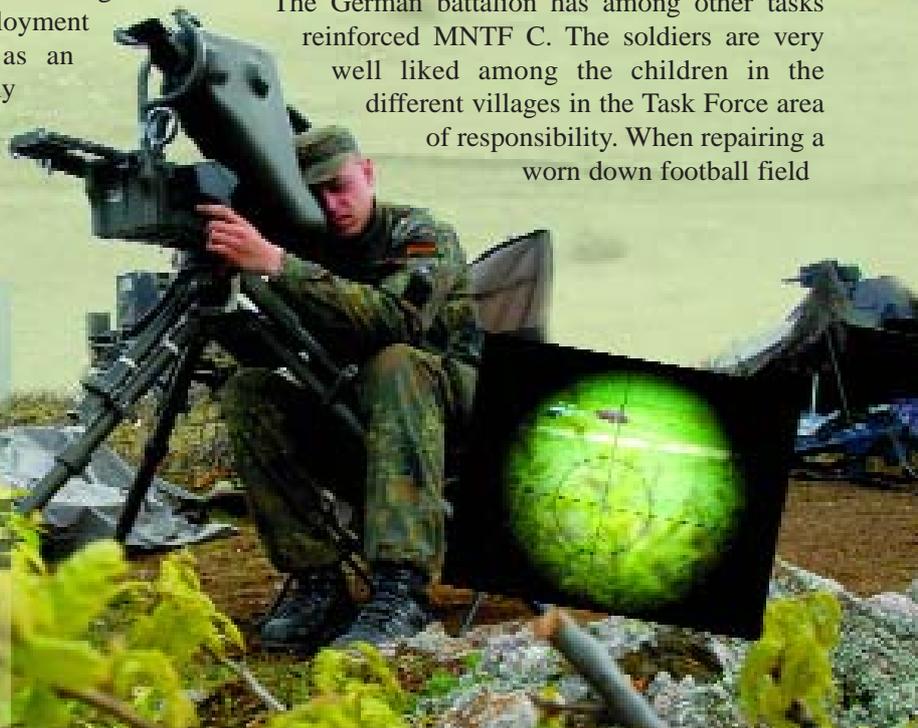
battalion is a mechanized infantry battalion. In Germany they serve also as a demonstration battalion. They are usually stationed in Munster in Lower Saxony in the northern part of Germany. The battalion is in an alert status meaning that they should be fully operational in their allocated area of operation within seven days from the alert call. The ORF Battalion can be used anywhere in the Balkans. At this time their equipment is stored in Kosovo.

*Text by Capt. Lars Oscarsson, Swedish Army
Photos by Armend Aqifi and
Combat Camera Team*

Between mid-March and the end of April the German Operational Reserve Force (ORF) Battalion has been reinforcing KFOR. The battalion's deployment in Kosovo is regarded as an exercise but it has been fully operational. The battalion consists of about 600 soldiers and officers. The

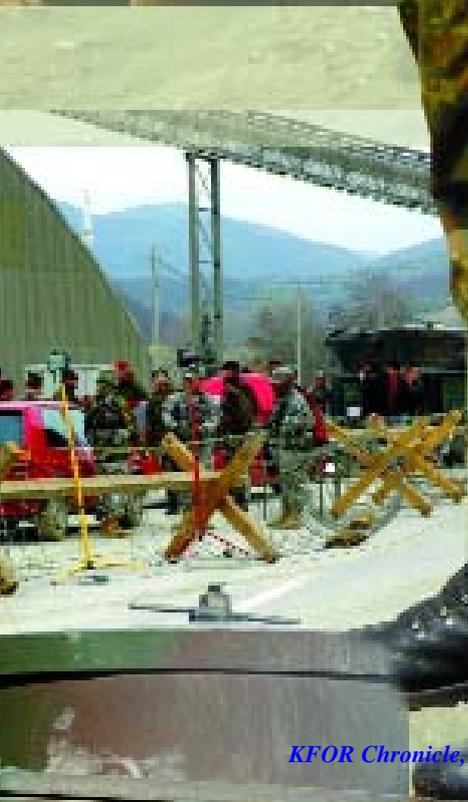
The ORF Battalion is equipped with more than 200 vehicles. As Armoured Personnel Carrier (APC) they use the German so called 'Fuchs' which means fox in English. While deployed in Kosovo the battalion has also exercised deployment by helicopter since they are to be used Kosovo wide.

The German battalion has among other tasks reinforced MNTF C. The soldiers are very well liked among the children in the different villages in the Task Force area of responsibility. When repairing a worn down football field



Thumbs up!

by a school the soldiers are completely surrounded by happy children. And this was probably the first time for many of the soldiers when they were asked to give their autographs. The soldiers also taught the children to do "thumbs up". So when the soldiers that normally patrol these areas see the children do thumbs up they should know that this means Tippy Toppo. The children definitely know it.



Joint Implementation Commission

The Joint Implementation Commission (JIC) was founded in 1999 in UNSCR 1244 and in the Military Technical Agreement (MTA). These basic documents were signed after the 78-day air war. MTA included and still includes some limits for the Serbian Armed Forces near the Astride Boundary Line (ABL). The primary task of JIC is to monitor, liaise and deconflict the fulfillment of the MTA requirements. JIC facilitates communication and understanding between KFOR and all Serbian parties in order to ensure overall compliance with the provisions in the MTA.

In order to have a harmonized and synchronized approach to the Serbian Armed Forces, all the Multinational Task Forces (MNTFs) have their own JIC branches which work together mostly with the Serbian Armed Forces, but also with forces of the bordering countries. HQ KFOR JIC has an advisory role toward the JIC teams of the MNTFs.

Cooperation with Serbian Security Forces

The contact between KFOR and Serbian Security Forces can be divided in three levels: high, main and Task Force level.

COMKFOR attends High Level Meetings, where he usually negotiates with the Chief of the General Staff of the Serbian Armed Forces (SAF). The main level meetings are conducted by HQ KFOR JIC and Serbian MoD MTA Implementation Commission meetings are organized routinely every two week weeks in Rudare, 15 kilometers northeast of Gate 3. The commissions are in contact on a 24/7 basis.

The representatives from UNMIK-Police, European Union Planning Team and Serbian Police also take part at the meetings. It is planned to start cooperation between KFOR

and SAF CIMIC sectors also. The meeting agenda includes issues like security along the ABL,

cooperation with Serbia has given us the possibility to exchange vital information.

More than 110 meetings between KFOR and SAF from local to high level and 255 synchronized patrols were conducted in 2006. The number of ABL violations is decreasing, but still KFOR commits more violations than SAF troops.

Cooperation with Albania, FYROM and Montenegro

Since KFOR has started cooperation with Albania, FYROM and Montenegro, the JIC branch has also been responsible for the arrangements with these countries.

Currently KFOR has a technical agreement on Temporary Operating Procedures (TOPA) only with Albania. The purpose of TOPA is both to establish effective procedures for a successful cooperation and to prevent incidents along the border.

KFOR is doing its best in order to prevent illegal activities along the border and boundaries and tries to continue the good cooperation on patrolling, exchange of information and training with the other forces.

violations of the boundary, information about forces on both sides of the ABL, common exercises, preparations for the High Level meetings or any other business that has been agreed in advance.

On the Task Force level there are three forums for exchanging information: command, coordination and local level. Contacts are held with different intervals where JIC teams from MNTFs meet their Serbian counterparts. For urgent contacts hotlines have been established between the Task Forces and the Brigades of SAF.

KFOR is conducting border/boundary control with Serbia by synchronized patrols. This has been an important contribution to confidence building and improving of safe and secure environment in Kosovo.

So far we have had excellent experience with these patrols. The



Kosovo's future status

When I first arrived in Pristina in March 2004, the unrest leaving 20 people dead and hundreds of houses and churches destroyed was still very present in everybody's minds and the International Community understood that it could not afford to continue the political limbo that Kosovo was in since 1999.

However, given the poor structures and many unsolved political questions, it was not possible to directly begin the discussion on the status of the province. At first, democratic and Western standards had to be implemented before the future status could be

determined. Kosovo since then has gone through a long process of institution building, creating market economy, facilitating returns of internally displaced people and freedom of movement, establishing rule of law and much more. UNMIK and the local Provisional Institutions of Self-Government (PISG) worked very hard on the eight standards which were set out by the Kosovo Standard Implementation Plan drafted in summer 2004. The report of Norwegian diplomat Kai Eide in October 2005 and later the Vienna negotiations led by the Finnish Ex-

President Martti Ahtisaari prepared the ground for the-probably-last chapter of the Kosovo status process. Since March 26 the UN Security Council is discussing UN Special Envoy Ahtisaari's proposal, which recommends a "supervised independence" for Kosovo. His proposal contains a multitude of regulations seeking to accommodate the minorities in Kosovo, first of all the Kosovo-Serbs. Thus, the comprehensive document contains provisions on the 'decentralization' (i.e. increased competencies of the municipal level in areas such as education and health), the protection of cultural heritage or the political representation of minorities in the Parliament. On the other hand the so called status package outlines the dissolution of the Kosovo Protection Corps and the stand up of the Kosovo Security Forces, a group of 2,500 men plus 800 reservists. This proposal which is the result of yearlong talks in Vienna, Pristina/Prishtinë and Belgrade, is now under scrutiny in New York and around the world members of the Security Council, UN's most important body, are asked to make up their minds. At present, countries like Ghana, Qatar, Peru or Indonesia have to decide on Martti Ahtisaari's proposal on the future status of Kosovo. Should the resolution follow the recommendation made by the Finnish mediator, UNMIK



*By Mr. Matthias Luttenberg
KFOR Political Advisor (POLAD)*

will seize to exist after a transition period of 120 days and the new International Civilian Organization (ICO) will take up its work. ICO's mandate is distinct from UNMIK's focusing rather on monitoring and mentoring than executive powers. It is still too soon to speculate how long this last phase in New York will take as the positions of UN Security Council's members are still far apart and a possible veto by one of the five permanent members of the body cannot be excluded. One thing is clear: Kosovo made it back on the agenda of the international community and KFOR is part of this very important process.



1 + 1 = 3

*Text by Lt. Col. Pertti IMMONEN, Finnish Army
Photos by CCT and JIC*

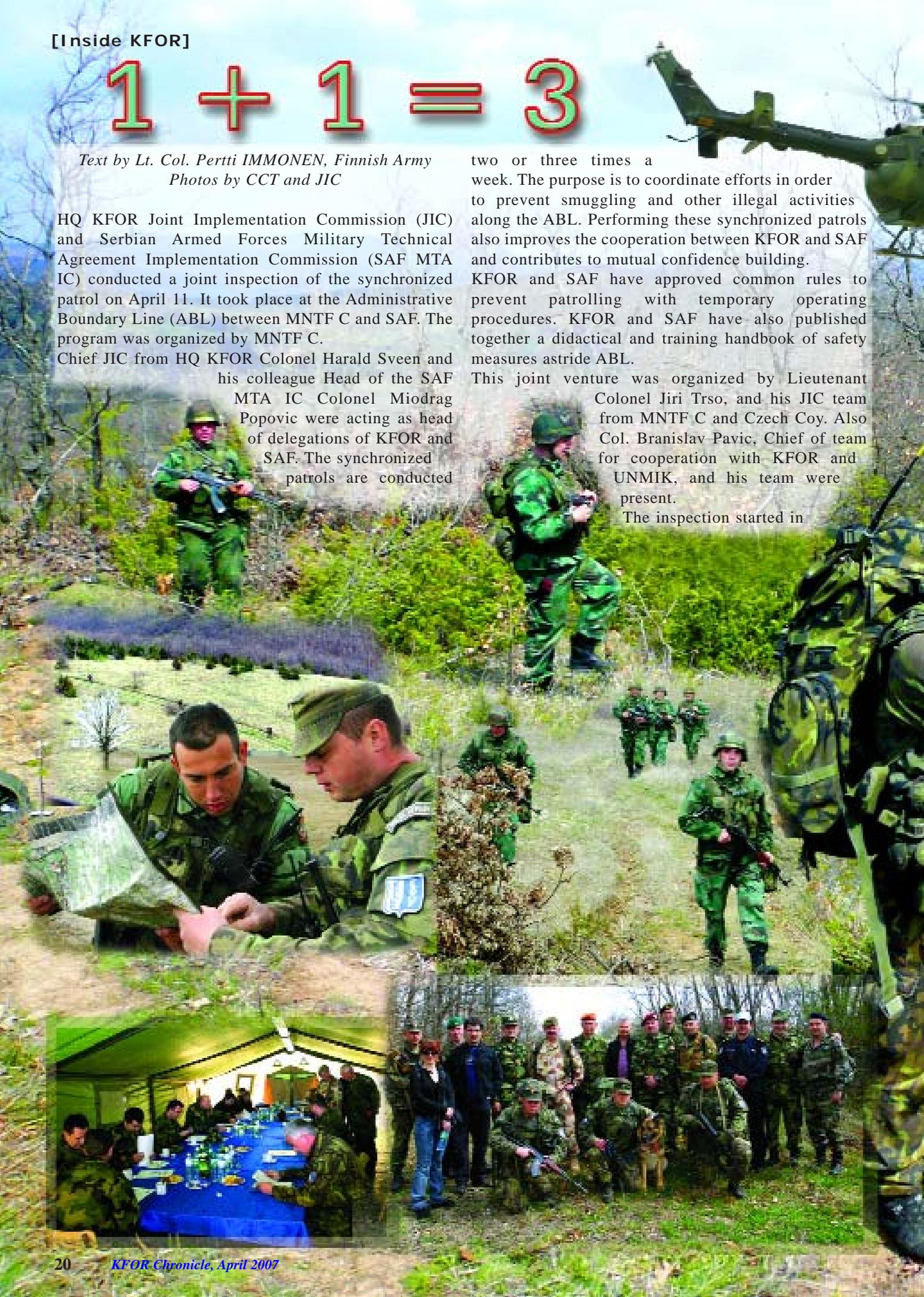
HQ KFOR Joint Implementation Commission (JIC) and Serbian Armed Forces Military Technical Agreement Implementation Commission (SAF MTA IC) conducted a joint inspection of the synchronized patrol on April 11. It took place at the Administrative Boundary Line (ABL) between MNTF C and SAF. The program was organized by MNTF C.

Chief JIC from HQ KFOR Colonel Harald Sven and his colleague Head of the SAF MTA IC Colonel Miodrag Popovic were acting as head of delegations of KFOR and SAF. The synchronized patrols are conducted

two or three times a week. The purpose is to coordinate efforts in order to prevent smuggling and other illegal activities along the ABL. Performing these synchronized patrols also improves the cooperation between KFOR and SAF and contributes to mutual confidence building. KFOR and SAF have approved common rules to prevent patrolling with temporary operating procedures. KFOR and SAF have also published together a didactical and training handbook of safety measures astride ABL.

This joint venture was organized by Lieutenant Colonel Jiri Trso, and his JIC team from MNTF C and Czech Coy. Also Col. Branislav Pavic, Chief of team for cooperation with KFOR and UNMIK, and his team were present.

The inspection started in



the morning in a friendly atmosphere with a short briefing near Gate 3. Col. Sveen explained the procedure and the schedule of the inspection in detail.

After clarifying some questions it was time to start. The starting point was at Gate 3, four Czech soldiers with a military dog and four SAF soldiers of the 125th Motorized Brigade conducted the patrol.

Normally there are two teams but today they were accompanied by an inspection team. That means that sometimes $1+1=$ not 2, but $1+1=3!$

The teams took their way along the ABL direction east while the inspectors were following them. After two kilometers of ground patrolling the chiefs from both parties were transported back and continued the inspection of the whole ABL of MNTF C by helicopter. The

others continued the inspection on the ground. The inspection patrol finished without particular incidents back at Gate 3. Lt. Col. Trso hosted a field lunch for all participants. The participants enjoyed their food and the joint inspection ended with a hot wash, where the chiefs stressed again the professional and confident level of cooperation and communication between KFOR and SAF in accordance with the approved mutual agreements. Both parties agreed that this kind of common inspection is useful and will be continued in the future!



[Inside KFOR]

HQ KFOR FIRE AND RESCUE SECTION

Igni Obsta

Text and photos by 1st Lt. Maksym Klunnyk, Ukrainian Army

On March 12, at approximately 2330 hrs, KFOR HQ was awakened by the fire alarm. People immediately left their accommodations, not only to get them to safety but also because of the regulations and to see what was going on. Three minutes later the firefighter crew was on the scene of the accident and took the situation under control.

That morning I visited KFOR HQ Fire Brigade. The purpose of my visit was to familiarize myself with their work and to understand their daily business better. You see them after an alert on the scene of accidents - but what are they doing the rest of their time?

The day started with the shift change. During the next 30 minutes all equipment, uniform and vehicles were very attentively checked by both shifts and now the new shift is ready to work.

After this procedure was finished I had talked with HQ KFOR Fire Marshal Mr. Benjamin Banks from Canada: "We belong to the Headquarters Support Group and our team consists of 30 local firefighters and me". "It's really a high-professional team and may be the busiest one: our AOR is Film City, Pristina/Prishtinë airfields, Camp Slim Lines and Camp Nothing Hill, but the number one priority is the Film City helipad", he added.

The fire alarm entrapped our conversation. The group of firefighters stopped their coffee break and like a flash they get - fully equipped - on their fire truck". It is time for training", explained Benjamin.

This exercise was conducted at the training area located in Film City. "This is a really well prepared and organized place for training", explained Mr. Banks. "At this place firefighters can prepare for any extreme situation and practice in providing help for people in different situations".

During the next two hours firefighters were trained on how to handle the fire in different types of buildings, how to help victims of a car accident, and how to fight the fire when there is the threat of chemical poisoning.

For me that was the funniest part of the training. I named it "alien invention" because when I saw one of the firefighters wearing special chemical protection he really looked like an alien.

In addition I want to mention that the Film City Fire Brigade team shows a very high level of skill in the work they do. They convinced me now that in case of any extreme situation the lives of all KFOR soldiers and civilians are in good and highly-professional hands. In addition I wish them to have very silent nights without fire alarm and clean roads without any car accidents. Good luck!



are - Standing Against Fire!



The flying hippos

*Text by 1st Lt. Maksym Klunnyk,
Ukrainian Army
Photos by Armend Aqifi*

"They will come in a few minutes. We can see as they fly from the direction of KEK", said Lieutenant Colonel Paul Thibodeau, Heliops chief for KFOR.

Five minutes later I recognized two big dots just above KEK.

They appeared bigger and bigger, and soon the two

dots became really huge helicopters. I saw them here for the first time. When they came closer they looked like huge hippos I saw once in a zoo when I was a child. Surprisingly the name of this Czech Republic unit is "Flying Hippos" - this assured me that my association was a good one. The type of this aircraft is the multifunctional and famous "MI-17", the most used helicopter in the Soviet Army. Especially, during the war in Afghanistan this helicopter showed its excellent technical strength and strong fire power.

After the helicopters land I had the opportunity to speak with the unit commander Major Milan





was a passenger or some official who came together with the crew but this lady was one of the helicopter pilots. Moreover, 1st Lieutenant Jitka Sehnoutkova is one of the first female pilots in the Czech Republic Air Force.

"It was my dream to become a pilot, and now I'm here", she said. "This is my first mission, and my dream for this mission is to make a training flight in formation with other types of helicopters".

J3 Air Chief Colonel Roberto Mangini told me the reason why they are here: "They came to support the tactical reserve units of COMKFOR like MSU and KTM. Additionally they will provide support for all of KFOR, not only for one Task Force area like it was in the past".

After the crew finished their routine procedures to prepare the helicopters for the next mission, we left the helipad and the two giant hippos remained behind to warm up in the bright shining sun.

Koutny. "We are here to provide support for COMKFOR. Our unit can provide transportation of troops and loads. We are also ready for reconnaissance, rescue and MEDEVAC tasks", he explained.

Deputy Commander Major General Roberto Bernardini welcomed the crews to KFOR. He familiarized himself with this huge helicopter and even tried out the co-pilot seat to get a better feeling for the helicopter. "I hope I will have an opportunity to fly on it soon", said Maj. Gen. Bernardini.

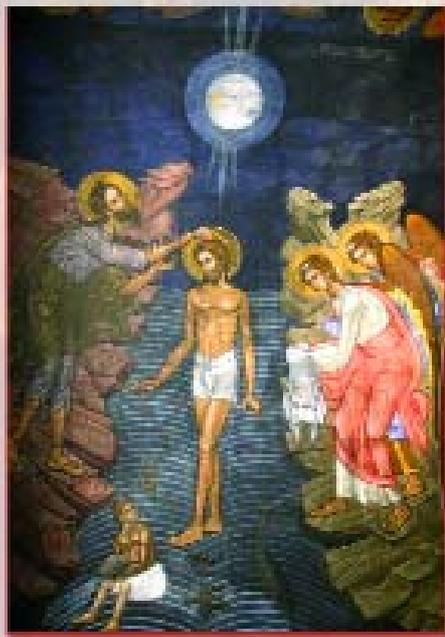
An unexpected shining blinded me and I saw a female in uniform with red hair just inside the helicopter. I thought it





Vis

*Text by OR-6 Christin Michaud, U.S. Air Force
Photos by Combat Camera Team and Spanish PIO*



Nestled up on the hill overlooking Istok/Istog is the Monastery of Gorioc.

This monastery dates back to the 14th century and is special to the surrounding community, because it is one of the last Eastern Orthodox churches in the immediate area that hasn't been destroyed.

Many of the monasteries in Kosovo have been the subject of attacks since the conflict started in 1999. In order to protect the heritage, this and other monasteries here are protected by KFOR soldiers. The Monastery of Gorioc is protected 24-hours a day by Spanish KFOR soldiers assigned to Espana Base.

Mother Antusa knows there are people out there who are destroying their churches. She explained however, that God gives strength to everyone - to the just ones and even the one who are not so good.

Her faith is what keeps her strong.

She and three other nuns keep the household of the monastery in order. Ensuring calmness and quietness is the most important for them. The monastery is a second home for many. People who were married or baptized there often come back to visit.

Others who visit are those who lost their homes. In many cases their land is occupied or they don't have the papers or documents they need. After 7 years, many don't even know where their house is. They come to see what is left and are often frustrated and sad. They turn to the monastery where they find comfort and pray. The hardest part is knowing

vision of faith



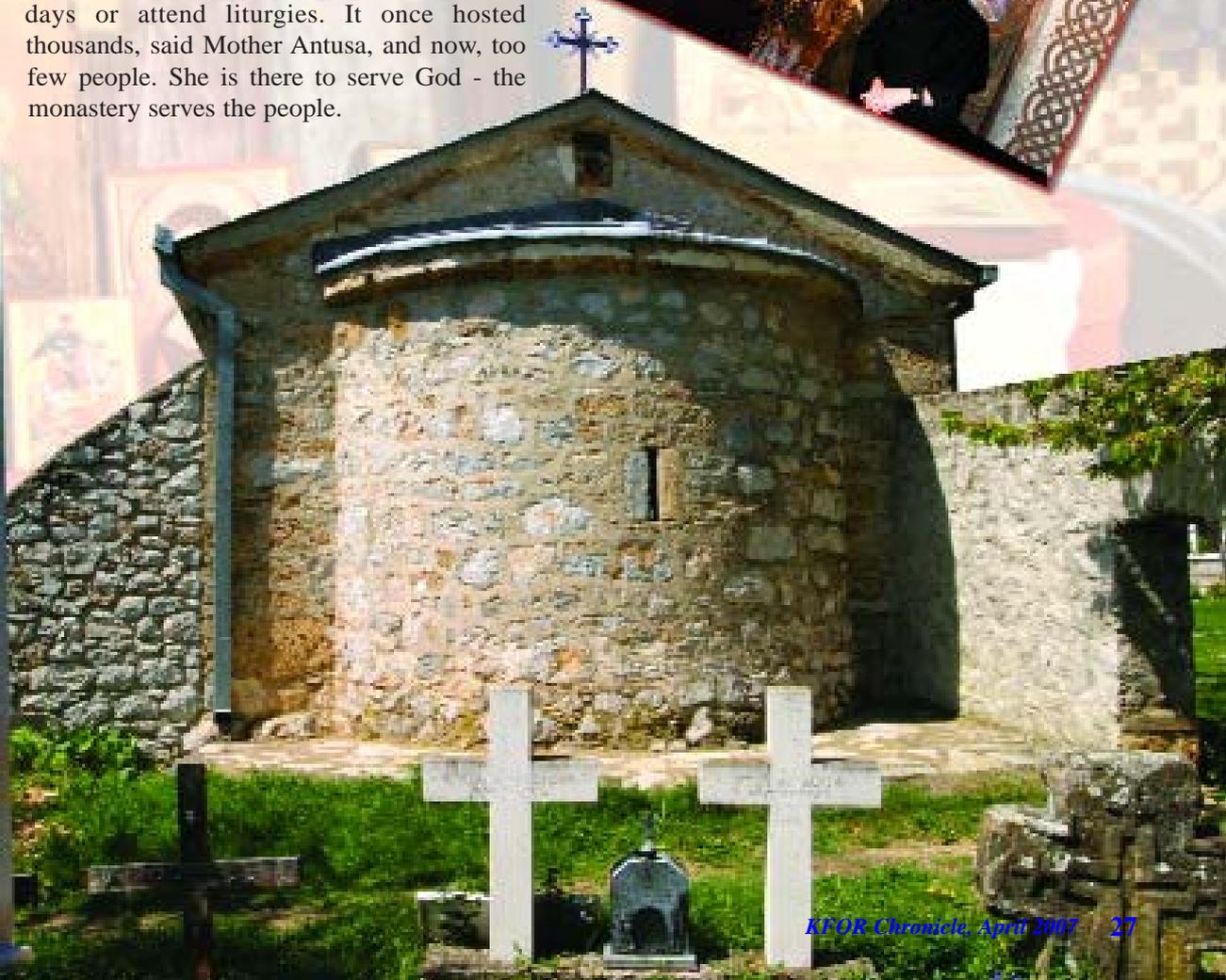
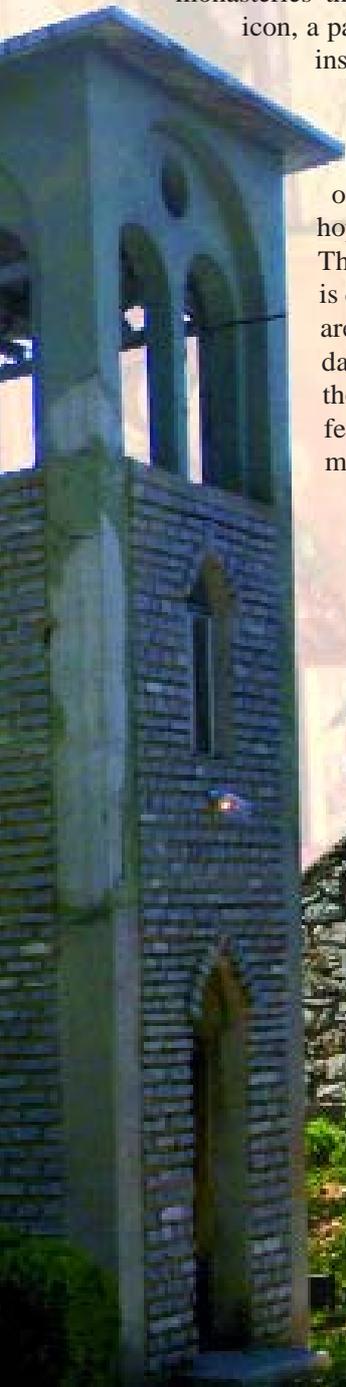
she can't help them, all Mother Antusa can do is listen. In some cases for people who are planning to return, the nuns offer them a place to stay while they build or rebuild their homes.

The church is small but offers a great deal of comfort and symbolizes hope. People who can't be healed by doctors have been healed here. In fact, the monastery was built as a tribute to St. Nicholas who restored King Stefan Decanski's burned eyes and allowed him to regain his eye sight.

A fresco of the Holy King is displayed inside the church representing this symbolic act. There are several other frescos and paintings, but only two originals from the 14th century. They are displayed in front of the altar. The others were damaged. The church was renewed in the 16th and 18th centuries. Many of the paintings now in the church were rescued from other monasteries that have been destroyed. Another religious icon, a painting of the Holy Mother is also displayed inside. Its origin is unknown. It just appeared one day and is said to have a miracle effect.

Any comfort the monastery and nuns can offer to its people is miraculous. There is hope.

The Monastery of Gorioč is small in size, but is quite sizeable in meaning for Serbians in the area as the only place left to celebrate holy days or attend liturgies. It once hosted thousands, said Mother Antusa, and now, too few people. She is there to serve God - the monastery serves the people.



*Text by 1st Lt. Maksym Klunnyk,
Ukrainian Army and OR-6 Christin Michaud,
U.S. Air Force
Photos by Armend Aqifi*

Nothing makes you as happy as seeing a child smile. After the eight months away from my daughter I clearly realized this. We have a lot of nice things during and in our life but when you see your child happy this is the best feeling you can have.

That is what happened with me during my first visit to a children's center located in downtown Pristina/Prishtinë. On this bright spring day I was invited by my friends OR-6 Gabriel Ursescu and OR-6 Ronald Leger.

The Center for Rehabilitation Mother and Children opened its doors in 1998 and is there for more than 150 children. The purpose of the center is to help the children forget the trauma of the war, provide clothes and even education. On average, 30 to 40 children visit the center on a given day.

The center is important for the children because they have only this humanitarian institution, where they find support and help them to forget all the trouble, explained Nina, one of the women from the center. The majority of these children lost a parent or parents in the war. The center is a place for them to turn at no cost.

Over the years, KFOR troops from Film City have offered help to the center in the way of clothing donations and other items. Recently, Gabriel and other volunteers had a meeting with the parents to ask what they could do for the children. The overwhelming response was to teach the children English.

KFOR has come together and made an effort to teach these children English. Different groups go down at least once a week to make a difference and share their knowledge.

On this day they provided their weekly English class. Gabriel and his friends made it in a very interesting way: every child received a book titled "The Hunchback of Notre Dame" with a lot of good illustrations in it, and the lesson started with the reviewing of the previous lesson material. After they began with the new learning material, Gabriel's comrade, OR-6 David Witty started reading the new part of the book. The children's attention was immediately concentrated on him - it looked as if everything around them stopped, like time and even their breathing stopped because you could hear only the child's voices when they repeated after David.

When the reading was finished students had the possibility to ask about the meaning of unknown words and Gabriel gave them the explanations of the meaning. Also parents of some of the children came to see how it works. I noticed that they almost felt like students as well because sometimes they also repeated after David.

During the lesson Ronald was busy with one of the

children's center teachers; they had a discussion about the daily problems in the center and how they could solve them.

Unfortunately this exciting lesson was finished and it was time for us to go back to Film City. Before we left, the children came to say goodbye. It was so hard for me to leave them. "Goodbye, come back soon, we will miss you, we love you", I heard several of the children say.

These KFOR Soldiers have also organized several charity events to raise money for the children like a blues event in Film City on April 1. It was a wonderful barbecue with great music - people had the opportunity to talk and enjoy a wonderful performance of classic and famous blues songs and ballads. As a result, more than 4,000 Euro was collected and passed to this children's center.

At last I had only one question in my mind - Why? Why instead of enjoying your free time are you spending it trying to help somebody else's children?

When asked some of the volunteers told me that they enjoy helping children and Ronald stressed: "We can change the world we live in and the lives around us. To be called an angel by the children is priceless".

People, friends - you are making a great job!



To be





...e called an angel



Come together



The Big Band of the
German Bundeswehr
Kosovo concert tour
23 musicians
Motto: Come together



April 24
HQ KFOR, Film City
400 participants

April 25
HQ MNTF S, Prizren
900 participants





Name: Theodoros Panas

Rank: Colonel

Nationality: Hellenic

Home unit: Hellenic Army General Staff

Unit in KFOR: Commander in Hellenic Tactical Command

About the mission: This is my second mission in Kosovo and the first as the Commander of the Hellenic Forces deployed in this region. The nature and the form of the tasks and the missions given is different now, due to changes taken place to the political and social scene, the reformation and the reshaping of the KFOR Forces and the nature of threat. I have two Hellenic Mechanized Infantry Battalions, the National Support Unit and one Armenian CRC Platoon under my command and it is a great challenge and unique experience to operate and work in a multinational environment.

Family reaction: My wife is very understanding and very supportive, backing up my decisions and giving me the strength to keep on trying. I have one son, Efstathios, who is a young lieutenant and I believe soon he will taste the experience of a mission abroad, in a multinational environment.

Plans after the mission: After the end of my tour and a short holiday, I will return to my previous assignment in the Hellenic Army General Staff and I will welcome my next international appointment.

Name: Cathy Grand

Rank: OR-9

Nationality: French

Home unit: Etat-major de force No1 - Besançon

Unit in KFOR: KFOR HQ DCOS OPS

About the mission: This is my fourth mission. It is my second one here in KFOR HQ, Film City. Not only has my first mission, being only last year, given me experience and knowledge of the HQ but it gave me the chance to see all my friends again. I feel that I am very lucky to have been given the chance to work in an international environment. On one hand it allows me to improve my English (which I feel I really need) and on the other hand it gives me the opportunity to meet new friends from other countries and learn about their customs and way of life.

Family reaction: I'm a single woman. I live with my grandfather and my brother. They really miss me and of course I miss them also. However they are very understanding and they support me during my missions.

Plans after the mission: My tour ends in July and after I have a vacation in August I will go back to my unit to prepare for future missions.



Name: Michael S. Eames

Rank: Specialist

Nationality: American

Home unit: 29th Infantry Division Virginia Army National Guard

Unit in KFOR: Task Force Red Dragon MNTF E

About the mission: I am glad to serve with 35 different nations on the KFOR peacekeeping mission. I served with the 82nd Airborne Division in Iraq in 2003-2004. This mission is much different. My unit and I are helping people here as much as we can and we are doing great things for the people and the future of Kosovo.

Family reaction: My family and friends all miss me and can't wait until I return home but they support me on the mission and are behind me 100 percent.

Plans after the mission: I plan on having a lot of fun when I get back to the States. I am going to hike the entire Appalachian Trail and I am going to Disney World. I am also going to continue volunteering with my local rescue squad and finish my B.A. in International Relations at Liberty University.

Rugova Valley

