

# KFOR

# CHRONICLE



8<sup>th</sup> Edition

August 31<sup>st</sup> 2009



# FIRE HAWK

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# COMKFOR's Foreword



## One year of Unity of Effort!

It is time to handover the command of the Kosovo Force to Lt. Gen. Markus Bentler. After one intensive and challenging year, I think we have progressed with our mission towards the end state. I want just to mention some key points that have marked our way during my command. From the operational perspective, KFOR has finally synchronized all the activities and the Effects Based Approach to Operations has provided, inter alia, a very useful tool to assess the situation. This has led KFOR on the way to the following phase, the Deterrent Presence. Talking about the non-kinetic approach, the introduction of the Kosovo Development Zones' Concept has brought KFOR, the Institution in Kosovo and the International Community to a better coordination

and cooperation. Eventually, the New Tasks assigned to KFOR have been dealt with high professionalism and competence. We have successfully stood down the Kosovo Protection Corps and we are standing up the Kosovo Security Force (KSF). The latter has already achieved the Initial Operational Capability (IOC). This is giving to KSF the necessary boost for the future. I am leaving Kosovo with a bittersweet feeling: the joy for the great achievements, the displeasure for leaving Kosovo and my Kosovar Friends together with all the International Community Representatives and KFOR's Soldiers.

I would like to thank you all and to wish you all the best for a brighter future.

Giuseppe E. Gay  
Lieutenant General  
Italian Army  
KFOR XIII Commander





*"To everything there is a season and a time to every purpose under the heaven."*

It is the season and the time for me to say farewell to you, the wonderful readers of the KFOR Chronicle. It is time for this captain to sail off (in the words of a sailor, my excellent Deputy, Andre Sabzog) to new horizons. I have been here for about six months and consider myself privileged to have been part of the military life here in Kosovo. I have been especially honored to work as the Chief of the Public Affairs Office team. You have been given one of the most challenging and exciting tasks, "to uphold the image of KFOR," and you have consistently fulfilled with sacrifice and professional excellence. You have also carried out your duties in a manner that reflects well upon your countries. Your Nations could ask no

more. I would also like to introduce you to the next captain of this ship, Colonel Manfred Wittig. I know that he will bring fresh energy and enthusiasm to the Branch. My work would not have been as joyful or successful without the support and collaboration of all the Flag Officers, especially the JEC Chief and his Team, with whom we have worked so closely. Last, but not least, I wish to thank the "J heads" inside KFOR HQ and all the PAOs of the MNTFs. We had a great time and I wish you a successful and peaceful continuation of your tour in KFOR and a safe trip back home.

All the best and take care,

*Stefano Schiappacasse*  
Colonel Italian Army  
Chief Public Affairs Office



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**Nations within KFOR:**

**NATO Nations**

- |                |                |
|----------------|----------------|
| Belgium        | Luxembourg     |
| Bulgaria       | Netherlands    |
| Canada         | Norway         |
| Croatia        | Poland         |
| Czech Republic | Portugal       |
| Denmark        | Romania        |
| Estonia        | Slovakia       |
| France         | Slovenia       |
| Germany        | Spain          |
| Greece         | Turkey         |
| Hungary        | United Kingdom |
| Italy          | United States  |
| Latvia         |                |

**Non-NATO Nations**

- Armenia
- Austria
- Finland
- Ireland
- Morocco
- Sweden
- Switzerland
- Ukraine

**KFOR Structure**

- HQ KFOR
- MNTF Centre
- MNTF North
- MNTF West
- MNTF South
- MNTF East
- KTM
- MSU
- HSG
- COMMZ(S)



# UNITY OF

## July 29, 2009

The new Supreme Allied Commander of Europe (SACEUR), Admiral James Stavridis, United States Navy, visited Kosovo with a delegation. They met with COMKFOR, Lieutenant General Giuseppe E. Gay, to have an update on the security situation in Kosovo and KFOR. It was Admiral James Stavridis' first visit to Kosovo since succeeding General John Craddock.



## August 01, 2009

Kosovo Force Commander, Lieutenant General Giuseppe E. Gay, hosted a Swiss delegation headed by Mrs. Karin Keller-Sutter, Swiss Senior Executive Representative and Head of the Department of Justice and Police. During her visit, Mrs. Keller-Sutter; Chief Swiss Armed Forces Joint Staff, Major General Peter Stutz; and Swiss Ambassador, H.E. Lukas Beglinger, discussed the current situation in Kosovo and KFOR.

## August 06, 2009

Kosovo Force Commander, Lieutenant General Giuseppe E. Gay, greeted Hungarian delegation headed by Mrs. Agnes Vadai, Senior State Secretary and second in charge, Hungarian Ministry of Defense. During her courtesy visit, Mrs. Agnes Vadai discussed the current situation in Kosovo and KFOR.



# EFFORT



## August 13, 2009

The new NATO Secretary General, Mr. Anders Fogh Rasmussen, visited Kosovo for the first time. After arrival, NATO Secretary General, together with Kosovo Force Commander, Lieutenant General Giuseppe E. Gay, moved to KFOR Headquarters, where an office call with COMKFOR and situational update took place.

NATO Secretary General expressed sincere thanks to COMKFOR for his hard work during the last year.



## August 19, 2009

Commander KFOR, Lieutenant General Giuseppe E. Gay, hosted Czech Prime Minister, Mr. Jan Fischer during his one-day visit to Kosovo together with Czech Minister of Defense, Mr. Martin Bartak. The main discussions during the Office Call were the future of Kosovo Forces, evolving to "Deterrent Presence," cooperation with Kosovo Police Service and local capability building.

## August 26, 2009

Kosovo Force Commander, Lieutenant General Giuseppe E. Gay greeted Mr. Christopher Dell, new U.S. Ambassador to Kosovo. It was the first visit of Mr. Dell to KFOR Headquarters after his appointment. Mr. Dell discussed with COMKFOR the current situation in Kosovo.



# NATO SECRETARY GENERAL, MR. AND



*Story and photos by  
KFOR Chronicle Team*

On 13 August 2009, the new NATO Secretary General, Mr. Anders Fogh Rasmussen, with delegation, visited Kosovo for the first time. The Secretary General's visit was full of events and meetings.

After arrival to Slatina military airport, NATO Secretary General, together with Kosovo Force Commander Lieutenant General Giuseppe E. Gay, moved by



helicopter to KFOR Headquarters, where an office call with COMKFOR and situational update took place. During the joint meeting in Pristina with President Mr. Fatmir Sejdiu and Prime Minister Hashim Thaci, Mr. Anders Fogh Rasmussen expressed his satisfaction with the progress that was made in the last ten years in Kosovo. NATO Secretary General reassured the leaders of Institutions in Kosovo that Kosovo remained one of the priorities of the Alliance. Mr. Rasmussen added that for the Balkans, as indeed for the Euro-Atlantic community more broadly, he was fully committed to the principle of NATO's Open Door. Membership is not a right - countries must be ready. However, NATO enlargement has already demonstrated its power to spread stability and promote reform. NATO Secretary General expects that this will continue during his tenure. Later, NATO Secretary General and COMKFOR spoke with Mr. Fehmi Mujota, Ministry of Kosovo Security Force (KSF) and KSF Commander Lieutenant General Sulejman Selimi on issues relating to NATO support of KSF activities. One of the last meetings with local representatives was briefed with Chairman of Serb Independent Liberal Party (SLS) Slobodan Petrovic. After, Mr. Rasmussen moved to Multinational Task Force North (MNTF-N) Headquarters in Camp Maréchal de Lattre de Tassigny, where he had meetings with MNTF-N Commander Brigadier General Patrick Ribayrol and local authorities, and visited the camp troops. NATO Secretary General also participated in a helicopter flight over the area of responsibility in MNTF-N, the northern part of Kosovo.



At the end of his visit, the NATO Secretary General gave a press conference in the Slatina Military Airport for media representatives. Having answered the journalist's questions, Mr. Rasmussen spoke about future KFOR reduction of troops in the context of improved security situation in Kosovo and NATO readiness to support Kosovo in the future.

The NATO Secretary General expressed sincere thanks to COMKFOR for his hard work during the last year.

# ERS FOGH RASMUSSEN, VISIT KOSOVO





# KFOR WELCOME

*Story by Spc. (OR-4) Darriel Swatts, 69th Public Affairs Detachment, US Army*

CAMP BONDSTEEL, Kosovo - Croatia, nestled between the Adriatic Sea and Serbia, became part of the NATO-sponsored KFOR mission for the first time on July 2, 2009.

"This is our first time being part of the KFOR mission," said Major (OF-3) Michael Krizanec, National Contingent Commander, Senior National Representative and pilot for the Multi-Role Helicopter Squadron, Croatian Air Force. "It is also the first time the Croatian Air Force has deployed to a NATO mission."

The Croatians are stationed at Camp Bondsteel in Multinational Task Force-East (MNTF-E); however, they are not part of that task force, they are part of KFOR Main.



# OMES CROATIA



"When we arrived here at Bondsteel we did mandatory, in theater training like area orientation flights with [the Alaska National Guard] Task Force Arctic Eagle," said Krizanec. "It goes to show the brotherhood that is between pilots extends across nations and we are here to help each other."

Some of the training they did prior to arriving at Camp Bondsteel included air insertion and extraction, medical evacuation, sling load, fire fighting and general transportation.

"We trained with the U.S. prior to coming here," said Master Sgt. Denis Burangi, crew chief for the Mi-171 Hip Multi-Role helicopter, Croatian Air Force. "We trained with the U.S. Navy personnel, Air Force pilots, and Army Special Forces prior to coming here to KFOR."

Due to the size of their aircraft, 69 feet 10 inches rotor diameter with the weight of 15,700 pounds and a length of 60 feet 5 inches, and the amount of deployed personnel, they could not be stationed at any other base except Camp Bondsteel. The Mi-171 is a Russian built helicopter that can sling load up to four tons of equipment or carry up to 24 fully equipped soldiers.

"I would like to express my gratitude to the U.S. Army, who was willing and able to take us in to Camp Bondsteel," said Krizanec. "The bottom line is that if it weren't for the U.S. Army and Bondsteel, our deployment would be almost impossible. They are the only base in KFOR that could take us in."

Now that they have found a base to call home for the remainder of their three-month rotation and have been trained in the area flight

patterns, they continue to fly their way into the history books, doing whatever mission comes their way, following their unit's motto 'You ask, We deliver'.



# Spanish KFOR:

*Story by OF-4 Carlos Lapresta, Spanish Army and KFOR Chronicle Team  
Photos by KFOR Chronicle Team*

On the 31st of July, at 1230hrs, under the leadership of Brigadier General Roberto Perretti, Multinational Task Force West (MNTF-W) Commander, and Colonel (OF-5) Ricardo Serrano Cueto, Senior of the Spanish Contingent in Kosovo, a military parade took place at Camp España's Cervantes Square in Istog/Istok. The ceremonies were aimed at marking the Transfer of Authority from KSPAGT XXIII "Castilla y León" and the Spanish Redeployment Support Unit (KSPUAR, in its Spanish acronym) and end of operational activities for the Spanish KFOR troops.

Different KFOR military and civilian authorities from the local municipality, and a number of civilian representatives from the various ethnic groups attended the festive event. The function started from ceremonial formation of Spanish troops at the marching pad of the camp. During the ceremony Brigadier General Perretti awarded the Non-article 5 NATO Medal to OF-5 Javier García Blázquez, Commander of the transferred KSPAGT XXIII.

After presentation, OF-5 García Blázquez addressed the attendees in both English and Spanish with a speech in which he thanked local authorities and representatives from the ethnic groups for their help and cooperation. He also dedicated words of gratitude to General Perretti, for his committed support at all times. In his speech, he highlighted the indefatigable work done by KSPAGT XXIII. He encouraged the KSPUAR members to follow the same path and to keep the same concentration in order to give the farewell to this mission in September with the inner pride of leaving behind a well-performed duty.



# mission is done

During Brigadier General Perretti speech, he thanked the Spanish for their dedication and great performance in their relations with the locals, also pointing out the high military values proven by the Spanish soldiers. He stressed that Spain could well be proud of its soldiers. Finally, he emphasized the loyalty and full commitment shown by OF-5 García Blázquez, closing his speech with a warm dedication to all those who died in the course of duty serving in this land for the past ten years of mission.

Then two Spanish soldiers accompanied by standard-bearers laid a wreath at the commemorative obelisk to all Spanish soldiers, who gave their lives during mission in Kosovo. For a while, the solemn melody played to show respect while all flags were lowered slowly and reholstered. The ceremony concluded with a parade by the Spanish KFOR sub-units and tactical vehicles, which left a great impression on attendees. Spanish soldier demonstrated excellent skills in marching and driving tactical vehicles during parade.

KSPAGT XXIII "Castilla y León" has scoured 253.716 kilometres, conducted 3030 patrols in vehicle and 2131 on foot, combining this duty with the laborious logistic redeployment tasks.

After the parade, Spanish Redeployment Support started its work to disassemble all equipment in the camp and prepare it for redeployment to Spain in accordance with Spanish Government's decision to withdraw its troops from Kosovo. Spanish peacekeepers in Kosovo are undertaking now all necessary measures to conclude their mission by September and in this respect, the Spanish base in Dubrave/Dubrava Istog/Istok municipality was returned to the local municipality. The official ceremony was held on 17 August 2009, at the base Camp Espana in the presence of representatives of Spanish contingent and municipality. Speaking at the ceremony, OF-5 Javier García Blázquez said that he hoped this occasion will be a symbol of Spain's presence and solidarity with Kosovo's people.

The Spanish KFOR future withdrawal after a 10-year presence is a sign of irreversible changes that have taken place, sufficient improvement of stability, and a safe and secure environment in Kosovo. Spanish troops may leave Kosovo, but the memories about the good deeds of the Spanish will live in the souls of local inhabitants for long years.



# MNTF-E assumes KFOR responsibility

*Story by OR-3 Nevada Smith, US Army and KFOR Chronicle Team*

*Photos by KFOR Chronicle Team*

Multinational Task Force East (MNTF-E) assumed responsibility of the Stimlje/Shtime municipality from Multinational Task Force Center (MNTF-C), 15 August 2009 during a Transfer of Authority ceremony. The event was attended by MNTF-C Commander, MNTF-E Deputy Commander, and Latvian Ambassador to Slovenia, Mr. Juris Poikans, Latvian National Guard Commander OF-5 Juris Zeibarts, Major of Stimlje/Shtime municipality and representatives of KFOR contingents within two MNTFs.

The transfer took place to facilitate coordination with the Kosovo Police (KP) on a regional level since Stimlje is part of the Ferizaj Kosovo Police Regional Command and judicial region in MNTF-E area of operation. "Until now Stimlje/Shtime has been the only municipality not covered by the same KP Regional Command and Multinational Task Force," said OF-5 Tom Loomis, MNTF-E Deputy Commander - Maneuver. There has been a detailed transfer process in order to achieve a successful handover, which has involved both Task Forces and the key leaders of the municipality and regional Kosovo Police. The Irish troops and Latvian Liaison Monitoring Team (LMT) handed over the responsibility in Stimlje/Shtime region. Task Force Hellas, one of the four ground maneuver battalions of MNTF-E assumed



# Ability for Stimlje/Shtime municipality

primary KFOR responsibility for the area comprising the Stimlje municipality. Soldiers from TF Hellas, as well as MNTF-E LMT troops have been conducting joint operations with the MNTF-C elements through July to ensure the transition between KFOR Task Forces is seamless to the population.

In his speech, the Latvian National Guard Commander, OF-5 Juris Zeibarts thanked all representatives of military contingents for mutual beneficial cooperation with Latvian KFOR for Kosovo future. He told Latvian contingent's tour in Kosovo after 10 years and 7 months commitment to KFOR and to all people in Kosovo was going to the end now and expressed the expectation to see NATO colleagues again in Afghanistan.

The ceremonial of Latvian flag's lowering, which marked the end of activities for the Latvian KFOR, took place under the leadership of Brigadier General Seppo Toivonen, as MNTF-C Commander, in Camp Ville, Lipjan on 15 August 2009. Latvians already left Kosovo, but they have fulfilled their tasks with dignity and in a highly professional manner to the last moment of their service in KFOR.

"The security situation in Kosovo has improved a lot. Today KFOR can be seen as the third line respondent and the last guarantee of a safe and secure environment as well as freedom of movement in the area", said Brigadier General Seppo Toivonen, the MNTF-C Commander, during the ceremony.

At this moment, soldiers of Multinational Task Force East have successfully performed their mission in Stimlje/Shtime municipality for one month after replacing their predecessors.



# THE UKRAINIAN INDEPENDENCE

*Story and Photos by KFOR Chronicle Team*

August is full of important commemorative dates for Ukrainians, including the greatest national holidays - Independence Day, and National Flag Day. On 23 August 2009, a group of enthusiasts ascended Piri Breg (2534m above the sea level), the highest mountain in the Ukrainian KFOR area of responsibility, to post the National flag on its peak. Shortly after starting, all participants surmounted obstacles, successfully reached the summit despite the steep climb. At the top of the mountain, they posted the Ukrainian national and Navy flags (Ukrainian national contingent was formed based on the first Naval infantry battalion) to mark this holiday. Tired, but happy, all climbers returned to Camp Breza later that day.

The following day started with setup preparations for the celebration of Ukrainian Independence Day. The ceremony was attended by Multinational Task Force East (MNTF-E) Commander, Brigadier General Keith D. Jones, Deputy MNTF-E Commander - Maneuver, Colonel (OF-5) Tom Loomis, Deputy MNTF-E Commander for Civil Military Operation, Colonel (OF-5) Phillip Butch, Defense Attaché of Ukraine in Serbian Republic, Colonel (OF-5) Volodymyr Opanasuk, all national contingent commanders within the MNTF-E, Polish, Greek, Armenian and Romanian, and representatives of Shterpc/Strpce municipality, where Ukrainian KFOR is stationed.

After the meeting with distinguished guests, the festive ceremony was opened with the playing of the National Anthem of Ukraine. The Polish Ukrainian Task Force battle flag was presented by the honor guards in front of the Ukrainian peacekeepers' formation. Ukrainian national contingent Commander, Lieutenant Colonel (OF-4) Volodymyr Veremchuk congratulated



# INDEPENDENCE DAY CELEBRATION

Greek Contingent Commander, Lieutenant Colonel (OF-4) Dimitrios Boudouris on his birthday, which coincided with the Ukrainian holiday. Later, Ukrainian KFOR Commander greeted subordinates and guests with the greatest national holiday. Ukrainian Chief of Staff, Major (OF-3) Oles Brykin read the congratulation letters from Ministry of Defense of Ukraine, Ukrainian Chief of General Staff, leadership of Joint Task Force Command, and Ukrainian Navy. Numerous servicemen were presented with certificates of appreciation for eminent results in service. In his speech, MNTF-E Commander Brigadier General Keith D. Jones congratulated with "red-letter day" and thanked Ukrainian peacekeepers for excellence in carrying out their duties in the mission. After, the parade of Ukrainian contingent's sub-units, all attendees were given an opportunity to see the festive show, organized by the Ukrainian Marines. The soldiers demonstrated the best skills and methods of mortal combat they have been taught during service. The guest were impressed deeply by willpower and mental strength, displayed by Marines, their jumping and acrobat items on the program, including team's, pairs and solos. Some soldiers broke, with their hands and heads, tiles covered with flame. At the end of the demonstration, guests applauded, and participants shook their hands personally. Brigadier General Keith D. Jones posed for a photo with Ukrainian soldiers, who participated in the festive show. Lastly, all guests and servicemen were invited to enjoy the meals of traditional Ukrainian cuisine.



# FIRE

*Story and photos by KFOR Chronicle Team*

Fire – one of the four elements that effected mankind the most since thousands of years. Controlled it can be of big use, from spending light and warmth to boosting a space shuttle into space. However, once out of control, fire can shows its destructive power as well.

We all know there are mostly very hot and dry summers in Kosovo. This is the basis for a threat, which must not be underestimated – wild fire!

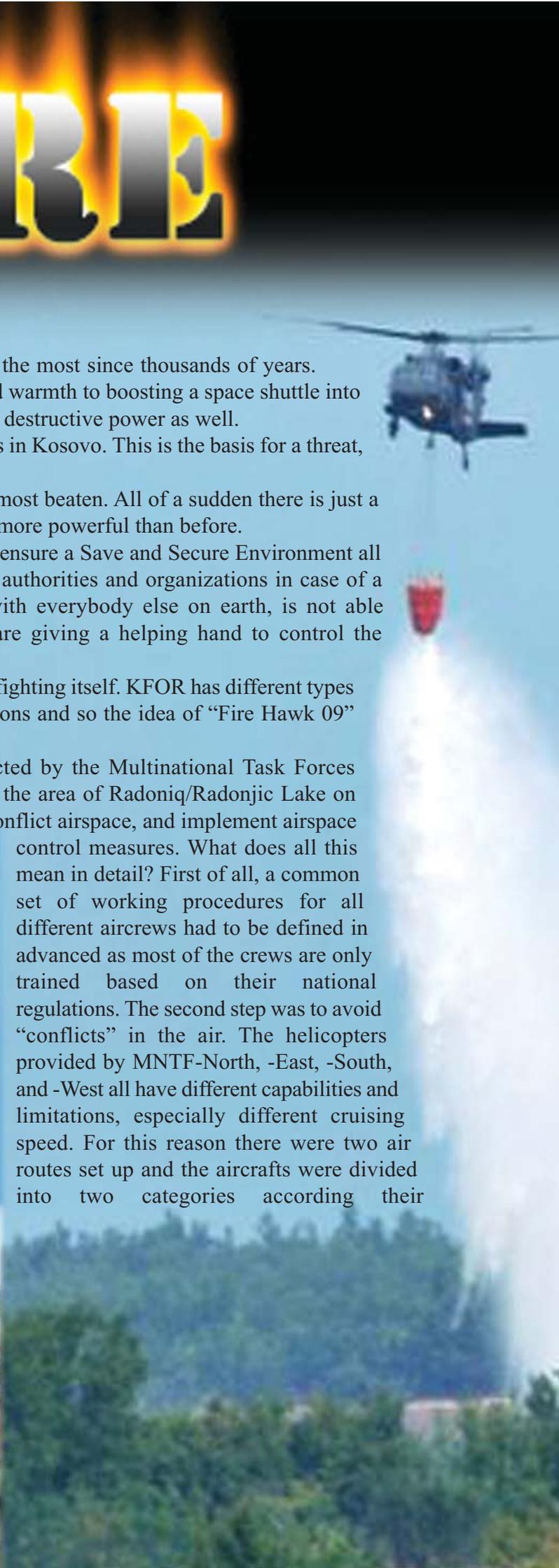
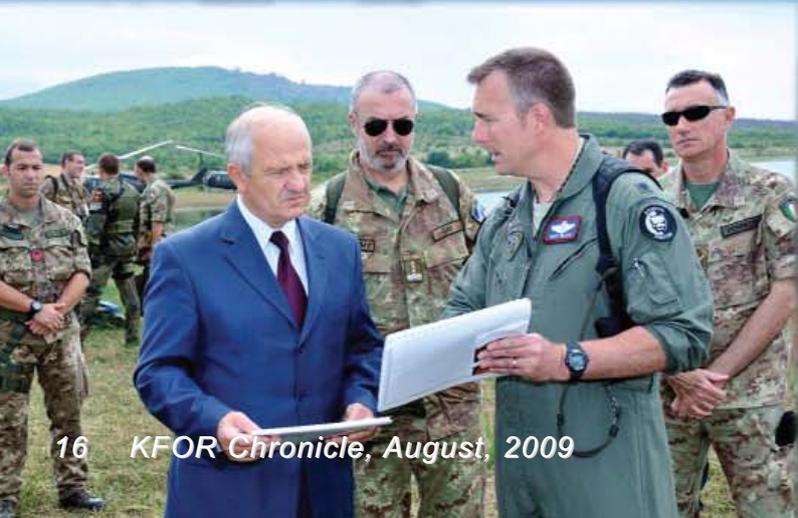
You might even think you have it under control and almost beaten. All of a sudden there is just a little breeze and it can flame up again to become even more powerful than before.

KFOR has to deal with a wide rage of tasks such as to ensure a Save and Secure Environment all over Kosovo, but we are also giving support to local authorities and organizations in case of a natural disaster. Well, we all know KFOR, along with everybody else on earth, is not able to fully control this king of natural force, but we are giving a helping hand to control the devastation it causes.

By the way, there is a second challenge besides the fire fighting itself. KFOR has different types of helicopters from the various troop contributing nations and so the idea of “Fire Hawk 09” was born.

We are talking about a fire fighting exercise conducted by the Multinational Task Forces (MNTF) planned and led by KFOR J3 Air Section in the area of Radoniq/Radonjic Lake on 5 August 2009. The aim was to train all aircrews, de-conflict airspace, and implement airspace

control measures. What does all this mean in detail? First of all, a common set of working procedures for all different aircrews had to be defined in advanced as most of the crews are only trained based on their national regulations. The second step was to avoid “conflicts” in the air. The helicopters provided by MNTF-North, -East, -South, and -West all have different capabilities and limitations, especially different cruising speed. For this reason there were two air routes set up and the aircrafts were divided into two categories according their



# HAWK

capabilities. Each route had its own dip site to refill the water buckets carried by the helicopters. Due to the helicopter limitations, the buckets ranged from the approximately 600 liter bucket carried by the Agusta Bell - 212 up to the 2,400 liter bucket for the Black Hawk.

The command and control (C2) of the exercise within the operational area was performed by the Air Mission Commander (LTC Anthony Lascano, J3 HELIOPS Chief) and crew aboard the Gazelle helicopter. They were responsible to coordinate all measures beginning from the reconnaissance of the area, de-conflicting the airspace throughout the operation as well as directing the assets as to the best location to drop the water.

During this exercise Lieutenant General Giuseppe E. Gay, Commander Kosovo Force, Dr. Fatmir Sejdiu, President of Kosovo as well as other high ranking civilian and military authorities were briefed by mission director Lieutenant Colonel S. Scott "Zip" Willits, Deputy Chief J3 Air. They were able to get an excellent impression of the complexity of this operation while observing the flight activities from the waterside of Radoniq/Radonjic Lake.

J3 Air is proud to say: *"The exercise was accomplished successfully due to the hard work, professionalism, and coordination between all the Task Forces air assets and crews, and is sure to help us safely execute fire fighting operations if called upon in the future!"*



# IRISH CONTINGENT

*Story by OF-3 Sean Dunne, Irish Defense Force*

*Photos donated by Irish KFOR*

Lieutenant Colonel (OF-4) Des Bergin currently commands the Irish Contingent 40th Infantry Group, headquartered at Camp Clarke, Lipljan. Lt Col Bergin is a native of County Kildare, in the Irish Midlands. County Kildare is home of the Irish Horse Racing industry and many leading horse trainers are based there. He has 32 years of service in the Irish Defense Force with this being his sixth overseas deployment, having previously served in Lebanon, Syria, the Golan Heights, Afghanistan and Ivory Coast. He also served with KFOR in 2004 as Second in Command, Civil/Military Operations, in what was then Multinational Brigade (Centre), based in Slim Lines, Camp Jubilee.

An operational Armored Personnel Carrier (APC) Company (Coy) that forms C Coy of Multinational Task Force Center (MNTF-C) and a Logistics (Logs) Coy are based in Camp Clarke. C Coy is under Operational Command to command MNTF-C. The majority of the personnel at Camp Clarke are from the one Southern Brigade of the Irish Defense Force, which is headquartered at Collins Barracks, in the southern city of Cork. Cork is Ireland's second city after the Capital, Dublin. Collins Barracks is named after General Michael Collins, a hero of the independence struggle and first Commander in Chief of the Irish Defense force. General Collins was killed during the Irish Civil War, following independence from Britain in 1922.

Commandant (Cmndt) (OF-3) Canice Brennan commands C Coy of MNTF-C. Cmndt Brennan is a native of County Kilkenny in the South East part of Ireland. He previously served in Lebanon and Liberia. In his younger days, Cmndt Brennan was very skilled in the ancient Irish sport of Hurling. Hurling is a game unique to Ireland and could best be described as if hockey is played at an extremely fast pace. During KFOR International Day, 9 June 2009, a number of Irish soldiers demonstrated their hurling skills, which generated huge interest amongst the visitors to the Irish tent.

The Irish Defense Force consists of full-time professional soldiers, some of whom were drafted, a process that did not exist in Ireland until recently. A majority of the soldiers from C Coy have previous experience overseas, many of whom with prior service in KFOR. They underwent extensive training in Ireland prior to deploying to include Crowd and Riot Control, Heli drills, APC drills, Improvised Explosive Device Disposal and First Aid. Kosovo Force is the Irish Defense Force's second largest commitment in terms of troop contributing missions. The total number of Irish personnel currently deployed in



LMT Team 5 Leader OF-3 Carroll talks to locals



# INGENT KFOR

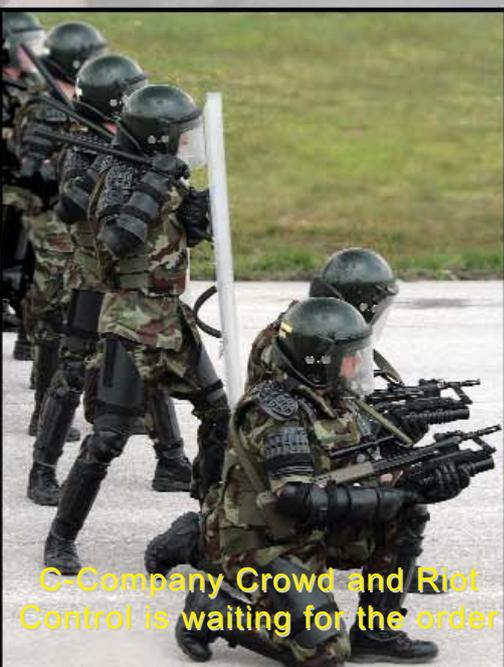
KFOR is 239. The majority of these personnel are located in Camp Clarke (C Coy MNTF-C and Logs Coy). There are also Irish Defense Force personnel serving in Headquarter (HQ) MNTF-C in Camp Ville, Lipjan/Lipljan and HQ KFOR, Film City. Presently, the Irish Defense Force has 450 troops deployed as part of the United Nations Mission in Chad, in central Africa. The Irish Defense Force has a long and proud tradition of service overseas on peacekeeping operations, which began with the United Nations mission in the Congo in 1960.

In MNTF-C, Irish C Coy serves with troops from Finland (A Coy), Sweden (B Coy), Czech Republic (D Coy) and Slovakia (E Coy). The Irish Defense Force has a long tradition of serving with soldiers from Scandinavia. Many of the older officers and senior Non-commissioned Officers have very happy memories of serving with Finnish and Swedish soldiers in Lebanon from 1978 to 2001 as part of the United Nations Mission in Lebanon. C Coy, MNTF-C is a highly trained and motivated unit that, due to the level of experience of its personnel gained on several international peacekeeping missions, brings a unique level of expertise to operations within MNTF-C.

Irish contingents serving on overseas service have a long tradition of providing humanitarian aid to the local population. Indeed, Irish contingents were doing this long before the term Civil Military Cooperation (CIMIC) was born. With the Irish Contingent currently in KFOR, the CIMIC effort is the responsibility of the Deputy Commanding Officer. Financial resources are limited and all funds used for CIMIC projects are raised by the Irish troops or from miscellaneous donations from Ireland. In the Lipjan area, the Irish have undertaken numerous CIMIC projects over the last ten years. These include the building of houses for needy local families, construction of toilets and classroom facilities for schools, improvements to playgrounds, football pitches, and improvements to other community facilities. Currently, the Irish Contingent is in the process of constructing a house for a needy family near the village of Janjevo. It is hoped that this project will be completed by the middle of September. In addition to structural projects, the Irish Contingent assists deserving families by way of food drops, provision of medicines, blankets, heaters, clothes and other basic commodities necessary for everyday survival.

Central to the CIMIC effort in the Irish Contingent, is the work of the Irish Liaison Monitoring Team (LMT) (C5) who is also based on Camp Clarke. The team is led by Cmdt Jim Carroll, an officer of considerable experience who is on his third tour of duty with KFOR. The Irish LMT also work

closely with the other LMT's in MNTF-C, under the overall direction of the Regional LMT (RLMT) based at Camp Ville. The Irish LMT help to identify worthwhile CIMIC projects, which the Irish Contingent directly may become involved in or may be handled by the CIMIC Cell G9 at MNTF-C HQs.



C-Company Crowd and Riot Control is waiting for the order



C-Company Piper OR-3 Casey

# Liasion Monitoring

*Story & photos by Damlan Urbanica (OR 5) SVN NAVY - LMT CC ADMIN ASSISTANT*

The LMT ITT (In Theatre Training); organized by the LMT CC, took place on 25 July in the Hollywood center, Film City, Pristina Kosovo.

First, let us go step by step. As from my personal experience, I realize that in KFOR we are constantly being bombarded by abbreviations. Trying to figure out what they mean, seems like skimming the surface of an ocean, so "What on earth does LMT stands for?"

LMT stands for Liaison & Monitoring Team and the LMT CC is the Coordination Cell; situated in HQ KFOR, Film city. The LMT structure was defined at the end of 2003 and was initially called KLT (Kosovo Liaison Team). The LMT was presented as a complementary structure aimed to improve the situational awareness. It was inspired by the LOT (Liaison Observation Team) concept, defined in Bosnia & Herzegovina by SFOR.

The March 2004 riots were a multiplier for implementing the LMT concept. Many think LMTs are like spies or intelligence agencies, but on the contrary, they gather overt information from local people, village leaders, Police, University, etc. throughout normal conversation and socializing. As the need to be able to swallow loads of coffee during these gatherings, some like to address LMTs as 'Latte Macchiato Teams'.

What others tell LMTs about their lives or the community situation is entirely up to them.

On the other hand, they quickly realized that we are here to help them, due to the fact that in a lot of cases, LMTs contributed to problem solving just by inter-communicating. In order to achieve this goal, to earn other's trust, is something even LMTs have to learn. This is why we organize each month ITT. All newcomers learn



# ing Teams (LMTs)



the procedures as well as the "Do's" and "Don'ts" of interrelating contacts as it is of utmost importance for building trust, confidence and to be aware of local habits and traditions.

In conclusion, I would like to stress that LMTs are becoming one of the most important tools and their mission is becoming a top priority for KFOR because of the troop withdrawal in the near future. LMTs will stay and monitor the situation until the very end. LMT WILL BE THE EYES AND EARS and will FEEL THE PULSE OF KOSOVO now and in the future.



# Southern Risi

*Story and photos by Lt. Tobias Strahl (DEU Army)*

Exercise situations can only transmit a part of an actual situation. It is in the hands of the planners, how close the exercise scenario will be to the original. Ten years of experience with the KFOR-mission, as well as living in the deployment situation, make it possible to get very close to actual situations.

Approximately 150 soldiers of the different nations of the Multinational Task Force South (MNTF-S) took part in the complex exercise “Southern Rising Readiness.” In addition to these, there were 80 to 90 role players. Referees were watching over the safety of the personnel on both sides of the scenario.

One can literally sense the tension in the air. About 30 soldiers are placed in a cordon facing a high number of demonstrators. The upset crowd demanded the entrance to the village of Zocishte/Zociste, which is located northwest of Prizren and south of the “Eselspass”, which connects the villages of Suhareke/Suva Reka from Rahovec/Orahovac. The soldiers of the maneuver battalion “DULJE” blocked this area. The leader of the demonstrators gives the soldiers an ultimatum as to when the entrance to the village should be opened by them. He cannot guarantee the soldiers’ safety if the MNTF-S refuses and continues to block the village. The use of violence was not an issue.

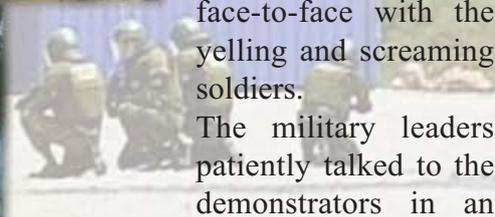
The negotiations between the military leaders and the demonstrators at the site failed because of the militant

forces’ intransigence. Soon, a large number of brickbats were coming down on the Swiss soldiers and bottles were smashing into the tall protective shields. Some of the demonstrators came face-to-face with the yelling and screaming soldiers.

The military leaders patiently talked to the demonstrators in an

effort to calm them down, but those efforts failed. The angry group insisted upon their unrealistic demands leaving some individuals to try and violently break through the cordon. A group of kicking and hitting demonstrators emerged, forcing the soldiers try to keep the situation under control. After some time, the soldiers managed to get the radical forces under control. Some arrests were made, but most of the demonstrators withdrew protesting loudly – at least for the time being. Exercises like this are designed to raise the awareness concerning possible crisis scenarios for “key leaders”, such as company commanders and platoon leaders. In order to assess the efficiency of key leaders in deployments, in neighboring areas of responsibilities, the forces of the maneuver battalion Prizren were faced with less known terrains such as Camp Casablanca. Nonetheless, the maneuver battalion “DULJE” had to face Zocishte/Zociste together with their comrades of the Turkish Army from Dragash/Dragas.

The special thing about this exercise was the long training period. Usually the timeframe of “Crowd and Riot Control” (CRC) Exercises is limited to two and a half hours that include the violent rioting of demonstrators. According to the opinions of the people responsible, the relatively long phase of uncertainty, in



# ing Readiness



together with the German Military Police, evacuated members of a conference of international, civilian organizations from Suhareke/Suva Reka. Also striking were the actions of the pilots from German, Switzerland and Austria, who transported units to the Holy Archangels' Monastery and evacuated civilians from Camp Casablanca and the village of Zocishte/Zociste.

At the completion of the exercise, the first assessment of the exercise took place. The newly acquired knowledge can

which the situation develops, is also part of the scenario. They tried to simulate this phase realistically in this exercise, which, overall, took about one day.

In reality, some of the soldiers were deeply impressed by the realistic situation. The observers of the group actions have high respect concerning the discipline and the endurance of the task force as well as the role players. After what seemed like an eternity of being positioned in a cordon, the soldiers, dressed in the CRC armor, were sweating heavily underneath their helmets and uniforms. The role players did a very convincing job. Even as an observer, the danger of the situation was apparent, especially when the usage of irritant gas was simulated, in order to repel the perpetrators or a hailstorm of water bottles was thrown at the unit.

The trouble-free efforts of other branches of service were also very impressive. Soldiers of the Psychological Operations unit of Camp Casablanca were used to transfer messages of the military leader on-sight to the demonstrators via speakers. Another very remarkable picture was the six helicopters of the mixed Army Aviation Corps from Camp Toplicane, who,

now be used to develop further the routine exercises of the task force. The highly complex, political situation, which escalated into a simulated, complicated scenario, was a huge success.



# Headquarters Support Group

## The good spirit of

*Story and photos by HSG and KFOR Chronicle Team*

The Headquarters Support Group (HSG) is not directly involved in operational matters, but they provide one of the most important elements in a multinational operational. In Film City, they are the life support of all the members of KFOR employed in the camp. It is a multifunctional unit with a wide range of

responsibilities, one of which is to ensure the essential commodities, such as food, water and power are constantly available, reliable and of a high standard. The HSG is comprised of 53 military, 83 civilian personnel, who are responsible for camp security, in/out processing, issuing and maintaining ID cards, infrastructure, maintenance, billeting, and transport.

One of the more exciting functions of the HSG is the Morale and Welfare Activities (MWA) area. Mainly local civilian employees run the MWA staff and they organize a variety of events and learning opportunity such as language, music, dancing lessons, weekend excursions and shopping trips in Kosovo and neighboring countries. The staff is also responsible for the gymnasium and multifunctional tent, which is



# Support Group Camp Film City

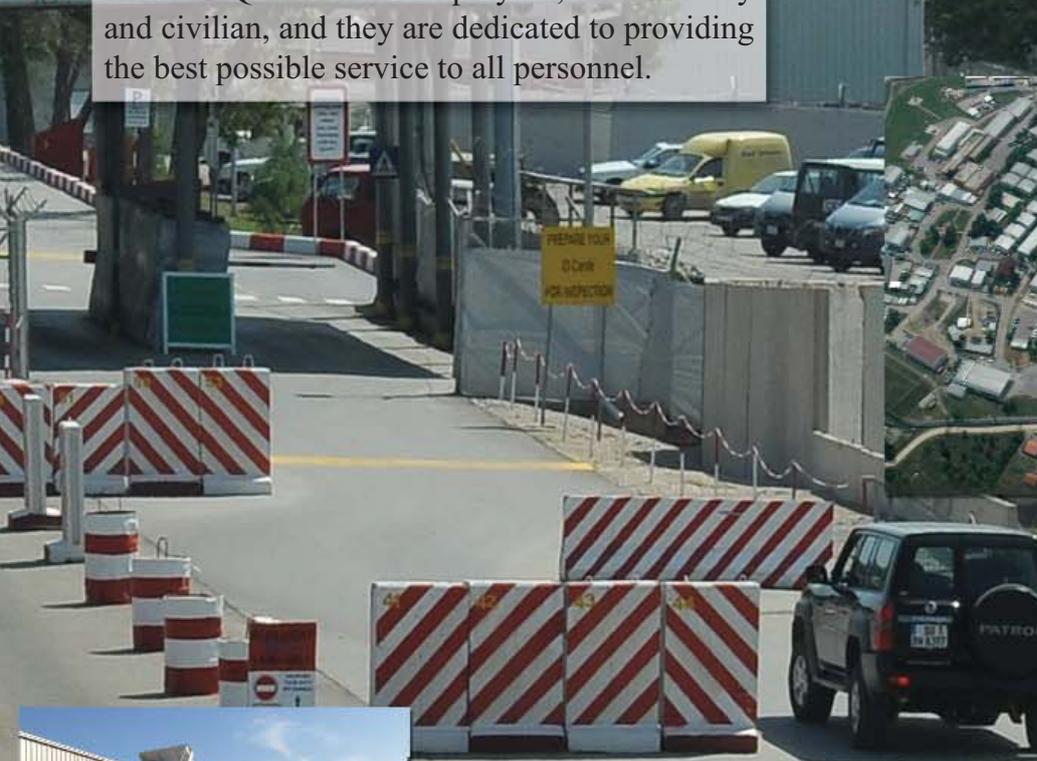


mainly used as a tennis court. The funding for the MWA comes from a 5% charge on profits from the businesses, known as concessionaries, which operate in Film City.

Another entity of HSG is providing services to aide in relaxing, and keeping in touch. These areas include the library for those who want to relax and read a book, a video store for those who want to sign out movies and/or internet service for keeping in touch with beloved ones and friends back at home or surfing the web.

Lastly, the two important safety tasks HSG provided is running the Camp Film City Fire Brigade and camp security. The Camp Film City Fire Brigade is not only responsible to fight fires, but also train all HQ personnel in using fire extinguishers and even more important, how to prevent fire. Camp security, the guards of Camp Film City, is provided on a rotational basis by different Multinational Task Forces and is during this period, they are under operational control of the HSG.

As you can read, HSG is a vital component of KFOR HQ and all its employees, both military and civilian, and they are dedicated to providing the best possible service to all personnel.



# Hygiene and safety in operations we are all responsible

*Story by OF-1 Nadia Filhos (French Army)*

*Photos by OR-7 Philippe Oliveira and OR-4 Stephane Joly (French Army)*

"In operations, forces operational readiness must be preserved in all circumstances." This small sentence, extracted from the operational forces' preventions directives, sums up one of the most essential members' mission within Multinational Task Force North (MNTF-N): the Hygiene and Safety Officer (HSO).

1st Lt Marie-Eve Sol arrived in Kosovo on last June to take on the responsibility as HSO with no apprehension. She was willing to tackle this huge task in an effort to ensure the program met its requirements. The safety of personnel is one of the commanders' responsibilities. This responsibility justifies the setting up of preventive and curative measures aiming to reduce health impact and environmental risks during operational conditions. The Hygiene and Safety in operations is a step of prevention aiming to guarantee the physical and psychological integrity of soldiers, whether it is before, during or after the operation. The soldier can be psychologically influenced through his presence on the battlefield. Operational Risks are the same as those applied to soldiers in France, in addition to the dangerous situations related to the external missions, the driving of vehicles in a different country, the fires risks or the handling of toxic tools and substances. In fact, all the risks related to the natural, industrial or the technological environment will be taken into consideration.

The MNTF-N Commander is responsible for setting up all dispositions and directives in close cooperation with "l'Economat Des Armées" (EDA) within the framework of the Additional Capacity for the External Support (CAPES) and with different subordinates on the battalions' levels. Subordinate to the Joint Support Deputy (Adjoint Soutien Interarmée), the HSO, activate, orient and coordinate all the preventive operations on the theatre. As guarantor of the optimal security, he is the first interlocutor vis-à-vis of the commanders in case of incidents of environmental risks. He manages a big budget that is dedicated to finance all the measures to improve work conditions and environment protection.

1st Lt Sol must check and inspect on a regular basis, all the AORs for which she is in charge of, to study all the request for new projects, to find new investments, to locate the polluted zones, to isolate the deteriorated materials, and to find ways to salve all harms to environment and soldiers safety. Therefore, all the French compounds in Plana, Novo Selo, Belvedere, Concession, Prishtine/Pristina (REPFRANCE), Vidomerik, Devic, la Tabatière, Thessaloniki (B17) are under her responsibility. Furthermore, she is also in charge of wasted water



# Operational conditions, responsible!

purification in Plana and Novo Selo.

The individuals in charge of environment and fires security in the EDA also work for the HSO. They are responsible for realizing all the different estimates for the ongoing projects, depending on each one's specialization and under the HSO request. They verify the materials, train the personnel, and report all problems to the HSO.

During our visit to Devic, we saw in a clear way the task of each one in dealing with problems related to the environment. The HSO detected a gas-oil leak from a generator (a common problem on the theatre). Therefore, a project study was necessary to readjust this compound to follow the rules of safety. The aim of this operation is to clean all the areas where the French troops were stationed in Kosovo.

In the case of mandate 31, and in accordance with the policy of "Deterrent Presence," the demolition of many compounds occupied by the French troops is one of the main concerns of the HSO, to conduct cleanup operations in cooperation with the infrastructure branch, EDA, engineers, and the private manufactories. This big mission involves the participation of several actors at all levels and has a big financial responsibility. Thus, the French Army is also responsible in the next 30 years for any pollution incident linked to its presence in Kosovo.

The first demolished site is "la Concession's compound" in Mitrovica on the south bank of the Ibar River. Since 8 July, all responsible for this mission are working hard to hand this building to the municipality's authorities by the end of August. The HSO conducted the cleanup operation of this area in a close cooperation with all responsible parties, mentioned above, and the Gendarmerie. Thus, the sewage, the fence, and wastes were removed and destroyed. The CSSBAT engineers cleaned up the area where the generators were before and removed the polluted soil. This soil was brought to Novo Selo's compound to be checked and cleaned up. All the areas where French forces were deployed will go through the same procedure until a clean zone conforms to the environmental quality requirements.

Everyone on the area of responsibility must know the rules of hygiene, security and working conditions. Any negligence can have a bad effect on our mission. Operations abroad put our soldiers' face-to-face with many risky situations so there is no need to increase those risk and dangers by negligence and disrespect of hygiene and safety rules.



# Feature

Story by Spc. Nevada J. Smith, 69th Public Affairs Detachment

CAMP BONDSTEEL, Kosovo - The Village of Letnica/Letnice is a beautiful sight to see. Once a year, this quiet and unassuming little village, nestled into the Karadak hills of Kosovo gets transformed into a bustling community where Roman Catholic pilgrims come to worship and pray. For two days out of the month of August, Letnica becomes the destination of choice for the thousands of pilgrims who come to celebrate the Feast of the Day of Assumption.

August 15th marks the Day of Assumption and is an important day for Roman Catholics all over the world. It is a holiday that marks the time where Catholics believe the Virgin Mary was taken up both body and soul into heaven, and is a holy day of obligation for Catholics across the world. The Day of Assumption is now a public holiday in many countries, including Belgium, France, Spain, Greece, and Chile.

There is only one destination in Letnica for the roughly 3,000 Serbian, Albanian, and Croatian pilgrims, a very historic landmark called the Church of the Black Madonna. Alongside the Balkan pilgrims, more than a 1,000 Kosovo Force soldiers make the yearly journey to the picturesque to see the Black Madonna. For three California National Guard Soldiers, this trip was more than just an excursion to see the sights of Kosovo, but a journey to a higher calling.

In the early afternoon, in a grotto behind the church with white shining walls, that seem to sparkle in the sun, Chaplain Captain Honecimo Figueroa with the Task Force Falcon Unit Ministry Team baptized Staff Sergeant LaDon Moses,

Chief Warrant Officer to Eddie McDevitt, and Lieutenant Colonel Michael S. Piazzoni into the Catholic Church.

"Being baptized at the Church of the Black Madonna was a great experience," said Piazzoni, who is a finance officer with the California Army National Guard. "My wife and



# Luja

children are all Catholic so now when I come home after the mission I can join my family." Piazzoni, McDevitt, and Moses' journey to the Black Madonna started long before the morning of August 15th when they made their trek through the Pristine Kosovo hills to the church. The three Soldiers have been going through a Catholic initiation process since Easter. Whether you are a devout Catholic or have just entered the church like Piazzoni, McDevitt, and Moses, the Church of the Black Madonna seems to bring something new out of people.

Maybe it's the twin-peaked towers, or the ornately carved granite statue of Mary outside the church, but something seems to inspire worship its visitors. After all, it is widely believed by the locals that the church is where the Mother Teresa of Calcutta first received her calling to faith.

"Being at the church where Mother Teresa decided to be a nun is very uplifting," said Piazzoni.

Now known as the Blessed Mother Teresa since the Vatican Beatified her, (the second to last step to sainthood), on 19 October 2003, Mother Teresa is a point of pride for many of the people of Kosovo. With her Albanian and local roots, Mother Teresa is included in the prayers of the pilgrims celebrating the Feast of the Day of Assumption. With a reputation for divine inspiration that includes the Blessed Mother Teresa herself, one would think that the church would have enough religious attractions to bring the pilgrims, but the Church of the Black Madonna has something else that draws in worshippers year after year.

"I think for those who have never experienced a large religious pilgrimage, they will take home a deeper sense of faith," said Sergeant First Class Anthony R. Greco, a Chaplain's Assistant and Task Force Falcon Non-Commissioned Officer in Charge of the ministry teams on Camp Bondsteel. "I think when people see such strong faith they will take that faith back home with them and say, "You know what, I can be a lot stronger in my faith." For the nearly 3,000 believers that travel to the Black Madonna every year, many of them come not only to celebrate the Day of Assumption, but also to see the statue that the church takes its name from. The other attraction to the church is a 300-year-old Black Madonna statue called the mother of God. Although there are many Black Madonna's throughout the world, religious scholars are hard pressed to determine why the statues are dark, and many faithfully believe them to be special or sacred.

"There's over 187 Black Madonna's, another name for the Blessed Virgin Mary, throughout Europe," said Greco. There are many legends surrounding the Black Madonna statues, and the Madonna in Letnica is no different. "There are legends that miracles have occurred here and that the statue has wept blood before," said Greco. In fact, many locals have claimed that the statue in Letnica has miraculously cured some ailment while others believe that the statue has helped them conceive their children. These local legends go back a long time, which isn't surprising since the original church was built in the 14th century.

It can be agreed on by anyone who takes one look at the worshippers at the Black Madonna, that cultural differences are forgotten as the various cultures that compromise this area of the Balkans, drop their differences and lift up their hearts in prayer.

Combining people and cultures seems to be a major effect of the celebration. Albanians, Serbians, Croatians, and citizens of the various KFOR countries all come together to worship and praise.

"We have created an environment where people can come together and worship safely. It really warms my heart to see soldiers from different countries here and know that they are our brothers," said Greco.

"Regardless to what country you come from, when you see all the nations here you know it is something bigger," said Piazzoni. "In the Army, you work on your physical health but coming here gives you a chance to work on your spiritual health."

The day was filled with prayer and reflection. There was a procession with the darkened statue draped in white cloth going through the teeming crowd, and every person who came there with troubles left with a lighter heart. For many it was a moving experience, and for three Camp Bondsteel Soldiers it was also a new beginning.



# The Kosova Art Gallery

The Kosova Art Gallery (KAG) is an Art Institution founded in 1979. They have organized more than 300 collective, individual, local and international exhibitions. Thousands of artists participate in these exhibitions, which are visited by many art lovers. The most successful exhibitions organized annually are the International Ceramics, International Artistic Photography with prize of the "Gjon Milli" and, finally the International with prize of the "Muslim Mulliqi". The Gallery has published many catalogues and brochures, among which is the Monograph of "Contemporary Arts of Kosova".

The Kosova Art Gallery is the only cultural institution for presenting visual arts in Kosova, such as the promotion of traditional arts and the trends of contemporary art. The Gallery is also a channel through which new artists find their path towards the public world. They organize workshops and lectures from different local and international art experts. The Gallery has its doors open for Artists from other countries and institutions who are interested in enriching the cultural life in Kosovo or exchange art experiences.



# Peacekeeper's Profiles

**Name:** KAVONDA Arnold

**Rank:** OR-2

**Nationality:** French

**Home unit:** 3rd CCT in Limoges

**Unit in KFOR:** COM MNTF-N "La villa Lyautey"

**About the mission:** 6 months after his enlistment, OR-2 Kavonda, cook of the 3rd CCT in Limoges has been chosen by Brigadier General Ribayrol for mission in Kosovo. Always in a close contact with the staff in "La villa Lyautey" and permanently at the service of COM MNTF-N and his guests, he succeeds to show all the skills and experience he got during his studies in the hotel management's school. His job as a waiter of VIPs requires the efficiency, the discretion and a big availability.

**Family reaction:** My family is very supportive. They respected my decision and are waiting for my return back because they know that every small input in peace support operations is relevant for the international society.

**Plans after the mission:** Once back from this mission, I will travel with my small family to "l'Île de la Réunion" to introduce my charming newborn boy to his grandmother. Regarding my career, I hope one day to be promoted to the rank of NCO and serve on the battlefield in an operational unit.



**Name:** Astrid Schmid

**Rank:** OF-2

**Nationality:** Swiss

**Home Unit:** Civilian who volunteered

**Unit in KFOR:** Staff Swiss National Contingent (SWISSCOY)

**About the mission:** Dealing with people is my passion and since I'm the S1 in our contingent, my passion is my job. I am serving in the SWISSCOY since September 2007, although I took a 5 month break. As Human Resources Officer I have different areas of work: planning leaves and vacations for Swiss Contingent members, close cooperation with our Embassy and, the one organizing diplomas and medals for the end of the tour. Right now, I'm recruiting among our soldiers for the following contingent and the liaison and observation teams (LOT) in Bosnia.

**Family reaction:** Since the beginning of my missions I had the full support of my family. We even used my being away for starting to write each other letters once again. Of course I am glad for this support and for the true freedom of choice they gave me.

**Plans after the mission:** In October 2009 my mission ends and I am really looking forward returning home. Here, I learnt how precious different aspects of daily life are, especially life in Switzerland.



**Name:** Lucia BALÁŽOVÁ

**Rank:** OF-1

**Nationality:** Slovakia

**Home unit:** 12 th mechanized battalion

**Unit in KFOR:** 14th SLOVCON, CIS (Communication Information System) Officer

**About the mission:** This is my first mission, in which I await new experiences, not only according by specialist aspects but by operational tasks too. The mission gives me more special know how and practice which are special in my function. I was on speaking terms with other nationalities and peoples from other sides, and many of them are my friends too.

**Family reaction:** I am married. I have two children, they are 8 and 4 years old. I set great store in my family while fulfilling tasks in Kosovo because they are my encouragement.

It is my primary what I have in my career too.

**Plans after the mission:** At first I will take care of my family, and spend free time together. Secondly, I will be happy to see my friends and colleagues in Nitra's battalion.



KOLIQ



PHOTO: AFRIM HAJRULLAHU