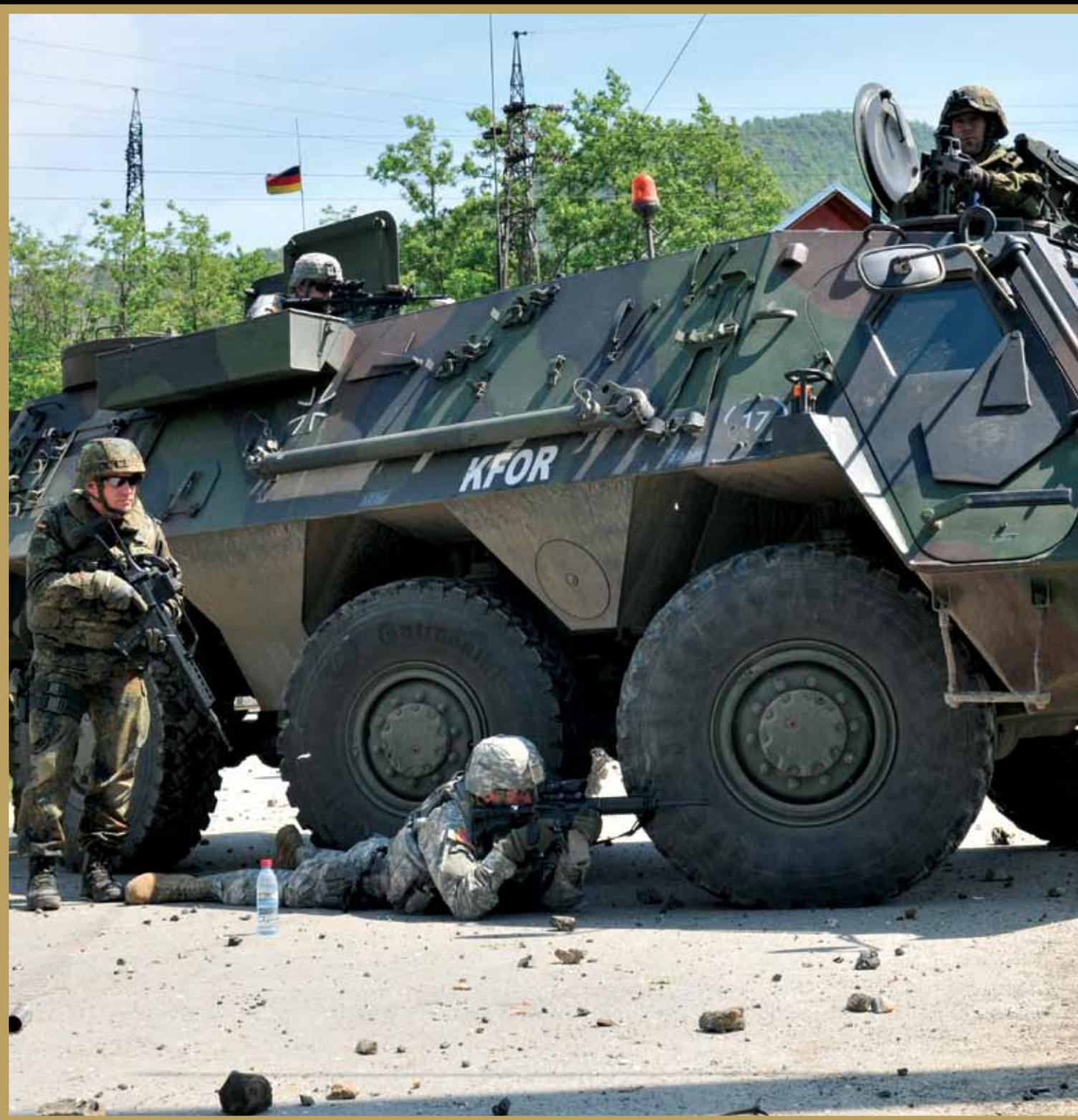




# KFOR CHRONICLE



**RUDARE ROADBLOCK REMOVAL**  
- KFOR -  
OPERATION

**UNFIXING OF**  
- DEVIC -  
MONASTERY

**BRNJAK BYPASS**  
- DOG 16 -  
BLOCKED

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“Peace is not merely a distant goal that we seek but a means by which we arrive at that goal” Martin Luther King, Junior. The solution regarding northern Kosovo, when it comes, be it swift or slow, will be political. It will be reached through communication, concession and compromise. On its achievement many initiatives to enhance the daily lives of its inhabitants can begin to become realized. While improved relations between the governments in Belgrade and in Pristina, and the government of Kosovo with the majority of its citizens in the north, are awaited, KFOR is resolved and remains determined to ensure Freedom of Movement throughout the length and breadth of Kosovo. Freedom of Movement is a key priority of the KFOR Peacekeeping Mission and will not be compromised on with anyone.

Preferring patience and dialogue, holding many talks with the representatives of the citizens of northern Kosovo, keeping lines of communication open, we were always eager to emphasize and encourage that they themselves would remove the obstacles, the barricades, the barriers to Freedom of Movement. But then inevitable comes the moment when KFOR has to act and remove the road-blocks, as we did early this month at Rudare. That this operation was successfully achieved without violence was testament to the skill and professionalism of KFOR troops. That this action received a violent reaction occurring some two and a half kilometres away, hours later, involving three separate incidents of live firing with murderous intent

on KFOR troops, indicates a will to kill not representative of the inhabitants but of a small criminal minority impairing progress for the peaceful right-thinking majority. KFOR is not deterred from contributing to a safe and secure environment in Kosovo, that is what our troops have been doing for the last 13 years at considerable risk to their own safety. KFOR will continue to do so firmly, prudently and impartially, in full compliance with our mandate.

Freedom of movement does not mean the use of unauthorised crossing points and illegal roads. Sooner or later the closure of DOG 16 in the vicinity of Bernjak was going to materialise. It occurred in the middle of the month when KFOR mounted a successful operation and physically blocked the unauthorised crossing point rendering it impassable. By doing so KFOR enhanced its contribution to a safe and secure environment ensuring motorists use the legal crossing point at GATE 31. To the KFOR soldiers who conducted these operations, I give you worthy praise, your performance was very convincing. The execution of your orders was extraordinarily conducted, going exactly according to plan. Your initial swift actions nullifying the resistance achieved a fully satisfactory result. The KFOR casualties resulting



PICTURE: H. FREU

from the reckless reaction. Dialogue, the genuine active interested communication with recognised community representatives and the determined use of KFOR capacities demonstrate KFOR's commitment to its mission to contribute to a safe and Secure Environment and Freedom of Movement Kosovo wide. At months end, despite the violent clashes and KFOR wounded we will stay the course in Kosovo ensuring both freedom of movement is respected and the implementation of the United Nations mandate to maintain a secure environment. ■

COMKFOR MAJOR GENERAL ERHARD DREWS

# RUDARE ROADBLOCK REMOVAL



# TOGETHER AS ONE



PICTURE: J. IMP

# RUDARE ROADBLOCK REMOVAL

Early morning on the first of June KFOR successfully removed a roadblock in the vicinity of Rudare. This operation was conducted in order to improve freedom of movement not only for KFOR, but also for international organizations and for all people of Kosovo. Almost a year ago, in July last, the south Rudare roadblock was established along with others across the north in order to prevent further attempts of unilateral action by the Pristina government imposing customs controls on the northern boundary between Serbia and Kosovo at Jarinje (GATE 1) and Brnjak (DOG 31). The Serb majority in northern Kosovo viewed such actions as an attempt to impose a state border between them and Serbia proper and erected barricades both as a means of protest towards, and a manifest rejection of, this. The denial of Freedom of Movement for all was contrary to KFOR's mandate

and became the subject of clashes periodically since. Specifically along route "BULL" the roadblock at south Rudare permanently hampered access to northern Kosovo requiring KFOR to resupply Camp Nothing Hill and GATE 1 by helicopter. In late September the roadblock was reinforced with concrete, railroad iron, gravel and concrete blocks. A previous opportunistic attempt in November by KFOR's Tactical Manoeuvre (KTM) Force proved in vain when the KTM perimeter was pushed back by three large trucks, 21 KTM soldiers were injured by thrown rocks and the reversing gravel-laden trucks. Later that month near Zupce, west of Cabra, KFOR's Operational Reserve Force (ORF) successfully secured the removal of a significant roadblock at Jagnjencia, the seizing of which gave access to an alternate route potentially allowing movement to northern Kosovo. 30 KFOR soldiers were wounded

in a violent reaction to the seizure of this roadblock, two receiving gunshot wounds, fortunately not life threatening. Subsequent political discussions at a high level resulted in most of the remaining roadblocks being removed. Rudare was amongst those that remained in place. A planned KFOR effort to remove the Rudare roadblock was executed to good effect on the first of June when a cordon was rapidly put into effect to secure the area surrounding the roadblock. Surprise and swiftness played their part as reinforcements were quickly helicoptered in, others moving rapidly by road to consolidate these key position and allowed the KFOR engineers to commence their dismantling works. Two and a half kilometres away and hours later a clash occurred at the Iron Bridge in the vicinity of Zvecan when protestors reacted by throwing stones. KFOR replied by firing rubber bullets and the use of non-le-



PICTURE: J. WAGNER



PICTURE: J. WAGNER

STORY: D. HARVEY

# TOGETHER AS ONE

thal gas. Shots were fired at KFOR soldiers with murderous intent on at least three separate occasions. The incoming fire impacted immediately near the KFOR soldiers, on and into KFOR vehicles, even on the helmets of the KFOR soldiers.

Two KFOR soldiers were wounded. Acting in self-defence KFOR returned fire. Items of evidential value highlighting the in-coming bullet impacts and so the evident will to kill KFOR soldiers, were subsequently presented to the

media some days later by KFOR to convincingly counter misinformation. Freedom of Movement was achieved. The Rudare roadblock was removed



PICTURE: H. PREU



PICTURE: H. PREU

# RUDARE ROADBLOCK REMOVAL



PICTURE: J. IMP



PICTURE: J. IMP

# TOGETHER AS ONE



PICTURE: AUTRECE COY



PICTURE: J. WAGNER

# RUDARE ROADBLOCK REMOVAL



PICTURE: J. WAGNER



PICTURE: J. WAGNER

# TOGETHER AS ONE



PICTURE: J. WAGNER



PICTURE: J. WAGNER



PICTURE: J. WAGNER

# RUDARE ROADBLOCK REMOVAL



PICTURE: T. PILAWSKI



PICTURE: T. PILAWSKI

# TOGETHER AS ONE



PICTURE: T. PILAWSKI



PICTURE: T. PILAWSKI

# UNFIXING OF DEVIC MONASTERY



PICTURE: MNBGE

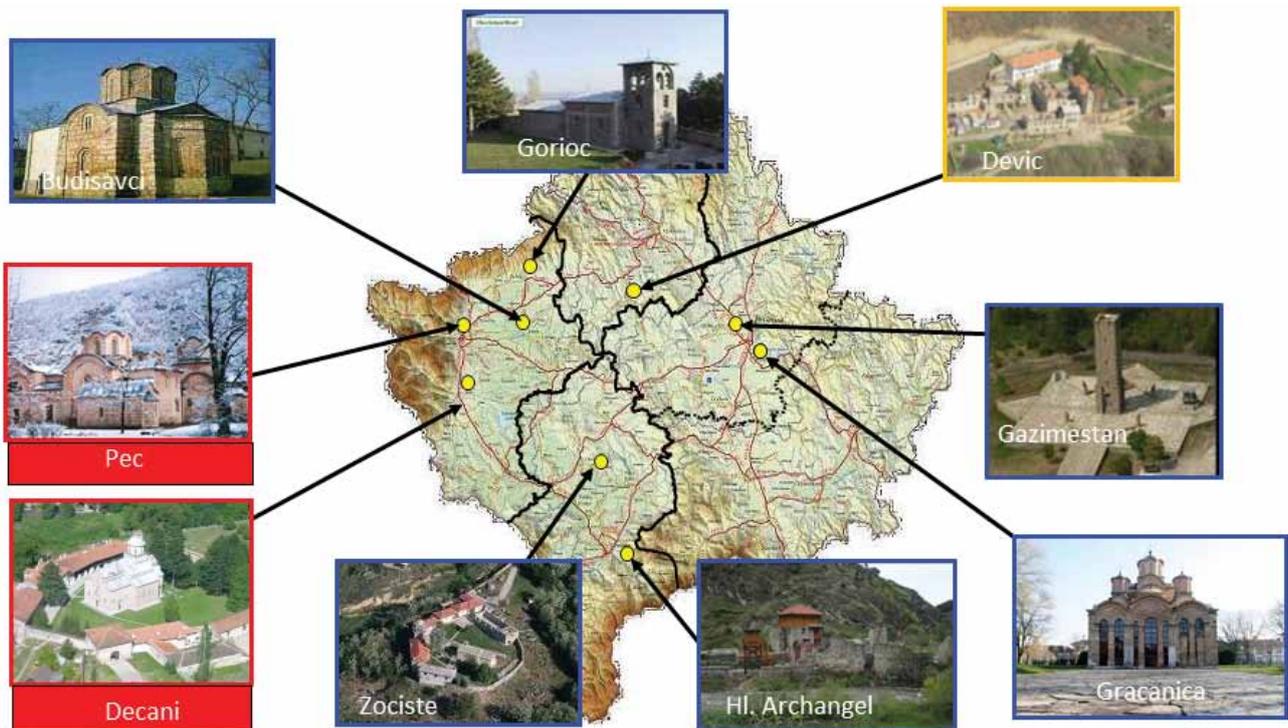


PICTURE: MNBGE

After the Gazimestan Monastery (28 March 2010) and the Graçanica Monastery (23 August 2010) were unfixed, the Monasteries in Zociste (03 November 2010), Budisavci (22 November 2010), Goric (15 December 2010) and Archangel Monastery (10 May 2011) have also been handed over to the Kosovo Police successfully. On 01 June 2012 this was followed by the completed unfixing of Devic Monastery. Thus, the transfer of

guarding tasks of seven out of nine Religious and Cultural Heritage Sites have been successfully completed by June 2012. The Kosovo Police has been a reliable and very successful partner throughout the unfixing process and the period during which it took responsible for the site. It is noteworthy that it was KFOR soldiers from the Moroccan contingent, an Islamic country in the north of Africa, who were the last to offer round the clock

protection to Devic Monastery until April last. Praised by Mother Anastasia on their departure for their professionalism, it was a proud occasion tinged with sadness at the ending of this very happy association. Visoki Decani Monastery and the Peja/Pec Patriarchate are the two remaining properties with Designated Special Status (Pr DSS) remaining to be unfixed. ■



STORY: I. OUANINECH



PICTURE: H. SOUBAAI



PICTURE: S. MALUCHE

## Memorial honors soldiers' sacrifices

*68 soldiers have died since KFOR entered Kosovo. Time stood still as representatives from KFOR came together to pay their respect and honor their friends who made the ultimate sacrifice to help others.*

“For many soldiers assigned to KFOR, your mission here is a short chapter of your lives. Some of you are here for a few months, some for a year. We sacrifice this piece of our lives to the cause of safety and security in Kosovo. But for 68 officers, NCOs and soldiers of KFOR, their sacrifice was much greater. 68 KFOR soldiers have lost their lives while serving for peace, freedom and security in Kosovo. It is to their memory and their sacrifice that we dedicate this memorial.”

COMKFOR, Lt Gen Marcel Valentin addressed a serious yet proud



and upbeat crowd of military men and women at KFOR HQ on June 11, three years after KFOR's entry into Kosovo.

“For you, the soldiers of today's KFOR, let this memorial service serve as an inspiration to fulfill our mission to provide a safe and secure environment for the people of Kosovo. In succeeding in this mission, we honor those who made the ultimate sacrifice to the causes of peace and security.”

“Let no one in KFOR or in Kosovo forget those who have paid the ultimate price to bring freedom and security to Kosovo. May God bless them, and may God bless us all.”



STORY AND PICTURE: Frank Benjaminsen and Guseppe Mattiello

## Italian effort bridges gap between villages

Peja/Pec, MNB West - Two parts of Kosovo were brought closer together with the inauguration of a new bridge in Gorni Petric on 4 June. The vital bridge was built by Multi-National Brigade West.

The bridge links the villages of Klina and Baran Valley, while separated by less than 200 meters, a rushing river flows between the two. People were forced to drive eight kilometres to go between the two villages.

### Child died

Brig. Gen. Pierluigi TORELLI, MNBW Commander, said that after he read the KOHA DITORE article, about a child who died trying to cross the Bistrice river, he decided to help rebuild the bridge, replacing the old bridge destroyed during the war. The work began in May and soon after, western Kosovo's newest bridge was in place. The Gorni Petric Bridge is 67 meters long, 4 meter wide, 3 meters high, and can accommodate vehicles up to 8 tons.

A number of important dignitaries attended the ceremony, including the Lt.Gen. Alberto FICUCIELLO, Italian Land Operative Forces Commander; Maj. Gen. Cigna, Deputy Commander for Operations; Agim Ceku, TMK Commander; along with UNMIK regional representatives and municipal managers of Klina and Peja.

### Rebuilt by Paras

The bridge was rebuilt by engineers of the Parachutist

“Folgore” Brigade along with a team of 20 men and women from TMK who worked alongside them. The TMK members will also help maintain the bridge in the future.

### Turning point

This bridge marks a break from the past, when people didn't always have the knowledge to build new infrastructures. The TMK members who worked alongside the Italian members will have the knowledge necessary to maintain the bridge far into the future, BG Torelli said. So, the bridge represents not only an important asset for the region's development, but, it also is the first step in lessening the dependence of Kosovo on foreign assistance for maintenance of its infrastructure. ■



STORY AND PICTURE: Marco Mattia

# BRNJAK BYPASS BLOCKED

In Mid-June KFOR completed an operation to physically close the bypass DOG 16 in the vicinity of BRNJAK. On this operation's successful conclusion unauthorized movements across the Administrative Boundary Line were prevented. It was carried out in order to permit KFOR troops to concentrate on the conduct of tasks central to their mission of contributing towards a safe and secure environment. Prior to the closure work commencing proper KFOR established several check points and secured a number of cordoned off areas for

safety reasons. This allowed the physical blockage of the bypass by KFOR continue unhindered until satisfactorily completed. The closure of DOG 16 resulted in a demonstration by protestors in the vicinity of GATE 31 and ZUPCE 4 as they displayed their displeasure in KFOR's action to close DOG 16. KFOR efforts then focused on engaging in dialogue with representatives of the local inhabitants. Earlier KFOR troops fired three (3) rubber bullets into the air to discourage protestors from climbing onto KFOR vehicles but apart from

this isolated incident the situation remained largely calm. The unauthorized bypass made impassable, the reaction contained through dialogue, the operation was stood down. Three morning's later a hand grenade exploded in the vicinity of the Administrative Crossing Point at BRNJAK (DOG 31) and a second hand grenade which did not detonate was destroyed by means of a controlled explosion carried out by a KFOR Ordnance Disposal Team. ■



PICTURE: V. DICANIO

STORY: V. LOSHAJ



PICTURE: V. DICANIO



PICTURE: A. ALAGNA

# BRNJAK BYPASS BLOCKED



PICTURE: T. PILAWSKI



PICTURE: V. DI CANIO



PICTURE: A. ALAGNA



PICTURE: V. DI CANIO

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## NATO Nations within KFOR

Albania, Bulgaria, Canada, Croatia,  
Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia,  
France, Germany, Greece, Hungary,  
Italy, Luxembourg, Netherlands,  
Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania,  
Slovenia, Turkey, United Kingdom,  
United States

## Non-NATO Nations within KFOR

Austria, Finland, Ireland, Morocco,  
Sweden, Switzerland, Ukraine

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# VISIT OF NATO MILITARY COMMITTEE AND SACEUR

June was an eventful month operationally for KFOR but also for notable military visitors to KFOR HQ, none more so than those of The NATO Military Committee and of SACEUR. The NATO Military Committee (MC) is the Senior military authority in NATO. It is the primary source of military advice to NATO's civilian decision-making bodies, the North Atlantic Council (NAC) and the Nuclear Planning Group. The MC's advice is sought prior to any authorization for military action and, consequently represents an essential link between the political decision-making process and the military structure of NATO. The MC is made up of senior military officers (usually three-star Generals) from NATO member countries who serve as their country's Military Representatives (MILREPs) to NATO. Their visit to KFOR was inclusive of briefings, discussions and field trips to 4 different locations relevant to presenting an update of the situation in Kosovo. The chairman of the MC Lt Gen Knud Bartels and COMKFOR Maj Gen Erhard Drews gave a press conference to some 30 local media representatives. Later in the month Admiral James Stavridis, NATO's Supreme Allied Commander Europe (SACEUR), journeyed to "Film City" and received a strategic overview briefing in KFOR HQ.



PICTURE: A. HAJRULLAHU



PICTURE: T. PILAWSKI

STORY: D. HARVEY

May 2012 was an important month in the region witnessing the successful smoothly run OSCE-facilitated Serbian Elections in Kosovo. But May had also a connected but separate significance for KFOR. For the first time in KFOR history two (2) Operational Reserve Forces (ORF) were on the ground in Kosovo at the same time, one Italian (ORF 1), the other a mixed German/ Austrian (ORF 2). For the German/ Austrian (ORF2) members it had a particular noteworthy all of its own to them, being the first time the same ORF was activated and deployed twice

to Kosovo. Having only recently departed Kosovo in early April they were to return later the same month at short notice to once again take up active operational duties. The period preceding the Serbian Elections in Kosovo had been one of tension and increased volatility, with a rising potential for widespread demonstrations and possible inter-ethnic violence. Following his assessment as to how best to maintain a safe and secure environment during the Serbian Election Period in Kosovo, COMKFOR Major General Erhard Drews decided it appropriate and prudent to seek

the deployment of a second ORF, in this case, the redeployment of those recently departed. KFOR's fully deployed deterrent presence in a state of readiness to react proved an effective contribution to the overall effort in conjunction with the Kosovo Police and EULEX thereby ensuring the elections passed off peacefully. ORF 2 along with KFOR's entire force played their part in accomplishing the mission. An appreciative COMKFOR acknowledged their contribution as the occasion of their second departure from Kosovo. ■



