

KFOR KFOR CHRONICLE

January 31, 2006

Edition 1



**On line tour with
TF DULJE**

COMKFOR extends Condolence in death of Slovak soldiers

As the Commander of Multinational Forces in Kosovo, it is with great regret and sorrow that I offer my deepest condolences to the Slovak people and Government on behalf of all KFOR soldiers as we mourn the loss of Slovak military personnel who died in a tragic airplane crash in Hungary.

The Slovakian soldiers had been on their way home after successfully completing their Peacekeeping Mission with KFOR operating in support of the population of Kosovo.

At this time, our thoughts and prayers are first and foremost with the families of those who have lost loved ones who had been working to ensure a safe and secure environment for Kosovo.

I ensure you that we will honor the memory of the lost soldiers, and their professionalism, by continuing to operate with the same vigor and enthusiasm they displayed.

**Commander Kosovo Force
LTG Giuseppe Valotto**

KFOR CHRONICLE

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Cover photo by Mr. Armend Aqifi

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KFOR Chaplain - God's gift of love is more than His price Making sense of the Slovakian contingent tragedy

All night long ... and then?

Here we are our Lord ... in front of you, breathless after a long walk.

If we feel tired, it isn't because we walked for long or because we crossed many countries.

It is because many steps have been taken on the road of the "whys" of lives, of "whys" of death.

My Lord, You took them with You in green age. You took them from the arms of their family ... Why?

Now more than ever, we feel St. Peter's world as ours: "We worked all night long, and we didn't take nothing."

Thank You for forcing us to contemplate our poor harvest. You help us to understand that without You we are useless. We are aimless.

Thanks for forcing us to consider our poor condition. You make us understand that our life is like the flowers in the field - in the morning they bloom and in the evening they die.

What is the reason for You to be concerned about a human being?

Nothing! Nevertheless You created him little less than angels, You award him with honor and glory!

I'm with You in the glory because You saved them with Your precious blood.

And as Nain widow, You tell all of us: "Don't cry!"

To the bride and the fiancé: "Don't cry!" To the mother, relatives and friends: "Don't cry!"

Jesus Christ, the human being redeemer, welcomed our cries and our inquiries.

Aloud in the dark night of our faith hanger do not prevail on the pray, that helps us to understand love is stronger than death.

We worked all night long...and then...?

Poems About Death

I'm Free

Don't grieve for me for now I'm free,
I'm following the path God has laid you see.
I took His hand when I heard Him call,
I turned my back and left it all.
I could not stay another day,
To laugh, to love, to work, to play.
Tasks left undone must stay that way,
I found that peace at the close of day.
If my parting has left a void,
Then fill it with remembered joys.
A friendship shared, a laugh, a kiss,
Oh, yes, these things I too will miss.
Be not burdened with times of sorrow.
I wish you the sunshine of tomorrow.
My life's been full, I've savored much,
Good friends, good times, a loved one's touch.
Perhaps my time seemed all too brief,
Don't lengthen it now with undue grief.
Lift up your hearts and peace to thee,
God wanted me now, He set me free.
Dylan Thomas (1914-1953)

Famous Quotes On Death

Life is eternal and love is immortal; and death is only a horizon,
and a horizon is nothing else than the limit of our sight.

- Rossiter W. Raymond

Father Gianluigi AROFFO
KFOR Theatre Chaplain



Photo by Armend Aqifi



Change of Command in MNTF C

Text by MAJ Peter Sykora, Czech Republic Army

Photos by Armend Aqifi, KFOR Chronicle

Czech Colonel Miroslav Hlavac assumed command of the MNB C during a ceremony at Camp Ville in Lipljan/Lipjan January 17.

At the same time, MNB C was officially renamed Multinational Task Force Center.

During a solemn parade, COMKFOR Lieutenant General Giuseppe Valotto handed over the command to COL Hlavac from COL Ales Vodehnal.

The outgoing commander, COL Vodehnal, summed up the performances of MNB C during the last six months by expressing his sincere appreciation to the soldiers, and to civilian personnel who have been part of the outstanding commitment.

"The Czech Republic has assumed the MNB C frame nation position from its Finnish predecessors," said COL Vodehnal. "I am personally glad that we have successfully been continuing in the building of a capable, joint, combined and reliable unit within KFOR since August 2005."

COL Hlavac echoed COL

Vodehnal's praise of the MNB C members.

"Using this opportunity, let me express my deepest gratitude to COL Vodehnal and all the MNB C Headquarters members as well as the other personnel for their very professional attitude and outstanding cooperation during the MNB C hand over process," said COL Hlavac. "I strongly believe that we will successfully continue the great job done by COL Vodehnal, and all our predecessors, for the benefit of the Multinational Task Force Center, KFOR and the whole Kosovo society."

LTG Valotto then awarded COL Vodehnal with the Non-Article 5 NATO medal and the ceremony was concluded with the playing of the Czech national anthem.





Change of Command in MNB E

California "Peacemakers" transfer authority to "Lone Star" Division 36th ID Uncases colors in Europe for first time since WW II

By Sgt. Matthew Chlosta
4th Public Affairs Detachment

Camp Bondsteel, Kosovo-Jan. 18 Under a cold, blue sky, protected and warm inside a giant "clam shell" bubble dome, Soldiers from the 36th Infantry Division, Texas National Guard, in their division's first deployment to Europe since World War II, took command of Kosovo Force Multi-National Brigade (East) at 10 a.m. in a transfer of authority ceremony, here.

Out going MNB(E) Commander Brig. Gen. John Harrel, 40th Infantry Division, California National Guard handed authority over to incoming Commander Brig. Gen. Darren Owens, commanding general, Task Force Falcon, 36th Inf. Div., and MNB(E).

"You were active in promoting my policy of support to UNMIK and the provisional institutions of self-government, thus contributing to back up my action aimed to show that, here in Kosovo, 'together we can' make the difference," Lt. Gen. Giuseppe Valotto, commander, KFOR, Italian Army, said. "Now it is up to -- General Owens, to take over

the command and to lead the brigade in its mission, to maintain a safe and secure environment for all the people of Kosovo. I thank you for your work, John, and my best wishes to you, Darren, for your tour in Kosovo."

Harrel stepped up to the podium next.

He talked about missions and goals his unit accomplished during their time in MNB(E) and he advised the Kosovars to keep looking forward to their future status talks, scheduled to begin this year.

"Today marks the official end of this historic mission for the 'Peacemakers of the 40th Infantry Division.'" Harrel said. "During our time here we have witnessed amazing progress. The Kosovo Police Service has assumed responsibility for routine police functions throughout the Gjilan and Ferizaj regions. Economic expansion and new business opportunities are evident throughout our area of responsibility. But most important for the people of Kosovo, progress is being made on the political front.

"Following a comprehensive review

of standards, Mr. Kai Eide recommended to the UN Security Council that status talks begin...and as we stand here today, final preparations are being made for that process to get underway." Harrel continued. "Leaders at every level must do their part to guide the process and to resist participation in unhelpful activities."

Troops from the "Lone Star" Division watched as Owens and Command Sgt. Maj. Kenneth Boyer, 36th Inf. Div., command sergeant major, MNB(E), uncased the 36th Inf. Div. colors on European soil for the first time since the "Fight'n 36th" took part in the invasion of Italy during WW II in 1943.

"This change of command ceremony is also the right opportunity for me to officially welcome the Soldiers of the 36th Infantry Division 'the Lone Star' Division," Valotto said.

"Let me say 'thank you' to General Harrel and the Soldiers of his command for the fine job they have done as peacekeepers for the last year here in Kosovo," Owens said.

The 36th Infantry Division was organized July 18, 1917 from units of the Texas and Oklahoma National



Guard for service in WW I.

"As Texans, you will see that we are a friendly people," Owens said. "But behind that friendly smile you will find that Texans are a tough people. The good folks here will find that we are good neighbors. The bad folks will find that we will be hard, and relentless in the pursuit of peace, justice, and the rule of law. We are here on a noble mission: to help make Kosovo a peaceful and safe place."

The 36th Inf. Div. adopted a shoulder patch consisting of an "infantry blue" arrowhead with a green "T" superimposed over it. The arrowhead stood for Oklahoma and the "T" for Texas. After the WW I, the 36th was reorganized and became an "all Texas" division and the Oklahoma units became part of the 45th Infantry Division.

"In our ranks stand fellow National Guardsmen, Reservists, and Regular Army Soldiers from 29 states and territories. We have the same brigade-sized force as the 40th Division. Our Soldiers patrol on foot, to get to know the local folks. We will continue working with the KPS and the civil authorities in Kosovo," Owens said.

Harrel finished his comments with reflection on the past rotation and for the future of Kosovo Forces and local citizens.

"We leave here with fond memories, positive experiences and above all-a belief that Kosovo's future will be bright and prosperous. Maintaining



peace in the Balkans is truly a noble cause -- a great endeavor-worthy of the sacrifices we have made to be part of this mission. While the duties of peacekeeping fall on Soldiers, it cannot succeed without the support and cooperation of the people. Keeping the peace is everyone's responsibility." Harrel said, during his remarks to the 36th Inf. Div. Soldiers standing in crisp formations and the crowd of distinguished visitors.

One of those DVs was Lt. Gen. Ricardo Sanchez, commanding general, V Corps and deputy commanding general, 7th Army and United States Army Europe. Sanchez had been commanding general of an earlier KFOR rotation several years ago, when he was still a brigadier general.

The 36th Inf. Div. was deactivated in

1968. On May 1, 2004, the 49th Armored Division was "reflagged" and the 36th Inf. Div. was reborn. 36th Inf. Div., the "T-Patchers," have a major role in the global war on terror, with more than 6,000 of the division's Soldiers on active duty in Afghanistan, Iraq and now Kosovo.

"I promise you this," Owens said emphatically as he closed his speech. We will not take sides. We will support the political process to determine the future status of Kosovo. We will do our part, working hand in hand with the police, and civil authorities to make this a place where decent folks can live without fear. So now is the time and now is the hour for all of us to re-dedicate ourselves to the hard work of peace, and let no one stand in the way.



Mongolians join the

**Text by CAPT M. RECOUR,
Liaison officer for the Mongolian
Detachment**

**Photos by Adj Olivier Dubois,
SIRPA TERRE**

The first elements from Belgium arrived in Metrovica one month ago to begin BELUMOKOS 20. They have recently been joined by a Mongolian platoon, and after an inventory of materials, vehicles and documents, the platoon has been fully integrated into the mission.

To enhance KFOR's mission of ensuring peace and security in the province, the Mongolian platoon rotates through four areas working three days at each zone. The areas the platoon are responsible for are: Northern area near Mitrovica, the city of Mitrovica, the "zone control" area and the Reserve, Training and Maintenance area.

Duties vary in the different areas. The platoons conduct checkpoints along the main supply road between Leposavic and Mitrovica as well as patrol in the valleys and mountains in the Northern area.

While conducting missions in the city of Mitrovica, they execute mounted or dismounted patrols with or without KPS police agents and perform mixed checkpoints with



The Belgian Company

Kosovo Police Service. The aim is to support the local police, who are in charge of the daily security, and ensure the progressive transfer of responsibilities to local institutions. The main focus during zone control missions is to patrol the Kukavica and Borcane region and check the condition of the railway in the area. The RTM period allows the members to continue training (like Serbian and Albanian language

courses for example), perform maintenance on equipment and vehicles and enjoy some physical training activities and sports. This RTM period is essential to mission success. All interaction with other nations is organized as "cross boundaries operations" and is aimed at enhancing interoperability between nations and flexibility in Kosovo. The sporting events also prove crucial in building teamwork

between the nations and whether it was a basketball tournament or a Danish-organized "skill march," the Mongolian contingent was eager to participate and push themselves to the limit.

In the short time the Mongolian platoon has been a part of BELUMOKOS 20, they have performed their duties well and successfully become a part of KFOR's peacekeepers.



Armenian Peace



**Text and photos by 1st LT
Maksym Nedria, Ukrainian Army**

Chilly weather and strong fog made the routine morning checkpoint complicated for Armenian soldiers. Each morning and afternoon, the Armenian platoon performs three-hour checkpoints within the GREBAT AOR, MNB E.

January 9, the Armenian checkpoint was established near Urosevac, at the junction to village of Babljac and HAWK road. Despite unfavorable weather conditions and low visibility, the traffic was regular.

"First, you have to put a car into the checkpoint," said Junior Sergeant Vardan Grigoryan. "Though it seems simple, you never know how each driver will react."

"After conducting this mission for several months, we know most of drivers in our AOR, but we still have to pay some special attention to strangers," he continued.

As each car is stopped, standard procedure must be carried out. "I check vehicle registration



keeping Platoon

documents, driver license and personal ID cards," said SRG Grigoryan. "Then we search the car and the passengers for illegal possession of weapons, drugs and smuggling."

"I am very satisfied with my platoon," said 1st LT Ashot Gafaryan, Armenian Contingent commander. "In Armenia, they belong to the Peacekeeping Battalion, which is dedicated to Kosovo and Iraqi missions. So, every soldier is well trained, motivated and professional."

Besides regular checkpoints, the Armenian platoon performs patrols, CRC rehearsals and provides security for Camp Rigas Fereos.

"In KFOR, the Armenian platoon belongs to the GREBAT, and we perform our duties together with well-organized cooperation," said 1st LT Gararyan. "I believe that the experience we are gaining during the KFOR mission, will help us improve our readiness and capabilities of our Peacekeeping Battalion when we return home."



The Pipes



**Text by MAJ Piers Hutt, UK Army
Photos by CPR Indresh, UK Army**

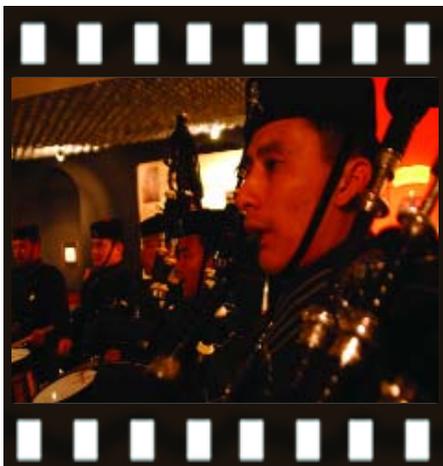


The Pipes and Drums of the 1st Battalion the Royal Gurkha Rifles (1RGR) visited Kosovo January 10-14. The Pipes and Drums are based with the Battalion in Bosnia for the winter and came down to play at a number of functions during their stay. The Gurkhas have close links with Kosovo having been a part of the infamous British 5 Airborne Brigade back in 1999. Many of the older members of the Pipes and Drums were deployed throughout Kosovo with companies being centered around the airport, Lipijan and the school "Vllezrit Frasheri" in the village of Urogoli in Kosovo Polje.

During the morning of January 11, the Pipes and Drums played at the school. About five members of the band had been stationed in the area and were happy to come back to mark the changes. WO2 Pitamber from 1RGR presented a plaque to the headmaster of the school, Rexher Drenovci, to mark the occasion and commented on how much the school had changed since he was bivouacked in the grounds during the summer of 1999. The headmaster acknowledged the contribution the Gurkhas had made and welcomed the Pipes and Drums

www.nato.int/kfor

and Drums



with some traditional Kosovo coffee. He remarked that it was the first time that the children of the school had seen a live band, let alone a Gurkha Pipe band! Cakes were handed out to the orphaned children at the school by the British Chefs from the UK NSE contingent.

The Pipes and Drums played that night at the Museum in central Pristina, to mark the farewell to Mark Dickinson, British Office and MG Jamie Balfour CBE, KPC Coordinator. They played a short rendition at the grand entrance to the Museum as the guests arrived before playing again later inside the great hall.

The third and final engagement for the Pipes and Drums was the farewell to the MG Balfour CBE with the KPC. The venue was in a wine cellar in Orakovac with the senior KPC members. A short rendition was performed before the General and guests sat down for a quick lunch. Instead of the traditional "quaich," the band was toasted with a few glasses of local wine.

As the Pipes and Drums members concluded their visit, the younger members went back to Bosnia with memories of their welcome here in Kosovo and the veteran members left with the satisfaction that their efforts in Kosovo in 1999 had been worthwhile.



Security at home ne



By MAJ Jo Schoepf, PhD, MBA,
AUT A

Photos by Armend Aqifi

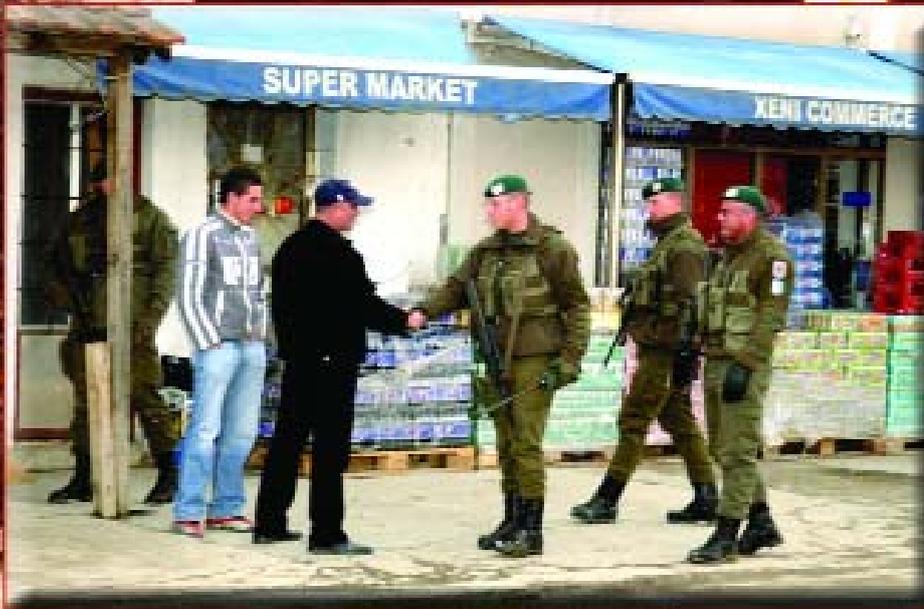
Austria took over the Presidency of the Council of the European Union January 1 for the second time since its accession in 1995. The Austrian Presidency will pay particular attention to operations, civil-military co-ordination and the development of military capabilities and support the countries of the Western Balkans in their efforts to get closer to the European Union.

"Security at home needs security abroad' is the slogan that we will give life to, guiding us in our efforts to implement the military objectives of the Austrian Presidency programme in the field of European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP)," stated Austria's Minister of Defence Günther Platter a few days ago in Vienna.

The KFOR Chronicle team had the great opportunity to participate in a patrol January 19, joining the Austrian 1st Armoured Infantry Coy/TF Dulje with the armoured personnel carrier (APC) "PANDUR." Captain Ninaus, the coy commander explained the different tasks in his area of responsibility.

"This unit is composed of professional soldiers and has existed since April 2004," he said.

"My men - mostly from the Austrian states of Styria, Burgenland and Vienna - are specially trained for



Needs security abroad

peacekeeping or peace enforcement missions."

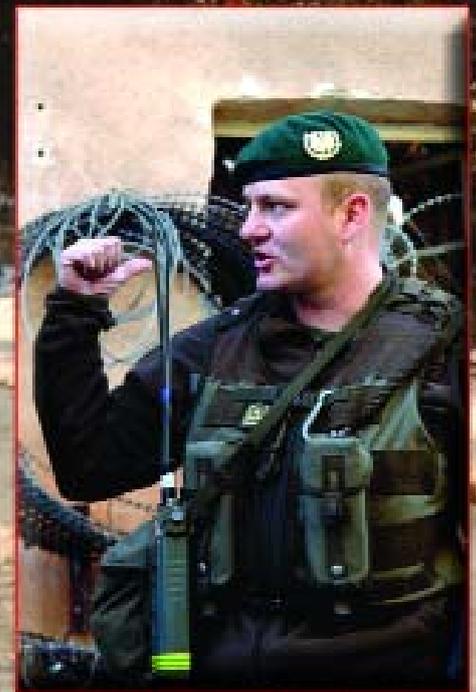
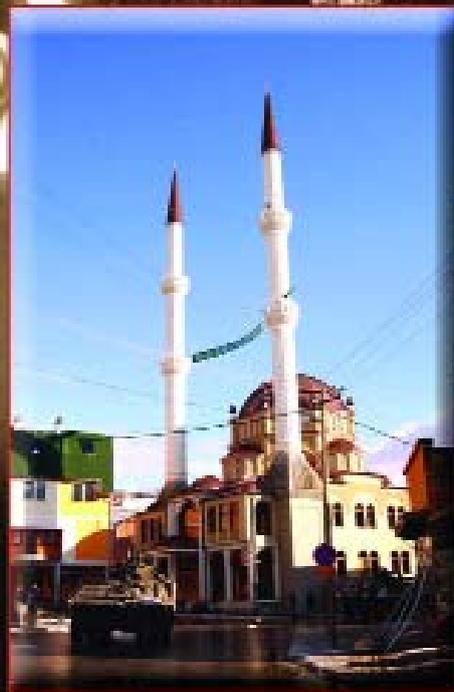
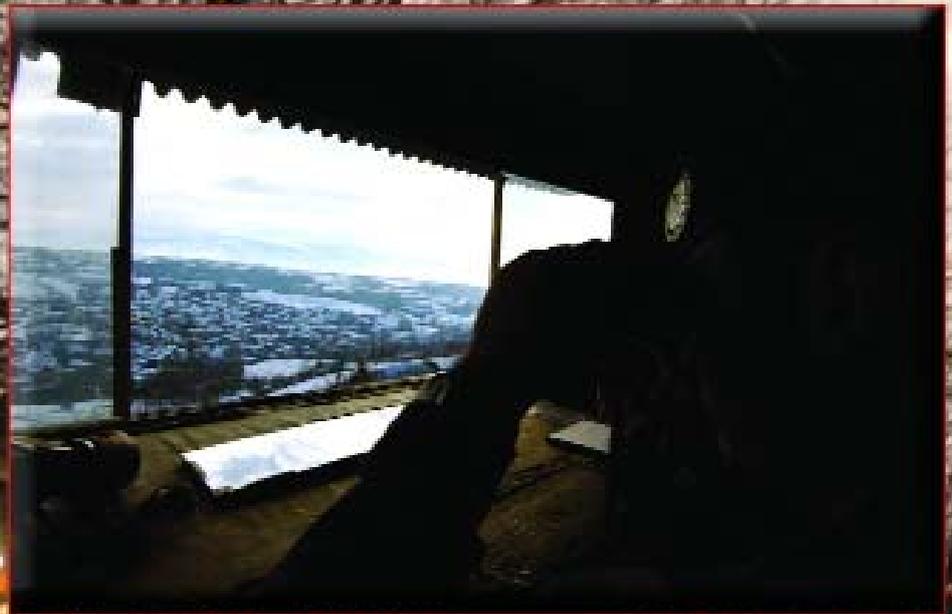
The first spot on this tour was the city of Orahovac. There, the task force had to protect KOS minorities and Orthodox religious sites. On our way to the next village, Velika Hoca, the seasoned platoon leader, OR-9 Macher, suddenly gave the order to set up a temporary checkpoint. It was very impressive how quick and professional the teams were executing his order. One of the soldiers asked the driver of a stopped vehicle to open the trunk lid and the doors.

"For security reasons, it is important that the hood, the trunk lid and other components are always opened by the driver himself," the platoon leader explained. "You never know what is inside.

"Our soldiers search the vehicle armed with a pistol, instead of a rifle, in order to minimize the risk of damaging the owner's property."

After a few minutes the search is finished with no suspicious or illegal material found.

Before ending the day-long mission, the platoon leader lead a foot patrol in the village of Zrze as well as the main thoroughway from Velica Hoca to Zociste. And with that, the Austrian 1st Armoured Infantry Coy/TF Dulje returned to base knowing they had done their part to make Kosovo safer.



Roma Mahala

The Municipality of Mitrovica, in cooperation with UNMIK and International humanitarian organisations, has undertaken a series of joint projects for the reconstruction of the Roma Mahala. This urban quarter had been the home of 8,000 Roma, Ashkali and Egyptians prior to the recent conflict.

In the framework of the quarter's rehabilitation project the reconstruction site needed to be cleared of debris and rubble, remaining from the destroyed houses. From August 1 to December 23, KFOR supported and assisted the clearing of this area. The Argentinean Staff Officer



reconstruction

Engineer Operations, Major Mander, explained this very specialized engineering skill.

"KFOR engineers identified the structures and buildings, which have to be brought down with explosives," said Major Mander. "MNTF (N) is leading the operation by blasting 15 buildings, during all four phases of the project."

The engineers of the 2nd ENGINEER REGIMENT (Foreign Legion) and Danish Eng platoon prepared and executed the blasting, using 40 kilos of plastic explosive, 40 detonators and 3,500 m of detonating cord. This means that less than 2.5 Kg were used for the detonation of each building. This great performance was possible because of the precise and strategic location of the explosives by the MNTF (N) engineers. They executed a detailed preparation of the blasting - in order to use the minimum amount of explosives - with the aim to conduct a safe blast and limit any damage of houses built near the quarter.

A close and detailed coordination with UNMIK POLICE, KPS and civilian authorities ensured the safety of all civilians during the demolition.

After a week of hard work and enduring bad weather conditions, the KPC and the Municipality of Mitrovica completed clearing the rubble and the demolition mission was successful.



Lithuanian night patrol

Text and photos by 1st LT Maksym Nedria, Ukrainian Army

A Lithuanian Contingent has been deployed to Kosovo since 1999. The Lithuanian platoon belongs to the Polish-Ukrainian battalion, MNB E. According to 1st LT Vidas Ilgaudas, the Lithuanian Platoon Commander, the Lithuanian soldiers perform regular KFOR missions, such as patrol, temporary checkpoint and guard of the camp.

The Lithuanian platoon conducted a temporary checkpoint in cooperation with KPS and a night patrol within the AOR January 18. The Lithuanian soldiers started from the White Eagle Camp at 20.00. First, a temporary checkpoint was established on the HAWK road near Kacanic. When a minibus passed the checkpoint without stopping, the KPS members reacted quickly and the car was escorted back to the checkpoint in few minutes. The Lithuanian KFOR checked out the driver and the passengers and

found no documents for the car. The suspects were handed over to the policemen.

Then, the checkpoint mission was ended and the Lithuanians carried out a vehicle and foot patrol.

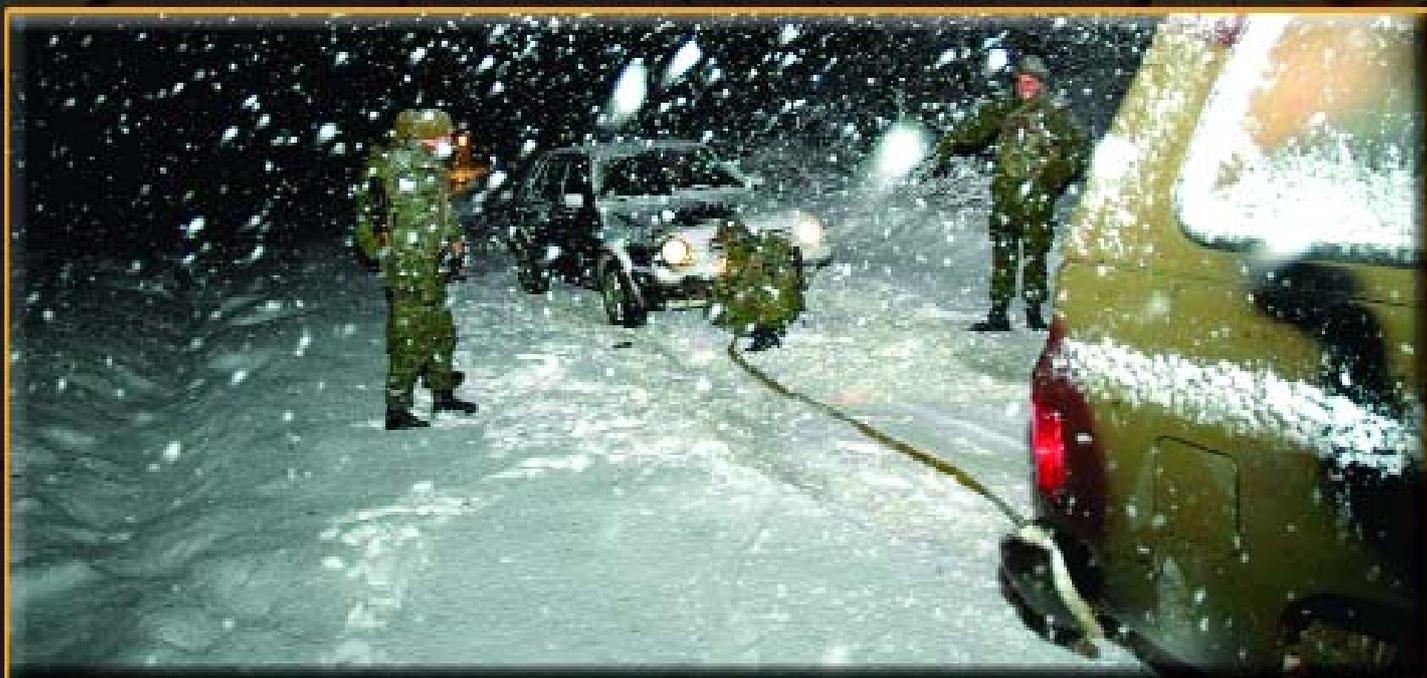
"We had several routes to patrol our AOR," said 1st LT Ilgaudas. "We conducted both day and night patrols in order to eliminate the possibility of those engaged in criminal activity to predict our location. The strategy helps us accomplish the main object of this mission - maintaining the security situation within our AOR."

During the night patrol as the weather worsened, two military trucks equipped with Interim Force Tracking Systems (IFTS), a system which can track the geographical location of the patrol, and radio communication equipment were slowly making their way through the rural darkness. Occasional residents of Doganovic, Globocica and Gorance greeted the KFOR members as the patrol made its way

to the final destination, the FYROM border checkpoint in Deneral Jankovic.

By the time the patrol reached Deneral Jankovic, the weather had made the sleet- and snow-covered secondary roads nearly impassible. But the main road from Skopje to Pristina blocked by a recent avalanche, it was the quickest route around the damaged area. As the KFOR members made their way back through the snow-covered mountain passes, they stumbled across two civilian cars dangerously stuck in the deep snow. Using the safety and rescue equipment on board, the soldiers helped the stranded motorists out and escorted them through the passes and back onto a better maintained road.

After several hours of treacherous travel, the Lithuanians arrived back at the camp at 04.30, knowing they had accomplished their mission by providing both security of the area and safety to the motorists they found stranded.





Cash-money controlled and



By LT Jan Katzmarczyk, GE Navy

The Task Force Prizren controlled border traffic from Albania into the Kosovo and led patrols on the market west of Prizren.

Prizren - "Geronimo" was the name of a recent operation prepared by the TF Prizren. Like the famous Apache-chief the Task Force operated swift and quietly.

On the first and third day, the operation was concentrated on the LOC Duck near the Albanian border. In checkpoints and cages suspicious vehicles were stopped and controlled.

"It was important for us to proceed goal-oriented and not to block the traffic," said LTC Volker, deputy commander of the TF Prizren.

More than 2,000 people and 700 motor vehicles were checked during the operation.

In the course of the operation, the Task Force also controlled the market west of Prizren. Dealers had



firearm found in operation

to show their licenses and stands were checked. In one of these controls, the Task Force found an unregistered Yugoslavian pistol. The owner was handed over to the KPS. Big amounts of cash-money Many of the controlled persons entering from Albania carried large amounts of cash. Most of them claimed to go the market in Prizren to buy livestock.

It was a plausible explanation as the Bajram holiday - where lamb is traditionally prepared - was not far away. At a checkpoint near the Albanian border crossing, two men had about 5,000 Euro cash in their jackets. The German MP checked the money to ensure it wasn't counterfeit. The men were allowed to keep their money after it was properly registered and their personal data was logged.

Royal cooperation

Also, a company of the Spanish TF Tizona participated in the operation, among them was a platoon of the Guardia Real, the Spanish royal guard. Normally, this unit is responsible for the security of the Spanish king. LT Cristobal, platoon leader of the Guardia Real had a

positive impression of the cooperation.

"With the common operations we can learn a lot about different procedures and equipment," said LT Cristobal.

TF Prizren also operated in the sector of the Turkish TF Dragas

where the local civilians were very cooperative and understanding toward the controls.

"The people were astonished to see German soldiers in their area," said CPT Jan, company leader of the 2nd company of the TF Prizren.



Ukrainian Arm



**Text by 1st LT Maksym Nedria,
Ukrainian Army
Photos by Armend Aqifi**

The new history of the Ukrainian Armed Forces began on December 6, 1991, when the Verkhovna Rada (Parliament) of Ukraine adopted the Law "On the Armed Forces of Ukraine". That act created legal basis for the organization of the armed forces of the independent state.

Since that time, people of Ukraine and Ukrainian military celebrate the date as Armed Forces Day. A number of Ukrainian military celebrated the 14th Anniversary of Armed Forces of Ukraine abroad while performing their duties in more than 10 peace support operations in Africa, Middle East and East Europe.

National Ukrainian Contingent in Kosovo solemnly celebrated the Armed Forces Day in Camp Breza, Brezovica. A Medal Parade, to decorate Ukrainian peacekeepers with Non Article 5 NATO Medal, was also held during the occasion. That day Ukrainians shared their joy with numerous guests from other KFOR Contingents, Special Police Units and from local administration.

Ukrainian MOD Delegation, headed by Deputy Minister of Defense of Ukraine Mr. Volodymyr Pas'ko visited the Ukrainian Contingent in Kosovo. Mr. Pas'ko congratulated Ukrainian soldiers and said a word of appreciation, on behalf of their families and people of Ukraine, for the contribution towards better future for the people of Kosovo. BG John Harrel, Commander MNB E gave a speech to congratulate the Ukrainian Contingent and to thank them for their dedication to the Brigade's mission in KFOR.

Then, the solemn ceremony of the Medal Parade was held. As the official part of celebration finished, soldiers from Airborne Company of the Ukrainian Contingent performed an impressive combat show for their guests. The celebration was a great success and was concluded with



ed Forces Day

performances by well-known singers from Ukraine, Tina Karol, Irina Lonchina, Ielisara and Bohdan Stashkiv, for the soldiers and guests.



Italian Air Force Patron's Day

Text and photos by 1st LT Maksym Nedria, Ukrainian Army

The Italian NSE in Film City was full of sunny smiles and children's voices as Italian Air Force celebrated the Day of their Patron Saint and Protector, the Lady Madonna of Loreto on December 10.

Loreto is a city in Italy, located on the Adriatic coast, where there is a small church, which is considered as the Holy House. According to legend Virgin Mary and Jesus spent their lives in this house in the small town of Palestine, Nazareth. Then, in 1290 some angels picked up this house and brought it with their wings to Illyrian in Kosovo and afterward to Loreto. In 1920 the Pope Benedetto XV proclaimed the Madonna of Loreto the protector of Aviators and consequently protector of the Italian Air Force. The house, through the centuries, has become a Sanctuary dedicated to the Virgin of Loreto. Nowadays, thousands of pilgrims visit the Holy Sanctuary.

The presence of 56 children from different ethnic communities created a touching atmosphere for soldiers and made this celebration remarkable. There were 35 children of Albanian ethnic group from an elementary school in Pristina; 15 of Albanian and Roman ethnic groups from Klina; and six children of Serb ethnic group from the school for disabled persons in Gracanica.

"Rather than have the usual conventional celebration, we use the opportunity to meet the children and to let them understand our role here in Kosovo," said COL Damiano Mariggio, ITA AF.

Italian aviators invited the children for lunch. Then, a movie about Frece Tricolori, Italian Air Force Aerobatic Team was shown to the guests. An outing to the helipad was also provided to give the children a close-up view of the helicopter.

"We invited the children to share this

moment of joy and entertainment, to give them a chance to learn more about KFOR and to let them understand that we are in Kosovo to protect them. That is why we showed them the helicopter. We explained to them that we use helicopters only to

help people in an emergency or to bring a patient from difficult to access areas to a hospital," said COL Mariggio. The Colonel also expressed how fantastic it was to see the luster of the children's eyes and their smiles.





Finnish Contingent celebra

By Miloff Mirva Brola, FIN CON
PIO, Finnish Army
Photos by Cpl Lauri Lilja, Finnish
Army

the previous generations had to
bring about reconciliation by
themselves and start together
building up an independent nation

from ruins."
The unity and independence of the
state were tested again during
World War II, when Finland was

The Finnish Contingent celebrated the Independence Day of Finland on December 6. The Parade of Independence Day and the Non Article 5 NATO medal parade of the Finnish Contingent took place at the Camp Ville in Lipljan.

This year Finns all over the world celebrated the 88th anniversary of Finland. The state became independent as a result of a series of tragic incidents. Right after the declaration of independence on Dec. 6, 1917, Finland drifted into a bloodstained war.

As Commander of the Finnish Contingent, Colonel Jukka Tuononen said in his speech:

"That war was never prevented by any international crisis management measures, neither was it followed by a peace keeping operation. Instead,



Kosovo Celebrates Independence Day



caught in the whirls of world politics. During the war from 1939 to 1945 more than 90,000 people perished. The rebuilding after the wars was also a great challenge for a small nation. Some 420,000 internally displaced people from the occupied areas had to be resettled. However, Finland retained its independence and freedom.

Colonel Tuononen expressed in his speech his sincere gratitude to all the cooperative nations of MNB C as well as to other KFOR members and the international communities for their valuable cooperation and support with the Finnish Contingent. "I especially want to thank the people of Kosovo for the good

cooperation with us. KFOR remains committed to maintain peace and stability in Kosovo. Working together in a peaceful and safe environment

is a benefit to all of us here in building a brighter future and future status of Kosovo."



Engineer's international St.

By MAJ Jo Schoepf, PhD, MBA,
AUT A

Photos by 1st LT Maksym Nedria,
Ukrainian Army

The Austrian and Swiss Engineers celebrated "St. Barbara's day" December 4 and invited engineers of all nations to their celebration. Engineers from HQ KFOR Jeng Branch had to pass this examination at the Austrian House, while Swisscoy organized an international engineer contest in Camp Casablanca in Suva Reka.

The Austrian Staff Officer Engineer Operations, Major Michalus, explained this very unique tradition. "Holy Barbara' is the patron of engineers in the Austrian and Swiss armed forces," the major explained. "For these engineers, St. Barbara's day has the same meaning as 'Camerone day' for the French Foreign Legion."

The legend of St. Barbara tells that she was hiding herself in a cave to escape from her pursuers. God helped her by screening the caves entrance with bushes. Because St.



Barbara found protection below ground she is also the colliers patron. The colliers were the first to use

explosives (black powder) while conducting their dangerous work. When the army snappers started working with explosives, colliers



Barbara's Day celebration

were their instructors. Along with the knowledge of explosives, they also passed on their patron to the army engineers. Since those days in the 16th century, it is tradition that every soldier who becomes an engineer, who according to MAJ Michalus is "the highest education a soldier can attain," gets baptized on St. Barbara's day.

The major touched on the importance of the launching ceremony that is performed for the engineers.

"The only thing an engineer fears is his inner swine, or 'Schewinehund,'" said MAJ Michalus. "Therefore this inner swine has to be killed in a ceremony using water from a nearby lake or river. The specifics of the ceremony are secret but I can tell you it is a terrible awful (ceremony) but it works."

**And the sapper said:
When the waters were dried
and the earth did appear
God created the engineer
The few, the proud, the fear-
less engineer
With the rank and the pay of
a sapper**



Time to say goodbye...



Major Jo Schoepf, Phd, MBA, AU A
Chief Internal Information KFOR

I arrived here in Pristina at Kosovo Force Headquarters May 4, 2005. First as J9 LNO Officer, then as chief internal information and editor in chief of your "KFOR Chronicle" magazine. Now it's time to say "Good bye".

I took much pleasure in working with my great team - Mr. Armend Aqifi, our civilian photographer and lay out artist, 1st Lieutenant Maksym Nedria, our Ukrainian Army journalist (2005/2006) and 1st Lieutenant Oleksandr Tretiak, the former Ukrainian Navy journalist (2005). Many thanks to the KFOR Public Information Office, the liaison officers from the Multinational Brigades and Task Forces, and the combat camera teams for their support.

Last but not least, I would like to extend my sincere gratitude to all of you for your cooperation, the friendship and the help I received during the mandate. I would never have succeeded in such a mission without your support.

Please forgive me if I made mistakes. I tried, like all of you, to serve the best as possible.

Finally, let me wish all of you a safe tour while completing your mission with KFOR and all the best in your future! Viel Glück!

Peacekeeper's Profile

Name: Francisco Javier Gonzalez Moya
Rank: OR-6
Home unit: 3rd Tercio of Spanish Legion
Actual Branch: Specialist in administration and military accounting in Logistic Group
Previous Activity: One tour to Iraq and Kuwait in 2004
Country: SPAIN
Where I live: Almería, city that belongs to Andalucía and is located just in the SE of Spain
Where I work: Dispatch Shift Leader, Transcoy, Headquarters Support Group
Why I am in Kosovo: To gain experience, to try to increase my level of English and German, and test myself working with multinationals as a Staff Sergeant

How was the reaction of my family:

My parents gave me all their support in coming to Kosovo, at the same way as last year in Iraq, but they are afraid always of something bad happen, however I think that's normal nowadays because they have plenty of information on TV, Internet, Radio and so on, for what they can know everything in real time.

I had also all the support from my girlfriend, but it was very hard to say good-bye to her, because after three years posted in Almería we manage to live together united for almost four months.

Nevertheless, regular phone calls keep me up to speed with what is happening in their lives.

I am going to take advantage of this opportunity in order to thank them for their support, mainly to my girlfriend.

Future plan after my tour:

Do my best so as to try to obtain the highest English level in the Spanish Army, because I would like to be posted for four years to Strasbourg or Naples in the future.

Live in my pretty apartment near the beach in Roquetas de Mar, after marry with my girlfriend.



Peacekeeper's Profile

Name: Yelverton, Freddy
 Rank: OR- 9
 Home unit: 1 S Bde MP Coy
 Actual Branch: Provost Section and Investigation
 Previous Activity: 2 Tours of Lebanon, 2 Tours of Cyprus, 1 Tour of Iran /Iraq, 3 Tours of Bosnia, Herzegovina, 2 Tours of Kosovo.
 Country: Ireland
 Where I live: Cork City in the South of Ireland
 Where I work: MP Coy, Collins Barracks, in Cork City, Ireland / IMP Coy, HQ HSG in KFOR Main, Film City, Pristina.
 Why I am in Kosovo: To help bring stability and peace to the people of Kosovo, and to pass on my 30 Years of experience as an Military Policeman, to the younger members of the multinational IMP'S out here in Kosovo.



How was the reaction of my Family?

My Wife, Mary, my son, Warren and his fiancé Roisin, my daughter Norah and her husband Tony, and not for getting my mother in law Ciss, gave me all their support in coming to Kosovo, the same way as all my other trips abroad. My wife and I have always talked about my decision to travel abroad. It would be on a joint decision that I would decide to travel. As part of an agreement I have brought my wife on holidays, to many of my overseas trips abroad. Nevertheless, regular phone calls keep me up to speed with what is happening in their lives at home.

I am going to take advantage of this opportunity in order to thank them for their support, over all the years, Thank you all, very much.

Future plan after my tour:

As this is my last trip abroad, I plan to retire from the Defence Forces; I am planning to ride my new 1500 c.c. Kawasaki, on route 66, before I croak.

Peacekeeper's Profile

Name: Raffaele FERRARA
 Age: 50
 Rank: Lieutenant Colonel (OF-4)
 Nationality: ITALIAN
 KFOR Branch/Unit: KFOR HQ JIC
 HOME Unit: Secretariat of Defence - ROME

As the final status of Kosovo is being decided through future and multilateral negotiations, good working relations between KFOR and Serbian and Montenegrin Armed Forces are essential.

As JIC Staff Officer I have always done my best to improve this relationship in all daily tasks, convinced that the work done by both sides, KFOR JIC and Serbian and Montenegrin Armed Forces MTA Implementation Commission, will ultimately contribute to de-conflict, make Kosovo more secure and enhance the commitment to a peaceful solution.

And I am proud of being part of the process.

I also hope that my work has contributed a little bit to make a better KFOR. At least, this was my intention.

My family sadly and unwillingly accepted the separation. I do look forward to re-join them all. However, they are aware that, as a soldier, I will always be where my Country deems it necessary and do my best to accomplish the mission.



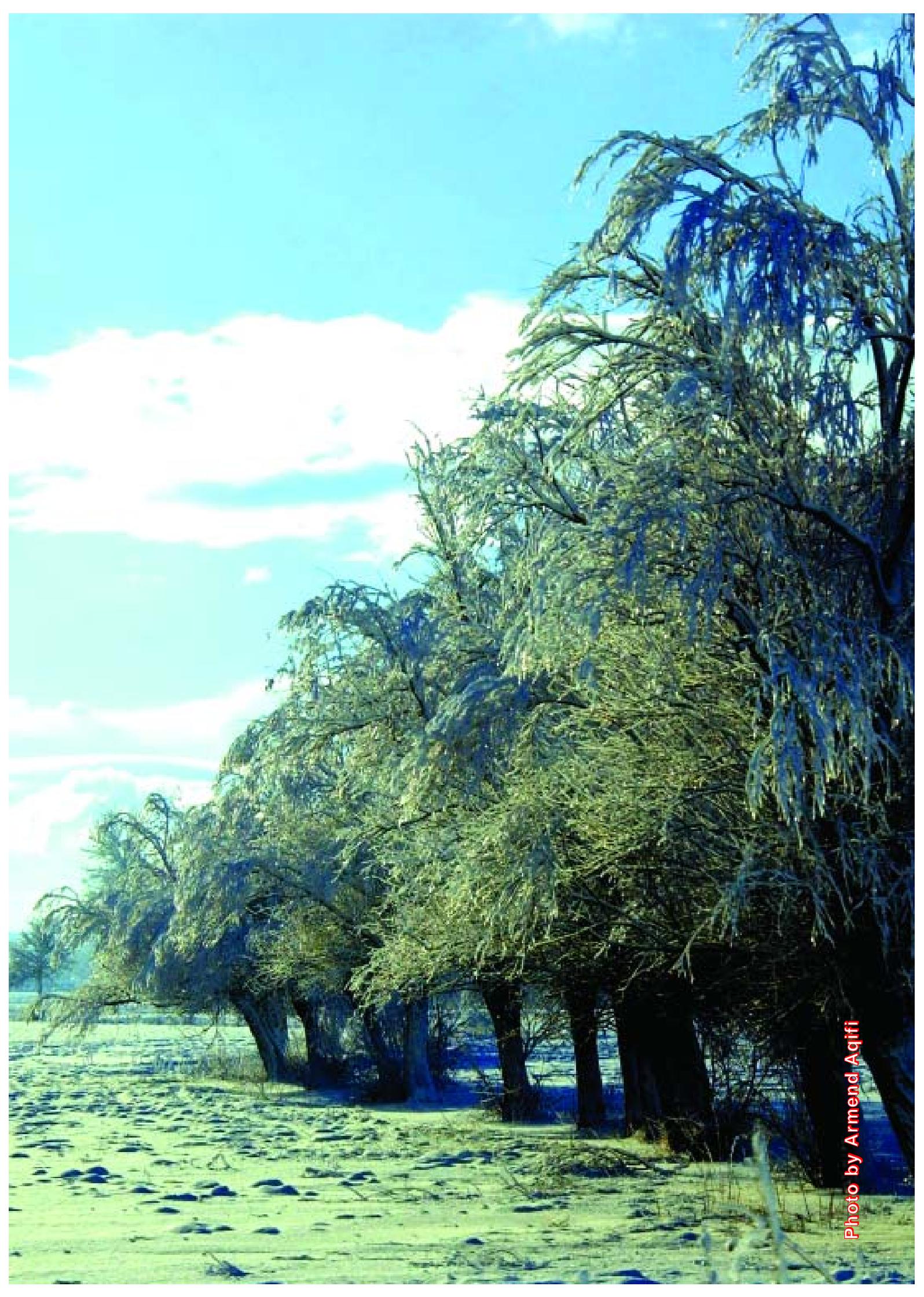


Photo by Armend Aqiri