

3

NATO IN
THE BALKANS



■ KEY INFORMATION

NATO is currently running peacekeeping operations in Kosovo and in Bosnia and Herzegovina. In parallel, both Serbia and Montenegro and Bosnia and Herzegovina have asked to join NATO's Partnership for Peace programme.

In addition, NATO also led a peacekeeping operation in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia*, which is already a member of Partnership for Peace.

NATO IN Kosovo

The recent upsurge in violence between ethnic Albanians and Serbs has shown the importance of a continued military presence in the province of Kosovo. This presence is provided by a NATO-led peacekeeping mission called the Kosovo Force or **KFOR**. KFOR works alongside the UN Mission to Kosovo (UNMIK) and other international and non-governmental agencies to stabilise the province.

KFOR is deployed in accordance with UN Security Council Resolution 1244 that calls for an effective international civil and security presence in Kosovo. It establishes Kosovo as an entity under interim international administration, while a solution is sought for the future status of the province. It also requests the UN Secretary-General to appoint a Special Representative to oversee the implementation of the international civil presence, and authorises member states and relevant international organisations to establish the international security presence.

NATO conducted a 78-day air campaign against the regime of President Slobodan Milosevic in 1999 to end the ethnic cleansing of Kosovar Albanians. Tension started in 1989 when Belgrade removed Kosovo's autonomy, imposing direct control over the province. It then started to oppress the Kosovar Albanian population. In 1998, major violence erupted in Kosovo with the actions of the Serb forces provoking flows of refugees and internally displaced persons.

NATO IN BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA

NATO has been running a peacekeeping operation in Bosnia and Herzegovina since December 1995 in accordance with the UN Security Council Resolution 1031. Discussions are currently taking place for the termination of the NATO-led peacekeeping force, the NATO-led Stabilisation Force or **SFOR**, and the hand over of the mission to the European Union by end 2004.

SFOR succeeded the NATO-led Implementation Force or **IFOR** at the end of 1996. IFOR was deployed in accordance with UNSCR 1031, transferring responsibility for military operations in Bosnia from UNPROFOR to NATO and mandating IFOR to oversee the implementation of the military aspects of the Dayton Peace Accord.

The Dayton Peace Accord establishes Bosnia and Herzegovina as a single, democratic and multiethnic state with two entities: the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina and Republika Srpska.

This peace agreement ended a four-year war in Bosnia and Herzegovina, which started following the break up of

Yugoslavia (Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia and Slovenia) at the end of the Cold War.

NATO IN THE FORMER YUGOSLAV REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA*

On the request of the late President Boris Trajkovski, NATO conducted three operations in this country:

- Operation *Essential Harvest*: This was a 30-day mission which began on 27 August 2001 and finished on 26 September. Its aim was to disarm ethnic Albanian insurgents on a voluntary basis. Approximately 3 500 NATO troops, with logistical support, were sent to the country. The operation resulted in the collection of nearly 4 000 weapons and several hundred thousand more other items, including mines and explosives.

Violence broke out in the country when ethnic Albanian extremists challenged government authorities to grant the ethnic Albanian community more rights. NATO adopted a double-track approach: it condemned the attacks but urged the government to adopt constitutional reforms to increase participation of ethnic Albanians in society and politics. NATO's conditions for deployment were that the political dialogue between the various parties in the country had a "successful outcome" and a cease-fire was respected.

- Operation *Amber Fox*: The mandate for this operation was to help protect EU and OSCE monitors overseeing implementation of the peace plan, signed on 13 August 2001. The operation started on 27 September 2001,

comprising some 700 NATO troops, together with 300 NATO troops that were already based in the country. It was terminated on 15 December 2002.

- Operation *Allied Harmony*: This was a follow-on mission that started on 16 December 2002. Its aim was two-fold: to provide support for the international monitors and to assist the government in taking ownership of security throughout the country. It was terminated on 31 March 2003 and, on the same day, the EU took over responsibility for the mission with Operation *Concordia*, the first EU-led military mission. *Concordia* has since been replaced by a police mission called *Proxima*.

NATO has maintained a headquarters in the country - NATO Headquarters Skopje - to assist authorities in the development of security sector reform and pursue the integration of the country into Euro-Atlantic structures.

RECENT SUMMIT AND MINISTERIAL DECISIONS

- 23-25 April 1999: NATO sets out the objectives of its air campaign against the Serb regime; Launch of the South East Europe Initiative, which aims to integrate countries of the region into European and Euro-Atlantic structures. Bosnia and Herzegovina is included from the start. The Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro) participates from the time President Milosevic is overthrown, in October 2000.

■ CHRONOLOGY

- 2004** **23 March:** First visit of Prime Minister Vojislav Kostunica of Serbia and Montenegro to NATO HQ.
17 March: Upsurge of violence in Kosovo.
26 February: President Trajkovski is killed in an air crash.
- 2003** **15 December:** Operation *Concordia* in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia* is terminated and replaced by an EU-led police mission called *Proxima*.
29 July: The EU and NATO agree a concerted approach to the Western Balkans.
31 March: NATO terminates Operation *Allied Harmony* and the EU takes over the responsibility for the mission with Operation *Concordia*.
17 March: NATO decides to terminate Operation *Allied Harmony*.
- 2002** **16 December:** Operation *Allied Harmony* commences, as a follow-on force to Operation *Amber Fox*.
15 December: Operation *Amber Fox* is terminated.
14 March: The Belgrade Agreement is signed under the mediation of the EU High Representative setting out the basis of a new federal state - Serbia and Montenegro (formerly the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia).
- 2001** **5 December:** Deputy Prime Minister, Dr Nebojsa Covic, states that the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia is considering membership of NATO's PfP programme.
16 November: Fifteen constitutional amendments contained in the Ohrid Framework Agreement are passed by the Parliament of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia*.

27 September: On the request of President Trajkovski, NATO launches Operation *Amber Fox* to provide additional protection for EU and OSCE monitors.

22 August: On the request of President Trajkovski, NATO launches a 30-day mission - Operation *Essential Harvest* - to collect and destroy all weapons voluntarily handed in by the National Liberation Army and ethnic Albanian groups.

13 August: Signing of the Ohrid Framework Agreement between the Skopje government and ethnic Albanian insurgents, paving the way for the introduction of internal reforms and the entry of NATO-led troops to collect the insurgents' weapons.

5 July: A cease-fire is signed between the Skopje government and ethnic Albanian insurgents.

28 June: President Milosevic is transferred to the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia in The Hague.

20 June: President Trajkovski of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia* requests NATO assistance in view of growing tensions between both parties. NATO declares that it will help on the condition that hostilities cease and a political dialogue is started that would lead to a peace plan.

10 January: First visit of a Serbian government official, Foreign Minister Goran Svilanovic, to NATO HQ.

1999 20 June: Withdrawal of Serb forces from Kosovo complete.

12 June: First elements of KFOR enter Kosovo.

10 June: End of NATO's air campaign against Serb forces; UNSCR 1244 is adopted, calling for an international civil and security presence in Kosovo.

May: The European Union launches the Stability Pact for South Eastern Europe.

23-25 April: Launch of NATO's South East Europe Initiative at the Washington Summit.

24 March: Beginning of Operation *Allied Force*, NATO's air campaign to end ethnic cleansing in Kosovo.

20 March: The OSCE Verification Mission is obstructed by Serbian forces and forced to withdraw. US diplomatic efforts fail to persuade President Milosevic to stop attacks on the Kosovar Albanians.

February: Negotiations in Rambouillet and later in Paris (15-18 March) fail.

30 January: In support of the six-nation Contact Group, NATO authorises the use of air strikes against Serb forces, if required, and sends warnings to both sides of the conflict following further acts of violence.

1998 13 October: The deterioration of the situation in Kosovo leads NATO to authorise activation orders for air strikes in support of diplomatic efforts to persuade Belgrade to withdraw its forces, cooperate in bringing an end to the violence and facilitate the return of refugees. The OSCE establishes an aerial surveillance mission in support of UNSCR 1199 imposing conditions for a cease-fire and leading to limitations on Serbian and Kosovar-Albanian forces and operations.

June: SFOR's mandate expires, but NATO agrees to continue leading a similar force under the same name.

28 May: NATO foreign ministers agree that the Alliance should seek to contribute to a peaceful solution of the Kosovo crisis.

1997 10 July: First indicted war criminal arrested by SFOR in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

- 1996 20 December:** SFOR replaces IFOR in Bosnia and Herzegovina.
- 12 December:** SFOR becomes the legal successor to IFOR in accordance with UNSCR 1088.
- 1995 16 December:** Beginning of the deployment of IFOR in Bosnia and Herzegovina.
- 14 December:** Signing in Paris of the General Framework Agreement for Peace agreed in Dayton, Ohio, ending the Bosnian war.
- October:** Renewed attacks on UN forces and NATO aircraft result in further air strikes.
- September:** Air strikes are discontinued.
- 31 August:** Due to continued attacks by Bosnian Serb forces on Sarajevo, NATO launches an air campaign against Bosnian Serb military targets.
- July:** The UN designated Safe Areas of Srebrenica and Zepa are overrun by Bosnian Serb forces.
- May:** 370 UN peacekeepers are taken hostage by Bosnian Serb forces and used as human shields at potential targets in a bid to prevent further air strikes.
- 1994 February:** On the request of the UN Secretary-General, NATO authorises air strikes to end the strangulation of Sarajevo. Four warplanes violating the no-fly zone are shot down in what is NATO's first military engagement and further air strikes are conducted to protect UN forces.
- 1993 April:** NATO aircraft begin Operation *Deny Flight* in support of UNSCR 816, establishing a no-fly zone over Bosnia and Herzegovina.



1992 December: NATO states that it is ready to support peacekeeping operations under the authority of the United Nations Security Council.

November: NATO and the Western European Union begin to enforce the sanctions and embargo imposed by UNSCR 787

October: NATO AWACS aircraft begin monitoring operations in support of UNSCR 781 imposing a no-fly zone over Bosnia and Herzegovina.

July: NATO begins monitoring operations in the Adriatic in support of the UNSCR 713 and 757 imposing an arms embargo and sanctions in the former Yugoslavia.

June: NATO foreign ministers announce their readiness to support, on a case-by-case basis, peacekeeping activities under the responsibility of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (subsequently renamed the Organization on Security and Cooperation in Europe).



■ OFFICIAL DOCUMENTS AND BACKGROUND READING

Go to the electronic version of the press kit for clickable links
(www.nato.int/istanbul2004/presskit.htm)

The General Framework Agreement for Peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina, 14 December 1995
<http://www.nato.int/ifor/gfa/gfa-home.htm>

United Nations Security Council Resolutions and other documents relating to Bosnia and Herzegovina and to Kosovo
<http://www.un.org/Depts/dpko/dpko/home.shtml>

NATO statement on Kosovo at the Washington Summit, 23-25 April 1999
<http://www.nato.int/docu/pr/1999/p99-062e.htm>

The EU and NATO agree on a concerted approach to the Western Balkans, 29 July 2003
<http://www.nato.int/docu/pr/2003/p03-089e.htm>

About NATO in Kosovo
<http://www.nato.int/kosovo/kosovo.htm>

Operation *Allied Force*
<http://www.nato.int/kosovo/all-frce.htm>

KFOR web site
<http://www.nato.int/kfor/welcome.html>

IFOR web site
<http://www.nato.int/ifor/ifor.htm>





SFOR web site

<http://www.nato.int/sfor/index.htm>

About NATO in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia* and its three operations

<http://www.nato.int/fyrom/home.htm>

Background information on NATO's role in peacekeeping (pp107-135 of the NATO Handbook 2001)

<http://www.nato.int/docu/handbook/2001/pdf/handbook.pdf>

About NATO's South East Europe Initiative. Web module containing background information, official documents and declarations on the subject

<http://www.nato.int/seei/home.htm>



■ A FEW FACTS AND FIGURES

- The six-nation Contact Group for Kosovo was comprised of France, Germany, Italy, Russia, the United Kingdom and the United States.
- Force levels and structures within NATO's operations are reviewed by NATO's Military Authorities every six months. Changes are introduced to respond to the evolution of the situation in the country concerned. The figures below are valid as at 23 June 2004.

1. KFOR WITH AN OVERALL STRENGTH OF 18 200 PERSONNEL

A. Contributing NATO countries (25)

Belgium	Luxembourg
Bulgaria	The Netherlands
Czech Republic	Norway
Denmark	Poland
Estonia	Portugal
France	Romania
Germany	Slovakia
Greece	Slovenia
Hungary	Spain
Iceland	Turkey
Italy	United Kingdom
Latvia	United States
Lithuania	



B. Contributing non-NATO countries (11)

Argentina	Ireland
Armenia	Morocco
Austria	Sweden
Azerbaijan	Switzerland
Finland	Ukraine
Georgia	

KFOR initially comprised 50 000 personnel provided by all 19 NATO member countries and 19 non-NATO countries under unified command and control. Early 2002, it comprised approximately 39 000 troops, and by spring 2002: 32 000.

2. SFOR WITH AN OVERALL STRENGTH OF 8 500 PERSONNEL

A. Contributing NATO countries (20)

Bulgaria	Norway
Canada	Poland
Czech Republic	Portugal
Denmark	Romania
France	Slovakia
Germany	Slovenia
Greece	Spain
Hungary	Turkey
Italy	United Kingdom
The Netherlands	United States

B. Contributing non-NATO countries (7)

Albania

Argentina

Austria

Chile

Ireland

Morocco

Sweden

SFOR originally comprised 31 000 troops. By early 2001 they had been reduced to 19 000, and in spring 2002, the decision was taken to reduce troops to 12 000 by end 2002 and to restructure SFOR.

