KFOR CHRONICLE

2nd Edition

February 28th 2009

The General Officer's Perspective

Dear comrades,

Recently MNTFS has invited respresentatives of those International Organisations being active within our area of responsibility. They are working in the municipalities of Prizren, Suva Rejka, Orahovac, Malisevo, Mamusha and Dragas. During the first „ Regional Interagency Meeting" we presented our concept to the International Organisations. The idea behind was to identify together still existing fields of improvement and how each of the International Organistions, including KFOR, can support Kosovo. The process building up an environment founded on the rule of law, creating adequate economical and social structures, is still ongoing even ten years after the conflict.

The idea is not to apply our cultural standards but to lead Kosovo carefully into the western community. Still the situation is not absolutly stable at the moment since many problems have not been solved yet. It is necessary to define the socalled „Kosovo Development Zones" in order to face still existing challenges in an appropriate way. It is like with a little child learning how to walk: At the beginning the child is completely depending on you. Than he starts to walk the first steps alone in order to fall again, you give him a hand until he walks without any help, step by step. We all know the building of nations is only developing successfully when working together, that means with the support and coooperation of KFOR and the other International Organisations in Kosovo.

The character of our KFOR-mission has changed within the past ten years. From today's point of view it is essential to identify our role here in Kosovo as an element of a developing process which began long before our mission initiated and which will be still ongoing after our deployment here in Kosovo has finished. Our mediating role means particulary that we provide Kosovo with an information platform and the necessary tools and devices in order to pave the way into a better future. It is not important to us just having the sentiment to act as an philanthropist but to provide adequate results for the well-being of the people of Kosovo. That means: We have to pay much more attention to the people's needs.

To follow the idea of „Kosovo Development Zones" together is definitely an advantage of MNTFS. Although the Bulgarian, Turkish, Swiss, Austrian and German Soldiers have a different historical background nevertheless they stick to each other having the common idea to support the people of Kosovo. In our area of responsibility we notice that the different ethnical groups are at least able to live peacfully side by side, to elaborate the conflict and to build up a common future. It is not only essential realising projects, but to influence the way of thinking in a constructive way. For sure we are already on the right way. Give the wheel just a slight jolt and the ship changes its direction. If there is additionaly a strong wind in the sails, the improving development in Kosovo will be even accelerated.

I really enjoy the meaningful being here and I already feel that I would appreciate it to extend my deployment in Kosovo. I really hope that you have the chance to become acquainted with the people you meet, to understand their needs and their different culture. We as foreigners very often experience an incredibly warm hospitality sometimes not even known from our home. To live to see their hospitality hopefully gives you, the soldiers, the sentiment to be welcomed and that your deployment in Kosovo was useful and made sense.

Brigadier General Thomas Starlinger

Dear comrades,

For sure you have noticed that some things look different and you are absolutely right! After almost seven years we have decided to change our way of presentation. The impetus for that decision was based on our ambition for constructive evolution, the desire to improve. I have to admit that to say goodbye to our very familiar cover page was a challenge, including lots of discussions. But, to stay abreast of changes, doing so, is sometimes an absolutely prerequisite to sustain quality and an appropriate content, in order to attract the reader's future attention. A core innovation is the commanders' article. I want to create such a new platform, where you, comrades, have the possibility to become confident with the generals' point of view, concerning the Kosovo-Mission. I am very much convinced that this is, at least, one of many appropriate ways to comprehend our duties, as KFOR-soldiers and to understand the reason all of us are here.

On February 17th, 2009, Kosovo celebrated the 1st Anniversary of the Declaration of Independence. February 17th, 2008, for Kosovo, means to be one of the most decisive historical moments. KFOR with its presence, for sure, supports that Kosovo will develop in a democratic country, for all its citizens.
Enjoy reading!

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Nations within KFOR:

NATO Nations

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

Non-NATO Nations

Armenia
Austria
Finland
Ireland
Morocco
Sweden
Switzerland
Ukraine

KFOR Structure

HQ KFOR
MNTF Centre
MNTF East
MNTF North
MNTF South
MNTF West

February, 4, 2009. The Commander of Kosovo Force visited Task Force "Tizona". After having been briefed with the structure, tasks and area of operations of Task Force, COMKFOR took part in a shooting exercise, organized within TF Tizona. At the end of the exercise, the TF Tizona Commander Colonel Luis Francisco Rey Arroyo presented to Lieutenant General Gay the "Diploma of distinguished shooter".

February, 5, 2009. COMKFOR presided over the Commanders conference, which took place in Film City Camp.

February, 6, 2009. In KFOR Headquarters Kosovo Force Commander chaired the first meeting concerning the Kosovo Development Zone which gathered representatives from the Kosovo Institutions, EULEX, OSCE, the European Bank for reconstruction, the European Commission Liaison Office, the International Civilian Office, the World Bank, the UNDP and US Aid mission in Kosovo.

February, 4, 2009. COMKFOR met with Mr. Behgjet Pacolli, the leader of the New Kosovo Alliance (AKR).

February, 5, 2009. The Kosovo Force Commander Lieutenant General Giuseppe E. Gay was in attendance at the solemn reception, devoted to the Transfer of Authority between outgoing KFOR Deputy Commander Major General Philippe Stoltz and incoming KFOR Deputy Commander Major General Gilles Fugier.

F EFFORT

February, 10, 2009. Lieutenant General Giuseppe E. Gay had a meeting with His Grace, the Bishop of Ras - Prizren and Kosovo-Metohija, Artemije.

February, 11-12, 2009. COMKFOR visited the KFOR Communication Zone "South" (COMMZ-S) Headquarters, located in Thessaloniki, Greece. During the visit, Lieutenant General Giuseppe E. Gay met COMMZ-S Commander Colonel George Reizopoulos and was briefed on the actual activities of COMMZ-S. Afterwards, the Kosovo Force Commander paid a visit to the NATO Deployable Corps-Greece Headquarters and had a meeting with its Commander Lieutenant General S. Nases.

February, 16, 2009. Within KFOR HQ Lieutenant General Giuseppe E. Gay hosted the representatives of Serbian Liberal Party.

February, 17, 2009. The KFOR Commander held a meeting with Mr. Nexhat Daci, the leader of Democratic League of Dardania, one of the Kosovo political parties.

February, 23, 2009. In KFOR HQ Kosovo Force Commander organized the meeting and the standing dinner with the representatives of the KFOR contributing nations.

TRANSFER OF AUTHORITIES WITHIN

Story by Major Oleksii Morozov (Ukrainian Army)
Photos by Combat Camera Team

In the August 2008 edition, the "KFOR Chronicle" welcomed Major General Philippe Stoltz, as the new Deputy for the Kosovo Force Commander (DCOM). Time is running very fast; Major General Stoltz has ended his 6 months tour of duty, and the moment came to say "Good-bye" to him and welcome his replacement, Major General Gilles Fugier. Apparently, it has become a tradition for the KFOR DCOMs to replace each other without military parade and bravura military marches, but still have the atmosphere of the solemn reception. This is what it was like in August, as well as this is what it was like in February.

"I will miss the black birds of Film City," Major General Stoltz said, addressing the audience during his farewell speech, "but, thanks to the blue sky over Marseille, I hope, I will survive such a lost".

The Commander of Kosovo Force, Lieutenant General Giuseppe E. Gay, spoke the warm words in the address of MG Stoltz, and welcomed MG Fugier. It is necessary to mention, that the new DCOM is very familiar with Kosovo and KFOR, because from 20 July 2006 until 29 January,2007, MG Gilles Fugier served within KFOR, as Deputy Chief of Staff Operations (DCOS OPS). He has also served for a long time within the Marines (l'Infanterie de Marine). Therefore, there are now two KFOR flag officers from the Marines: the KFOR Deputy Commander Major General Fugier, and the KFOR Chief of Staff Brigadier General David Berger.

In France, MG Gilles Fugier is assuming command of the 1st Force Headquarters in BESANCON, in the east of the country, near Switzerland. Many French soldiers of Film City come from this unit.

Il nous reste plus qu'à vous remercier, Monsieur le Général Philippe Stoltz, pour votre soutien et à vous souhaiter très bonne continuation! (We have finally to say 'Thank you', Major General Philippe Stoltz, for your service, and to wish you good luck!)

Et pour vous, Monsieur le Général Gilles Fugier, qui êtes de retour au Kosovo, que cette mission vous soit pleine d'épanouissement et de succès. (Welcome to Kosovo for one more time, Major General Gilles Fugier! We wish You the successful mission!)

Kosovo Force (KFOR)

Story by Major Christian Zankl
(Austrian Army)
Photos by Armend Aqifi

After one year as Deputy Commander Support (DCOS SPT) the Spanish Brigadier General Alberto Ruiz de Oña handed over his authority to the Austrian Brigadier General Gerhard Christiner. The solemn ceremony took place at the HQ KFOR in Film City January 29th, 2009.

During his farewell speech Brigadier General de Oña thanked all those who supported him so much and offering him their friendship. He stated that it was a honor and pleasure for him serving within the KFOR family.

"At the moment of finishing my second deployment in Kosovo I have mixed emotions. On one side I am happy to return to Spain and to my family but however on the other side I am also a little sad to leave too many excellent colleagues and good friends I have been working together for the last 12 months."

Brigadier General Alberto Ruiz de Oña stated that during his time in the lead of the Support Division has faced important challenges. Among them the real life support issues in Film City, Camp Nothing Hill and Camp Vrelo, the Air Scan, the Toxic Trucks at Trepca factory, the supporting growth of the MCA, the enhancement of the KFOR network, the improvement of the DLOS system, the upgrade of Camp Nothing Hill and numerous projects to preserve Freedom of Movement.

Brigadier General Alberto Ruiz de Oña wished his successor Brigadier General Gerhard Christiner all the best during his tour as DCOS SPT.

According to the solemn protocol Brigadier General Christiner took over command over the SPT staff.

After Brigadier Generals de Oña's farewell speech and the Transfer of Authority Act the Deputy Commander KFOR General Major Philippe Stoltz (French Army) awarded de Oña with the Non Article 5 Medal.

Among the numerous international distinguished guests were also Brigadier General Starlinger and the Austrian Army General Hoefler, both of them followed the ceremony with utmost attention.

From 2002 until 2006 Brigadier General Gerhard Christiner was Chief of Staff of the Austrian International Operations Command. Since 2006 he has been DCOS Operations of the Joint Force Command. He is married and has a 16 years old daughter.

TRANSFER OF AUTHORITIES WI

On Saturday, February 14th, 2009, after almost seven months as Deputy Chief of Staff Operations (DCOS OPS), Brigadier General Bernhard Liechtenauer handed over his duties to Brigadier General Kurt Schiebold. Brigadier General Liechtenauer and his office-team went back to Germany, in order to continue their service in the Airmobile Division, after having enjoyed their well-deserved holidays.

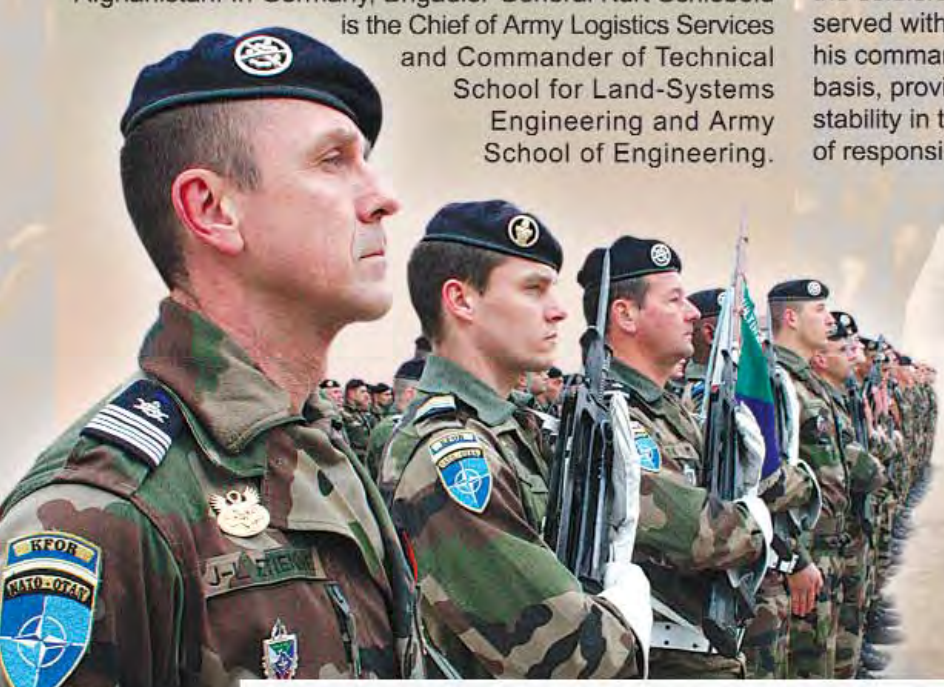
The new Chief of OPS Division, Brigadier General Kurt Schiebold is an officer, who served already as Joint Operations Center Chief at the Stabilization Forces (SFOR) and as commander of the Task Force FOX here in the Balkans. After all, as commander he built up the Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT) Konduz, in the North of Afghanistan. In Germany, Brigadier General Kurt Schiebold is the Chief of Army Logistics Services and Commander of Technical School for Land-Systems Engineering and Army School of Engineering.

Text by Captain Paul
Photos by OR-4 Mickael Balondrade

On Friday, January 30, 2009, at 11:00 Brigadier General Philippe Bras replaced Brigadier General Michel Yakovleff, as the Multinational Task-Force (MNTF) North Commander. The Transfer of Authority ceremony, which took place at Camp Maréchal de Lattre de Tassigny, Novo Selo, was presided over by the Kosovo Force Commander (COMKFOR), Lieutenant General Giuseppe E. Gay.

During the speech, COMKFOR stressed that Brigadier General Yakovleff was very successful in maintaining a safe and secure environment in Northern Kosovo, which represents the most sensitive area of KFOR responsibility.

Before the departure, General Yakovleff expressed his gratitude to the soldiers from France, Denmark, Greece, Morocco, Belgium, Luxembourg, and Estonia, as well as to the soldiers of the other different Task Forces (TF), who served within MNTF North under his command on the rotation basis, providing peace and stability in the TF area of responsibility.



THIN KOSOVO FORCE (KFOR)

Brigadier General Philippe Bras, the new commander of MNTF North, came to Kosovo from the position of the Commander of the 1st mechanized brigade, located in Chalons en Champagne (France). He was appointed to this position on August 1st, 2008.

The new general of the MNTF-N declared in his speech: *"I know that all our predecessors have accomplished an outstanding work to contribute to restore a peaceful and harmonious life for all the women and men in Northern Kosovo. I am also well aware of the important developments that have been implemented in the course of the last few months and which represent significant stages."*

Brigadier General Philippe Bras is a Chevalier of the Legion of Honour, an Officer of the French Order of Merit and an Officer of the Order of the British Empire.

ECHOCARDIOG
BY TELEMEDICINE FROM KOSOVO

Story and Photos by
Major Alfonso Boo and
Major Francisko Martinez

A little boy was born in February 2007, in Pejë/Pec. At 7 weeks old he was hospitalized due to a heart disease. When his illness got worse he was moved to Gjilan hospital, and the diagnosis was myocarditis, wolf Parkinson white syndrome, ventricular tachycardia and mitral failure. He has suffered cardiac crisis regularly.

At the beginning of February 2009, his parents brought him to Base España (Istog) main gate, asking for help from the Spanish CIMIC team because they had full trust in the Spanish medical service.

The CIMIC team explained the situation to the Task Force Tizona´s medical team and they decided to check him and to look for a solution. After exploring him, the doctors decided to do an echocardiography in order to have a better diagnosis of the problem. Within a few days they prepared all the equipment and documents and they contacted "Gomez Ulla Military Hospital", in Madrid, and the echocardiography was carried out last 9th of February, by Telemedicine (videoconference). So, the echocardiography was done in Kosovo, at real time, and the signal was received and analysed by cardiologists in Spain.

The result has been better than expected and after the echocardiography and additional electro, the cardiologists have diagnosed that his heart is a normal one, there is not any mitral failure. So, the heart beats normally, only with a soft murmur. They think this murmur will not disturb little boy´s life and he only will need an annual check.

RAPHY

This is the first time that and echocardiography have been made to a child, from abroad mission, so the Spanish medical team is very proud of this process.

A FIRST: KFOR CONDUCTS JOINT EXERCISE WITH LOCAL POLICE IN KOSOVO

Story by Captain (OF-2) Pierre Kugelweis (Austrian Army)
Pictures by Master Sergeant (OR-6) Karl REINISCH (Austrian Army)

IOn Tuesday, February 3rd 2009, Kosovarian security authorities made a big step towards their future capability, of independent action. For the first time, within the scope of an exercise, members of the local police, security forces from the European Union, and KFOR soldiers combined, practiced the protection of buildings.

COMBINED FORCE

Lieutenant Colonel Manfred Hofer, commander of Maneuver Battalion Dulje, describes the context of this exercise: "The Austrian-Swiss infantry battalion is intended to ensure the safe and secure living conditions of the people here. We achieve this, on the one hand, by deliberately approaching the population, and on the other, by demonstrating strength within the scope of our announced regular exercises However, this time, we wanted to go a step farther. Acting in our favor was our positive relationship with the local security forces. During the training, all authorities were integrated according to their responsibilities here in Kosovo."

KFOR IN THE BACKGROUND

More precisely, according to Hofer, "the local executive, the Kosovo Police, always represents the primary responsible authority in matters of security. For example, if a road accident happens, it is incumbent upon the local police to deal with it. This principle also applies to the most complex security situations, such as violent demonstrations. Here, too, the local authorities possess the knowledge to act professionally, which means, proportionately. "Should the security situation be such as to overwhelm the capabilities of the Kosovo Police, the security forces of the EU (EULEX) stand ready to assist. Hofer: "When employment of the Kosovo Police and of EULEX proves to be insufficient, the Maneuver Battalion Dulje stands ready, at all times, to provide additional help. The KFOR soldiers are, so to speak, in the third row, behind the Kosovo Police and EULEX."

THE EXERCISE SCENARIO

Lieutenant Colonel Hofer about the exercise: "The task of the three security organizations was to protect particularly important buildings against attacks. The most important among them was the rescue center of the town of Malishevo. This, too, was an unusual feature of this exercise: For the first time, the local population was able to see for themselves the high performance capability of the national police in cooperation with the EU security forces and KFOR."

A STEP TOWARDS AUTONOMY

Brigadier General Thomas Starlinger, commander of Multinational Task Force South, summarizes: "This joint exercise was very valuable for all participants because the current established responsibilities of all organizations were clearly assumed. Standing very professionally in the first row were the Kosovo Police, assisting them from behind were the EU security forces of EULEX, and only in third position came KFOR." Brigadier General Starlinger in conclusion: "Apart from all the tasks successfully accomplished by the various exercise participants, the most important step was undertaken by the Kosovo Police – the step of taking responsibility for the security in their own country."

All On One Field: Multi-ethnic Soccer Tournament in Kosovo

Text by Captain Pierre Kugelweis
Pictures by Master Sergeant Karl Reinisch

On Saturday, January 31st 2009, soccer took center court at Maneuver Battalion Dulje. The peculiarity of this tournament in Kosovo: Four teams and three languages, yet nevertheless all understood one another perfectly.

The Unifying Power of Sports

Lieutenant Colonel Manfred Hofer, commander of Maneuver Battalion Dulje: "Our task here in the Austrian sector is to provide for security and stability. One of the reasons for our success in this respect is that we KFOR soldiers deliberately seek open-minded contact with the local population. For instance, on the occasion of my countless talks with the competent local representatives, I proposed to organize a soccer tournament, in which all major population groups of the region would participate together with my KFOR soldiers. My goal was to further improve the relationship between the Albanian inhabitants and the Serbian minority by way of a joint athletic activity."

Enthusiastic Participation

The organizational framework was rapidly put in place: The Albanian proprietor of a sports gymnasium offered the use of his field in Orahovac/Rahovec free of charge. Ultimately four teams participated in the soccer tournament: one Albanian-language team from the surroundings, and the small village of Velica Hoca participated with two teams, thereby ensuring much cheering in Serbian language. The Austrian Maneuver Battalion provided the fourth team.

The Tournament

Major Reinhard Bacher, plans officer and Austrian team leader, describes the athletic contest: "As an experienced soccer player I had the task to select suitable players from among our personnel to put together a team. This was accomplished quickly for everyone was dead keen on participating in the multi-ethnic soccer match. From the beginning, our team was highly motivated." Bacher described the action of the match: "For us Austrians, the conditions in the gymnasium presented a big challenge. Our opponents, whether Albanian or Serb, were technically extremely well practiced, played a very fast game and were unbeatable in terms of their teamwork. As an Austrian soccer fan I was delighted about the challenging match and above all about the sporting fairness that was palpable at all times."

Together Towards the Future

Lieutenant Colonel Hofer concludes: "In my area of responsibility, I have been observing for quite some time now that the various groups of local inhabitants are making steps towards one another. That is a very positive turn of events, which we want to promote further by way of the joint soccer match. It was a pleasure to see that, despite any athletic rivalry, there was always a uniting sense of community in the foreground. The multi-ethnic soccer tournament therefore was a successful project that we will continue in the future."

MWA – Soccer Tournament

Story by Major Christian Zankl (Austrian Army)
Photos by Major Oleksii Morozov (Ukrainian Army)

Eight teams, one objective – to win the competition!

The soccer tournament taking place on February 21st, 2009, at HQ KFOR, organized by Morale Welfare Activities (MWA) Chief, OR-9 Manfred Bamberger (Austrian Army), was the scene of an ardent and keen sports competition. Each team consisted of six players, plus substitutes fighting for 20 minutes on the field.

The attendees were Multinational Task Force (MNTF) South, Camp Clarke, MNTF West, Kosovo Police Service (KPS) Vushtri, European Union Rule of Law Mission in Kosovo (EULEX), Villagio, Ireland and HQ KFOR. The impassionate let sportive competitions show, that the adversaries' skills were almost equal so that the results were quit often conceivably narrow. The protagonists definitely had not to hide their soccer skills.

The top scorer for that day was a member of the Vushtri team, which definitely proofed that the Kosovarians soccer skills could easily compete with those of the internationals. Unfortunately, they also had to complain the only injury on that day. The goalkeeper of the Vushtri team broke his forefinger, on his right hand.. But only a few hours later, he returned to join his team during the prize presentation.

As in every competition there is only one that wins the trophy. MNTF South was the winner of the MWA-Soccer Tournament 2009. Congratulation boys! Whoever said Austrians have good skiers, but … shall remain silent, at least till the next tournament.

So the results are:
1st MNTF South,
2nd HQ KFOR
3rd KPS Vushtri.

Final:

MNTF South - HQ KFOR 4:3

Semi-final:

KP Vushtri - Ireland 5:3

The awards ceremony was held by Headquarter Support Group (HSG) Commander Colonel Herbert (Irish Army), who congratulated the winners. He also expressed his appreciation to all the participants for their commitment and their fair playing.

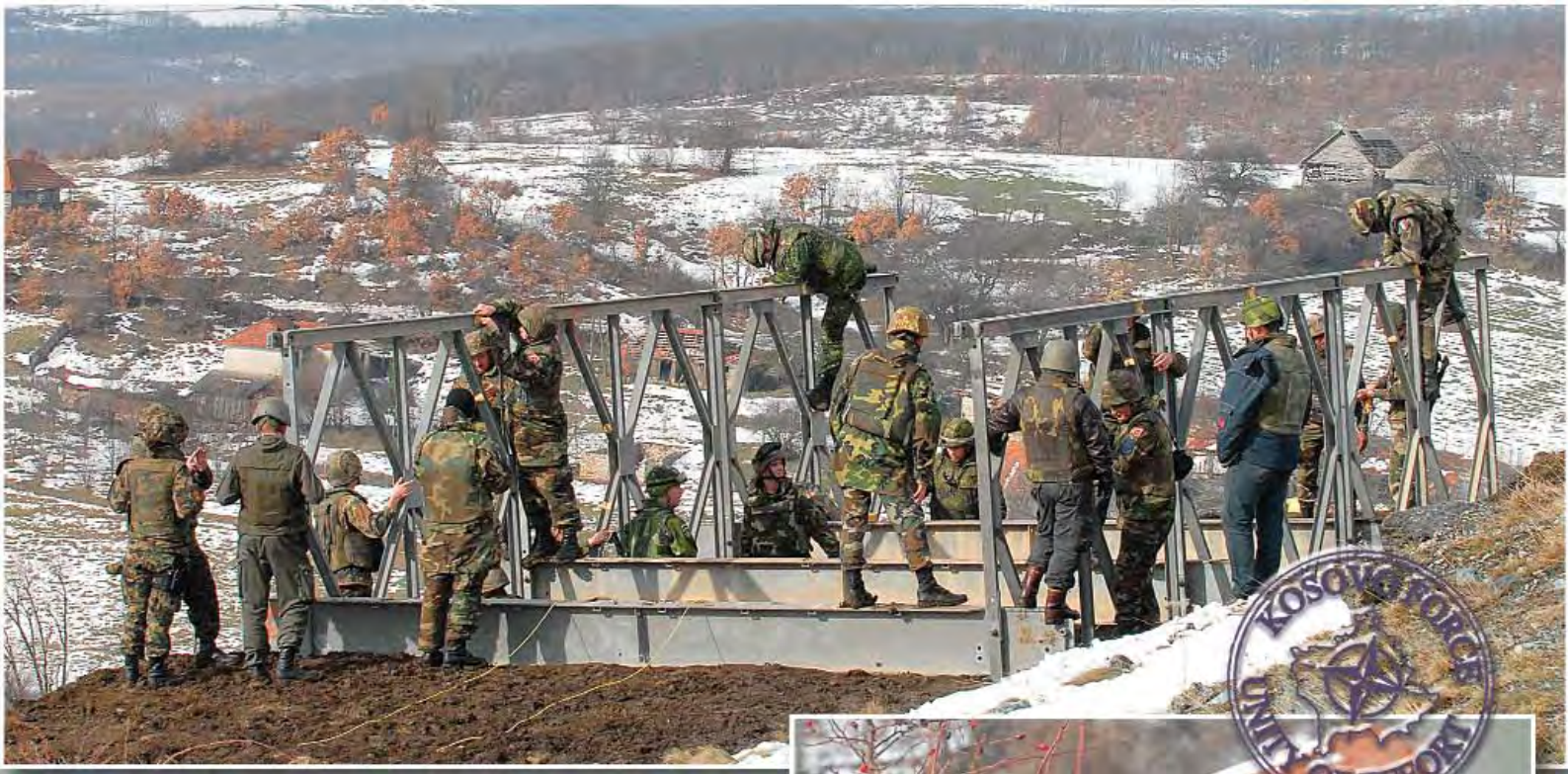
KFOR DEMOLITION TRAINING DAYS

Story and photos by Major Walter Voglauer (Austrian Army)

One of KFOR engineer's main tasks is to ensure freedom of movement for KFOR troops whenever needed. Therefore engineers are prepared for bridge operations using KFOR bridge equipment. As the history of KFOR mission shows, engineers have to conduct mobility and counter mobility operations as well as (re)construction works. These tasks were often conducted by use of high explosives for the replacement of partly destroyed buildings or bridges. The demolition could only be done in fast and safe way by use of explosives like Italian engineers did in many cases.

FORMER FAMOUS DEMOLITION TASKS IN SUPPORT TO THE KFOR MISSION

In order to save NATO money, such bridge demolitions had been done, for example 2004 when the big reinforced concrete bridge south of Kacanic was prepared and successfully blasted by a multinational engineer platoon which saved nearly one million EURO compared to other demolitions methods. Engineers had also created immediate road blocks with explosives cratering charges in order to block illegal traffic. As another example a partly destroyed tunnel structure which caused big danger was smartly removed in December 2008 by MNTFC engineers by using explosives. KFOR engineers can expect any time different special engineer tasks like removing roadblocks caused by rock falls or other natural disasters. These especially qualified troops have to be trained on regular basis to use the needed demolition assets.



MULTINATIONAL TASK FORCE CENTRE PREPARED MULTINATIONAL DEMOLITION TRAINING FOR ALL KFOR ENGINEERS

According to KFOR HQ FRAGO the MNTFC prepared and conducted multinational demolition training for all KFOR engineers. In this training the engineers were trained to use various high explosives for wood, steel and concrete demolition and earth cratering and battlefield simulation. The training was divided in three phases. In phase one the training conditions had been well prepared. In this phase amongst other works, a three bay military bridge consisting of damaged bridge parts was assembled to be destroyed within the demolition training. In phase two KFOR engineers from 11 different nations took part. The engineers were grouped in multinational teams, and used equipment and explosives from 5 different forces to carry out various demolition tasks. The training was completed without any injuries. In this training engineers learned a safe and proper handling of foreign equipment. The had been introduced and to follow different national regulations and limitations. Most interesting for all participants was to learn a couple of new blasting techniques.

It was found that reduced manpower requires enforced and increased interoperability in all fields of demolition techniques using explosives. A proper evaluation and analyses will follow after the last phase of the training, the clean up phase. So far everybody who was involved in this training agreed that all engineers took a lot of lessons learned back home. After this training the small multinational family of KFOR engineers is looking forward to performing the next demolitions task in order to show their engineer skills to the rest of KFOR.

THE BLAST
FOR SAFETY OF THE PEOPLE

Story by Major Oleksii Morozov (Ukrainian Army)
Captain Ossi Leander (Finnish Army)
Photos by Major Oleksii Morozov and Combat Camera Team

On Thursday 29 January 2009, at 10: 45, a 43 meters high chimneystack was demolished at a Sole Freezing plant located in Kosovo Polje/Fushë Kosova. Even though there was a big blast, this was not a terrorist attack. The blast was intended with an absolutely peaceful purpose. Actually, it was a bright example of the civil-military cooperation.

What was the background for this operation? The chimneystack was constructed of stones that were very old and with the natural course of time, they started to ruin. The weight of each stone was about 5 kilos, and it was clear that the aging process of the construction could bring possible destruction to nearby houses and injuries or even death to the local population surrounding the plant. On request by the local municipality, the Multinational Task Force Center's (MNTF C) engineering team, under the command of Commandant Kevin Higgins (Ireland), consisting of Irish and Finnish soldiers, conducted this operation, in order to provide a safe and secure environment to the local community.

It was a serious challenge for the engineers, since the chimneystack was located just between the plant building and one of the houses. From the third side, there was another building, belonging to the plant... Therefore, there was only one direction for the chimney to fall. Everything was professionally evaluated, with mathematical precision. All the necessary calculations were carried out; the explosive charges put in place and soldiers were ready. In the presence, and under the control of Kosovo Force Commander, Lieutenant General Giuseppe E. Gay, and MNTF C Commander Brigadier General Kyösti Halonen, the engineers blew the charges placed in the bottom of the chimney. After the dust had landed, the audience could witness the precision of the calculations, and the professionalism of the KFOR soldiers. The only bricks on the ground were from the chimney. No additional damage had occurred to the surrounding buildings. The locals were now able to continue living their lives without being afraid of the possible injuries to them selves, their children, or their property, by the 280 tonnes of bricks above them.

"Everything went according to the plan", said MNTF C deputy chief engineer Captain Harri PELKONEN (Finland), who had planned the demolition.

For KFOR soldiers it was their everyday routine, nothing special happened.. But several people of Kosovo received once again the impression: they can trust and count on the KFOR personnel.

THE POWER OF

Story and pictures by Anna Darabos Captain (Hungarian Army)

Helping others; the altruism is one of the most beautiful, holiest, and the most venerable thing in the world. In essence, helping others gives pleasure to both: who gives and who gets.

We went to Klína to participate in a donation ceremony of the Hungarian KFOR CIMIC. Since I am Hungarian, this event was especially important for me. During this event I was especially proud, to see that as a result of those Hungarian colleagues of mine, their work on 06 February 2009, which was an accomplishment of a large-scale and long-term CIMIC project. It was a separate honour for me, because this meant that the local people acknowledged the Hungarian soldiers' work, that they have been doing on account of the Kosovo people for peace, affection, reconciliation, and good conditions be allowed to be a general value in all people's life.

Dr. Ali Ahmet Xhekaj, the director of the Medical helath Centre, welcomed Lieutenant Colonel László Mórucz, commander of MNTF-W Hungarian Battalion, Task Force Nimród. A quick friendly handshake and the donational ceremony began.

Last November, the Hungarian battalion of MNTF-W, the Task Force Nimród, set up three large-scale CIMIC projects. The expenses were voted on by the Hungarian Parlament for the budget of Hungarian KFOR CIMIC. The total values was 17,000 euros. Collaborating ecxlusively with Kosovar enterpreneurs, the project, whose framework, the main aims were: to winterize public institutions, develop the local electric network, modernize the water supply system, and to correct the living condition of poor families. The Hungarians provided effective help for more than three hundred families, eight primary schools, one secondary school in Klína, and three non governmental organizations; these non government organizations deal with youth, the underprivileged and handicapped, and maltreted women. All of the processes affected approximetly 10,000 people.

HELPING OTHERS

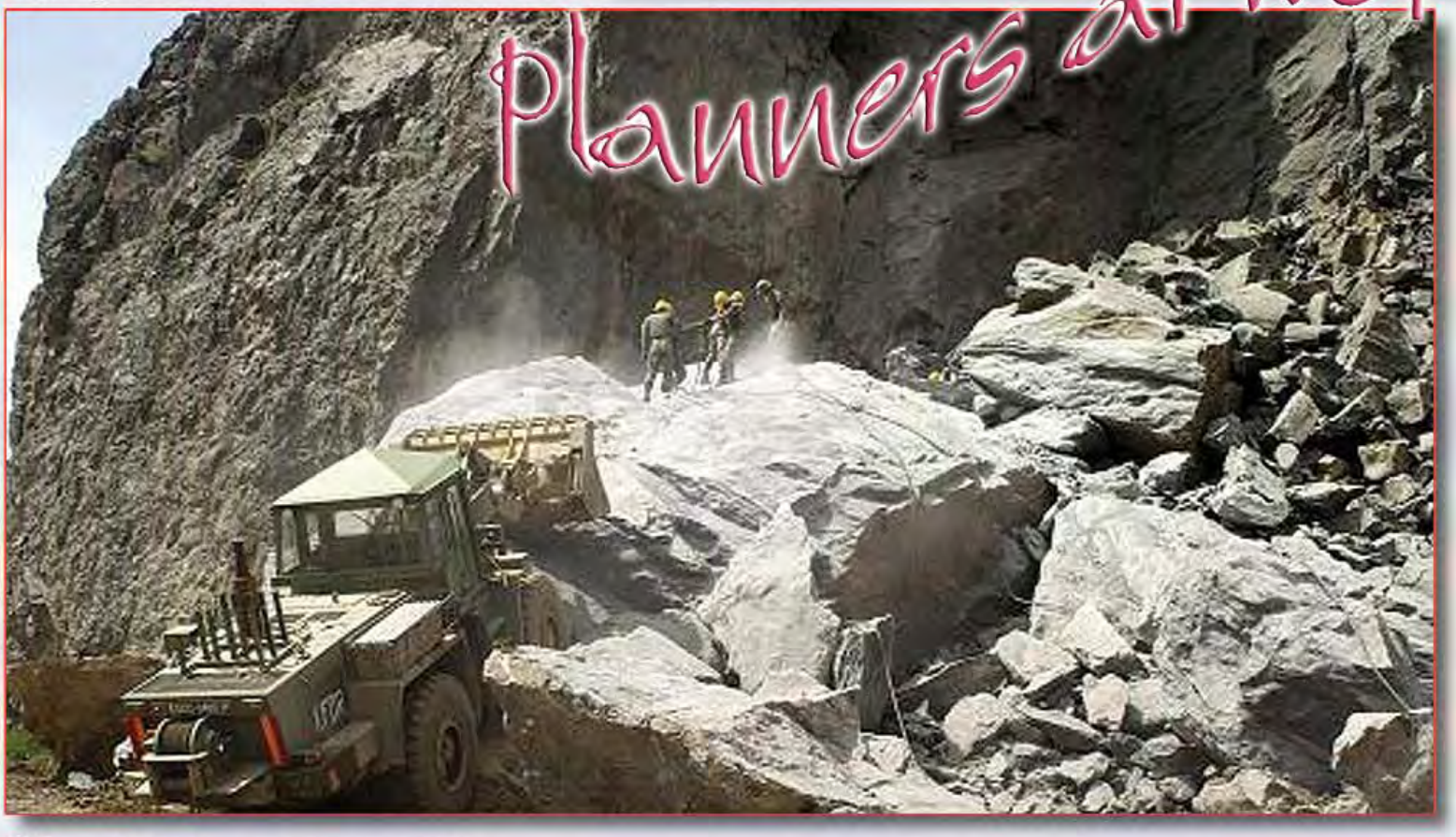
On 6 February 2009, a donation ceremony was held in the Main Medical Centre of Klína. Lieutenant Colonel László Mórucz, Task Force Nimród Commander, handed over eight electric heater systems, ten uninterruptible power system, eighteen water automats , and 180 nineteen litre refillable water tanks for the department's family centre and emergency room of the hospital. In addition, huge amounts of personal hygienic packages were also donated. The total values of the donated devices for the Medical Centre was 3,650 euros.

After the official donation ceremony, a short press conference, consisting of all the local media representatives, on behalf of the Main Medical Centre Phd. Ali Ahmet Xhekaj, director of the institution sad thanks for the Hungarian Battalion and the Hungarian CIMIC for their help. The commander spoke about the Hungarian battalion's work and its future plans. He highlighted the importance of CIMIC activities and expressed his joy about the sussecc of this project. He wished the best for everybody. As he stated: "Every euro spent during the project took its best place. But, money is only money; essential, but personally, I belive that the concept of help is more important. My joy is might stronger than yours, because we could give you something nessesary for your work, and during it, you can help other people to become healthier. It is a common work. The result of our project will be mensurable during your action. I wish all the best for it!!!"

God of Plann

Story by Julien Boyer OF-3
(French Army)
Pictures by Alain Mees OR-8
(Belgium Army)

Once upon a time, the God of Planners humbly took advice from Zephyr, the Greek God of Meteorologists, to define the essential qualities for this brand of new creature requested for implementing the Guidelines for Operational Planning: The Planners' Bible! (GOP) Unfortunately, when Zephyr told him that the Minimum Military Requirements demanded a man with twenty fingers to work faster, an abnormal-sized brain to retain all the topics to deal with, no ear to get rid of complaints and extra-sized eyes to look into the future, God of Planners sadly acknowledged that this nugget could be just a man, on condition of being lenient with all his defaults …And so it was…They planned the creation of Atlantis, Rhodes, Babylon, (just look at the picture)…and you know the rest! Of course, now-a-days, due to a never-ending effort, they are able to swiftly build cunning plans and state-of-the-art Operational Designs for everybody's sake, even though it takes a hell of a time to recover from such an effort, urgently requesting to watch "Allo, Allo" episodes on a weekly basis to soften the famous 'planners' jetlag effects.



ers

More seriously, as part of the KFOR HQ, the "think tank" is in charge of looking behind the horizon and coordinating the brains in order to produce, adjust, and refine the different plans for keeping the KFOR populace busy.

Now, it is understandable why J5 is able to lead the brainstorming sessions to rule the planning process, nastily lashing everybody (or stroking higher ranked contributors, of course) to urge them for the timely release of a urgent contribution. Do not hesitate to volunteer, of course, but needless to say that "crystal ball looking aptitudes" are specifically required for the job.

On the other hand, for those who are reluctant to planning issues, J5 is also offering you a job in developing policies. Wisely advised by the Chief of Plans fellow warriors, Chief J5 decided to create a Policy section to apologize with foreigners for the building of Babylon. And so it was…

Now assuming all policy and reporting issues in the name of KFOR, its main tasks are to facilitate the contacts with non military world in Kosovo. As pure meeting maniacs, policy members try to improve cooperation between EULEX and KFOR by means of joint working groups, usually establishing some joint operational procedure to achieve our "unity of effort '. Of course, how to achieve a unity of effort without a common understanding at all decision levels? That is the reason why J5 Policy sweats a lot to collect information from all branches to report to the higher HQ periodically.

For the time being, no one knows whether the century report will be approved for the next generation, but it should be the best report to definitely reach our objective to see "beyond the horizon", not to say "over the top"!

Fortunately, the whole subdivision is working hard to become friendlier with everybody. Just take a look! But I know you cannot wait any longer to look at this famous team directly inspired by the God of Planners, so enjoy!

INTERNA
MILITARY POLICE

Text and photos by Major Douglas Giffozd
Provost Marshal MNTF-E

The Multinational Task Force East Provost Marshal's Office hosted an International Military Police (MP) Day at Camp Bondsteel, Kosovo, on 16 January 2009. More than sixty Military Policemen from Austria, Belgium, Finland, France, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Morocco, the Netherlands, Poland, Romania, Slovenia, Switzerland, Sweden, Turkey, and the United States of America, participated in the event, representing every Multinational Task Force in Kosovo. This was the first event of several planned to enhance relations and cooperation among coalition forces within KFOR in Kosovo.

The highlight of International Military Police Day was a 9mm shooting competition using the Camp Bondsteel Small Arms Virtual Trainer (SAVT). The competition consisted of five events: MP Qualification Table, Pop-up MP Qualification Table, Marathon, Quick Fire 1, and Quick Fire 2. The events were designed to test speed and accuracy using multiple scenarios. The soldier with the highest combined score in all events was declared the winner. Forty-eight participants competed in the event. OR-7 Josefin Jarlheden of Sweden, was the winner followed by Specialist Clayton Schoneboom of the United States and OR-4 Adriano Currenti of Italy.

In addition to the shooting competition, soldiers had the opportunity to participate in a Military Working Dog (MWD) exhibition, conducted by the Multinational Task Force East (MNTF E) MWD section. Throughout the day MPs mingled freely with fellow MPs from other countries. "This was a great chance to teach and learn from other nationalities," said Sergeant 1st Class (SFC) Jeff Wolfgeher of the MNTF E Provost Marshal's Office. Commenting on the shooting skills of the International MPs Wolfgeher said, "They scored very well shooting on a course they were not familiar with. For example, the Swedish MPs and the Italian Carabinieri came in first and third place." Wolfgeher himself had the highest score on the marathon scenario. At noon, all participants gathered for a luncheon at the South Town Dining Facility.

T I O N A L
DAY IN KOSOVO

International Military Police Day was the brainchild of KFOR Provost Marshal Lieutenant Colonel Arend te Velde, of the Royal Netherlands Marechaussee. "The Military Police in KFOR are trying to raise their professional standard. The goal they are trying to reach is an even more flexible organization, which can support the commanders within KFOR in the best way possible. This event is an excellent way to build team work and cooperation within the Military Police throughout KFOR," said te Velde. "We [KFOR Provost Marshals] have really focused on policy and how to work together. To my knowledge this is the first time this [an International MP Day] has been done." Also, te Velde said that he hopes International MP Day will become an annual event in Kosovo. According to te Velde, the day proved that it was possible for people to get in contact with each other. They met and talked about their work and typical National assets. People also made agreements on how to inform or help each other when needed. These are precisely the elements that are needed in a good working organization and this day was a perfect first step to achieve this.

SFC William Schumaker of the MNTF E Provost Marshal's Office, was the lead planner for the event. "Everyone enjoyed meeting people from other countries, with similar skills and experiences. By the end of the day people were exchanging patches and e-mail addresses," Schumaker said. "Everyone had a good time."

MIGHTY MIKE

TRADITIONAL GAMES

Story and pictures by
SSGT Luís Morais
Supply TEAM CO/ACoy/TF MIKE/KTM

On 31st January 2009, Kosovo Force Tactical Reserve Maneuver Battalion (KTM) Mighty MIKE TRADITIONAL GAMES took place in Jubilee Barracks camp, in Prishtina - Kosovo.

It is generally accepted, as a definition, that popular traditional games are worth above all as pastime entertainment and recreation. It seems, however, that behind them there was always an aesthetic and pedagogical wisdom that highlights all the cultural activities of our rural folks.

Consider as an example of what happen in the popular theater, which is still alive across Portugal villages and small towns; the tradition youth parties from some of our Portuguese villages are also a live example of it.

Inherent to the recreational purpose, we can find in the origin and popular games development, the need to transmit to the youth the collective wisdom, ancestral knowledge and culture. Furthermore, it is also important to overcome the opponent's performance in order to win and gain the female and collective admiration and recognition. This was the way in which popular games were developed and practiced, in not far away ages, in our countryside communities - fun and training for upcoming life challenges in order to overcome the past achievements and become part of history and the future collective memory.

Our games cover a great cultural heritage that needs to be known and preserved. We believe that culture is life, and as such, it is up to us all to keep it alive in the collective memory. The traditional games can provide diverse studies within the history, historiography, psychology, sociology, pedagogy, and the ethnography of language, among others aspects.

Popular traditional games vary with regions, but all of them have a mix of magic and religious significance. They are usually well practiced in certain seasons of the year or in intervals of agriculture tasks, contributing healthily for the free times occupation.

The traditional games have a remote origin, practiced since centuries and are transmitted orally from generation to generation, "God wanted men to have fun with lots and lots of games, because they bring comfort and dissipate daily concerns " (*Alfonso X King of Castela from 1252-1284, in his book Games*).

In these lands of Kosovo, Task Force MIKE honored his national background and left a mark in this region bringing each of us a little bit closer to our roots and traditions. We played in a fashion past time, the pawn, the axis and arc as we did in our childhood.

It was within this spirit that the Mighty MIKE TRADITIONAL GAMES were held and organized with 06 different activities: bags race, tied legs race, rope traction, wheelbarrow, blindfolded balloon braking and water bearer.

The purpose of this event was to stimulate team spirit and conviviality among the KTM people, promote the sport activities, ties of friendship and camaraderie between the Task Force MIKE command, Staff and Subunits.

Eight teams participated in the event, competing against each other. Teams were made up of six elements, and had to have, at least, one Officer/NCO and one female.

The first game was played in two series of four teams, and the victory in each series was worth four points. These events were amusing and spectacular due to its nature. The second game, tied legs race, formed by duet team, was also of the great and most funny moments, where the team dexterity had to be proved, in order to achieve victory. The rope traction is the most physical strength demonstration and here The "ENCALACRADOS "showed their best. The top event of these games was, without any doubt, the blindfolded balloon braking, where all teams participated in a passionate and spectacular way. Everyone present had a good laugh.

"MARÃO WOLVES" team from BRAVO COY, had their second and consecutive win, but what will stay, as a KTM memory, was a different and enjoyable day, with special moments of joy and happiness. At the end, Task Force MIKE was the true winner honoring its motto "We are only One".

The Games were setup by ALPHA Coy Supply Team, to whom we pay our homage, not only for this particular event planning and completion but also to the others in which they were involved thanks to the medical team and CSI (KTM signal team) team backup. "UT UNUN SINT" – "and all became one"

Even through an overcast sky,

Text and photos by
Cpt. (OR-2) Andrea Krobotová, Czech Army

On Monday, 16th February, the first of many planned humanitarian aid activities of the 14th Czech Contingent KFOR was initiated.

It is a frosty morning. The sky is overcast and the sunlight cannot be seen. But we know that the sun will dawn on the children's eyes and hearts, at Primary School, in Obrandza and also for two families. Commander of 14th Czech Army Contingent Lieutenant Colonel Róbert Bielený, together with members of Liaison Monitoring Team (LMT), will present a humanitarian aid there.

Dancing and singing welcomed the Czech soldiers at Primary School. " Thank you for a nice program," said Lieutenant Colonel Bielený, to the children and continued: "We are here to hand over toys from Bechyně town´s children." The children together with soldiers from 151st engineer batalion did a collection of toys in November 2008. Most of the children here are of the same age as the children from Bechyně town and it is a pleasure to hand over this present to them. Plushy animals, dolls, cars, brick-boxes were packed in a paper box. Now, these toys have already had new friends from Kosovo. "It is nice to see children´s eyes gleamed with joy," said commander of Czech Army Contingent.

the sunlight arrives

Humanitarian organization Charitas, along with members of Czech LMT, monitors the Podujevo area. There are 150,000 inhabitant and nearly 4,000 families live on the brink of scarcity. Therefore, the commander of 14th Czech Contingent had a meeting with representatives of humanitarian organization, Charitas Mr. Zenjun Bunjaky, and the nun Motry Smila, on 12th February in Luzane. They disscused the distribution of humanitarian aid from Czech Contingent soldiers.

The day has not finished yet. The convoy of cars have continued with other humanitarian aid, for two selected families. The first stop was at Ashkal family. "I would like to thank you for the job, which you have been doing here for the Kosovo´s people," said Mr. Bunjaku, chief of the humanitarian organization - branch office of the Podujevo area. He welcomed, along with father´s Ashkal, nine-members family. "Thanks to you and other Czech Contingents which were here before you. The aid was delivered to more than 2,500 families," he said, and continued that this nubmer of families is not final. In reality it is much higher. For example, there is no donation for children (toys, school things and repairing of school building) included. To put it into words: "We do not do these things for being appreciated, but we do it for the people. Our relief could not have to been so target oriented without your help," said Lieutenant Colonel Bielený, his farewells to Mr. Bunjaky.

It was time for lunch when the cars stopped in front of the small building. The family has a son who is disabled, and needs an operation. There is some chance that after this operation he would be able to find work, to take care of his family and their standard of living could turn around rapidly. Today everything was donated. It was the first humanitarian aid in which commander Bielený organized, along with the humanitarian organization Charitas. "We would like to extend our aid and endow two families with food every month. Until the end of our mission, it would be eight families that recieved donations. But, it is not only this humanitarian relief we plan. For example, we will donated 70 pieces of blankets and pillows to Pristina´s hospice in the spring and we will prepare the collection of clothes for adult and children. We are here to help you," said commander of Czech Army Contingent at the end.

THE GOLDEN SECRET...

Text and photos by
Georgios Athanasiou
OF-1
HELBAT CIMIC OFFICER

Military personnel, serving not only in Kosovo, but in other areas of the globe as well, may have not realized that a golden opportunity lies in front of them. Working in a multinational environment is the perfect opportunity for the military to develop in the highest possible degree their foreign language fluency. Think about that for a moment…civilians in every country throughout the globe sometimes pay a huge amount of money, for them or their children, in order to learn a foreign language and get a respective certificate-diploma, develop their speaking ability, listening or writing skills and be able, one day, to get a good job or travel the world! Think again…we in Kosovo, have a nuclear weapon in our hands, we hold the secret. And, the secret says that if anyone wishes to learn English he or she has to be born in a land of the native speakers; grow up there, breath, eat, cry, argue and live in English. In that way, the fluency of a native-speaker level comes naturally; you are born speaking English…

The same applies to Kosovo life! Think again! English has long been the international lingua franca, all military personnel in Kosovo should grasp this once-in-a-life-time (maybe) opportunity to fill their brains with as much English as possible. We have to speak, listen and write in English as much as possible!

There is no excuse, even if you don't mix with foreigners, you don't participate in meetings or submit and write reports. Just breathing this multinational air, in the Multinational Task Force North (MNTF-N) area, should prompt you to get down to business. Listen to the radio. Read reports or public affairs news. Watch English TV without subtitles. Read the KFOR Chronicle magazine. Extract knowledge from the Internet. Particularly those of us who mix regularly in foreign activities (meetings, reports, conversations etc) should consider it as a lottery win!

This is serious business guys, I repeat, think again, think how many people around the world seek out for an opportunity to travel to London, or New York, and express themselves in English, to talk to someone, to prove to themselves that their language certificate didn't go in vain. Or, think deeper, think that with the Kosovo language experience, you should be able one day to study in English or get your masters degree or doctorate! MNTF-N personnel and KFOR in general, should exploit this nuclear weapon, in order to improve in terms of language efficiency and professionalism. Things have changed, and times have changed. Military personnel without an international-environment working experience are close to extinct! And what an opportunity; to practice your English here, as much as possible!

Of course this should make the British and Americans proud, but this is not the case. The above mentioned secret applies to ANY FOREIGN LANGUAGE, be it English, French, Spanish, Italian, Serbian, Greek! The same golden secret is in force with all languages…Comrades, this is our golden opportunity, please be seriously aware of this fact because it's the truth, we breath in a multinational, multiethnic environment, isn't it high time we bore fruit?

Peacekeeper's Profiles

Name: Cláudia Vieira
Rank: OR-6
Nationality: Portuguese
Home Unit: First Military Hospital – Lisbon – Portugal
Unit in KFOR: TF MIKE/KTM/KFOR
About the mission: I've joined the Portuguese Army in 1999 and this is my first peacekeeping mission. In this theatre of operations, being a nurse, as Chief of the Health Service Staff, since September 2008 to March 2009, me and all the health service staff, we give priority to the health and well being of KTM Portuguese Soldiers. In any kind of event we also assure the support to any military or civilian, always having in consideration the bio-psycho-socio-cultural and spiritual component. Personally and professionally this has been a very challenging, demanding, rewarding, constructive and unique experience, in which I've been able to be in touch with the local population and to know their genuine live reality. In a perspective of the military nursing, all the work I've developed with all multinational health service professionals has being an outstanding and enriching exchange of knowledge, a different way of being and doing. New professional and personals values are being achieved in a very constructive way.
Family Reaction: When I first volunteered for this mission, in the early stage, my family and friends had showed a little fear and concerns, with also a mixture of excitement and pride. We are far, but always close by, the technology provide us the necessary support connection that had been essential to communicate with them in a daily basis.
Plans after the mission: The mission will finish soon and I already miss this place. Other kind of new missions are waiting for me: meting again with my family and friends at the Military Hospital, but before that of course, I will enjoy a very well deserved, invigorating and revitalizing holydays.

Name: Moise Eugen
Rank: OF3
Nationality: Romania
Home Unit: Romanian Navy Forces – The 56th Frigates Fleet
Unit in KFOR: Romanian Detachment ROFND XVII
About the mission: This is my first time in Kosovo but there is the third mission under NATO command. In 2006 and 2007, three months per year I worked on the board of the Romanian frigate „Regele Ferdinand" which took part in the „Active Endeavour" operation for maintaining a peaceful and secure climate in Mediterranean Sea.
As chief medic of ROFND XVII, my job is to take care of soldiers and civilian health, and to provide fast treatment in case of disease. I have specialization in general practitioner, in acupuncture, ultrasonografic and emergency care. For me, to be here is a great opportunity to make a lot of friends from different countries and to improve my English language skills. Moreover, I have possibility to learn and enjoy foods, customs and Italian lifestyle. I have a good collaboration with Italian and Slovenian medical teams and I like to say that they are my best's friends.
Family Reaction: My wife has still upset about me because when I have started this mission she was pregnant in eight months. Now my wife is a happy mother but she has to take care alone of our daughter who is only three weeks old. So she is eager to see me back at home and share with me our parent's duties.
Plans after the mission: First I am eager to see my little daughter and to hug warmly my wife and after that to take a holiday together. Then I will return to my unit to continue my medical and military job.

Name: Terry Van Gelder
Rank: Senior Airman (OR-4) US Air Force
Nationality: American
Home Unit: 435 CS /Sembach Air Base, Germany
Unit in KFOR: 401 AEG Det 2/Postal
About the mission: Our mission is to receive and dispatch all mail to U.S. forces and DoD Civilians in the KFOR AOR. We provide services 7 days a week and strive to provide the best possible service to all U.S deployed personnel. We were responsible for the uninterrupted delivery of 339,516 pounds of incoming mail and dispatch of 130,761 pounds of outgoing mail; also the processing of mail for the holidays and the demobilization of KFOR 10.
Family Reaction: My family is very supportive of me and always wishes the best for me. I come from a very military oriented family so they are used to the deployments, and are always there for me. My wife is happy that I have an opportunity to serve my country, but she is excited for me to be coming home soon.
Plans after the mission: My plans when I get home are to take a lot of leave and then get back to work at my post office in Germany.

Rugova Gorge

PHOTO:
ALEKSANDAR NARANDŽIĆ