

KFOR CHRONICLE

3rd Edition

March 28th 2009



KTM Transfer of Authority

The General Officer's Perspective

Villaggio Italia, 14 March 2009

While beginning my second experience in Kosovo, this time as MNTF-W Commander, I inquired in how I can best fulfill my duty to ensure security, stability and freedom of movement in my area of responsibility.

First of all I considered it essential maintaining solid the trust that all the citizens, indiscriminately of ethnic group or social class, nourish for us. The same trust that the 18 previous Commanders, together with the military of all the different nations that served in this Multinational Unit, have rewardingly earned on the field during the ten years of this Mission.

Subsequently I asked myself what are the citizens of Kosovo expecting from me.

I simply reached to the conclusion that everyone was looking forward that the new Commander would coherently perform his mission with firm equality and stability, but also with human spirit as a sign of continuity from his predecessors.

Finally, I decided to make treasure of my previous Kosovo experience, at the same time without letting myself believe to have complete knowledge of the current Operative Situation.

I started out this term with a good deal of tranquility and simplicity, looking forward in any circumstance to speak with the people and to understand Kosovo in the present day.

I outlined an image of a young society who is desperately seeking for a social pattern to follow, which will assist their economic growth, reduce the unemployment, improve the living standards and erase racial and religious differences. In other words, patterns that can give them Hope.

If from one side, my position as KFOR MNTF W Commander has demanded to pursue Safe and Secure Environment (SASE) and Freedom of Movement (FOM) in every circumstance, on the other side, I reserve to contribute for the achievement of this symbol of Hope.

During my term of command I decided to fully endorse the Kosovo children because they, more than anyone, are the personification of Hope. They are not different than the ones that those of us, who are married with children, have left at home.

Just like our children they are fragile, need love, attention and protection. They represent the future of this land regardless of their religion or ethnic group.

A nation that doesn't care for its children cannot have a future and therefore any Hope.

Considering that we spent these months in an operative theater switching from only assumptions and words to firm facts like making efforts for the children by reconstruction of schools, medical centers, in treating serious illnesses that cannot be treated in Kosovo and in environmental protection.

The children of Kosovo will remember, for all time, KFOR's loving contribution for building up their symbol of hope just like we will bring inside of us their innocent smiles when we return to our families.

Brigadier General Giovanni Armentani





Dear readers,

After more than seven months in theatre, my second tour in Kosovo and the third in the Balkans - is over. As always, time is running fast, while time-consuming routine and unavoidable external and internal factors contribute to leave you with a sense of unfinished work as you prepare to finish your mission. I'm not so keen on farewells because their intrinsic sadness having to leave comrades with whom we have been sharing an intense period of our lives and whose friendship helped endure living apart from our families and loved ones. I would rather prefer to think we'll meet again in other missions or anywhere else in the world.

However let me use this opportunity - and the space in our magazine - to publicly thank all the Public Affairs family members within KFOR. Especially my direct collaborators; people from 12 different nationalities who represent a great richness and whose daily commitment, different characters and culture are the real experience I'll bring back home. Thanks to you all!

To our readers I would ask for an even wider participation in PA matters. Each and every one of you may contribute to this magazine and to KFOR public website with articles, pictures, videos or simple suggestions. Apart from that, you might also contribute to PA as a fundamental military function. PA specialists rely on a fast-paced information network and on a full information sharing approach. In a global world news are very often circulating faster than military reports and we cannot be late if we don't want to lose the "battle" for the information in both routine and crisis time. Since technology permits it, every KFOR soldier must be integrated into a network which allows us to anticipate Media queries and to "speak with one single voice". To sum up; stay in close contact with your unit's PA specialists and be an active part of the KFOR PA family!

To you all and to my successor best wishes for a successful mission and a safe return home.



Col. Adriano Graziani

<p>Commander KFOR: Lt. Gen. Giuseppe E. Gay , ITA Army</p> <p>Chief Public Affairs Office: Col. Adriano Graziani, ITA Army</p> <p>Chief Internal Information & Editor in Chief: Maj. Christian Zankl, AUT Army zanklc@hq.kfor.nato.int</p> <p>Journalist Maj. Oleksii Morozov, UKR Army</p> <p>Webmaster/Journalist OR-6 Libra Johnson, U.S. Air Force</p> <p>Layout and Design Sara Narandzic</p> <p>E-mail: kforchronicle@hq.kfor.nato.int www.nato.int/kfor</p>	<p>The KFOR Chronicle is produced and fully funded by HQ KFOR. It is published for KFOR forces in the area of responsibility. The contents are not necessarily the official views of, or endorsed by, the coalition governments' defense departments.</p> <p>Editorial content is edited, prepared and provided by the Internal Information Section of HQ KFOR's Public Affairs Office (PAO) in Pristina, Kosovo.</p> <p>PAO HQ KFOR reserves the right to edit content to conform to style and space requirements. Articles run on a space-available basis.</p> <p>The KFOR Chronicle is printed by RASTER Tel: 038 601 606</p>
---	--

Nations within KFOR:	
NATO Nations	
Belgium	Luxembourg
Bulgaria	Netherlands
Canada	Norway
Czech Republic	Poland
Denmark	Portugal
Estonia	Romania
France	Slovakia
Germany	Slovenia
Greece	Spain
Hungary	Turkey
Italy	United Kingdom
Latvia	United States
Lithuania	
Non-NATO Nations	KFOR Structure
Armenia	HQ KFOR
Austria	MNTF Centre
Finland	MNTF East
Ireland	MNTF North
Morocco	MNTF South
Sweden	MNTF West
Switzerland	KTM
Ukraine	MSU



UNITY

Photos by OR-4 Marina Dore, Italian Army

March, 4, 2009.

In KFOR Headquarters, the Commander of Kosovo Force Lieutenant General Giuseppe E. Gay received General Karl-Heinz Lather, Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe Chief of Staff.



March, 4, 2009.

COMKFOR attended the Portuguese-Italian dinner, organized by the KFOR Tactical Reserve Maneuver Battalion (KTM) Commander in the Camp "Slim Lines".



March, 7, 2009.

The Kosovo Force Commander presided over the Transfer of Authority Ceremony in the Multinational Task Force "East", on Camp "Bondsteel" base (see the pages 14-15).



March, 7, 2009.

COMKFOR visited the German-Austrian operational Reserve Force Battalion in the Camp "Notting Hill". Having been briefed with the structure, tasks and area of operations of battalion, Lieutenant General Giuseppe E. Gay got acquainted with the equipment and operational capabilities of the unit.



F E F F O R T



March, 8, 2009.

In the Multinational Task Force "West" Headquarters, Camp "Villagio Italia", the Commander of Kosovo Force Lieutenant General Giuseppe E. Gay, along with the MNTF "West" Commander Brigadier General Giovanni Armentani, received Maria Rosaria Carfagna, the Italian Minister for Equal Opportunity. The visit of the Minister was devoted to the International women's Day.



March, 9, 2009.

Within KFOR HQ, Lieutenant General Giuseppe E. Gay hosted Major General William H. Wade, California Adjutant General.



March, 11, 2009.

COMKFOR had a meeting with Major General Anders Brannstrom, the Deputy Director of Joint Operations (Sweden).



March, 13, 2009.

The Kosovo Force Commander received Baskim Smakaj, Kosovo Intelligence Chief.



Pristine 25 March 2009

The Kosovo Force Commander, Lieutenant General Giuseppe Emilio Gay received the the Commander of Joint Force Command Naples, Admiral Mark Fitzgerald, United States Navy who visited Kosovo to engage directly with leaders of different organizations in Kosovo.

SNIPER

MORE THAN JUST A SHOT

Story and pictures by
1/Lt Maria Pålsson, SWECON PIO

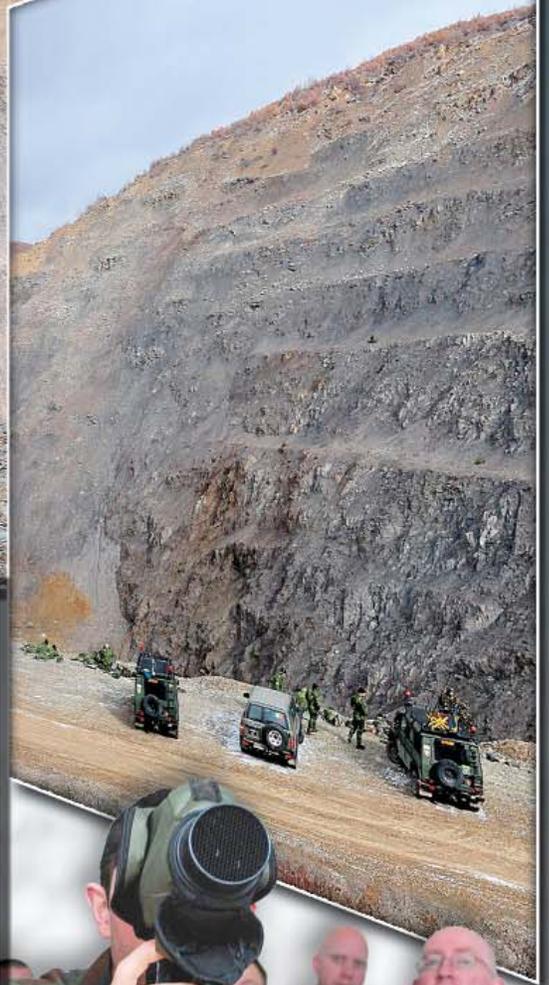
"Since we might be deployed together it is important for us to be familiar with each others techniques and weapons," says Coy Sgt Kilroy, of the Irish Charlie Company in Multinational Task Force Center. His comment sums up the reason for the joint sniper-training with the Swedish Bravo Company.



The joint training takes place in three stages. First, the focus is on skills in the short range relevant to the KFOR Crowd Riot Control (CRC) role. Then follows, practice at longer distances with various targets and alternate shooting positions. And lastly, the soldiers practice at long distance with pop-up targets. The Irish sniper instructors also spend time demonstrating various techniques for camouflage and concealment. "The Irish sniper team's main role in Kosovo is to support Charlie Company in their CRC-role," Coy Sgt Kilroy explains. But security of vital installations can also be a task for us. Today we practice a longer range, at the shooting range, in the Kisinca mine. But shooting is really the last bit, he continues.

Sniper training is long and has a high failure rate. In Ireland only about 20% are successful. There are six other





skills to master apart from shooting. Observation, camouflage, map reading, judging distance, stalking and sniper knowledge combined with shooting skills make it possible for a sniper to be successful. "Apart from getting familiar with the methods of our Irish colleagues, it is a good opportunity for our soldiers to learn from the Irish instructors' expertise since we don't have our own here in Kosovo," says OC Bravo Company major Johnny Eriksson. "It has been fun to train with the Irish contingent. When you train with others you can pick up new skills. It gives you the opportunity to combine the best of both worlds," says Swedish private Edvard Hübel.



PRISTINA MOTHERS AND CHILD SAYING BYE TO OLD FRIEND



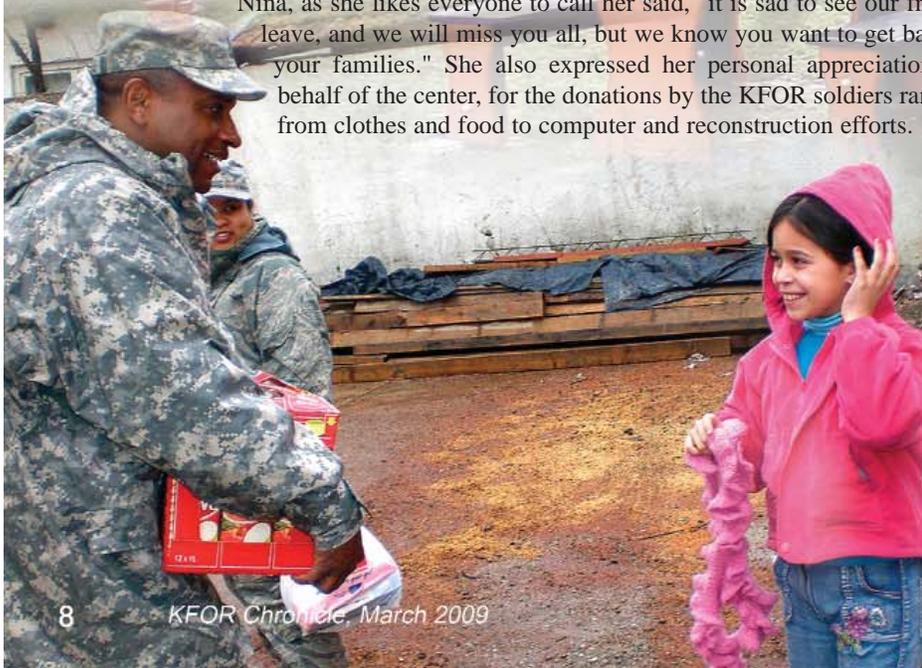
KFOR soldiers donate to the Pristina/Prishtine Rehabilitation Center of Mothers and Children.

Text and photos by OR-6 Libra Johnson, US Air Force

The purpose of the center is to help women and children from all over Kosovo that were persecuted from their homes, wounded or traumatized from the war and loss of their loved ones. In addition, the center supports educational conditions of orphans and the poor. This Center was founded in 1998, with the initiative of the Women's League, led by now Director, Dr. Flora Brovina.

On March 5th, 2009, several KFOR soldiers had their last visit to the center, dropping off supplies and to say their goodbyes before leaving Kosovo.

Center Coordinator Halime Maliqi, or Nina, as she likes everyone to call her said, "it is sad to see our friends leave, and we will miss you all, but we know you want to get back to your families." She also expressed her personal appreciation, on behalf of the center, for the donations by the KFOR soldiers ranging from clothes and food to computer and reconstruction efforts.



WOMEN REHABILITATION CENTER: GOODBYE TO OLD FRIENDS AND HELLO TO NEW FACES



As a show of gratitude, the staff prepared a small meal, for this last visit. Afterwards, everyone was offered tea, and during this time the center coordinator, Nina, took the opportunity to talk to departing KFOR HQ Transport Company representative Sergeant First Class (OR-7) Kaonis Thomas, and new arrival KFOR HQ Public Affairs representative, Technical Sergeant (OR-6) Libra Johnson.

She also explained the history and purpose of the center, and provided a walking tour of the center. After the war the condition of the center was very bad. Fortunately, the center has a new building and has reconstruction efforts being supported by many sources, of which KFOR has support for the last several years. "The German KFOR soldiers have and still are contributing to the reconstruction of the electrical system, throughout the building, a linoleum floor and new walls for the director's office. They've fixed the basketball court that was part of the playground project, financed by the American KFOR soldiers," said Nina.

The tour moved to the sewing room, where Nina explained that the women learn their tailoring trade and also made children's clothes and costumes. Within the center there is a small library, which also doubles as an arts and craft show room for the hand-crafted items and clothes the women make.

Nina showed us the computer room, consisting of four computers. She went on to explain that the computers were donated from the KFOR German soldiers. Although no one unit or nationality within KFOR solely provides supplies, support and reconstruction projects, because there is always a constant flow of new faces, ready to take-over where their predecessors left-off.

At the end of the visit, Nina and the center's staff presented a few of the departing Missouri National Guard, KFOR soldiers with small goodbye gifts.



KFOR FIRE BRIGADE EXT IN TIRE

Story by OF-2 Pierre Kugelweis
Photos by OR-6 Karl Reinisch



Full concentration on the difficult mission.

"Fire alert!" for the fire brigade of the Austrian KFOR Camp Casablanca. A tire and plastic factory located near the camp had caught fire shortly before 2 pm. The civilian fire brigade was not able to cope with the firefighting operations without additional help.

Fire fighting operations on "stand by"

The head of operations at the ignition source, OR-7 Roland Längauer, describes the course of events: "We, the Austrian-Swiss Fire Brigade, an emergency physician team and the military police were able to start right away upon alert. I had already expected the decisive call. The high pillar of smoke over the industrial plant located two kilometers away in the town of Suva Reka had not escaped our notice." Immediately, all members of the camp fire brigade were alerted and necessary preparations were made.



A firefighting team at the immediate ignition source.

Längauer depicts the immediate action taken at the factory: "We were the first firefighters in situ. The local firefighters were very involved, but they had already exhausted their personnel and especially their technical possibilities. Therefore, I assumed control of the operations and quickly obtained the necessary overview of the situation." The tyre factory employs 400 workers and only has a small company fire brigade. Hazardous industrial material and dangerous waste had been accumulated in its huge factory buildings. The head of operations says: "Fortunately nobody was endangered by the fire despite the poor precautionary measures. But I was worried about the enormous production of smoke. It was caused by burnt plastic material and high amounts of textiles. This evolved a poisonous cocktail into the air, which put peoples health in the entire surroundings at risk."



Civilian firefighters are in need of support.



A firefighting team is preparing for the mission.

EXTINGUISHES MAJOR FIRE FACTORY

Fire fighting operations

While the water for firefighting was pumped through the hoses, Swiss soldiers ensured the re-supply from a nearby well. "It was extremely important to us that the urgently needed water supply would not be interrupted. The many exercises we underwent have finally paid off", says Längauer. "The challenge of this mission was to achieve a target-oriented cooperation between the civilian and the military fire brigades in the spacious factory buildings.

This was necessary because it took every effort to extinguish the burning plastic material: During the operations, heavy breathing protection had to be used." Later, also German and Turkish KFOR fire brigades arrived at the burning tyre factory. OR-7 Längauer integrated them into the ongoing firefighting operations.

Civilian fire brigade reassumes control

At 7 pm Längauer was able to hand-over control to the civilian fire security guard of the local fire brigade. Längauer recapitulates: "I am very proud of my soldiers. They have proved their worth in a real case of emergency. As head of operations, I was able to rely on every single soldier. That is what really matters in emergencies like this. After all, it is always about peoples' lives."

The liaison officer of Kosovo Police comments on the soldiers' firefighting operation as follows: "We are relieved to see how KFOR supports us in firefighting operations. It is not only in the field of safety and security that our cooperation works excellently. For civilian organizations like us it is good to know that in a state of crisis we can rely on support by KFOR."



The water hoses are laid out.



Technical support is also needed.

Alert! Camp fire brigade and military police upon deployment.



The head of operations, OR-7 Längauer, in front of the burning building.

At the place of action:
The local fire brigade needs help.

TRANSFER OF AUTHORITIES WITHIN



Story and Photos by Major Christian Zankl (Austrian Army)

On March 24th, the KTM Transfer of Authority took place in Camp Slim Lines (Pristina/Prishtine). The weather god seemingly was in a good mood on that day and sent the sun to cover the solemn scene in warm light.

On that day the 1st Infantry Battalion and their Commander Lieutenant Colonel Fernando Artur Ferreira Teixeira replaced Task Force Mike and their Commander Lieutenant Colonel Jocelino do Nascimento Braganca Rodrigues. The Transfer of Authority ceremony was presided over by Kosovo Force Commander (COMKFOR) Lieutenant General Giuseppe Emilio Gay. COMKFOR stressed his recognition for "Mighty Mike's" outstanding performance within the last six months and wished the incoming 1st Infantry Battalion the very best for their mission in Kosovo.

In his farewell speech Lieutenant Colonel Jocelino do N. Braganca Rodrigues stated that during those 181 days in the Theater, 130 of which KTM was deeply operationally engaged, they worked very hard to pave the way and setting the conditions towards a better Kosovo.



N KOSOVO FORCE (KFOR)



He thanked COMKFOR for his Direction and Guidance, his staff, the MNTF's, the International Organizations and Non Governmental Organizations, Multinational Specialized Unit, EULEX, Kosovo Police and the people of Kosovo for their support and cooperation. Furthermore he stressed that he is very much convinced that Task Force Mike's legacy will be carried on by the great men and women of the 1st Infantry Battalion.

The new KTM Commander Lieutenant Colonel Fernando Artur Ferreira Teixeira stressed addressing COMKFOR and all comrades and distinguished guests that he and his Battalion are very keen to contribute decisively to the maintenance of a Secure and Save Environment and Freedom of Movement Kosovo wide. "All 1st Battalion Soldiers will dedicate the maximum of their wisdom and availability for the mission's full accomplishment, in light of our motto 'As unique cause the honor and dignity'."



TRANSFER OF AUTHORITY IN MUL

Story and photos by
Specialist Darriel Swatts
(USA Army)



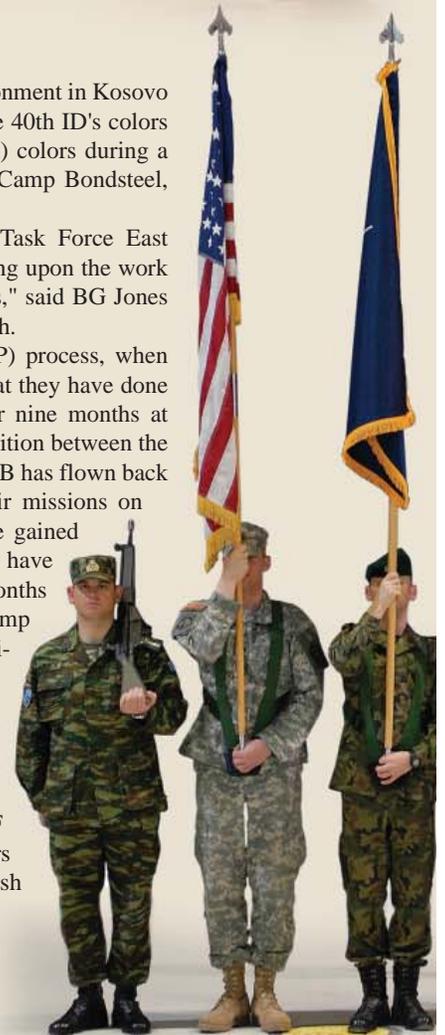
The 40th Infantry Division (ID) assumed the responsibility of providing a safe and secure environment in Kosovo for the second time in less than five years when Brigadier General Keith D. Jones unfurled the 40th ID's colors and Brigadier General Larry D. Kay cased the 110th Maneuver Enhancement Brigade (MEB) colors during a

Transfer of Authority ceremony held at Camp Bondsteel, Kosovo on March 7, 2009.

"As the commander of Multi-National Task Force East (MNTF-E), my goal is to continue building upon the work done by KFOR 10 and their predecessors," said BG Jones during his assumption of command speech.

The two-three week Relief-in-Place (RIP) process, when KFOR 10 showed KFOR 11 Soldiers what they have done and what they have learned during their nine months at Camp Bondsteel, provided a smooth transition between the two rotations. And now that the 110th MEB has flown back home, KFOR 11 is able to conduct their missions on their own with the knowledge they have gained from their counterparts and the skills they have picked up through the past several months training at Camp Roberts, California, Camp Atterbury, Indiana, and the Joint Multi-National Readiness Center at Camp Albertshof, Germany. Soldiers of KFOR 11 are prepared for the task at hand.

"Our Soldiers are well-trained, flexible, disciplined, and ready to join our Task Force (TF) Hellas [Greek] and TF POL/UKR [Polish and Ukrainian] soldiers to deliver unity of effort and to accomplish the mission," said BG Jones.



MULTINATIONAL TASK FORCE "EAST"

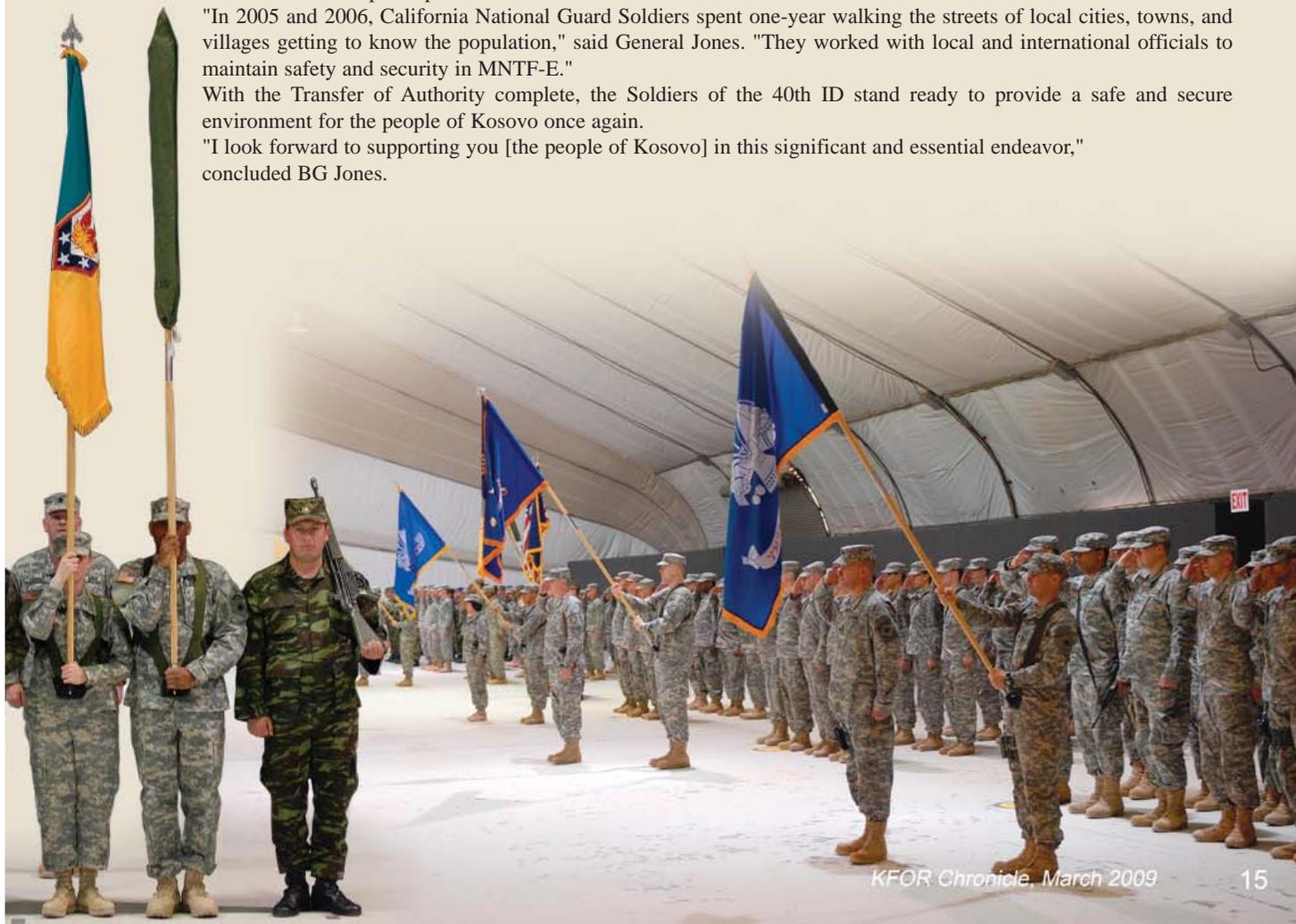


KFOR is a multi-national force under unified command and control with substantial NATO and other Non-NATO participation. MNTF-E is one of four designated areas of operation. MNTF-E has seen many rotations in its existence. This is its 17th rotation and the second time the 40th ID has participated in this mission.

"In 2005 and 2006, California National Guard Soldiers spent one-year walking the streets of local cities, towns, and villages getting to know the population," said General Jones. "They worked with local and international officials to maintain safety and security in MNTF-E."

With the Transfer of Authority complete, the Soldiers of the 40th ID stand ready to provide a safe and secure environment for the people of Kosovo once again.

"I look forward to supporting you [the people of Kosovo] in this significant and essential endeavor," concluded BG Jones.



MILITARY POLICE BETWEEN MNTF



RSM Walter Verbeke,
Sgt Olli Oivanen,
Cpl Andy De Buck,
WO11 Pavel Buban

Story and pictures by Captain Orla Jennings (Ireland)
Provost Platoon Commander
MNMPE, MNTF (C)

The Multinational Military Police Element (MNMPE) is located in Camp Victoria in MNTF (C). It consists of Military Police from four (4) contributing countries Czech Republic, Finland, Ireland and Sweden. There are twenty nine (29) personnel in the unit. This unit is responsible for maintaining law and order among KFOR troops within MNTF (C) AOR and outside the AOR where KFOR troops from MNTF (C) are involved.



Capt Emil Martensson,
RSM Walter Verbeke, Cpl Debbie Carr,
Cpl Andy De Buck, S/Sgt Jaakko Iivonen
in Camp Belevdere

In MNTF (N) there are three (3) countries providing Military Police support. They are Belgium, Denmark and France. The Military Police in MNTF (N) are located in three (3) separate camps, Camp Belvedere, Camp Olaf Rye and Camp Novo Selo.

During the month of March a Military Police exchange programme occurred between MNTF (N) & MNTF (C). The concept behind the exchange program was to improve the working relationship between Military Police in different Task Forces, to foster and develop links that would enable enhanced communications in relation to Military Police investigations and to compare working environments and methods of Policing.

The first exchange took place from the 03 March to 04 March 09. Sergeant Olli Oivanen from Finland and Warrant Officer 11 Pavel Buban from the Czech Republic participated in this exchange. They spent 03 March working with the Danish Military Police in Mitrovica and the 04 March with the Belgian Military Police.



Sgt Olli Oivanen (MNMPE, MNTF C) conducting speed checks with Danish MP's

POLICE EXCHANGE OF (N) & MNTF (C)

During this time they received briefs, conducted joint speed & vehicle checks, compared Standard Operative Procedures (SOP) and meet with local KP personnel. The second exchange took place between 23 March and 24 March 09. Staff Sergeant Jaakko Iivonen from Finland and Corporal Debbie Carr from Ireland participated in this exchange which was conducted in a similar manner to the first exchange.

Captain Bo Kristensen Officer in Command of the Danish Military Police said that he thought the exchange program was an excellent idea and great way to get to know other Military Police and compare investigation techniques. Sergeant Major Walter Verbeke from Belgium felt that exchange program allowed him the opportunity to make new contacts within the Military Police world and to reminisce on old acquaintances.

Corporal Debbie Carr from Ireland said that she enjoyed participating in the exchange program and felt it was a great opportunity to learn from other nations. Staff Sergeant Jaakko Iivonen from Finland said that he too enjoyed the chance to meet and work with Military Police in another Task Force and looks forward to other such exchange programs.

This Military Police exchange program was a huge success and it is hoped that it will continue and Military Police from MNTF (N) will visit MNTF (C) in a similar manner. New contacts between the Military Police have been established and there is increased respect and professionalism between all participating elements.



Sgt Olli Oivanen (MNMPE, MNTF C) conducting speed check with Danish MP's



Sgt Olli Oivanen & WO11 Pavel Buban (MNMPE, MNTF C) with all the Danish MP's at the MP station in Camp Olaf Rye

AN AIR-BORN

ARMY AVIATION FORCES PRACTISE THE EVACUATION OF A

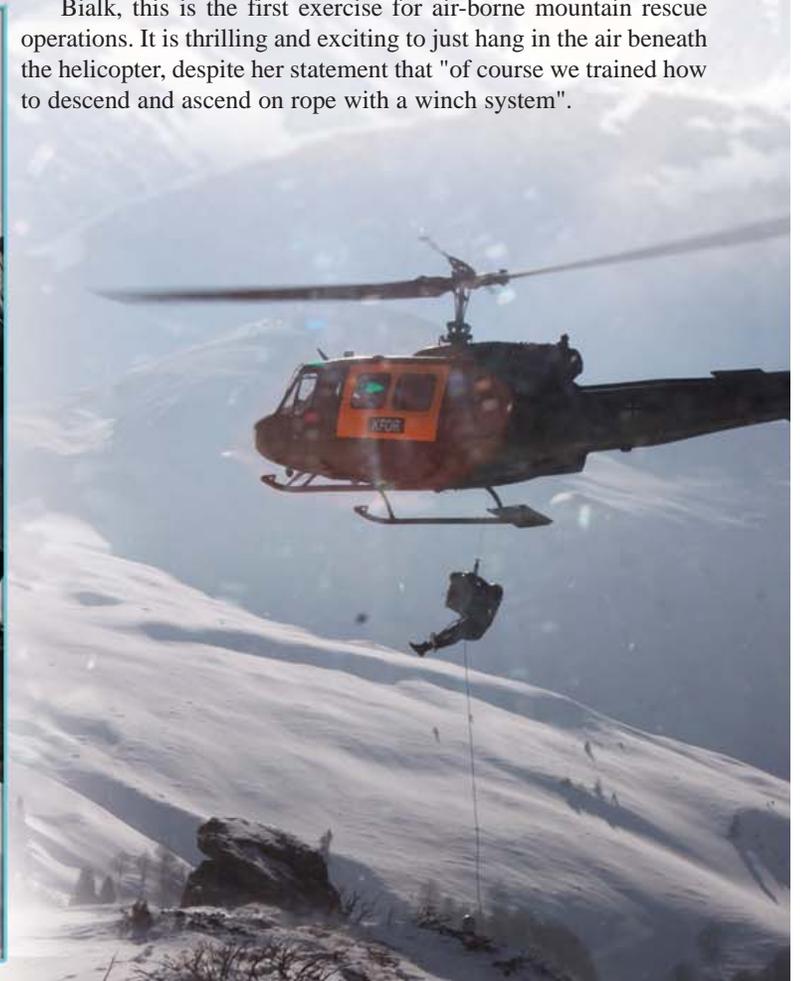
By Captain Karsten Dyba

*Pictures taken by Captain (OF-2) Karsten Dyba
and Sergeant (OR-5) Simone Geyer*

It can be a very complicated task to rescue injured persons who had an accident in the mountains south of Prizren. Weather permitting, help may come in the form of the "Samaritan", the MEDEVACH helicopter of the combined Army Aviation units. At 2200 meters above sea level, the rescue squad has trained to for the case of such an incident.

Toplicane. Alert in Camp Toplicane, were the helicopters of the Army Aviation are standing by on a huge asphalt surface. A helicopter has crashed down in the mountains of Sar Planinac, as the mountain range on the southern border of Kosovo is called. Lieutenant Colonel Meyer-Ricks, commander of the division and a pilot himself, had flown over the site of the accident and reported to have spotted at least one survivor. The Samaritan-team steps into action. They have 15 minutes from notice to move - the pilot, the air rescue specialist, the emergency surgeon and additionally in this case the Army mountain guide of the Maneuver Battalion.

For the emergency surgeon, Medical Corps Major Ina Bialk, this is the first exercise for air-borne mountain rescue operations. It is thrilling and exciting to just hang in the air beneath the helicopter, despite her statement that "of course we trained how to descend and ascend on rope with a winch system".



THE SAMARITAN

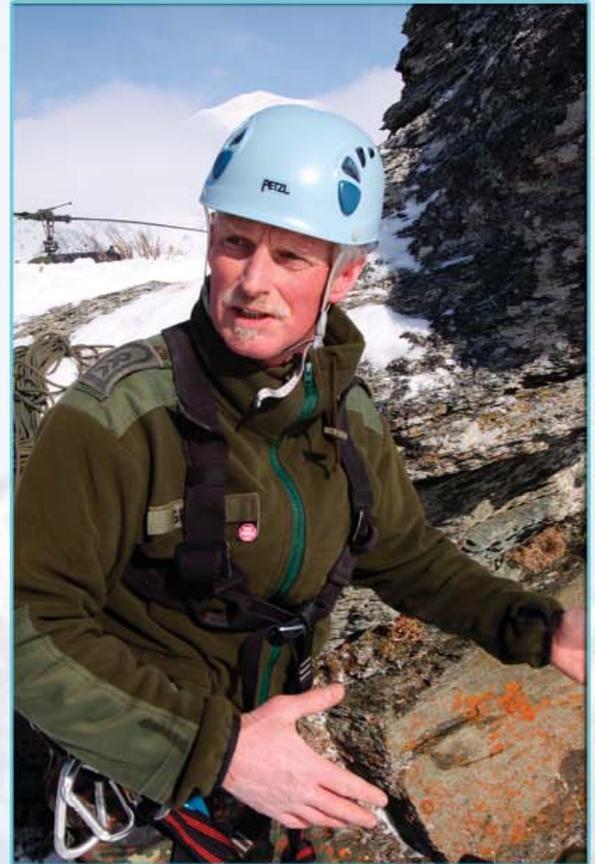
AN INJURED PERSON IN THE MOUNTAINS OF SAR PLANINA

This training experience, though, can not compare to the real life situation in the snow and the mountains, where the injured is on a rock, partly even buried by rocks. The narrow space barely leaves the rescue squad room to give the patient a first treatment. This is where the Army mountain guide enters the stage. Sergeant Major (OR-8) Harald Grandl acts as the advisor of the rescue team: "I advise them on the risk of avalanches, for example", he says, and grabs a rope and a safety hook. He must install a safety lock, in order to prevent the rescue team and the patient from falling. While the patient is being given first treatment, the "Samaritan" hovers in a safe distance.

With the help of a rope winch the injured who has been put on a stretcher

is being pulled into the helicopter. The air rescue specialist, Sergeant Major (OR-8) Stefan L. also hangs on to the rope. This is a real challenge for the pilot, as his helicopter is already heavier loaded than usually, with all the equipment and the rescue team. "In such moments the helicopter's centre of gravity is on the side", Lieutenant Colonel Meyer-Ricks explains. This makes it exceptionally difficult to maintain control of the helicopter, in the mountains and especially "that close to a rock face and at night - this is something we must train on a regular basis". The crews based in Toplicane are trained for such situations. "We are a mountain aviation unit", the commander says.

Ice crystals patter against the protective goggles, which are attached to the helmets of the rescue squad - the helicopter's rotary wings stir the snow - the conditions are almost unendurable. With the help of the winch, the injured and the rescue team are finally pulled onto the helicopter. One last look at the panoramic view of the snow-covered mountains and the blue sky. Mission accomplished, patient sound and safe. Now, off to the field hospital.



BIG HUG KOSOVO

Story and photos by Lieutenant Colonel Jocelino Bragança Rodrigues
TF MIKE/KTM Commander



When Task Force (TF) MIKE assumed KFOR Tactical Reserve Manoeuvre Battalion (KTM) role in 23 Sep 08, many of us were far from understanding the meaning of the words Kosovo Wide. It was part of our mission and also a concern.

We are a Force tailored to perform military operations in a broad range of scenarios and situations, which the image is associated to holding weapons in one hand and Crowd Riot Control (CRC) equipment in the other. But Portuguese soldiers are also able to get in touch with the general public, speak to citizens, show human respect and to treat them as one of us. The Portuguese, a noble people that one day gave *new worlds to the world*¹, was always able to mix with people from different communities. So it has been in Kosovo, where TF Mike has shown a special ability to perform, to get in contact with the people of Kosovo. Having this in sight, to implement KTM's commander's intention of start actions to improve the KFOR image and acceptance Kosovo wide. Highly motivated, with the

unchangeable goal of creating and improving friendship ties, KTM assessed the needs in the assigned temporary AOR's.

Doing an accurate needs assessment and keeping situational awareness, it is necessary to fall in with local inhabitants, without losing our main focus, COMKFOR given mission - Safe And Secure Environment (SASE) and Freedom Of Movement (FOM) maintenance Kosovo Wide.

To accomplish this permanent task, KTM planned and implemented BIG HUG Operations (Ops), designated to have the population to understand the Force's presence and acceptance, and also to set up community ties, putting together all the communities by doing the same activity.

KTM had performed CIMIC Ops in the area of Skenderaj, where excellent jobs were done. KTM is sure that this people will never forget KFOR, they are still planning a football match with us. Also the Aqalev children will remember the day when KTM soldiers gave them training, for the first time, on the procedures and the way to follow, in case of natural disaster/catastrophe or fire. They will see these instructions everyday, displayed in the boards that KTM provided and installed in the school walls. We have no doubt that current students and tomorrow's teachers will remember these procedures, and will teach them to the future kids.

More recently was deployed in Mitrovica, North of the IBAR River, nearby the hospital. In the good will of Portuguese soldiers,



WUG WIDE



KTM made friends and distributed cloths, food, t-shirts, footballs, and other equipment. By doing this, all the communities living in the city would be put together, in the same street. Here, because the Portuguese soccer player Cristiano Ronaldo is the world player of the year, we hope to fix things for a multiethnic soccer game. We are deeply committed to put together, in the same pitch of Portuguese and Kosovar players from all communities, operating in MNTF-C AOR, the KTM wanted to get in with the right foot, co-locating, side by side, KTM's Soldiers and the children of Donja Gusterica, and Doside Obravodia communities, developing an outstanding image for KFOR Forces and a good relationship with the local population. Having that in mind, we delivered heaters, toys, food, t-shirts, and of course some footballs, to the children of Donja Gusterica kindergarten and Doside Obravodia multiethnic school. In addition, we also performed some work on both the soccer field and the playground. Thus ending this brief chronicle, where we try to explain why KTM performed and will carry on performing "BIG HUG OPS" Kosovo Wide.

'Portugal was the first country, most important power on the 15/16th centuries, putting together the five continents, performing that way the first big globalization. With its discoveries, Portugal was able to put together the inhabitants of the five continents.



St. Patrick's Day cele



Story by KFOR Chronicle Team
Photos by Aleksandar Narandzic

On March, 16, Saint Patrick's Day, also known as Paddy's Day, was celebrated in Film City Camp, Pristina/Prishtine.

But, first of all, who was Saint Patrick? Why is he well known all around the World? Many people do not have any idea. So, we will try to figure it out.

According to the history, Saint Patrick was the patron saint and national apostle of Ireland who is credited with bringing Christianity to Ireland. March, 17, is believed to be his death date. On this day the feast takes place, popularly known as Saint Patrick's Day.

St. Patrick is one of Christianity's most widely known figures. But for all his celebrity, his life remains somewhat of a mystery. There are many stories traditionally associated with St. Patrick, including the famous account, telling of him standing upon a hill, using a wooden staff to drive the serpents into the sea, banishing them forever from Ireland.



Ambassador Martin Greene, his wife Jill, BG Hegarty, Col. Herbert, Senior Irish Officer in KFOR and Lt. Col. Caufield, Contingent Commander

Saint Patrick's Day has come to be associated with everything Irish: anything green and gold, shamrocks and luck. Most importantly, to those who celebrate its intended meaning, St. Patrick's Day is a traditional day for spiritual renewal and offering prayers for missionaries worldwide. The Irish have observed this day as a religious holiday for over a thousand years.



4th Western Brigade Pipers, 2 drummers from the Irish contingent in Camp Clark



Celebration in Film City

But this day is not only a religious feast, but also a good reason to meet friends, to listen to the Irish music and to enjoy life, in order to prepare the mind for new challenges; and the KFOR soldiers did it.

The celebration in Camp Film City started with the traditional Irish music, which was full of Irish sprit, and lasted through the night with classic hits. Not even the cold weather could stop the festive atmosphere. The Irish way of life has always been magical. Saint Patrick's Day is celebrated worldwide by those of Irish descent and the ever-growing crowds of people with no Irish connections but who may proclaim themselves "Irish for a day", usually with the consumption of traditionally Irish alcoholic beverages (beer and stout, such as Murphy's, Beamish, Smithwicks, Harp, or Guinness; Irish whiskey; Irish coffee or Baileys Irish Cream), and by wearing green-coloured clothing and attending parades.



BG David Berger and BG Gerry Hegarty



The former Multinational Task Force Centre Commander Irish Brigadier General Gerry Hegarty and the Irish ambassador to Kosovo Mr. Martin Greene accompanied by his wife Jill, paid a visit to the Irish soldiers, serving within KFOR, to celebrate this day along with them.



BG Hegarty, MG Fugier, KFOR Deputy Commander, and Col. McMahon, MNTF Center Deputy Commander



GENDARMERIE NATIONALE DE LA

Text by Colonel (OF-4) Bernard Burstert, Major (OF-3) Pascal Beaussein (French Gendarmerie nationale), and Major (OF-3) Oleksii Morozov (Ukrainian Armed Forces)

Photos by Adjudant-Chef (OR-9) Fabrice Balsamo (French Gendarmerie nationale, Sirpa) and Major Oleksii Morozov

Since 1999, the KFOR soldiers, as well as the Kosovo local population, have seen military personnel with the inscription "GENDARMERIE NATIONALE" on their uniforms. Somebody might even ask: "Who are those servicemen? Where do they come from? What are their tasks?" This article will present a short overview of the French "Gendarmerie nationale" and its role in KFOR and Kosovo. La Gendarmerie nationale is one of the oldest French institutions. In 1373, the royal decree gave the start to the creation of "maréchaussées de France", military force which for ages has become the only corps executing police functions in France. In 1791, it was renamed "Gendarmerie nationale".

Nowadays Gendarmerie nationale is the military force responsible for the public security, maintaining public order and executing of the laws. Except that, it takes part in the defense of France.

The tasks of the Gendarmerie are very diverse. Judiciary police deal with the crimes investigation and counter-terrorism. Administrative police are responsible for the public security in the medium cities and villages, on the roads and the state borders, in the sea ports and the airports, for the air surveillance, sanitary control, and civil protection. Road traffic control units are in charge of road network surveillance, accidents prevention and their inquiries, and providing the necessary assistance to the people on the roads. Search and rescue teams conduct operations in the mountains, under the ground, on the sea and rivers. Special detachments take care of illegal immigration. Besides that, French gendarmes maintain public order and fight against organized crime, protect sensitive facilities and the embassies of France abroad,

escort VIPs and special freights, and participate in the defense missions inside France and beyond the borders of the country. Lebanon, Haiti, Democratic Republic of Congo, Ivory Coast, Chad, Bosnia and Kosovo, this is incomplete list of the "hot spots" where the French gendarmes conduct peacekeeping operations, under international, European and national commands.

Until the end of 2008, the representatives of the French Gendarmerie nationale were part of the Kosovo Force Multinational Specialized Unit (MSU), with the tasks of law enforcement and civil disturbances management, maintenance of secure environment and military



*Commander of French gendarmes in Kosovo
Colonel Bernard Burstert*



FRANCE AND ITS ROLE IN KOSOVO

security matters, information gathering and CIMIC operations. After the French government took corresponding decision, they went under the European Union Rule of Law Mission (EULEX) command, having left in KFOR a small number of colleagues, organized in two main cells, under the command of Colonel Bernard Burstert.

The task of the first one consists of collecting information concerning the safe and secure environment in Kosovo, which is vital for the KFOR units, conducting their mission. This cell is also responsible for gathering data relating to the French internal security threats, such as weapons, drugs, human trafficking, terrorism, and so on.

The second cell, named "brigade prevotale", executes military police missions within the French forces. "But we do not act only as military police", Chief of brigade prevotale Major Jean-Francois Pierret says. "At the same time we are in charge of performing all the functions of the judiciary police under the direction and control of the Prosecutor of military tribunal of Paris. This includes the investigations of different accidents and law infringements, made by French military outside France".

"Gendarmerie has the advantages nobody can contest. Especially, sincere confidence and devotion, which has been proven by elected representative and population in respect of gendarmerie. Promptitude, proximity, sense of service and -respect for professional ethics are the fundamental values which permit us to justify this confidence. Let's be ourselves and the gendarmerie will continue to hold its place!" (General Roland Gilles, French Gendarmerie nationale General Director)

Finally, the "KFOR Chronicle" would like to express its gratitude to the French gendarmes for their job, done within KFOR, for their friendship, cooperation and understanding, hospitality and fine French humor!

Merci et bon chance à vous !



KFOR HOSTS BALKAN M



Story by Lt Col Daniel Reiser,
Deputy JMED Branch
Photos by Sara Narand ic

"Envision what healthcare support will look like in the end and describe the best path to get there". Those were the welcoming words and challenge provided by KFOR Chief of Staff (COS) Brigadier General David Berger to the more than 30 Balkan Medical Conference (BMC) attendees. On 11 March 2009, Colonel Joerg Frerichs, KFOR Medical Adviser (MEDAD), hosted the semiannual Balkan Medical Conference (BMC) at FILM CITY. This year's event was unique because it was the first time local Kosovo medical leaders were invited. Attendees of the conference included

medical leaders from ACO/SHAPE, JFCNP, KFOR HQ, all of the MNTFs, EUFOR, and for the unrestricted part of the conference the Kosovo minister of Health, Director of National Institute of Public Health as well as representatives from EULEX. General Berger, in his opening remarks, additionally stressed the importance of "not just taking notes, but using this time to challenge ideas, question plans and to speak up." This active engagement will support and improve "logically taking medical care from point A to point B without sacrificing care to the soldier."

The purpose of this year's conference was to discuss and coordinate the NATO Medical Support plan from present to the spring 2010; to rationalize operational level medical support priorities, to increase bi/multi-nationality, and to discuss the possibilities and limitations of utilizing in-country medical resources in order to reduce manning, equipment and costs. Brigadier Robin Cordell (GBR-A), SHAPE ACO-MEDAD stressed in his opening-speech that we must "look forward and have engagement with our hosts in Kosovo." He also went on to stress that all players in the Kosovo healthcare system "look at the level of capability now and then ask what can be done to improve upon it and then develop that capability."



MEDICAL CONFERENCE



Brigadier Cordell also outlined the new medical timelines in operations which were recently discussed by the Committee of Chiefs of Medical Services (COMEDS, NATO Surgeons General). Evidence from accumulated experience in Iraq, Afghanistan and other earlier campaigns revealed there are three timelines: bleeding and airway control within 10 minutes of injury, medical evacuation assets reaching the casualty within one hour of injury and patients requiring surgery reaching the medical facility within two hours of wounding the "10-1-2 Rule". Brigadier Cordell concluded his presentation by asking has been very good to Kosovo and has provided great emergency assistance and medical care to their minority population." He also encouraged further thoughts on "how can we work more closely with KFOR on a day-to-day basis and how can we integrate the emergency healthcare system?" Keeping continuous open communication with KFOR and engaging the Kosovo medical providers in joint medical training were common themes of the minister's presentation.

Colonel Renzo Mattei, JFCNP Medical Advisor and Chairman of the BMC stated that "this has been the most interesting and productive BMC...now the work will begin." Col Mattei oversaw the meeting and facilitated the MNTF presentations. The BMC identified future projects to support the healthcare delivery in Kosovo as well as identified future opportunities for the KFOR medical system. One of the key recommendations from the meeting was the request to develop a multinational working group including medical leaders from the national healthcare system, EULEX and KFOR. This new working group will help pave the way for future cooperative medical efforts within Kosovo.



NOCHE LATINA OR KOSOVAN IN THE CAMP V

Story and pictures by
OF-3 Anna Darabos
(Hungarian Army)

"People who live in their own mind only live in the ego. The ego can't dance. Can act but to can't dance."

I wrote this quotation without bad intention, because my aim is not to hurt others. For me, it is very important that my daywork be done the best, but besides this, I consider that to spend the spare time be useful, amusing, entertaining.

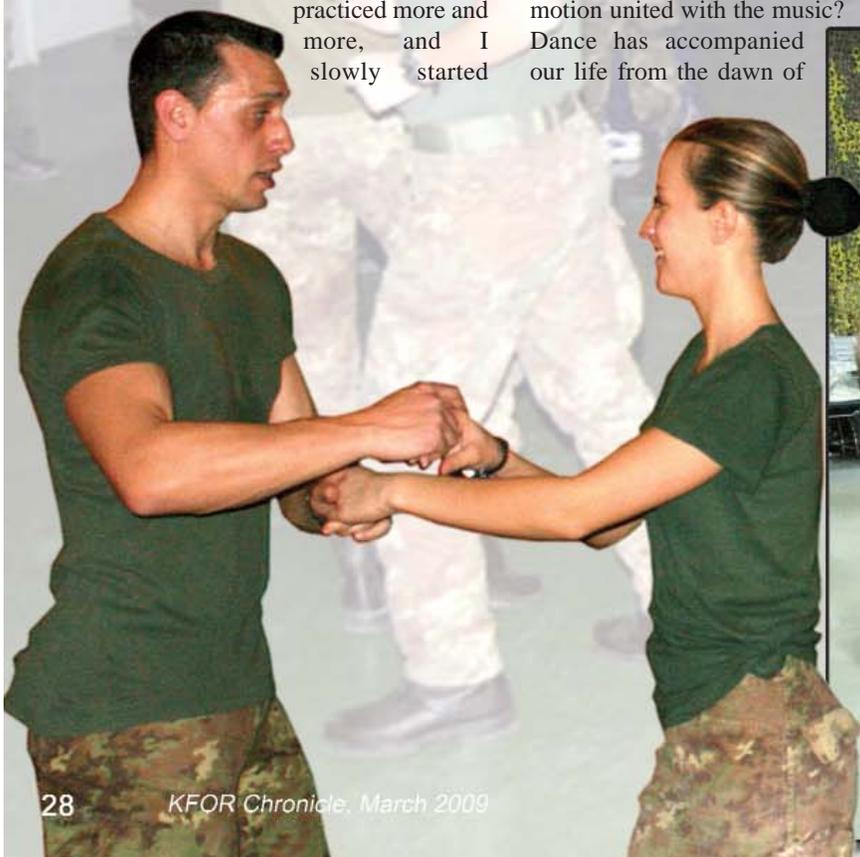
The Public Affairs Office Chief of MNTF-W, Major Pietro Piccirilli made about all of latin type of music and dance (what a surprise, he is Italian) especially the salsa. I had never studied dance before, however I like dancing, but I can't do it. I'll never forget the day when on the occasion when he switched on Latin music, on his computer and invited me to dance, in our office. In our spare time we practiced more and more, and I slowly started

learning and comprehending this new feeling and lifestyle pertaining to Salsa, Merenge, Bhaccata. It was a sudden idea, what would happen if Pietro would not only teach me, but others as well?

The first lessons we organized, was in the Radio West building, with only 10-12 paxes. The story of the dance school went around very quickly in the barracks, so we had to move into a bigger place. In the present period approximately 25-33 people came to the school regularly, to learn dance, in the function of the their service occupations. This little school grew into a real community in a short time, in which Italian, Hungarian, Slovenian, Romanian and Spanish both young and older soldiers spend their spare time together. What may be the secret of the motion united with the music?

Dance has accompanied our life from the dawn of

the human cultures, all the way along. It was the attendant of the birth, of growing up and of the death, of a joy and the grief. The dance from ancient times helped the ones to cross the borders of their own body. During dancing, our ancestors understood their strengths, and their place in the universe got tuned onto the magic circulation and rhythm of the nature. Our ancestors applied instinctively the strength residing in the dance, but our modern rational world rather focus on the intellect, and lays the emphasis on the sense. The body is squeezed into background fatally, and the balance between the body-soul is upset. The reason, overemphasizing the sense, implies that we stifle it, we leave our emotions out of consideration.



KOSOVO DANCE SCHOOL

VILLAGGIO ITALIA

The dance teaches bodily consciousness and helps to understand and express our emotions. Restores the balance, leading back to our own completeness, and we may face ourselves, our most internal essence. This discovery modifies our relation with ourselves, and helps us and others' acceptance. It is possible to dance alone, but the dance builds upon the community's strength primarily: people being young or old, and women and men dance together. The common dance, is the symbol of unity and completeness. To belong to a community, to turn into its integral part, can be a liberator and curative strength, after all the root of the modern human's spiritual problems often come from the experience of own isolation, that stems from solitude.

We, the MNTF-W Noche Latina Kosovo Dance School students have been learning the Latin dances enthusiastically and gladly. On the different programs, we perform short mood degree shows. When I can see new faces appearing in the school, I always think that we managed to hand something over to others:

When you feel that the happiness starts to flood you, embrace you, and moves your body: it is the dance.

Although some days ago I have finished my mission and returned home, a kind of feeling forced me to write this text. My aim with this article was to say thank you, to my chief, Major Pietro Piccirilli, and all of my Italian and other nationality friends in the Noche latino dance school, for the affection that I got. I am really happy, that I had the opportunity to learn this excellent dance and spend my time among them. It was a great honor and respect for me.

Thanks for everything and I wish you all the best!



BULGARIAN CONTINGENT WELCOMES THE SPRING

„MARTENITSA“: RED AND WHITE RIBBONS ON THE OCCASION OF THE BULGARIAN NATIONAL HOLIDAY

The celebrations for the national holiday of the Bulgarian nation on the third of March may have been less extravagant than the celebration of Germany's national holiday on the third of October, but carried an unmatched flair of joy and festivity. The Bulgarian contingent had invited to the Antalya restaurant to celebrate their national holiday, where they distributed red and white ribbons as a symbol of health and happiness.

Prizren. "Our fatherland is one of the oldest sovereign countries in the world", Lieutenant Colonel Todor Kraev, commander of the Bulgarian contingent, proudly told his guests when presenting a short overview of Bulgarian history. On the third of March, the Bulgarians celebrate the anniversary of their country's independence in 1878. The national holiday naturally presented the fitting occasion to introduce the home of the Bulgarian Engineer platoon to the soldiers of all other KFOR TCNs. Being a people of the Balkans themselves, the Bulgarians in Prizren have a very close ties to the local inhabitants. Lieutenant Colonel Georgi Georgev explains: "Our mother tongues are very similar, we are able to converse quite fluently with every people from the region of former Yugoslavia". Thus, the Bulgarians heartily invited a dancing group from the Bosniak village of Grancare to the festivities in the former "Keiler" restaurant. The juveniles from the village located in the mountains north of Camp Prizren made this evening an atmospheric event in the style of the Balkans.

It was an honour for General Fugger, speaking in his function as DCOM MNTF S, to congratulate the Bulgarina comrades: "For many years now we have been working side by side, united by a common mission and shared goals", he said. He thanked all soldiers of the Bulgarian contingent, whose contribution to the KFOR mission helped to promote peace and stability in the western Balkans.

"KFOR is a big family, and comradeship is this family's outstanding trademark".

The third of March has a very special meaning to all Bulgarians: It marks the anniversary of the Contract of Stefano, which today is called Yesilkoy (near Istanbul). Here, the political landscape was re-shaped after the Turkish-Russian war. The Russians had conquered the Balkans and the Osmani Empire had lost all its European provinces. Serbia, Montenegro, Romania and eventually Bulgaria gained their independence.

Lieutenant Colonel Kraev explained the custom of the "Martenitsa" to the guests. "Martenitsas" are red and white ribbons, which were distributed by the Bulgarian engineers. According to a legend from the early times of Bulgarian history, these ribbons are to be worn on the lapel until you see a dove. Then you must hang them on to the next fruit tree. To those who can not find a fruit tree, Georgi Georgev said, can put the "Martenitsas" under a stone instead."



By Captain Karsten Dyba
(text and images)

Peacekeeper's Profiles

Name: Apostolos KATSIKAS

Rank: OF-2

Nationality: Greek

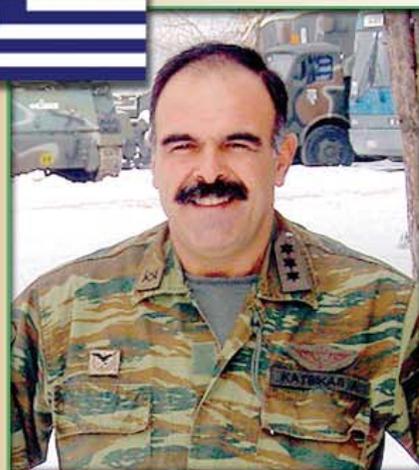
Home Unit: 526 Mech. Infantry Battalion

Unit in KFOR: MNTF (N)-Hellenic Battalion-Director of 1st Office (Administrative Director)

About the mission: This is my fourth mission in Kosovo and all of them in Mitrovica! I've been here in 2000-2002, 2004, 2006 and now since Nov 2008. In total, I've been here for 38 months and I gained a lot of experience during my time here. I'm grateful for this and I constantly try to help my newer colleagues and solve their problems, in relation with my duties.

Family reaction: I'm married and I have 2 grown sons. My family knew that this wasn't always easy, being away from home for so long but they all completely understood and fully supported me all these times and I thank them from the deep of my heart.

Plans after mission: I believe this is probably my last mission as I am close to the end of my military career. I wish all the best and health to all KFOR personnel. As far as the future is concerned, in my country they say: "When men make plans, God laughs..." So I wish I am healthy and I will handle all the rest.



Name: Franz Jung

Rank: Sergeant Major (OR 8)

Nationality: German

Home Unit: Mountain Infantry Reconnaissance Battalion 230 in Bavaria

Unit in KFOR: HQ German Contingent MNTF S in Prizren

About the Mission: This is my third deployment on the Balkans. The first one was in 1998 and the second in 2002. And once again, it is an exciting time to be here. Kosovo is now in a special phase of its development. This young state has been formally sovereign for a very short time, and is not nearly ready to proceed unguided.

I want to make my contribution to the founding of its governmental structures, and to play a part the establishment of its economic base, that in the end will lead to a peaceful and liberal country. KFOR continues to ensure the secure environment necessary for this development work. It is hardly conceivable that these peaceful conditions could be maintained without the presence of KFOR.

Family reaction: I have two sons aged 27 and 23. Both of them serve as soldiers in the German Federal Forces. This fact alone already points to the support that I receive from my family when I practice my profession. It is, however, still a burden when the family is once again torn apart for a few months. This is particularly true for those who remain at home.

Plans after my tour has ended: Contrary to what I did at the end of my previous deployments, I will not return directly to work at my parent unit for the first two weeks. Instead, after my return I will first go on vacation with my wife. And after that, I will enjoy my homecoming with my sons, other family members and friends. When I am back on duty, I will happily share my experiences with my comrades.



Name: Damir Vogrinc

Rank: SFC (OR-7)

Nationality: Slovenian

Home unit: 1 brigade of Slovenian Army - HQ

Unit in KFOR: KFOR HQ J4

About the mission: I've been in the Slovenian Army for more than 12 years. I started my first mission as a corporal, than a squad leader, third one as a NCO in battalion S1. Now I work as an admin in the KFOR HQ J4. On every one of those four missions I experienced something new, something challenging. But in the end, this last one was a bit different. Before, I worked every day with one or maximum two different nations, now I work in a J4 Branch that has 13 different nations. That means 13 different cultures, habits... and from my point of a view, we are doing the job very good. On the outside, we are (just one) J4 or as we say "J4 family".

Family reaction: For me, going abroad, it's not a big problem any more and also my family got use to it; I think. I know for me it is just another mission but probably for my family it is another mystery, unknown thing...

Also on a previous mission, two years ago, I got a beautiful daughter and I must say that I miss the time I couldn't be with her.

My family knows that the military is also a big part of my life and they are supporting me (for now). So I'm thankful for that.

Plans after the mission: Well, after the mission I will just try to adapt back to "Slovenian" life again, and wait to see what the future will bring. With a little help, I hope for the best.



Belo Brdo



PHOTO:
ALEKSANDAR NARANDŽIĆ