



KFOR CHRONICLE



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SUPPORTING THE TROOPS
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THE SUSTAINABILITY ISSUE

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KALAJA PRIZREN

2012 will be an important year for developments in Kosovo and a most important one for the Kosovo Security Force (KSF). The KSF is currently advised and mentored by KFOR's Military Civil Advisory Division (MCAD) which has already trained KSF members from 2008 to 2010. Accordingly MCAD will consequently continue to transform, adapting its structures in conjunction with the evolution of KFOR tasks in line with guiding the progress of the KSF. The Military Civil Advisory Division created in 2008, in order to undertake KFOR tasks regarding Security Sector Reform in Kosovo, mentors, advises and trains the trainers of the newly established Kosovo Security Force (KSF). The KSF is a crisis response organization whose core capabilities are fire-fighting; search and rescue; dealing with hazardous material and explosive ordnance disposal. It is both professional and multi-ethnic. Recruited from across Kosovar society, consisting of 2,500 active members (men and women) and 800 reserves, who benefit from fair and transparent selection and promotion procedures.

After reaching their Initial Operational Capability in mid-September 2009, all KSF efforts converged towards reaching Full Operational Capability (FOC). In February 2010 the MCAD was restructured internally reflecting its transformation to a mentoring and advising role intended to guide the Kosovo Security Force (KSF) to Full Operational Capability (FOC). Through four joint KFOR/KSF assessment

cycles, FOC criteria were developed, rearranged and updated, and the performance evaluated, to ensure progress had been made. COMKFOR Major General Erhard Drews in November 2011 reported on the significant progress of KSF and recommended to North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) Joint Force Command (JFC) Naples that FOC be declared in respect of the KSF. The formal approval for this recommendation by NATO could be expected in the coming months.

The KSF is not an army, although lightly armed, it has no heavy weapons, tanks or artillery and no offensive air capability. Its budget is less than one per cent of GDP (0.9%) and so does not create an undue burden on Kosovo's finances. Officially formed on the 8th August 2008 the KSF was to take over from the Kosovo Protection Corps, (whose members were placed in an UNDP-led resettlement program) as a new formal civil protection service without any residual connection to the past. To-day the KSF's basic structure has as its Supreme Commander, the President Atifete Jahjaga, while the Prime Minister Hashim Thaci is responsible for oversight and control. There exists a Ministry of KSF whose Minister is Agim Ceku and the KSF Commander is Lieutenant General Kardi Kastrati. Since September 2011 I have been fortunate to have led the MCAD effort to Stand Up the KSF to FOC. To achieve this the MCAD is currently organized



PICTURE: ARCHIVE

into several branches: Force Advisory Office; Force Vetting Unit; Land Force Command Mentoring and Advisory team; Operational Support Brigade Mentoring and advisory Team; and Rapid Reaction Brigade Mentoring and Advisory Team. COMKFOR's FOC recommendation does not represent the end of the development of KSF. Indeed more effort is required, it is a long way yet towards self sustainable forces according to NATO standards, and PfP readiness requires further improvements. Cooperation post FOC is likely to see high-level KFOR liaison. 2012 is significant as it will see one of KFOR's line of operations, that "to strengthen Kosovo Security Force capabilities" substantially satisfactorily completed. ■

Chief MCAD Brigadier General Francesco Diella

THE SUSTAINABILITY ISSUE



PICTURES: H. GRIMONPREZ, D. JACKSON AND J. BÜNGER

TOGETHER AS ONE





KFOR



The dust has turned to mud. The clear skies are gone replaced now by mists and freezing fog. The last rays of wintery sun have given over to sheets of falling rain, sleet and snow. Winter is upon us. Resupply has become more challenging because of the adverse effects of the bad weather on KFOR transportation along the air and road supply corridors. Already made difficult by man-made barriers in northern Kosovo, the sustainability issue has become more complex, interfered with now by nature. Like many things in life however and especially in the military, matters have to be made

happen, KFOR soldiers welfare are dependent on it. This responsibility is met by a combination of highly competent, comprehensive and committed KFOR teamwork. Sustainment is achieved by the relentless persistence and continuous efforts involving the foresight of the planners; the organization of the logisticians; the involvement of the JLSG; the skill of the helicopter pilots; the stamina of the transport drivers; and finally the forbearance and patience of the soldiers themselves. ■



STORY: D. HARVEY

PICTURES: J. WAGNER

FINNISH WINTER SPECIALISTS

Skiing patrols have been moving in AOR of Finnish Battalion. Who are these men? Some kind of Special Forces perhaps? No, they are regular Finnish soldiers. In the Finnish army everybody is trained to ski and act in harsh winter conditions.

And everybody really means everybody. Not only infantry, but also supporting elements and even the Navy and Air Force are trained to ski. For the most that is quite easy, because skiing is usually learned already as a child. In Finland there is snow even in the southern part at least three months in a year, so it is vital that troops are able to manoeuvre and fight effectively.

Finnish troops with skis have legendary history. For centuries there are many examples in military history when they are caused devastating losses to the invading enemy. In 12th of March 1555 about hundred strong Finnish troops encircled and destroyed almost three thousand strong enemy column. Battle happened place called Joutselkä in Karelian isthmus and is first battle mentioned in written documents about using skis in battle.

Skiing skills are in modern times not just a speciality but still extremely useful in warfare. When a mechanized army is in wintertime completely dependent on roads, an army with skiing skills is able to control the terrain outside the roads and manoeuvre there. Armoured columns are encircled cut in pieces and then destroyed separately. The depressed and scattered infantry are chased through wooden area.

Surprisingly, manoeuvring for light infantry is actually faster in snow than in summer conditions. A troop of skiing soldiers can transport all their personal material, accommodation equipment and even heavy weapons, such as light mortars or heavy Anti Tank Grenade Launchers. Each skier has their personal package, and heavier equipment is pulled in a sledge. Regular infantry can proceed by skiing ca 35 km in a day with all their equipment.

Finnish ski patrol caused a little confusion at the gate of Camp Bondsteel. They had spontaneously decided to ski from Lipljan to Bondsteel on Christmas Day. The trip was approx. 25 km and it took about six hours to proceed.

Our snow dresses were wondered among the local people, tells Lt Ville Estlander the leader of patrol. Some were almost shocked, when we just appeared behind them. Skiing does not cause any noise. Local inhabitants look with astonishment when ski patrols emerge from the hills and then disappear silently to valley. The patrol continues its mission through terrain where is impossible to walk or drive car. They can cover quite large area which is otherwise difficult to do. The track which patrols makes is the only sign of their presence in the area. ■



10 YEARS AGO



STORY: M. VIRTÀ

PICTURES: A. TANHUANP

TROOP VISIT GERMAN CHANCELOR



The German Chancellor Angela Merkel paid a special visit to Film City in December. After meeting COMKFOR Major General Erhard Drews in HQ KFOR she called to see German troops assembled at KFOR MAIN and thanked them emphasizing their important role in maintaining the peace and stability in Kosovo. While media were present at the event's beginning only, this unique opportunity was all about her personally meeting and greeting the individual German soldiers, many of whom were members of the ORF battalion involved in violent clashes at the barricades in Jagnjenica in northern Kosovo in late November. A very warm occasion her genuine interest and friendly manner were hugely appreciated by those present and will be long remembered by all in attendance. ■



STORY: D. HARVEY

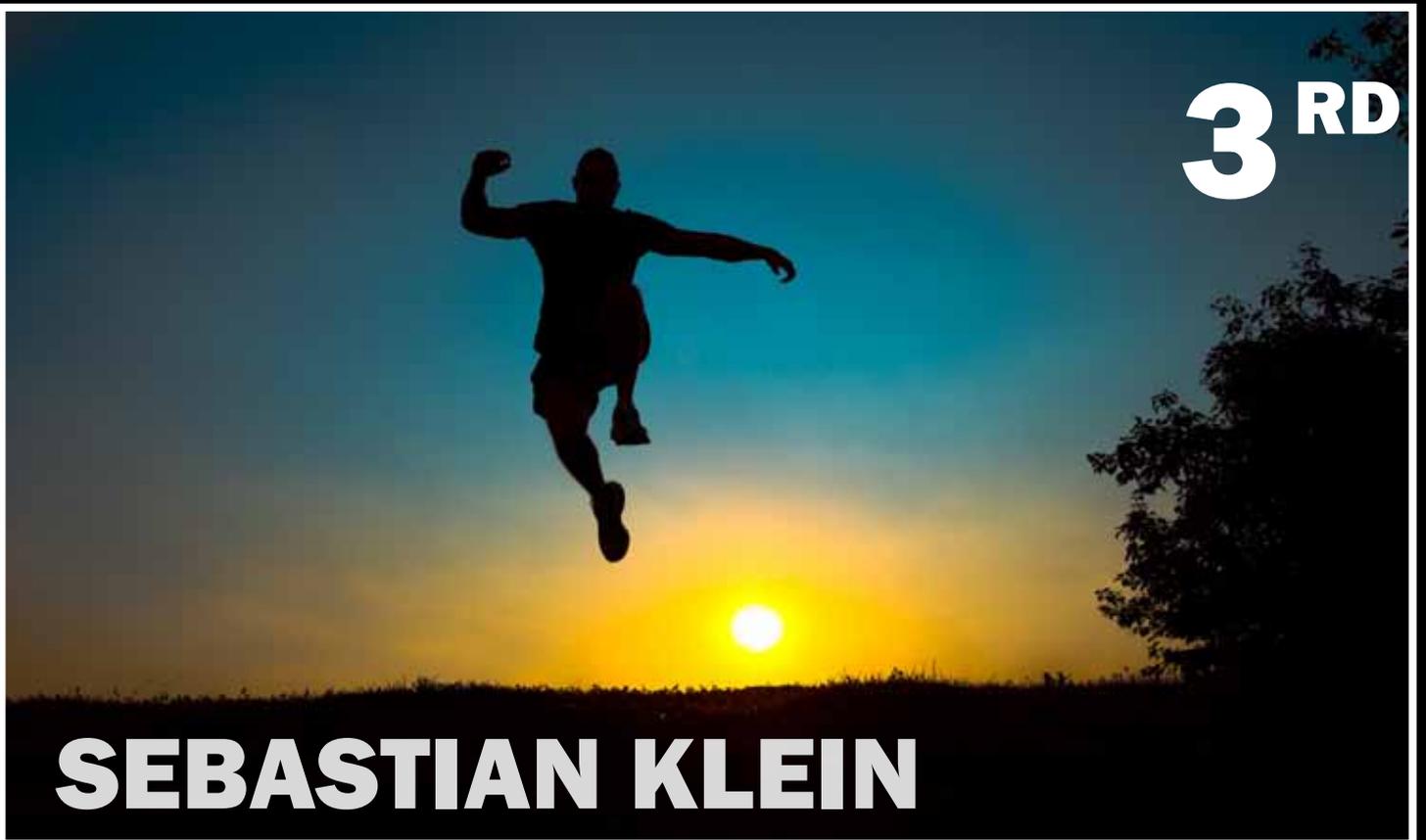
PICTURES: H. PREU

BATTLE OF PICTURES - WINNERS



2ND

JARMO SINKKONEN



3RD

SEBASTIAN KLEIN

1ST



JOHN BÜNGER



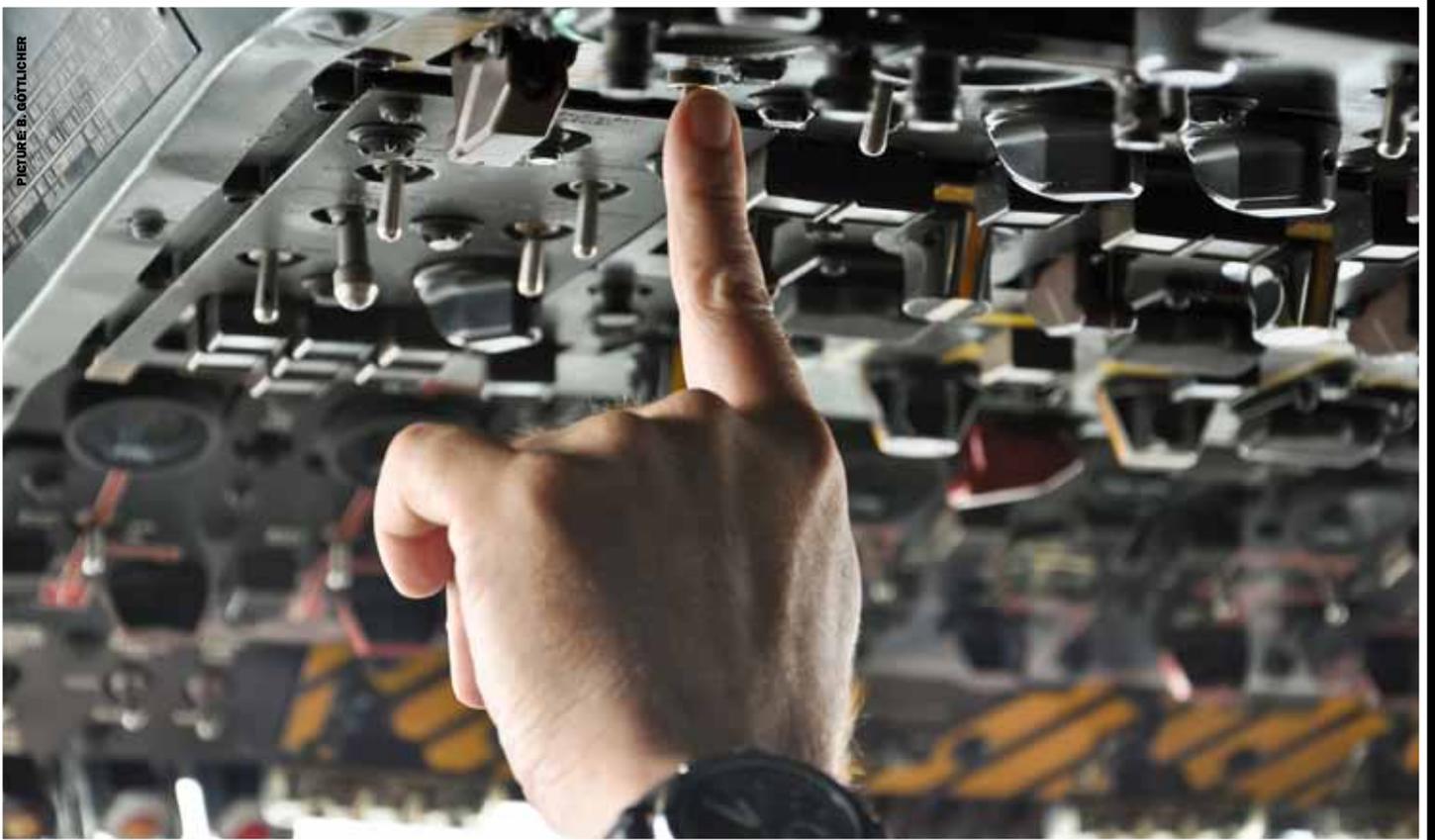
PICTURE: F. REICHENBACH

BATTLE OF PICTURES

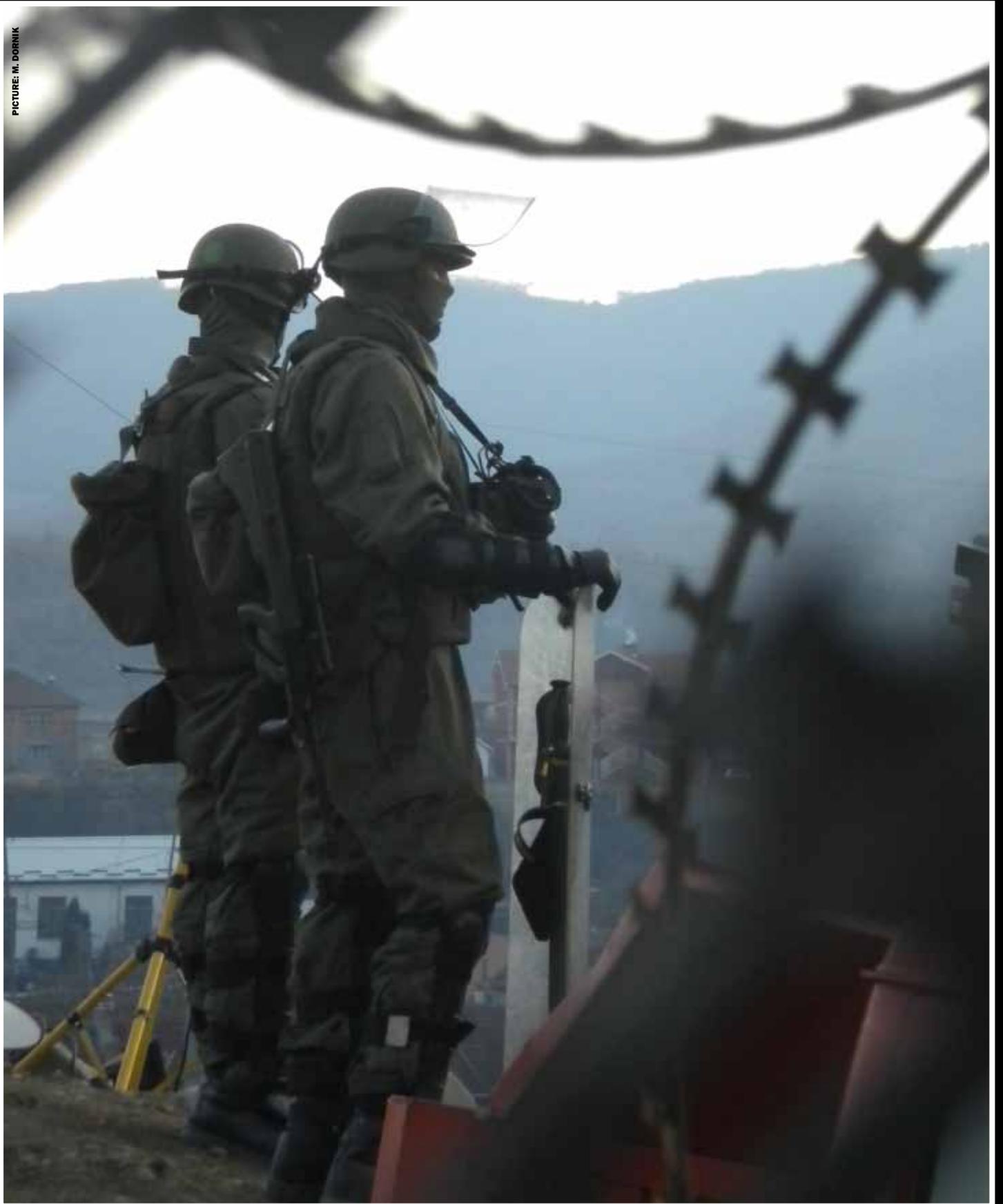
PICTURE: J. BÜNGER



PICTURE: B. GÖTTLICHER



PICTURE: M. DORNIK



PICTURE: H. PREU



PICTURE: J. SINKKONEN



PICTURE K. ASAD



PICTURE D. JACKSON

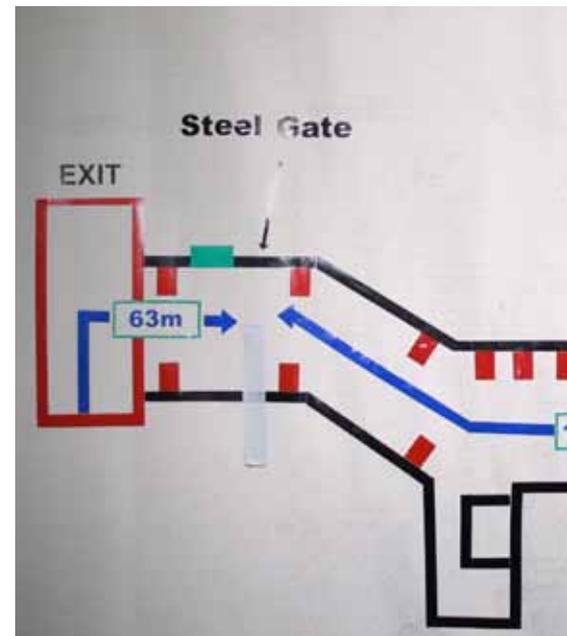


UNDERGROUND HANGAR

When driving to Pristina towards Slatina-airport from Kosovo's capital city shortly before you turn onto its long approach road you will become aware of KFOR's Fuel Storage Depot at the recently handed over Camp Vrelo at the foot of Mount Joles. What you will not be aware of, unless pointed out, even then there are no visible tell-tale signs, is that nearby and literally within Mount Joles itself, is the second largest military underground hanger complex of the former Yugoslavia. In 1999 during the 78 day NATO bombing campaign (Operation Allied Force, 23 March-10 June) before the Yugoslav military withdrawal, this impressive underground hanger facility kept safe and serviced two MiG jet fighter squadrons, the 123rd and 124th of the 83rd Fighter Aviation Regiment. There is evidence that NATO targeted the tunnel entrance attempting to bomb one of the massive steel

doors protecting the 431 metre long tunnel. No damage resulted, and it was still possible for aircraft to taxi in and out. The squadrons of MiG-21 Bis and Mig-21 UM aircraft suffered no losses, every aircraft remaining intact. Hugely expensive to build, it was part of Tito's formidable defence network, and to-day if developed into a visitor attraction, it holds the potential to tell a very powerful story, and like all the best tales, one with a mystery attached. Slatina airport was, at the commencement of Operation Joint Guardian, (12th June 1999) strategically important to militarily support the carrying out of UNSC Resolution 1244, only for that night a unit of Russian SFOR troops based in Bosnia to surprisingly arrive at the airport. That hardware which the tunnel may have contained was never fully known and has remained the subject of much unexplained

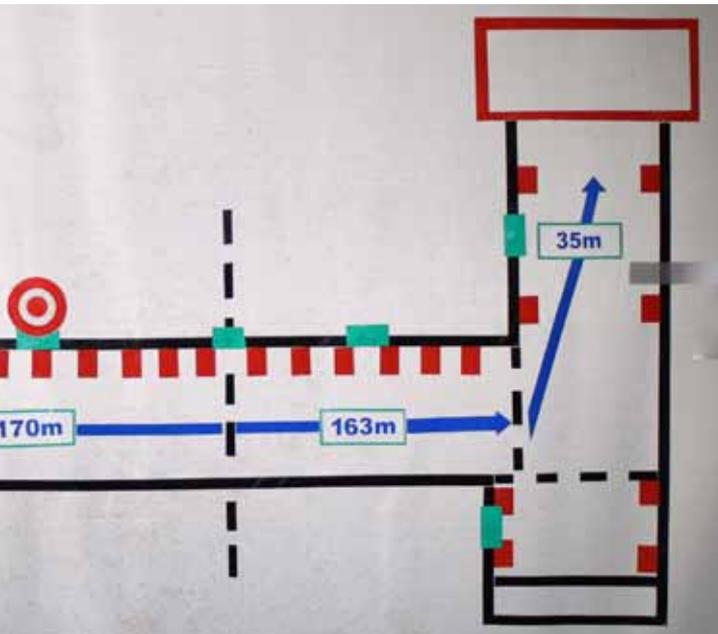
speculation. Driving in and out of to-days airport you thought you were only looking at a hill! ■



STORY: D. HARVEY

PICTURES: F. REICHENBACH AND ARCHIVE

NICE TO KNOW



KALAJA PRIZREN



Perched high up on the dominant south-eastern precipice above Prizren is a UNESCO World Heritage listed attraction. This once massive medieval citadel will probably prove to be one of the highlights of your visit there. Impressive in itself because of its sheer size but spectacular also because its prominent position presents an unforgettable picturesque panoramic view over Prizren and its environs sweeping out extensively below. Unknown exactly when the fortress (Kalaja) dates from, it is considered likely that a castle-like fortification began its existence here on this strategic site along this once important communication and trade route sometime in the 6th century. More certain however is that it has been in continuous use for military purposes until 1912 throughout a number of historical eras controlled

by the Byzantine, Serbian and Ottoman empires. The fortress now in ruins, its shape still discernible following the outline of the plateau upon which it has been built. Within its walls were once both upper, lower and southern fortresses, a mosque and a prison. It had two entrances and four towers, the castle base containing a network of tunnels. In need of restoration it is of immense importance in architectural, archaeological, heritage and cultural terms, not just for Kosovo but for the South East Europe also, being one of the most ancient of fortresses. Significantly damaged by climate, nature and man, it is on the UNESCO list of World Heritage Sites in Danger. Its preservation could open a plethora of potential uses as a vibrant centerpiece for a variety of cultural events and festivals. ■



STORY: D. HARVEY

PICTURES: A. DOMBROWSKI, D. BACHMANN AND ARCHIVE

Commander KFOR

Major General Erhard Drews,
German Army

Chief Public Affairs Office & KFOR Spokesman

Lieutenant Colonel Uwe Nowitzki,
German Army

Chief Internal Information & Editor KFOR Chronicle

Commandant Dan Harvey,
Irish Defence Forces
harveyd@hq.kfor.nato.int

Photographer & Design

Mr. Afrim Hajrullahu
Staff Sergeant Florian Reichenbach,
German Army
reichenbachf@hq.kfor.nato.int

Cover Photo

F. Reichenbach

E-mail and Web

kforchronicle@hq.kfor.nato.int
www.nato.int/kfor

Printed by N.G.P. "A-1"
Tel.: 044111308

NATO Nations within KFOR

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

Non-NATO Nations within KFOR

Austria, Finland, Ireland, Marrocco,
Sweden, Switzerland, Ukraine

The KFOR Chronicle is produced and fully funded by HQ KFOR. It is published for KFOR soldiers in the area of responsibility. The contents are not necessarily the official views of, or endorsed by, the coalition governments' defence departments. Editorial content is edited, prepared and provided by the Internal Information Section of HQ KFOR's Public Affairs Office (PAO) in Pristina, Kosovo. PAO HQ KFOR reserves the right to edit content to conform to style and space requirements. Articles run on a space-available basis.

GENDER ADVISOR

Win the women, and you own the family. Own the family and you take a big step forward in mobilizing the population. The role of the KFOR Gender Advisor is not internal but external. It has NOTHING to do with equality, discipline, sexual harassment or equal opportunity. It concerns the indigenous population here in Kosovo. It is about increasing situational awareness and operational effectiveness. To build a safe and secure environment KFOR needs to have a knowledge of not only the security of the different ethnic groups but also of men and women in Kosovo. Understanding the role of woman is important when building stability. The more complete KFOR's information, the more precise its strategy will be. The Gender Advisor gives KFOR a new perspective which is an advantage over previous operation plans. COMKFOR has therefore just appointed the first Gender Focal Points who provide a vital link throughout KFOR and help in training soldiers, such as the Liaison Monitoring Teams. This is a start. It will be some time before all soldiers understand the concepts and a Gender perspective becomes normal. Gender is an asset to improve operational effectiveness and a force multiplier. Gender awareness is of vital importance to KFOR military operations. There is much to be gained in this field and that is why we must not shy away from it.



PICTURE: ARCHIVE

STORY: E. SCHLEICHER



Name: Elisabeth Schleicher

Rank: OF-3

Nationality: Austrian

Unit KFOR: HQ KFOR

MILITARY EDUCATION:

I have 12 years service. I commenced basic training in October 2001 going to the Military Academy between 2003 and 2006 at the end of which in October I went straight to Kosovo as LMT Leader in Suhareka for 1 year. On my return I undertook a PHD in Political Science in the University of Vienna.

ABOUT THE MISSION:

This is my second overseas tour and I am the 1st Austrian Gender Adviser in KFOR. I hope to positively influence the mindset of those who serve in KFOR.

FAMILY REACTION:

I am the youngest of three, having two older brothers. Without their support and particularly that of my parents, I could not possibly have achieved any of that which I have been fortunate to do so to date.

HOBBIES:

First and foremost, travelling, particularly to the US, I have visited 12 times already so far. I was a competitive cross country runner and today enjoy hiking, cycling and skating.



Name: Fatih Emir

Rank: OR-8

Nationality: Turkish

Unit KFOR: MCAD

MILITARY EDUCATION:

I have 13 years service in the Turkish Navy. I joined the navy in 1999 having first attended for 3 years the Turkish NCO Academy. This is my first overseas mission, but I have been sea-going for many years and have been to 24 countries overall during the course of my naval travels world-wide.

ABOUT THE MISSION:

I work in the Military Civil Advisory Division (MCAD) training the trainers of the Kosovo Security Force (KSF) in Mitrovica. I advise the KSF senior NCOs on how to undertake training and on up-to-date instruction methods.

FAMILY REACTION:

I am a single and from Istanbul, both my parents are alive and I am the second eldest of 2 boys and 2 girls. My older sister like my younger one is a teacher and my younger brother is in the Aeronautical Academy hoping to become a pilot in the Air Force.

HOBBIES:

I am a blackbelt in karate, and love swimming, hiking and mountaineering. I like to travel and hope to visit the U.S.A..

