



KFOR CHRONICLE



**LIVING THE LIFE
- KFOR -
SOLDERING IN THE NORTH**

**KOSOVO TREASURES
- NICE TO KNOW -
PATRIARCHATE OF PEJA / PEC**

**EYES AND EARS OF KFOR
- KFOR -
LIASION MONITORING TEAMS**

CONTENT



4

SOLDERING IN THE NORTH

3

COMKFOR



12

POLITICAL ADVISOR

10

TEN YEARS AGO



16

CHAPLAIN



14

CHARITY CONCERT

20

LIAISON MONITORING
TEAMS



22

WOMEN'S DAY



23

PROFILES



18

PEJA/PEC PATRIARCHATE

The KFOR journey with me as its Commander has recently reached its halfway point. This journey, which began in September 2011, has already been an eventful one in many ways, serving as we are during a very challenging time. As Force Commander of KFOR it is my task to give military effect to political policy. This involves giving purpose, direction and motivation to a 6,000 strong multinational force from 29 countries who are deployed into a complex, difficult and sometimes dangerous situation, like the events recently experienced in northern Kosovo. KFOR has faced up to the challenges encountered, with resolve, has worked hard, and is successfully and sensitively fulfilling its mandate. This has had to be made happen for those relying on us, and for the duration of my time in command KFOR will continue to impartially safeguard all the peoples of Kosovo contributing to their safe and secure environment and freedom of movement.

The presence of KFOR over the last 13 years has contributed greatly to making a positive difference to the security environment. Throughout the last half-year KFOR has continued to prove itself a valuable asset for stability in Kosovo. I have always maintained that KFOR is neither authorized nor possesses the capability to unilaterally solve all of Kosovo's problems as many of the major issues remaining to be resolved in the region are more political than military. That many of the tough issues which in the past were left



PICTURE: H. PREU

to be faced have now come of age and require to be dealt with, is demanding, daunting but potentially dramatic. Doubtlessly challenging, it is exciting also, in that this now presents an opportunity for a political solution to begin to develop during 2012 improving the real life of all the peoples of Kosovo. KFOR will remain steadfastly focused on maintaining the stability on the ground thus supporting this development.

The future is uncertain and the outcome of events still to come unpredictable. The prospect of success itself, despite future potential setbacks, must be sustained. Reinforcing trust and confidence in eventually achieving such success will be underpinned by the persistence of KFOR's strong cohesion, unity of intent, high professional-

ism and dedication to the mission's mandate. The KFOR journey will continue beyond the stage with me as its Commander but between this and then KFOR will continue to meet the expectation of those on the ground, the peoples of Kosovo who deserve our efforts

COMKFOR MAJOR GENERAL ERHARD DREWS

“LIVING THE LIFE” AT GATES 1 AND 31



PICTURES: H. PREU, H. GRIMONPREZ, C. TRÄGER AND F. REICHENBACH

TOGETHER AS ONE



“LIVING THE LIFE” AT GATES 1 AND 31

The local population of northern Kosovo reject Kosovo's 2008 secession from Serbia and want to stop Kosovo's authorities enforcing its authority there. Clashes occurred late July last year when attempts were made to set up custom checks at Gates 1 and 31. Shortly after that these came to be put under the protection of KFOR troops. Multinational Battle Group East (MNBG-E) has responsibility to secure the Jarinje Administrative Boundary Line (ABL) Crossing Point at Gate 1, while KFOR's Operational Reserve Force (ORF Battalion) is responsible to secure the Brnjak ABL crossing point at "Dog 31". In the subsequently

created adjacent KFOR camps, on the nearby temporary Vehicle Checkpoints (VCPs), out on the patrols and recons, creature comforts are few, conditions Spartan, and the harsh unfavourable weather of recent months made an already difficult, demanding duty, a much tougher task. Regular resupply and rotation of troops contribute to mitigate against such circumstances and help the KFOR troops there endure the onerous hardships and contend with the arduous assignment that is soldiering in northern Kosovo to-day. In recent weeks these two crossing points have begun to operate more in line with their potential capacity as a result

of the agreements reached between Kosovo and Serbia regarding Kosovo's regional representation (footnote) and the future implementation of Integrated Border Management, all in the context of the EU granting Serbia, Candidate status, for future accession to the EU. ■



STORY: D. HARVEY

PICTURES: H. PREU



“LIVING THE LIFE” AT GATES 1 AND 31



PICTURES: H. PREU, H. GRIMONPREZ, C. TRÄGER AND F. REICHENBACH



10 YEARS AGO

Big Blast by BATGEN



Mitrovica - Traffic is always a topic to worry about in Kosovo. But normally cars or trucks are causing the troubles.

The problem in this case was very big sized: A huge rock had broken off and obstructed the main road near Mitrovica heading north, and the danger of more rocks breaking off. But engineers like to have big problems because they require big solutions. 12 kilogramme in the first blast and almost 50 kg of high and progressive explosive

were used in the “big one”. The engineers from BATGEN, located in Camp Novo Selo between Mitrovica and Pristina, built a diversion to keep the traffic going. With the support of the Danish and Belgian comrades the first step of maintaining the freedom of movement was easily done. Excavators, dumpers and other heavy equipment managed it in a very short time.

The preparation for the explosion were more complicated. The

French engineers (all members of the 17e Regiment Du Genie Parachutiste in Montauban) had to work 80 metres above ground with pickaxes and pneumatic hammers. A small Danish compressor was lifted up to the top by a helicopter to have power for the hammers. Lieutenant Cyril Michaut, platoon commander of the BATGEN, and his men fixed the explosive in the right positions. Due to the weather conditions the big blast was postponed twice. Not only the engineers were involved in the campaign. The UNMIK-Police was responsible for the traffic control during the hole work. The area had to be cleared during the detonation, KFOR and Municipality worked together to inform the public and some houses had to be evacuated. Even air traffic control had an eye on operation “Smooth Rock”.

At “D-Day” the Commander of BATGEN, Colonel Jean-Fred Berger, was on the scene with other interested guests. 30 seconds before the bang, a warning signal hooted in the Mitrovica area. Then a huge explosion blew more rocks from the cliff. After the smoke of the blasting disappeared, the engineers were satisfied with the result. ■

Fort Bragg Engineers Help KPC Clean Clogged Culvert

GJILAN/GNJILANE, Kosovo
A small group of engineers from the Kosovo Protection Corps and Task Force Falcon completed an important project for the residents here, and helped build ties with each other Tuesday Feb. 12.

Tons of trash, a few abandoned cars, and a small forest of brush and trees blocked a culvert, near a busy intersection on Ring Road. The blockages cause the road to flood out after heavy rainfall or melting snow. The KPC and 27th

Engineer Battalion (Airborne) out of Fort Bragg, N.C. worked together to repair the culvert.

“We’re addressing a problem with this culvert,” said 1st Lt. Gregory Quimby, the 27th Engineer’s KPC liaison officer.

The KPC engineers did most of the work by hand, cutting the forest with axes or chain saws. A backhoe removed the abandoned cars. By noon, the engineers had collected a large pile of wood, trash, and rusty metal in a small field next to the road.

The work was important for traffic on the road, said Quimby. “It will prevent the water from getting blocked inside and coming over the top and flooding. By clearing out the ends, the water will be able to flow through and pool on the opposite sides and that will maintain (traffic flow) on the road,” Quimby explained. “Culverts being blocked by trash and debris are a problem in this area.” Quimby felt that this project would be a good chance for the battalion to work with their KPC counterparts. “We’re providing them training to help them become more proficient engineers,” Quimby

said.

While the engineers worked, groups of onlookers, both children and adults from the surrounding houses, came to see how the work progressed.

“It gives them a chance to go out and do something that’s beneficial to the community,” Quimby said. “Part of our goal with our partnership with them is not only to provide them with training, but improve their perception in the eyes of the public.”

This project isn’t a one-off event, according to Quimby. The road was identified as a problem area, but the training and cooperation will be used as the basis for future projects between the KPC and KFOR.

“Some of the projects we potentially have on the horizon are road upgrades and culvert construction,” Quimby said. “We’re just using this (project) to identify their skill level... we’re basically using it as a stepping stone for future construction projects.” ■



WHAT POLAD KFOR DOES

COMKFOR has to translate political guidance into military action on the ground in Kosovo. The political advisor (POLAD) in KFOR's HQ is here to serve the KFOR effort to effect success. HE does so ,not by taking decisions , but by helping to give COMKFOR an exact description of the options available to him and both the intended and unintended consequences each (option) may entail. This is informed

by maintaining a network of contacts across the executive, legislative and judicial branches of government as well as international organizations and relevant key segments of society across Kosovo. To achieve this each member of the POLAD office has a whole cluster of contacts to be maintained and processes to be followed. AS such the POLAD office operates as a mechanism of liaison to political and other actors inside and outside

Kosovo. Working with other KFOR staff sections they provide an estimate of an overall overview for COMKFOR . All this ensures COMKFOR can use his room of manoeuvre to the maximum extent without departing from agreed lines that come through the chain of command. COMKFOR's adherence to that guidance is an expression that NATO is a civilian controlled organization and is subject to democratic oversight. ■



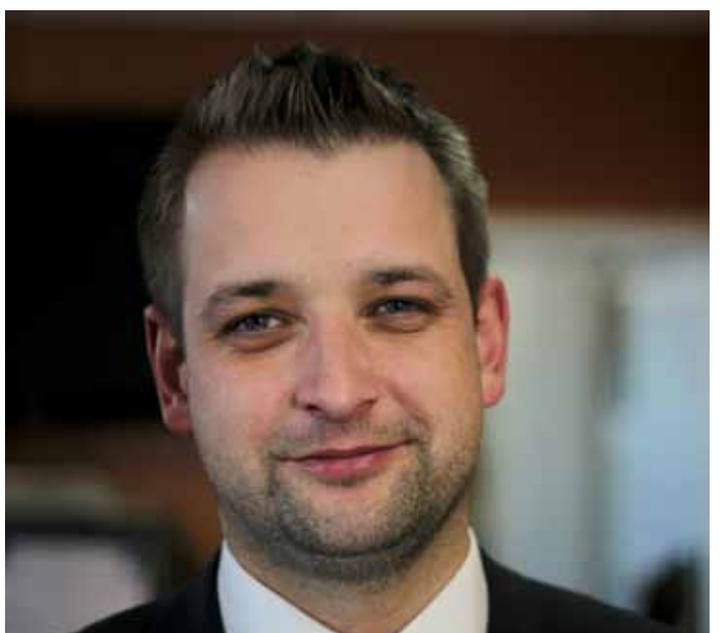
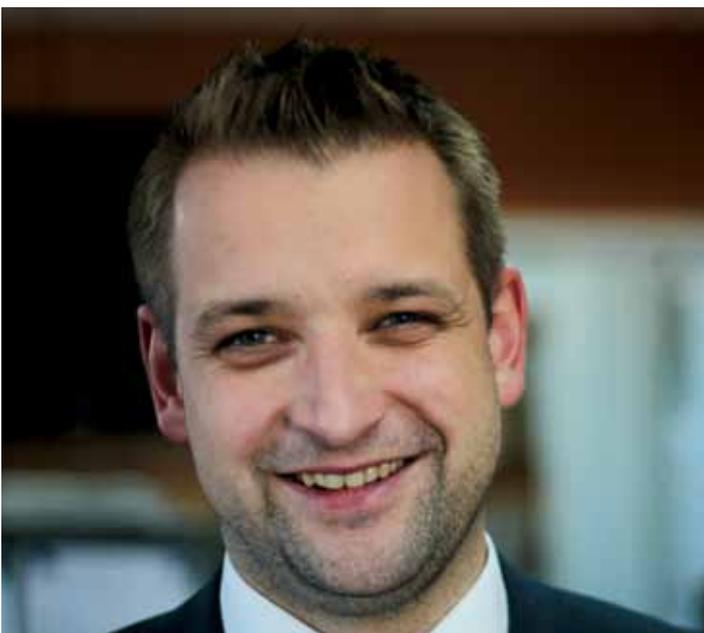
STORY: D. HARVEY

PICTURES: H. PREU AND A. HAJRULLAHU

The role of KFOR's Cultural Advisor, Captain Christian Ramet, an appointment within the POLAD Office, is the establishment and maintenance of networks in areas otherwise not covered within the political sphere. The regular liaison with religious, clan, and other individuals, identified as 1 important informal

key leaders that have influence on large proportions of the population is a crucial engagement for KFOR. This frequent contact with and the keeping open of such lines of communication maintains a vital connection to a culturally representative network of peoples within Kosovo. Educationally, this appointment requires a background

in Political Science, more so however as an ethnologist with a particular in-depth knowledge of the country's culture as a foreign area specialist. In addition he has additional assigned portfolios assisting the POLAD and the Deputy POLAD with internal affairs, specific parties, areas and international organizations.



CHARITY CONCERT

The First Charity Concert for Kosovo initiated by Rotary Club Pristina International took place under the patronage of the President of the Republic of Kosovo, Ms Atifete JAHJAGA with the support of Commander Kosovo Force, Major General Erhard DREWS and all Rotary Clubs in Kosovo. The Charity Concert was held in the Red Hall of Youth Culture and Sports Centre in late February with a special performance by the chamber

music ensemble “Trio Celebre “, a group of classical musicians from Pristina comprising Antonia Gashi, violoncello, Venera Mehmetagaj-Kajtazi, flute, and Lule Elezi, concert piano. Music pieces from Johann Sebastian Bach, Charles Gounod, Frederic Chopin and Joseph Haydn amongst others were presented. The aim of the Rotary Clubs in Kosovo in the framework of the Charity Concert was to raise enough funds to give support to three different projects throughout

Kosovo: Providing relief from the natural disaster caused by snow avalanche in Restelica village of Dragash. Enabling the “Mitrovica Breast Cancer Initiative” by the Non Governmental Organisation “Community Building Mitrovica”(NGO CBM). Providing support to the innovative concept for school libraries “ bu Nateka “ developed by “bnarchitects & education”and in cooperation with the Rotary Club Pristina International. ■



STORY: D. HARVEY

PICTURES: A. HAJRULLAHU



BORN TO BE A PASTOR

I was ordained Pastor in 1993 having studied Theology in Munich and Heidelberg universities. To-date I have completed 8 years Chaplaincy service in the German military, and was in Kosovo five years ago between January and May 2007. I arrived on this tour early in the new year and will stay until May before heading to the U.S. as military Chaplain to German soldiers and their families in New Mexico for 4 years. I am married and have three teenage daughters.

Feeling Faith and Belief have a positive and practical application in life, I have always adopted a pragmatic approach to my ministry. We, all of us, experience problems in our daily living, both large and small difficulties, some self-solvable, others sometimes cannot be handled on our own.

Anyone and everyone in KFOR can talk with me, regardless of religious denomination, rank or nationality.

Having previously worked as a vicar, I've had pastoral experiences both in and out of uniform, so I can say with certainty there are differences between both.

These however are positive ones working within the military environment. For a start my congregation happily involves contact with young soldiers, an age group of people, 18-34, that are not so easily reached outside. Secondly the discipline and mutual respect inherent in military life enhances that exchange of communication. Thirdly, I have different aspects to my role within the military. As a lecturer I equip soldiers and junior

leaders with a considered ethical approach to that which they have to do professionally. As a pastor I must not only render attention to their spiritual welfare but also to give consideration to their personal well-being.

From a young age I had always felt compelled to become active amongst my community and did so until, encouraged by my father, I tried theology as a subject in university, and became more convinced than ever of the necessity to touch people's lives and pass on, pragmatically, the good message. My work has proved to be positively fulfilling, the great joy, contentment and happiness resulting within me and my belief, gives my existence a credibility, this in its own way and circumstance, sometimes benefiting those I encounter. I look forward to meeting you. ■



KFOR Coordinating Chaplin

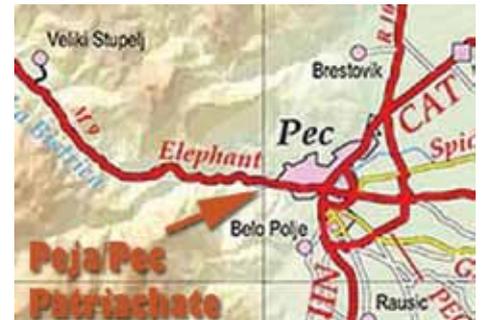


NICE TO KNOW

Located in meticulously tended gardens at the entrance of the Rugova gorge near Peja/Pec, along the river Bistrica is the Monastery of the Patriarchate of Peja/Pec. This haven of tranquility contains four 13th and 14th century medieval churches: St. Apostles church, St. Demetrius church, the church of the Holy Mother Hodegetria, St. Nicholas church and the grand parvis. This was both the home and the mausoleum of the Serbian Archbishops (and later the Patriarchs – the highest ranking bishop, or ‘first among equals’) from the thirteenth century onwards. The influence and authority of the Patriarchate was to wane however been interrupted by subsequent years of Ottoman rule. In July 2006 the site was added to the UNESCO World

heritage list – and to the list of sites considered at risk. The centrepiece of the complex are the chapels – the first of these, the Church of the Apostles, was built around 1250 by Archbishop Arsenije. The next, St. Demetrius, was constructed by Archbishop Nikodim in 1320. Archbishop Danilo II then added the Church of the Virgin (and a smaller chapel, the Church of St. Nicholas) and joined the three main churches together with a single narthex, or porch. The result is a unique layout. The interior walls of complex are covered in dark murals painted and restored at various times up until the 17th century. The murals depict the lives of Saints and figures from the church’s history, such as St Sava who founded the Serbian Orthodox church. Additional buildings – a

tower, a guest house, a water mill – have since been added. ■

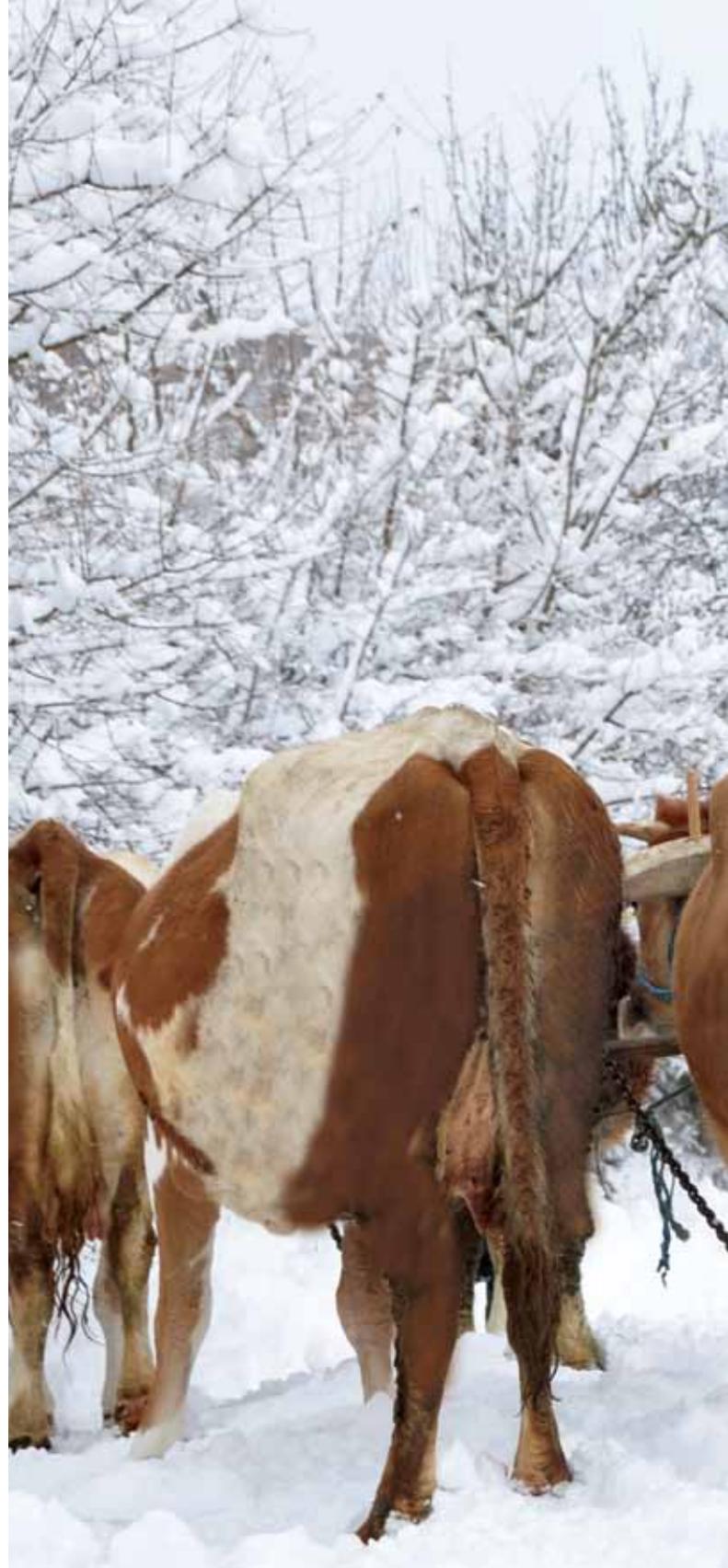


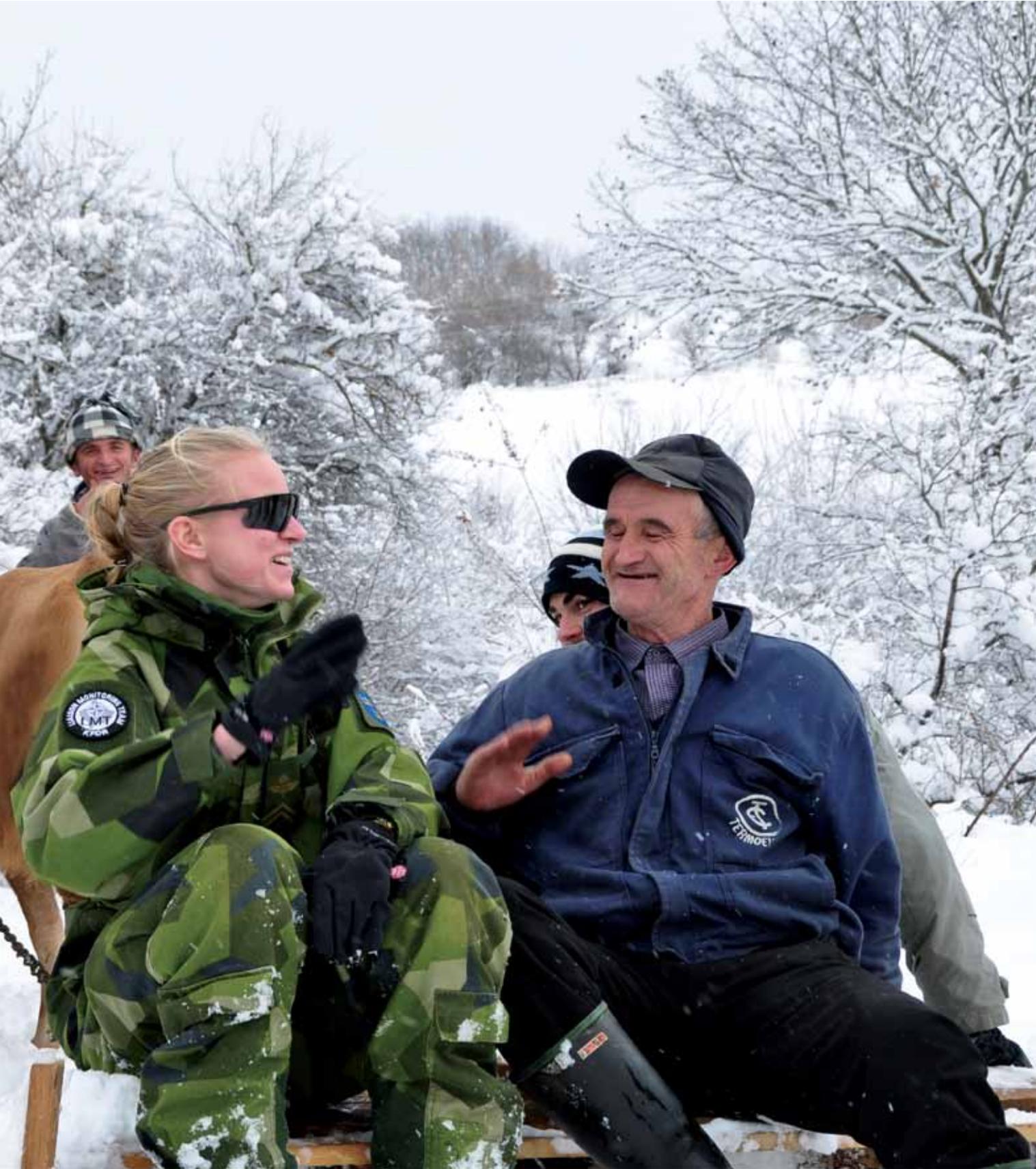
STORY: D. HARVEY

PICTURES: A. HAJRULLAHU AND ARCHIVE



Liaison Monitoring Teams (LMTs) are the forward sensors of KFOR, meeting daily with the inhabitants of Kosovo. This important interaction allows the LMTs to directly detect early indicators of the mood of the people and so gain a timely appreciation of their feelings regarding issues on the ground. As the eyes and ears of KFOR we add a considerable amount to the forces situational awareness and subsequent decisions are informed in no small way by our input. Our team works in the Pristina Municipality area, and has responsibility not only for the city, as you might think, but also the many villages extending beyond into the countryside. The work involves everything from spontaneous meetings with people in rural areas to scheduled appointments with persons in higher positions in society. It is not as simple as just being a member of an LMT, by being a member it requires both commitment, social skills and that you are ready to give of your self in order get somethings back from the ones you meet. To be a soldier belonging to an LMT presents the difficulty of not getting personal involved in your tasks here, as it's an interactive social role dealing with real people. I, as a human being have become more open-minded as a result, and my experience has really taught me that we are all equal human beings regardless of circumstances. I have found it important as a female member of an LMT that we explore and expand on contact with the female population here and present their important perspective. It will be tough to leave Kosovo and return to Sweden. I will miss many of my contacts who now feel like friends. I hope I get the opportunity to return to Kosovo. ■





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

Non-NATO Nations within KFOR

Austria, Finland, Ireland, Morocco,
Sweden, Switzerland, Ukraine

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International Women's Day

On 8 March KFOR celebrated International Women's Day with a reception hosted by the KFOR Commander Major General Drews. All of KFOR, soldiers and civilians, were invited to attend this event highlighted the contributions and achievements of women and the important work they do here in KFOR. In KFOR women and men work together in every capacity from performing patrols, to leadership positions, to specialized jobs such as our doctors and engineers. In his speech, Major General Drews highlighted these facts and that because we have both men and women in all of our roles, we can draw on perspectives and experiences that otherwise we would miss. He spoke of how this makes our organization stronger and better able to perform our mission in Kosovo. The next week, Major General Drews invited leading women in Kosovo to another reception at KFOR's Film City base where they were asked to give short presentations of their organizations and their accomplishments. The groups ranged from advocates for the handicapped to a women's business organizations. The Chief of Staff, Brigadier General Spitler, gave an opening speech reinforcing KFOR's commitment to working with women's organizations and organizations led by women in Kosovo and he stated how they have set an example of cooperation that we all can copy. Both events were very much appreciated by all the participants who looked forward to their continued work with KFOR for a better future for Kosovo.



STORY: A. YOUNG

PICTURES: A. HAJRULLAHU



Name: Sara Eklund
Rank: OR-4
Nationality: Swedish
Unit KFOR: JRD-C, LMT

MILITARY EDUCATION:

I enlisted in 2005 and was a tank commander for one year. After that I was 4 years in the Swedish National Guard as a deputy platoon commander. This is my first tour of duty overseas. I arrived here in October last year. I would welcome another tour here or elsewhere in the future.

ABOUT THE MISSION:

KFOR's Liaison Monitoring Teams go out amongst the communities to meet and talk with them, so as such are the sensors and tentacles whereby KFOR learns how the people feel about matters and events occurring around them. This important feedback could include early warning of potential difficulties ahead.

FAMILY REACTION:

I am the eldest of two and have a younger brother. My parents initially concerned about my being here, no longer are and have become a huge support to me. We are in almost daily contact.

HOBBIES:

Everything to do with outdoor activities and nature, hill-walking, skiing, and a special interest is photography.



Name: Márcio Sousa
Rank: OR-6
Nationality: Portuguese
Unit KFOR: KTM

MILITARY EDUCATION:

I have 11 years of service. I started my career in 2000 as a signals corporal. In 2005 I ran for the NCO's course and joined the Army Sergeants School. I chose to embrace the future as a cavalry Sergeant. I finished my training in 2008 and served the Military Police for 2 years. Then I was placed in the Reconnaissance Squadron of my Brigade.

ABOUT THE MISSION:

I am a Squad Leader. It is my responsibility to prepare my men for the mission, to guide them, train and discipline them for the excellence of the platoon. This is my second deployment and it was marked by the intensity and lived experiences in operations in the north of Kosovo.

FAMILY REACTION:

My family is my pillar of support. I have a very special 2 years daughter called Renata. Despite the distance, every day I feel the spirit and the balance of my family.

HOBBIES:

I like sports and feel fit, especially because it is part of the military condition. I like Orienteering and mountaineering.

