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# **PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICE**

## **Press release**

### **Commander KFOR, General Erhard BÜHLER supports the villagers of Karacevo and visits Ranilug/ Ranillug and Klokot/Kllokot**

Commander Kosovo Force (KFOR), General Erhard Bühler, following his tour visit to the Municipalities in Kosovo, with the intent to meet the Municipalities Mayors, the local political and religious representatives, visited the municipalities of Klokot/Kllokot and Ranilug/ Ranillug.

COMKFOR tour started at the ABL in Karacevo (Municipality of Kamenica) where the Mayor of Kamenica, Mr. Shaip Surdulli, and villagers complaint about violations of the borders by the Serbian Gendarmerie. They told General Bühler that people of the Village are intimidated and even arrested by the Serbian forces. Further they were irritated that at a specific point of the road the Serbs had meetings with KFOR soldiers. After a long and detailed discussion it turned out that the villagers are not fully aware of the exact position of the ABL which was agreed in 1999 by KFOR and the Serbian side. There are some areas which belong to Kosovo according to the Yugoslav provincial boundary line which is now allocated to Serbian control by the Komanovo agreement. At Karacevo the ABL is not congruent with the former provincial Boundary line between Serbia and Kosovo. This is the reason why villagers are thinking that Serbs are unauthorized on the village territory. General Bühler ensured that he will care about the problem. In a short term he will give order that there are no further meetings between KFOR and Serbia Gendarmerie at point which irritate people. He will talk with the Serbian Side about the performance of the Serbian Gendarmerie. The clarification of the boundary line can be solved in the future. However that should be discussed also with NATO in Bruxelles and with the authorities of Pristina and Belgrade.

During his visit Commander KFOR and also visited the local Kosovo Police Stations and paid a visit to the Police Commanders and their staff, as well as both Orthodox Religious Leaders. In the Municipality of Ranilug/ Ranillug General Bühler was received by the Mayor Mr. Gradmir MIKIC and his Deputy Mr. Nebojsa KENIC. In the visit to the municipality of Klokot/Kllokot he was received by the Deputy Mayor Mr. Marco SILVANOVIC.

General Bühler was received during his visits at the Municipal Buildings by the high local representatives and on both those occasions he was informed on the current situation of the two towns. Commander of KFOR expressed his admiration to the

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Mayors and their teams, for their results achieved from the early establishment of the two municipalities. He also assessed the situation as calm and stable in the two Municipalities and pointed out the good cooperation with KFOR.

General Erhard Bühler was briefed about the successful results achieved by the municipalities, after the meetings, held in the Municipal Building, Commander KFOR took the chance to have in both cases a walk through the towns. Commander of KFOR was positively impressed by the improvement in the works, such as the recently finished road that connects the villages to Klokot/Klllokot. As other newly created Serb majority municipalities, even for Klokot/Klllokot, that project was realized with the money allocated in the municipality by the Kosovan Government.

Despite the good results within the municipality governance, there are disputes between the municipality of Ranilug and the central authorities of Pristina. The propriety rights of the construction site of the new orthodox Church of Ranilug/Ranillug are claimed by Pristina, while the Municipality thinks it is the owner of the ground (area). General Bühler promised that he will raise this issue when talking to the Government of Kosovo.

In Klokot General Bühler also visited the Church St. Peter and Paul and the Church St. Nikolas. Those visits are conducted by Commander of KFOR as part of his program to reconcile the religions in Kosovo in order to improve mutual respect, tolerance and common efforts to improve stability and security. The Talks with representatives of the religions are planned during those church visits.

Finally within the visits to the Kosovo Police Commanders at their Stations, Major General Bühler was informed about the security situation and he stated that much progress was achieved adding that those results have been possible even because of the highly professional work carried out by the Kosovo Police.

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