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Press release

Supreme Commander NATO Forces in Europe and Chairman NATO Military Committee visit KFOR

Supreme Allied Commander Europe NATO, Admiral James G. Stavridis together with the Chairman Military Committee of NATO, Admiral Giampaolo Di Paola today, Monday, 29th of August 2011, conducted a visit to KFOR Headquarters and troops in Kosovo.

Commander KFOR, Major General Erhard Bühler, welcomed his superiors to his Headquarters in Film City in Pristina. He informed the Admirals about the general situation in Kosovo and the Western Balkans and the progress of the security situation to which KFOR has significantly contributed.

Major General Bühler delivered his assessment of the developments in the North of Kosovo since 25th of July 2011. After the escalation of the first days of the crisis, the situation was deescalated by the commitment and high presence of KFOR in that part of Kosovo. After the mediation of a common understanding between the governments in Pristina and Belgrade, the situation in general calmed down and Freedom of Movement could generally be reestablished. However there is still a high degree of tension in the North which makes it necessary that KFOR remains in the lead to control the authorized and unauthorized crossing points at the Administrative Boundary Line (ABL) at least until the end of September.

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Major General Erhard Bühler thanked his NATO superiors for their outstanding support and the rapid deployment of the Reserve Battalion (ORF) which contributes significantly to the success of the mission. He confirmed the determination and readiness of all KFOR soldiers to accomplish their mission.

After their visit to Headquarters KFOR, Supreme Allied Commander Europe and Chairman Military Committee went to the ABL Crossing Point Jarinje (GATE 1). They were accompanied by Commander KFOR. At GATE 1 the highest ranking NATO officers were informed about the situation, the control system and the incidents during the 27th of July 2011 when the Crossing Point was attacked and the infrastructure burnt and destroyed.

Supreme Allied Commander and Chairman Military Committee thanked Major General Erhard Bühler and the soldiers of KFOR for their outstanding commitment and crisis management during the last weeks, thereby preventing an outbreak of major violence. KFOR has full support of its superiors and it is important now to reach a peaceful resolution of this situation through political means.

Picture:

From the left to the right:

Supreme Allied Commander Europe NATO, Admiral James G. Stavridis
Chairman Military Committee of NATO, Admiral Giampaolo Di Paola
Commander KFOR, Major General Erhard Bühler

Behind:

Deputy Commander KFOR, Brigadier General Marco Serronha

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