

THE REPUBLIC OF BULGARIA

In 2008, the Republic of Bulgaria sustained on average 832 (including NRF on standby) Land Forces personnel in operations, of which 547 in NATO operations and 285 in other operations. This represents 5.11 % of reported Land Forces strength. The average of total Armed Forces (including Navy), sustained in 2008 was 845 personnel. The total number of Armed Forces troops deployed/standby in 2008 was 2075.

Bulgarian Armed Forces have participated in:

- a) NATO operations: ISAF with 944 troops, KFOR with 122 troops, "ACTIVE ENDEAVOUR" with a frigate, and 154 crew, and NTM-I;
- b) Other operations: SFIR in Iraq with 459 troops;
- c) EU: operation "ALTHEA" with 234 troops, mission in Chad with 2 personnel and Observation Mission in Georgia with 4 personnel;
- d) UN missions (UNMEE, UNMIK and UNMIL) with 7 personnel.

Bulgaria strongly supports the NRF concept and efforts. During 2008, it provided on standby a platoon for NRF 10 and a company for NRF 11 (total strength 147 personnel). The plans are to substantially increase the contribution for the NRF rotations in 2009.

In 2008 Bulgaria expressed its principal interests in offering helicopters and crews in support of NATO operations.

Bulgaria also participates in the Multinational Peace Force South Eastern Europe (SEEBRIG) with some units and in BLACKSEAFOR activations with a ship.

As reported, for 2008, the Land Forces strength was 16,268 personnel of which 5,205 (32%) were deployable, and 974 (5.99 %) sustainable.

Bulgaria's 2008 defence expenditures were 2.34 % of GDP, above the NATO 2 % benchmark.