

KFOR CHRONICLE

The KFOR Magazine for KFOR Soldiers

February 2018



MAINTAINING BRIDGES FOR A BETTER WORLD



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PICTURE: Afrim Hjarullahu

20th February 2018 - Greek Guard Company Change of Command Ceremony. COM KFOR awarding certificates and coins.



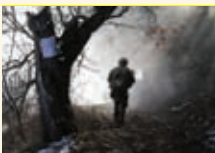
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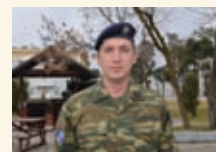
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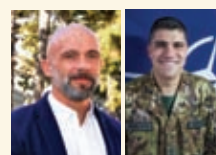
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MAINTAINING BRIDGES FOR A BETTER WORLD



On Thursday February 1st Admiral Foggo III, Commander of Allied Joint Force Command Naples, and Major General Cuoci, Commander of KFOR, went to Mitrovica and met with both Mayors, Mr. Agim Bahtiri and Mr. Goran Rakic.

On the previous day Admiral Foggo had met with Serbian Minister of Defence Aleksandar Vulin, Chief of Defence Ljubisa Dikovic and Assistant Minister of Foreign Affairs Branimir Filipovic in Belgrade. Admiral Foggo left that meeting “with a sense that while their history of disagreement with neighbours in the region remains, they are moving forward with a keen eye for the future to include membership in the EU and continuing partnership with NATO”.

Admiral Foggo stated that he had always intended to visit Mitrovica but the recent murder of Oliver Ivanovic had accelerated the timing of his arrival. ‘Serbia and

Kosovo have been fortunate to benefit from a clear line of communication through the Pristina- Belgrade Dialogue, and despite the setback of the tragic murder of Kosovo Serb politician Oliver Ivanovic on January 16th, we will continue forward with constructive communication’.

Commander of Allied Joint Force Command Naples, after crossing the main bridge together with General Cuoci and the Mayor of Mitrovica South, Mr. Agim Bahtiri, met the northern Mayor, Mr. Goran Rakic. They expressed their condolences to him on the recent loss of his father.

The presence of both Mayors of Mitrovica was very important because good relations are vital for cooperation and stability. This is particularly important in light of recent incidents, which has caused the people of Kosovo to be concerned about potential tensions. KFOR



is always committed to preserve a safe and secure environment and guarantee freedom of movement for all citizens in Kosovo and it is performing its mission to ensure a better future, with special regards to the youth. The Commander of JFC Naples noted that both “the mayors of North and South Mitrovica Goran Rakic and Agim Bahtiri, are committed to moving past this incident in a calm and constructive manner”.

Admiral Foggo III expressed his deep appreciation to both mayors for their presence and ensured NATO support through KFOR in improving the relationship between North and South Mitrovica. He also thanked General Cuoci for what he is doing for the people of Kosovo and the future of the region, by KFOR showing an “Enduring

Commitment” every day.

The main bridge in Mitrovica has represented the symbol of a divided city but the visit of Admiral Foggo III has shown that NATO remains committed to the security

and stability of Kosovo, and that bridges do not divide but unite. “They require cooperation to build and maintain and are important symbols, connecting people, enabling trade and facilitating prosperity. The Austerlitz bridge





connects the ethnically Serb and Albanian populations, and the two mayors are challenged to unite their constituents in the wake of Ivanovic's deplorable murder”.

The time of conflict is over and

bridges are actually among the most powerful symbols of communication, cooperation and harmony. They connect people, they open trading routes and they bring prosperity and tolerance.

After his two day visit to the region Admiral Foggo III reflected that 'I've been privileged to engage key leaders in the Western Balkans whom I'm convinced will partner in - and contribute to - our efforts to further secure and stabilise the region. The Western Balkans are important to NATO and they are important to me. We will continue to connect, communicate and collaborate to ensure we provide security and stability for a stronger region, a more united Europe and a free and prosperous world'.

Comdt. Michael Cullen
OF-3 IRL ARMY



EXERCISE DRAGON FIRE

The current KTR Bn is mainly composed of personnel from the Hungarian Defence Forces 5th "Bocskai István" Infantry Brigade which has deployed troops abroad since 1999. In Hungary this unit is garrisoned in three locations: Debrecen, Hódmezővásárhely and Hajdúhadház. The primary role for the KTR Bn is to engage as the Tactical Reserve of COM KFOR by conducting all infantry specific tasks including Crowd And Riot Control (CRC) all over Kosovo in order to deter and/or counter any threat against Safe And Secure Environment (SASE) and Freedom Of Movement (FOM).



PICTURE: Afrim Hajrullahu(2)

Zegovac/Zhegoc was the location for Exercise Dragon Fire 2018-1 where two companies of the Hungarian Kosovo Tactical Reserve Battalion (KTR Bn) conducted Area Cordon – Search and Surge operations on the 26th of January and the 2nd of February.

The two Hungarian KTR Bn companies played the alternate roles of Opposition Forces and Friendly Forces on the separate dates of the exercise that gave a good opportunity to the unit to give an account of their military capabilities and skills also allowing them to assess their interoperability with troops from other nations. The manoeuvre required liaison with the KFOR Intelligence Surveillance and Reconnaissance Battalion (ISR Bn), MNBG-E Aviation Task Force and other aviation elements.

The weather conditions varied considerably on each date of the exercise. The operational area was covered with snow on the first occasion although a week later it became much milder that left the

soldiers in very muddy conditions. Prior to the main events four days of training took place in order to permit the sub-units to practice the manoeuvre, plan the movements and conduct cordon & search operations. Additionally enough time had been provided to develop interoperability between the multinational partners. Furthermore, beyond the tactical operations KTRBN was also able to utilise its air mobility through the aviation detachments and the medical capabilities including MEDEVAC that had been drilled since the beginning of their deployment.

The final phase of the planning work and logistical preparations was displayed on the 26th of January and the 2nd of February which were attended by D COM KFOR and COM KFOR respectively.

A few days earlier a Recce Platoon of the ISR Bn was deployed to the objective area to conduct target surveillance and update the KTR Bn TOC on the details.

The exercise commenced with the establishment of an outer and inner box employing checkpoints which was followed swiftly by the air insertion of the assault elements. The teams were carried by two Croatian Mil Mi-8 helicopters to the operational area where after a rapid disembarkation the troops began to move stealthily towards the objectives. In the meantime the reces were monitoring the target area with a barely audible UAV and continually passing information to the operations centre.

While the units were making their way in the direction of the targets a quick set of orders were delivered. During the approach to the buildings the unit split into two teams. One of them turned to the higher hills to get across and end up by the rear of the southern building for the purpose of out flanking the opposition. The other team aimed for the second but closer building on the North-West where they could establish a foothold in order to enter one of the houses.



PICTURE: Afrim Hajrullahu (4)

The opposition forces were located in a small built up area within two houses that were enclosed by a 2-metre high brick wall and some smaller outhouses.

The enemy cell was reported to consist of ten heavily armed suspects that were located inside the two buildings. Once the opposition force realised that the KTR Bn had discovered their location, they immediately opened fire. The assault force instantly responded with suppressive fire.

Once the enemy gunfire began to wane, the KTR Bn troops swiftly mounted a ladder against the ground floor window ledge and breached the building in a coordinated and disciplined manner.

Room by room they moved through each building leaving white tags in the searched quarters. Good levels of communication and effective cooperation were displayed during the assault. As it happens in real life the assault resulted in minor and critically injured casualties from both sides who were treated and handed to medics immediately, once area was considered safe. The level of medical care and assistance was to a very high standard.

On the first day of the exercise the seriously injured casualty was extracted by Air Medevac from the courtyard using a hoist and



transported to the ROLE-1 Modular tent installed at CMLT. During the second exercise, the weather made it possible for the ambulance to take the casualties close to the heli landing zone where Air Medevac and Casevac were able to take off with the soldiers.

COM KFOR and DCOM KFOR were impressed with the outcome of both exercises. Even though the scenario was similar, each company faced different weather conditions ensuring a unique approach and demonstration of their skills and

capabilities.

Last but not least, the essence of the exercise is that, beyond CRC tasks the KFOR third responder battalion is capable of conducting tactical manoeuvres either in support of other forces or independently in the light of its infantry nature.

Lt. Eszter Janosi
OF-1 HUN ARMY
&
Comdt. Michael Cullen
OF-3 IRL ARMY

"HIGH ALTITUDE PATROLS"

The Multinational Battle Group West (MNBG-W) - Manoeuvre Battalion conducted several mountain patrol and control activities during the winter in the north-western sector of their Area of Operations (AO), near the Administrative Boundary Line (ABL) in close cooperation with the Kosovo Police (KP).



The conditions were hard to cope with and demanded the highest professional standards in a very cold environment and mountainous setting. Snow, icy roads and severe climatic conditions characterised the activities which were led with a BV 206.

This kind of all-terrain vehicle provided by the Italian Army delivers full road mobility control and facilitates a wide range of tactical activities throughout the winter season.

Was it the key to the success? BV 206 payload can deploy a joint patrol team made up of mountain



PICTURE: PAO MNBG-W(2)



equipment, skis and snowshoes of the Austrian “Bravo” Company, together with the Moldovan engineer platoon with Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) assets to clear the routes and implement the search of Unexploded Ordnance (UXO’s). Additionally the BV 206 catered for all the Italian specialists: drivers and paratroopers of “Papa” company.

The MNBG-W Units work constantly to ensure a safe and secure environment and guarantee the freedom of movement to the assigned area according to 1244 United Nations resolution, without weather limitations.

Cpt Fabio G. Capriati
OF-2 ITA ARMY



PICTURE: PAO MNBG - W(3)

MABEY BRIDGE IN MITROVICA

On the 30th of January, COM KFOR, Major General Salvatore Cuoci and KSF Commander, Lieutenant General Rrahman Rama, attended a ribbon cutting ceremony on a Mabey bridge in Mitrovica. The military bridge provides a by-pass to local and military traffic in the vicinity of Mitrovica. The ribbon was cut by Mr Rrustem Berisha - Minister of the Ministry for the Kosovo Security Force (KSF). Mr Rrustem Berisha re-opened the by-pass bridge just days after members of the KSF, under the supervision of KFOR JENG military bridging staff had completed renovation work on the bridge.

A week earlier, troops from the KSF led by Capt Argon Xhekaj had arrived in Camp Marechal de Lattre de Tassigny to collect the bridging assets that KFOR provided. Under the supervision of Capt Mustafa Torun, the KFOR Engineer Officer responsible for roads and bridges, Polish soldiers from JLSG using their heavy lifting equipment loaded the sixty four bridging units onto the KSF transport. The KSF personnel consisted of eight transport members and thirteen engineering crew. In 2009 the KSF engineers had completed a three week bridge building course provided by the Swiss Engineers in Camp Casablanca. Capt Xhekaj has also undertaken a military bridging course in the United States. The KSF now have the capability to train their own personnel and regularly conduct training courses. The KSF Engr Bn has two hundred trained personnel.

The main bridging assets that KFOR provided were transported to the KSF base in Mitrovica which is located near the bridge that was to be refurbished. The following day on a cold and crisp January morning, the KSF were at the bridge site with all the tools required to complete the task. Liaison had been conducted earlier with the Kosovo Police and the roads accessing either side of the bridge had been blocked off. Capt Xhekaj had conducted his planning for the operation complete with a Gantt chart displaying the different milestones and targets. The daily



target was to replace a minimum of twelve units on the bridge each day. This military bridge is KFOR property, built by the French engineers in 2002, located on MSR HEN, and it increased the freedom of movement to DOG 31.

The type of the bridge is MABEY COMPACT 200 LOGISTICS SUPPORT BRIDGE, with a span of 45.72metres and a maximum load capacity 60t. for wheeled vehicles. The repair work was funded and supervised by JENG KFOR, while

PICTURE: Afrim Hajrullahu(3)

the work has been executed by the KSF Engineering battalion. KSF deployed thirteen people from their bridge squad and six vehicles.

The KSF engineering staff set about their business in a very coordinated manner. Using the basic engineering tools, pick axes and shovels, they cleared away almost sixteen years of compacted dirt from the edges of the bridge. Specialist tools were required to clear away the grime on the bolts holding the panels in place, prior to T-bars being deployed to twist and turn the solidly placed French bolts. It was necessary to use an air compressor to clear the loosened soil on the inner crevices on the bridge. Many of the original bolts used on the bridge were close to their original condition while some displayed the marks of sixteen years of traffic traversing the bridge.

The bridge is four panels wide. Once the bolts had been removed, the KSF used their Bobcat forklift to remove and replace the panels on the crossing, each panel being secured to the forklift using chains and an L type connection on the lifting sockets. In addition to removing and replacing the panels, the KSF engineers checked the structure of the bridge underneath the panels. It was also necessary to replace beams at each end of the bridges. These beams were exposed to most of the wear and tear as the traffic struck them as it mounted the bridge.

The KSF continued and completed the task over a four day period, sometimes with the buzz of a drone above as the PAO section recorded the reconstruction. On a daily basis they had the company of the local fishermen on the banks of the Sitnica. The KSF completed the task ahead of their planned schedule



PICTURE: Afrim Hajrullahu (3)

displaying a high level of efficiency which was obvious from the outset.

With this joint operation, KFOR continues to build & support the capacity of the Kosovo Security Force in accordance with its current mission and the KSF demonstrated their professional expertise in military bridge construction. Reflective of their expert ability, the KSF Engineering Battalion were deploying to Albania, the following

week, to build a fifty two metre bridge over a thirteen day period. COM KFOR expressed his deep appreciation for the excellent job while KSF Commander, thanking General Cuoci for his support, has been very proud of the professional level achieved by KSF personnel.

Comdt. Michael Cullen
OF-3 IRL ARMY

A VISUAL OVERVIEW



30 JAN 2018
KFOR Commander, Major General Salvatore Cuoci, met H.E. Olexsandr Alexsandrovych Ambassador of Ukraine to the Republic of Serbia, at Camp "Film City" NATO KFOR Headquarters.



31 JAN 2018
KFOR Commander, Major General Salvatore Cuoci, received the official visit of H.E. Mr. Laszlo Markusz Ambassador of Hungary in Kosovo, at Camp "Film City" NATO KFOR Headquarters.



02 FEB 2018
KFOR Commander, Major General Salvatore Cuoci, received the visit of H.E. Radmila Shekerinska Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Defence Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, at KFOR HQ.

A VISUAL OVERVIEW



09 FEB 2018
KFOR Commander, Major General Salvatore Cuoci, received the visit of H.E. Kivilcim Kilic Ambassador of the Republic of Turkey to Kosovo, at KFOR Headquarters.



10 FEB 2018
KFOR Commander, Major General Salvatore Cuoci, received the visit of H.E. Alexandra Papadopoulou Head of EULEX in Kosovo, at KFOR Headquarters.



14 FEB 2018
KFOR Commander, Major General Salvatore Cuoci, received the visit of General Danilo Errico, Italian Army Chief of Staff, at KFOR Headquarters.

CHANGE OF COMMAND IN PRIZREN:

New Tasks for the 49th German KFOR Contingent



*Assuming responsibility: Lieutenant Colonel Kiesel being handed the command flag by Major General Poschwatta
(source: PAO DEUCON KFOR)*

It is always an extraordinary experience when the colours march in. Seeing the guard of honor march by gives all servicemen and women a proud feeling of being part of something special. This is even more the case when it takes place on the occasion of rotating personnel in and out of a mission. For some, this means the beginning of something new, for the others it means they will soon return home. The 48th German KFOR Contingent

was concluded with a ceremonial parade on 2 February 2018. The Deputy Commander of the Bundeswehr Joint Forces Operations Command, Major General Thorsten Poschwatta, transferred command from Lieutenant Colonel (GS) Hans Juergen Elsen to Lieutenant Colonel Christian Kiesel. This marked the beginning of the 49th German force contingent to the stabilisation mission in Europe's youngest nation, which has been ongoing since

1999. The predominant feature of Germany's longest lasting military commitment will remain the same: adjusting the military level of commitment after successful stabilisation of the security situation in Kosovo.

In the last minutes before the transfer of command was put into effect, Lieutenant Colonel (GS) Hans Juergen Elsen summed up the six eventful months of his deployment. He said that he came to the country



as a guest and that he would leave the country with a lasting impression of the people he met and their spirit of hospitality.

In his interactions with people he approached everyone equally, whether they were fellow Germans or allies from other nations, soldiers or civilians. After all, everyone had the same goal: a peaceful Kosovo with improved circumstances for everybody. "This is why we, the soldiers of the 48th contingent, were here. We wanted to contribute our small share to sustainable

stabilisation and thus improve living conditions for all people in Kosovo."

Making Appropriate Adjustments

Afterwards, Major General Poschwatta addressed the German troops, "Fellow soldiers, in the past months you have carried out your mission in a committed, reliable and exemplary fashion while accepting personal restrictions. You can be proud of your achievements."

In his speech, General Poschwatta acknowledged the KFOR Mission's achievements, saying that the

development of the situation was going in the right direction. This allows the Bundeswehr to appropriately adjust its level of commitment. With successful military stabilization, the comprehensive approach with its broad spectrum of capabilities is now becoming more and more important. "Good synergy between the political level, the military, the administrative level and civilian organisations is therefore of key importance," the Major General added.

Taking Over New Tasks

With the handover of the command flag, the command over the 49th German KFOR Contingent passes on to Lieutenant Colonel Kiesel. His men and women are faced with important tasks: further adjusting the German commitment and preparing to shift the focus to the KFOR Headquarters in Pristina. This marks a new chapter in the long history of German Bundeswehr deployments abroad. It is also a testimony of success for the international efforts to support the establishment of a stable, safe and secure environment in Kosovo and throughout the region.

Capt. Ulrich Veen
OF-2 DEU A



PICTURE: Bundeswehr/PAO DEU EinsKgt KFOR (3)

OPERATION BOWIE STRIKE CONFIRMS INTEROPERABILITY EXCELLENCE

Kosovo Force, Multinational Battle Group-East, executed the Operation Bowie Strike combined training exercise, Jan. 19, 2018, at a KFOR training site in Zhegoc, Kosovo.

The training involved a mixed multi-ship airlift conducted by the MNBG-East, Southern Command Post who piloted three UH-60 Black Hawks and the KFOR, Croatian Aviation Detachment who piloted two Mil Mi-8 Helicopters. They inserted MNBG-East, Forward Command Post U.S. and Polish Soldiers who tactically navigated through challenging snowy woodland terrain and seized several buildings occupied by opposing forces role-players. Blank ammunition and universal training munitions were used to make the training as realistic as possible.

Operation Bowie Strike provided an opportunity for MNBG-East to conduct core mission essential task list training while deployed in a NATO peace support mission. The exercise is a combined effort that provides a realistic training opportunity for the FCP, SCP,



PICTURE: Staff Sgt. Nicholas Farina (4)



and MNBG-East headquarters, explained Maj. Rick Caldwell, the MNBG-East operations officer.

The exercise demonstrates not only what the United States can do but also the multinational partners within the KFOR team, said Lt. Col Kevin Taylor, the MNBG-East, FCP Commander. It indirectly serves as a deterrent factor for those sources of instability or actors that may try to undermine the institutions of Kosovo.

"It was awesome," said Chief Warrant Officer 2 Justin Walker, MNBG-East, SCP UH-60 Black Hawk pilot and air mission commander for Operation Bowie Strike. "It was actually my first time flying with the Croatians. They're professionals. It's really good working with them."

Walker, who piloted the second chalk, said the mixed multi-ship formation coming into the landing zone looked great and the snow-covered ground was not a

factor for the helicopters when landing for the troop insertion.

It became FCP's show as Soldiers from the 82nd Airborne Division and Polish Coy infantry units exited the helicopters and regrouped behind a wood line north of the target objective to establish their ground tactical plan.

FCP's mission was to seize three buildings within a village from an enemy force that was about 15 to 20 strong, said 1st Lt. Bart Jeffrey, a platoon leader for MNBG-East, FCP.

The units proceeded south toward the village, navigating through snow-covered ground, thick woods and small streams.

Once within assaulting distance, the U.S. Soldiers donned their gas masks to protect their faces from the UTM's which are non-lethal training rounds that leave colored markings on impact and can be fired from various weapon systems. The Polish Infantry Coy wore ballistic eyewear and covered their faces with a thick fitted mask.

They threw smoke grenades and moved in to seize the first target building.

"We breached a window that the OPFOR had no idea we could actually use," said Jeffrey. "They had no idea where we came from."

Sgt. Devon Clark, an MNBG-East, Task Force Military Police desk sergeant who role-played as one of the OPFOR confirms Jeffrey's observations of FCP's elusiveness.

"We really didn't see them until it was already too late. I know they had some recon patrols hidden somewhere in the wood line and on the hills, but they hit us by surprise. We didn't even see it coming," said Clark.

FCP Soldiers secured the first building and established suppressing fire on the other target buildings, Jeffrey described. The suppressing fire gave freedom of movement to the Polish Coy and a U.S. squad element as they maneuvered to seize the remaining target buildings.

When the smoke cleared and the sounds of gunfire stopped, FCP had successfully secured the area, ridding the village of the OPFOR.

Jeffrey praised the U.S. and Polish partnership for their fluid interoperability.

"I really love working with the Polish. They are a really professional army and I hope to get to work with them soon because they know what they are doing," said Jeffrey.

Taylor credited Operation Bowie Strike's success to the



PICTURE: Staff Sgt. Nicholas Farina (3)

teamwork and support from MNBG-East as a whole. "It was a great training event but it takes all those people working together to make it happen," said Taylor with pride.

Staff Sgt. Nicholas Farina
OR-9 US-A

KFOR AND THE NATIONAL BLOOD TRANSFUSION CENTRE OF KOSOVO (NBTCK) ORGANISED AND HOSTED A BLOOD DONATION IN CAMP FILM CITY

On February 5th over 115 KFOR military and civilian personnel from over 28 different nations voluntarily donated blood to support the National Blood Transfusion Centre and the people of Kosovo.

The donations have been deposited in the NBTCK in Pristina and the blood products can be redistributed to any national medical facilities in need and several International Organisations in Kosovo.

The event was hosted in the Italian Role 1 medical facility. All the donors were screened by the NBTCK personnel and the professional and friendly manner of their medical staff was commented on very positively by all those involved with the event. All donors received a certificate for their donation and a special KFOR badge, which was commissioned to mark the event, was given as a gift to each donor. A special cake was also prepared as part of the refreshments given to the personnel after making their donation.



The very positive response from the large number of donors and the success of the event underscores the widespread awareness among KFOR personnel of how donating blood is a great act of altruism. The fact that so many nations participated demonstrates that solidarity overcomes any differences we may have due to ethnicity or creed.

Dr Bukurije Zhubi PhD, the Director of NBTKC expressed her special thanks and gratitude to the KFOR organisation and hopes that this activity, held in the wake of many other drives throughout all KFOR facilities during last decades, will occur on a regular basis to help strengthen the bond and cooperation between KFOR and civilian organisations in Kosovo.

Comdt. Michael Cullen
OF-3 IRL ARMY



MEDICAL EVACUATION (MEDEVAC)

Medical Evacuation (MEDEVAC) exercise PLUTO II was conducted, at Camp CMLT, on the 27th of January by the JRD-N primarily in order to rigorously test the readiness and capabilities of the Liaison Monitoring Teams in assessing, providing first aid treatment and assisting with the evacuation of a priority casualty in collaboration with MEDEVAC crew.

The morning of the exercise provided ideal environmental conditions for the scenario. When the PAO team left Camp Film City, driving conditions were good, clear visibility. After five kilometres the morning fog was so dense visibility was reduced to ten metres. There was one single car accident, numerous cars driving without lights or fog lights on. The potential for a Road Traffic Accident (RTA) was very likely.

The scenario exercise was based on the treatment of several injured individuals in an RTA within JRD-N AOR. The aim of the exercise was to provide to all JRD-N Liaison Monitoring Teams the necessary knowledge, to exercise the required skills so as to work effectively in patient evacuation procedures, as well as coordinate their actions and to enable participants to achieve and sustain situational awareness in a multinational operational environment at all times.

The main Learning Objectives for the course were a better understanding of NATO's medical support system in multinational operations and how, where and when to collect, manage and transmit all the information required through proper reporting procedures (9 LINE EMERGENCY MEDEVAC REQUEST & MIST REPORT).

The scenario was very realistic and the preparation obvious for all those who attended the training exercise. The casualties' injuries were clearly visible and the role playing by those involved was true to life.



The Liaison Monitoring Teams conducted primary surveys, assessed the casualties, stabilised the patients and prepared them for evacuation. Then they request a MEDEVAC to bring the patient for further treatment to the next medical treatment facility. It was clearly visible that the medical staff were capable of dealing professionally with all the challenges presented to them. The interoperability between the LMT teams and the medical teams, from different nations was unmistakably evident.

A key objective of the exercise was to accomplish the necessary training and drills within the so called "Golden Hour" the vital period that can make the difference between life and death for an individual following a serious injury, in accordance with NATO doctrines.

The purpose of training is to prepare for scenarios that may occur. Very often there may be situations that we hope do not occur. On January 29th Hungarian military doctors and KFOR soldiers, rendered assistance

at a motorway traffic accident in Kosovo. The group consisted of Hungarian military doctors who were travelling to the Adem Jashari Airport. As soon as the three military doctors of the group realised the serious nature of the incident they immediately provided medical care to the four injured civilians while the KFOR soldiers assisted with traffic control. It can be seen that the conditions mirrored those exactly in the scenario of Exercise Pluto II. Fortunately for those involved trained medical personnel were on the scene to provide vital assistance within the Golden Hour. The exercise and incident are a clear reminder to all KFOR personnel, to expect the unexpected and maintain familiarity with the basic medical skills that could be required at any time.

Capt. Konstadinos Ponirakos
OF-2 GRC-ARMY
&
Comdt. Michael Cullen
OF-3 IRL ARMY

Soldier of the Month

This month sees the commencement of an initiative by the CSM Gianluca Mattei whereby soldiers are nominated for Soldier of the Month. Soldiers can be recommended by their contingent based on the performance of their duties in support of KFOR and its mission. The Soldier of the Month is selected by a panel consisting of COM KFOR, D COM KFOR, COS and the CSM. OR-5 Vlasios Ntokoros is the first soldier selected for this award. He was nominated by OR-9 WO Elena Mouriki, the Greek CSM. He received a plaque from COM KFOR and a letter of commendation from the CSM. OR-5 Vlasios Ntokoros's profile is given below and the reason he was nominated.



Name: Vlasios Ntokoros

Rank: OR-5

Nationality: Hellenic

Military Education: I enlisted in the Hellenic Army in November of 2005, as an NCO of the Signal Corps. After five months of basic military training and specialty(Radio and Communications System Operator) training, I was assigned to a Signals Company as a Squad Leader initially and then as a Platoon Commander on a Close Air Support and Quick Reaction Teams on Advanced Communications. In 2013, after completing enlisted NCO Special Forces training, I was assigned as a Platoon Commander on an independent SF Signals Platoon operating with a Special Forces Amphibious Battalion. Currently, I live in a Central Aegean island, where I'm responsible for a Battle Zone C4I relay post. I've been deployed three times to ISAF and twice to KFOR.

About the Mission: This is my second mission in KFOR but my first as part of HSG GUARD Coy. We are based on Camp Film City, providing a safe and secure environment, primarily to HQ Staff and to all other inhabitants of CFC. In order to accomplish our mission, we maintain 24-hour manned posts and IRF - QRF reserves. Also, we perform routine drills, that ensure our readiness and a high state of alert. This, might be stressful sometimes, however we receive the acknowledgement from other nations, making it worth the effort.

Family Reaction: I am 33 years old and married for the last two years. My wife and I are expecting our first child to be born in a few months, hopefully after the end of my tour here. Even though this is my happiest time so far, being on a mission can be challenging. Thankfully, my wife

supports my career and understands the sacrifices that we have to make in order to serve our country and NATO.

Hobbies: Since childhood my main passion was computers and luckily, a lot of my work in the army has something to do with it, keeping it active till now. I also love hiking and exploring new terrains along with my wife. I used to play tennis but the lack of a tennis field where I live and the plethora of fish, led me to shore-jigging (fishing technique), that also helps me clear my mind every now and then.

He was recommended to be the soldier of the month, primarily due to his discipline, his sense of responsibility, his strong personality, his professionalism and his attention to detail when on duty. On one occasion when working on Check Point 1 during the morning shift, as he was checking a vehicle and its passengers, entering the Camp, he noticed simultaneously, a vehicle passing out of the camp. The woman driving was looking curiously inside the Camp. It seemed strange to OR-5 Ntokoros, who decided to look carefully and finally noticed that under the hand of the driver, there was a well hidden smart phone, taking pictures of the Camp, in particular its position, the buildings, personnel and vehicles. He acted very professionally, stopped the vehicle and immediately called the Duty Officer and those responsible for the safety and the security of the Camp. He was congratulated by the Commander of the HSG. His action is an example for everyone in the Camp, not only for Greek guards, but also for every soldier.

Commander KFOR XXII
Major General
Salvatore Cuoci,
Italian Army

**Chief Public Affairs Office &
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Kingdom, United States.

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PICTURES OF THE MONTH February 2018



"Rugova Gorge"
Equipment Used: Canon 5D Mk2
Photo by: OR-9 George Griffen
KFOR HSG Gp



"Sunset in Helipad CFC"

Photo by: OR-7 Bertoglio Andrea
Carabinieri MSU Pristina

Contribute to the KFORChronicle!

Just send your photos to:
kforchronicle@hq.kfor.nato.int by the 20th
of the month explaining where you took the
photo and what equipment you used. We will
then select one of the submitted images and
publish it in the next edition of the Chronicle.
A KFOR Chronicle T-Shirt is awarded each
month to the winning photographer.
You will be immortalised in the KFOR
Chronicle!
Is that not something to be proud of?
Sincerely
The Chronicle Team





Name: McCourt David

Rank: ICC-7

Nationality: IRL

Unit: JENG/SPT Branch,
KFOR HQ

Military Education: - I joined the Irish Defence Forces (DF) in 1995 attending the Military College as an Officer Cadet. I was commissioned as an Infantry officer in 1997 to the 12th Infantry Battalion, Limerick. I completed a B Eng (Civil) Degree in 2002 at NUI, Galway joining the Corps of Engineers in 2002. Since then my appointments have included; Field Engineer Platoon Commander, Chief Instructor in the School of Military Engineering, DF Special Operations Task Group (SOTG) and SO in the Directorate of Engineering at DFHQ.

About the Mission: I am the Chief of Infrastructure in JENG/Support Branch where I'm responsible for planning and monitoring NATO funded infrastructure projects in KFOR. This is my fifth deployment abroad. Previously, I served in Liberia, Afghanistan, Chad, and Sierra Leone. I have spent periods working with Irish Aid and Department of Foreign Affairs in Nigeria and South East Asia. I came to KFOR in May 2016, in a military capacity, as the Real Estate Staff Officer in J4. At the end of my six months my current appointment in JENG became available. I will retire from the DF on February 9th leaving KFOR on February 16th to commence a job in Ireland. I have really enjoyed the time I spent in Kosovo, meeting many friends from different countries and delivering a number of infrastructure projects.

Family Reaction: I was born near the town of Athlone, Ireland. I joined the army after school, so my family are quite used to the military lifestyle and to me being abroad. They have always been very supportive and understanding, in particular when I have been overseas. However, this is the longest period that I have spent apart from my wife and two children. So they and I, are eagerly looking forward to being re-united as a family and spending as much time together as possible.

Hobbies: I love all sports and have always been involved in team sports: rugby, hurling and later rowing. Most of my college time was dedicated to rowing. However, since then I have been involved in endurance and adventure sports. Completing an Ironman and the Marathon de Sables are my biggest achievements to date.



Name: Vellozzi Salvatore

Rank: OF-2

Nationality: ITA

Unit: C4 Coy – MNBG-W

Military Education: In 2005 I joined the Army attending the Military Academy. I was commissioned as a Signals officer in 2007 and after graduating I was posted to the 11th Signal Regiment in Civitavecchia (Rome). Since then, I have been appointed as Platoon Commander. After being promoted to the rank of Captain (OF-2) in 2014, I was initially appointed as a Logistic Company Commander and later as a Signal Company Commander.

About the Mission: This is my third deployment abroad, the first under the NATO flag. Previously, I served twice in Lebanon in the UNIFIL mission as Platoon Leader and in the G6 branch. Currently I'm the C4 Coy Commander of the Multinational Battle Group west and I'm in charge of delivering national Communications and Information Services in our area of responsibility.

Family reaction: I was born on the 2nd of September of 1986 in Formia (Rome). My family is quite accustomed to me being abroad since I left home in 2005, while for my girlfriend it is the first time that we are apart for so long. Since they are not so familiar with electronic devices, I "forced" them to learn to use apps, like Skype, to keep us in touch.

Hobbies: I really enjoy cooking, above all pizza and sweets. I also attended a course of wine tasting and eventually graduated as sommelier. Therefore I like, during weekends, to travel in areas with the best landscapes, wines and restaurants. I'm also an avid reader of books, thus I carried here the whole Games of Thrones paper series books to read in my spare time.

