

# KFOR CHRONICLE

The KFOR Magazine for KFOR Soldiers

March 2018



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PICTURE: OR-4 Castellaneta Filippo

15<sup>th</sup> February 2018 COM KFOR meeting with Corps of Military Attaches and Advisors to Kosovo (CMAAK)



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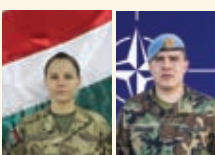
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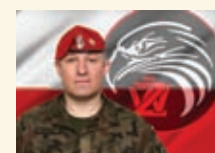
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## ST. PATRICK'S DAY

*March 17th, St. Patrick's Day, (Lá Fhéile Pádraig in Irish) is a national holiday on the island of Ireland and an occasion marked throughout the world due to the large Irish diaspora. It is estimated that 80 million people, worldwide, claim Irish heritage. There are twelve members of the Irish Defence Forces serving with KFOR, commanded by Col Tim Daly, and on St. Patrick's day they celebrated the day with their KFOR colleagues and other members of the Irish community in Kosovo.*



St Patrick is Ireland's national saint and is credited with converting pagan Ireland to Christianity. There are many legends associated with St. Patrick, including that he drove all the snakes out of Ireland. Ireland's national symbol, the shamrock, An Seamróg in Irish, is associated with St. Patrick. Patrick was the son of a Roman nobleman living in the modern day area of Wales when he was captured by Irish pirates and sold into slavery. He eventually escaped, but as Col Daly informed the guests in Irish House, once you have visited Ireland, it has a gravitational pull that draws you back. Patrick returned to Wales and entered the priesthood, but God called on him to return to Ireland and convert the people to Christianity. In the process of explaining the trinity to the pagan High Kings of Ireland, St. Patrick used the three leaves on one piece of shamrock to demonstrate that three parts can be one. Early on the morning of St. Patrick's day, Pte Olan McCarthy, a Defence Forces piper, roused KFOR HQ with his delightful playing of the bagpipes. Olan was requested to come to Kosovo to mark St Patrick's day and has a long personnel association with Kosovo having served with the 1st Irish Transport Company. This unit was part of the first Multi-National KFOR military convoy which entered Kosovo from Greece in July 1999.

The Irish Defence Forces personnel were presented with the KFOR Balkans medal by the Commander of KFOR, Major General Salvatore Cuoci. Once the medal ceremony was concluded, Col Daly presented COM



PICTURE: OR-4 Roberto Nola (3)

KFOR with shamrock and then to presented shamrock to each of the Irish contingent

During the afternoon, the Irish contingent were joined by members of the British Armed forces and other fans of rugby to watch the Ireland and England rugby teams in their final six nations match of 2018. Ireland prevailed to win their third rugby Grand Slam title ever. COM KFOR was the guest of honour at an official function to mark St Patricks' day in the Irish House later in the evening. Col Daly thanked all the guests for the great relationships they had forged with the Irish in KFOR and celebrating Ireland's national day. He hoped everyone would enjoy the evening remarking that "Lá Fhéile Padraig is an occasion when everyone can be Irish for the day".

Comdt. Michael Cullen  
OF-3 IRL ARMY

# KFOR GENDER PERSPECTIVE DAY THE INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON WOMEN, PEACE AND SECURITY IN KOSOVO



## The Conference

Following the success of the first KFOR Gender Perspective Day in June last year, KFOR organised this year's event on 6th March 2018 to coincide close to the celebration of International Women's Day, which occurred two days later. This year the title of the event was The International Conference on Women, Peace and Security in Kosovo. Therefore, the focus of the conference and the 2018 Gender Perspective Day interlinked on three important topics: Women, Peace & Security Agenda, Gender Perspective, and the International Women's Day.

The aim of the conference was to bring together actors from different organisations who work in the field of Women, Peace and Security. They discussed the current situation in Kosovo, shared their perspectives and experiences. The purpose of the conference was to enhance the awareness and importance of including the population as a whole- women, men, girls and boys.

The conference adopted a panel approach similar to the many summit events. There was a morning panel and an afternoon panel. The individual panels focused on two aspects of the field respectively - Security challenges of Women in Kosovo, and Women as Actors of Peace and Security. Initially, panellists were asked to deliver a brief overview of their organisation, projects and activities in relation to the topic of the respective panel. The moderator commenced further discussion

which was provoked through the involvement of the audience in a questions & answers session. The director of the conference, Lt Colonel Suzana Tkavc, PhD (SLO-A), is a Subject Matter Expert on Gender & Women, Peace and Security. She chaired the conference and acted as moderator for each of the panels.

COM KFOR officially opened the conference welcoming all the guests stating that he was pleased to "have gathered today with high-level guests, experts on women's



PICTURE: Afrim Hajrullahu(2)





rights and gender from different Kosovo institutions, international organisations, and militaries from KFOR to discuss this important topic". COM KFOR emphasised the importance of Women's rights and the Women, Peace and Security Agenda, wishing all participants a good discussion on those topics.

The guest speaker for the opening of the event was the Kosovo Deputy Minister of Culture, Youth and Sport, Ms Burbuqe Bakija-Deva. She highlighted that "The Government of Kosovo has approved an Action Plan for United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security, in order to improve the status of women. Although there is a legal system in Kosovo on this issue, it is not fully implemented". In addition, she pointed out that domestic violence against women in Kosovo is obvious.

#### **Panel 1 - Security challenges of Women in Kosovo**

The members of the first panel were representatives from International organisations in Kosovo, Kosovo Institutions, and KFOR: Ms. Flora Macula, Head of UN Women Office in Kosovo; Ms. Feride Rushiti, Executive Director of Kosovo Rehabilitation Centre

for Torture Victims (KRCT); Col Taibe Canolli, Director of Human Resources Department & Director of Association of Women in Kosovo Police; Mr. Vahagn Muradyan, Deputy Head of Council of Europe Office in Pristina; Capt Kethlin Piirma (FIN-A), Liaison Officer and Gender Focal Point at the LMT Glogovac/Obilic. The focus of this panel was on international and national legislation, projects, solutions, and future plans. The panellists shared their own experiences in the field, focusing on how different actors have and can better collaborate to manage the security situation of women in Kosovo. They discussed the security issues of women in Kosovo – currently and in the past. Security

concerns of women in Kosovo are mainly related to gender- based violence. Discussion between panellists centred on sexual violence in conflict and the recently adopted legislation in Kosovo on the recognition of this issue as a war crime as well as the rights of raped women to apply for financial assistance. However, difficulties have been experienced especially in the cases where it is hard to prove the crime and end the impunity of perpetrators of sexual violence and rape. Secondly, the issue of domestic violence was debated by the panellists. The panel considered domestic violence in Kosovo and how it compared with other countries from an international perspective.



PICTURE: Afrim Hajrullahu (2)

## Panel 2 - Women as Actors of Peace and Security

The afternoon panel was constituted by women from Kosovo institutions and non-institutional organisations, who have made and are still making a change within Kosovo society - women, who are personally strongly committed to act for women's rights, and are real actors for Peace and Security. Guests on this panel were: Ms. Igballe Rogova, General Director of Kosovo Women Network (KWN); Ms. Edi Gusia, Agency for Gender Equality; Ms. Adrijana Hodzic, Chief Executive Officer at Administrative Office of Mitrovica (Nord); Ms. Tijana Simic LaValley, Director of Women's Rights NGO Mitrovica (Nord); Brigadier General Irfete Spahiu, Deputy Commander of the Kosovo Security Forces Training and Doctrine Command. Each of the panellists delivered very personal speeches and strong messages related to their work, institutions, projects and results. The ensuing discussion on the panel was very frank and led to questions on the role of women in society, sharing their personal views, emphasising the willingness to make a change, and the importance of including women as part of the population to ensure



better living conditions in Kosovo. Last but not least, the importance of women's equal participation and full involvement in all efforts for a peaceful and secure environment was agreed by all.

The closing speech was delivered by guest speaker Ms. Mimoza Kusari-Lila, a member of the Kosovo parliament and the first female Mayor elected in Kosovo. She gave a very powerful and inspiring speech on the role of women within the society and their influence on leading positions. She shared her personal experiences and achievements within Kosovar political system as the Mayor of Gjakovë/Đakovica.

The closing remarks of the ceremony were provided by COM KFOR, who recalled the many interesting points

that had been discussed during the conference. He stated that there were very fruitful discussions, sharing different points of view. COM KFOR emphasised the importance of the involvement of women, ensuring their rights and equal participation, and concluded that this event demonstrated KFOR's dedication to the Women, Peace and Security Agenda, Women's rights, and the importance of the Gender Perspective. The needs of the population as a whole should be considered, as well as collaboration between different stakeholders and organisations enhanced, in order to successfully ensure a safe and secure environment in Kosovo.

Comdt. Michael Cullen  
OF-3 IRL ARMY





# MNBG-W ITALIAN CONTINGENT PROVIDE EQUIPMENT TO SUPPORT MEDICAL CAPABILITIES IN KOSOVO

*A new cycle of donating medical equipment has been completed in the western area of Kosovo.*



This activity was coordinated by Civilian –Military Cooperation (CIMIC), planned by Italy and led by Multinational Battle Group West (MNBG-W), under the auspices of 185th Airborne Artillery Regiment “Folgore”.

A neonatal incubator was donated to the Gjakovë/Đakovica hospital. The neonatal incubator will increase the life support capability of the Gjakovë/Đakovica hospital, potentially decreasing the complications and risks for about 50 premature babies each year.

An electrocardiograph, a multi-parametric screen and stethoscopes were given to Klina hospital. These will develop the neonatal support capability and the ability to conduct life parameter checks.



The medical devices were given directly to the Hospital directors, Mrs. Drita Gjergji and Mr. Ahmet Asslani. They expressed their gratitude to Italy for supporting the local population since 1999 to forge a better future in Kosovo.

The Multinational Battle Group (MNBG-W), situated in Pejë/Pec, at “Villaggio Italia” Camp, includes about 650 soldiers from Italy, Slovenia, Austria and Moldavia. They promote the development of CIMIC projects, under the United Nation 1244 Resolution to demonstrate KFOR’s “Enduring Commitment”.

Cpt Fabio G. Capriati  
OF-2 ITA ARMY



PICTURE: OR-4 Antonio Tommaso CALO' (4)

# "EQUALITY FOR WOMEN HAS MEANT PROGRESS FOR ALL"

## INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY KFOR HQ

*Major General Salvatore Cuoci, KFOR Commander, on Thursday, March 08, celebrated International Women's Day with KFOR civilian and military personnel at Camp Film City. The event, hosted by COM KFOR, was attended by the majority of female staff in the Camp along with their male colleagues. The event was coordinated by Fitore Berisha in the Gender Advisor (GENAD) office.*

Capt Suzette Cox (USA), KFOR GENAD, was the master of ceremonies at the International Women's Day event where she welcomed everyone to the event, highlighting the importance of achieving equality for women and girls 'not simply because it is a matter of fairness and fundamental human rights, but because progress in so many other areas depends on it'. The facts demonstrate that countries with more gender equality have better economic growth. Many companies with women leaders and in leadership roles perform better. Peace agreements that include women are more durable as they are more collaborative and representative of all sides involved in the conflict. Parliaments with more women enact more legislation on key social issues such as health,



education, anti-discrimination and child support.

Denik Prizreni, supported by Artan Rexhepi provided entertainment to the audience present. Mr Prizreni, a classically trained singer from

Prizern, sang a range of songs in Albanian, Croatian, English, Italian and Serbian which enthralled all those attending the event.

Maj. Gen. Salvatore Cuoci noted that this was the 107th celebration



PICTURE: OR-4 Castellaneta Filippo (2)





PICTURE: OR-4 Castellianeta Filippo (2)

of International Women's Day. The day has evolved from a number of origins, but the current date, March 8th, is generally associated with women gaining suffrage in Soviet Russia in 1917. March 8th became a national holiday thereafter in Soviet Russia and was celebrated in communist countries and by the socialist movement until it was adopted by the UN in 1975. Despite the fact that one of the earliest Women's Day observance, called "National Woman's Day," was held on February 28th, 1909 in New York, organised by the Socialist Party of America, International Women's Day is not a noted event in many parts of the United States.

COM KFOR commented that it is not necessarily a day for celebrating women, but rather for celebrating human beings achieving equal rights, side by side. It is only a matter of time before the position of COM KFOR is filled by a woman. Already, Admiral Michelle Howard served as a former Commander of JFC Naples. Women following the motto of KFOR XXII – Enduring Commitment – are working to perform in difficult conditions in KFOR. Maj Gen Cuoci, highlighted to the audience that it is a team effort and despite our diversity as human beings, we must support each other as peers. It must be recognised today that inequalities exist and women must be supported to have the same



rights as others. 'We must call to substantiate the rights of women in the world'. An important key fact to take into account is that, we as soldiers must take care of what we do during war. We must take care of women and prevent them from becoming victims during a war. COM KFOR concluded by calling on all present to celebrate the success of women. 'Women's success is everybody's success'.

Comdt. Michael Cullen  
OF-3 IRL ARMY



## ON FIRE FOR SAFETY

*The fire brigade of the German KFOR Contingent practices for emergencies on a regular basis. In mid-February, they conducted a fire safety assistant training. By the time they were done, all trainees were “on fire” for the job.*



*One aspect of the training: how to save a person on fire. (Source: PAO DEUCON KFOR/Daniel W.)*

All over the world, fire fighters are regarded as heroes – and rightfully so. With bravery and courage they are prepared to throw themselves into the flames to save others. Additionally, they are real all-rounders. Extinguishing fires is not their only job. They also engage in recovery, rescue and protection activities. Fortunately, Camp Prizren has not yet had an emergency of that nature thanks to fire prevention. Nevertheless, the fire brigade is committed to train regularly and pass their knowledge on to others, so that everyone is prepared should disaster strike. The fire safety assistant training conducted in Camp Prizren

in mid-February was both practice-oriented and informative.

Training began under the scrutiny of Lieutenant Colonel Christian Kiesel, the Commander of the 49th German KFOR Contingent. “This valuable training will benefit you personally,” the Commander said, wishing the participants success. Immediately after, the action started.

Bjoern W. (OR-6) is a Fire Safety NCO and the person in charge of fire safety at Camp Prizren. “What should I not use on burning grease?” he asked the 17 fire safety assistants. The answer: “No water and no foam either.” The

best choice is to cover the fire with a blanket or a lid or baking tray in case of a burning pot. This immediately starves the fire of needed oxygen. Fire safety experts warn that water in particular accelerates such fires and even causes explosions. To make sure that everybody was aware of the problem, they gave a presentation using a basin for controlled burning. This demonstrated very realistically how dangerous burning grease or fat can be.

At the same time, the training was an opportunity to practice the proper handling of fire extinguishers. Every participant had to extinguish a





*Full on action – the fire safety training was a hot deal. (Source: PAO DEUCON KFOR/Daniel W.)*

flaming basin that had been prepared by the fire brigade. While his fellow soldiers were busy demonstrating how to save a burning person with a blanket a couple of metres away, OR-6 Bjoern W. stated “Due to the practice-oriented nature of the training, we managed to successfully demonstrate and practice proper handling of handheld fire extinguishers.”

At the end, OR-6 Bjoern W. announced that there were plans to conduct further training similar to this in the 49th Contingent. “I recommend everybody get trained in using handheld fire extinguishers,” the fire safety expert added. Fire safety is everybody’s business and when an emergency happens it is best to be prepared. OR-8 Christian D. with the Signals

Platoon called on his fellow soldiers: “I suggest that everybody take part in this hands-on training.” The training was educational indeed, but it was also an experience that left everybody fired up!

Author: Dritan Hoti  
Photos: Daniel W.





# A VISUAL OVERVIEW



16 FEB 2018  
KFOR Commander, Major General Salvatore Cuoci, met MG Timothy E. Orr, Adjutant General for the Iowa National Guard, at Camp "Film City" NATO KFOR Headquarters.



16 FEB 2018  
KFOR Commander, Major General Salvatore Cuoci, received the visit of MG Ferenc Korom Commander Hungarian Joint Forces Command, at KFOR Headquarters.



26 FEB 2018  
KFOR Commander, Major General Salvatore Cuoci, received the visit of H.E. Jean-Hubert Lebet Ambassador of Switzerland to Kosovo, at KFOR Headquarters.

PICTURE: OR-4 Roberto Nola

PICTURE: OR-4 Castellaneta Filippo (2)



# A VISUAL OVERVIEW



01 MAR 2018  
KFOR Commander, Major General Salvatore Cuoci, met Gen. Bjorn I. Bisserup, Chief of Staff of the Danish Defence Forces, at Camp "Film City" NATO KFOR Headquarters.



08 MAR 2018  
KFOR Commander, Major General Salvatore Cuoci, received the visit of LGT Aldo C. Schellenberg Chief of Joint Operations Command and Deputy Chief the Swiss Armed Forces, at KFOR Headquarters.



13 MAR 2018  
KFOR Commander, Major General Salvatore Cuoci, received the visit of H.E. Ms. Marija Pejcinovic Buric Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign and European Affairs of the Republic of Croatia, at KFOR Headquarters.

PICTURE: OR-4 Castellaneta Filippo (2)

PICTURE: OR-4 Roberto Nola



# CAMP KODRA

## COMMUNICATION ZONE SOUTH - COMMZ(S)

*The city of Thessaloniki, built by King Kassandros in 315 BC, was named after the king's wife, sister of Alexander the Great. To this day, it has maintained a military connection and throughout its history it has always been a major economic, industrial, commercial and cultural centre. For Greece and south-eastern Europe it is a major transportation hub, notably through the Port of Thessaloniki.*

For KFOR, Communication Zone South COMMZ(S), situated in Camp Kodra the only KFOR Unit in Greece, continues to provide this military connection, but more importantly key logistical support. Camp Kodra is located in Kalamaria Thessaloniki. The camp has existed since 1915 when it staged French Forces during World War I. It was a NATO base from 1973 for Allied Forces South Advance Command Post. COMMZ(S) has operated in Camp Kodra since 1999 during the early stages and the very beginning of the KFOR Mission.

COMMZ(S) is a branch of JLSG HQ KFOR. Colonel Christos Oikonomidis (GRC A) is currently serving as the unit Commander leading a staff of four Greek officers and a civilian employee



PICTURE: Afrim Hjarullahu (2)

who assist him in all the activities of COMMZ(S). The officers of COMMZ(S) have to be very efficient and proficient in all activities, due to the small number of personnel manning the unit.

The main activities of COMMZ(S) are to liaise and facilitate the provision of engineering, medical support, communication (NATO and Public classified and unclassified), fuel, energy, security,





accommodation, transit and cargo transport support to all KFOR contingents. The considerable capabilities of Hellenic Host Nation Support are available to KFOR mission. They can support all classes of equipment and services such as accommodation, transportation, refuelling, staging, recovery and force protection. COMMZ(S) leads and coordinates the reception, staging and movement of KFOR contingents and their equipment through Thessaloniki, by Air, Sea, Road and Rail. While COMMZ (S) is located in Thessaloniki, it can also liaise with other ports in Greece, namely Igoumenitsa and Volos. Additionally it engages with the International airport in Thessaloniki. The APOD is a contingency in the event of unsuitable weather conditions in Kosovo. There are multiple options and locations to provide logistical support to KFOR through Greece. In 1999, COMMZ(S) was established to assist with the deployment of KFOR troops to Kosovo through Thessaloniki and thus began the strong connection between KFOR and Camp KODRA. Through the liaison and coordination of COMMZ(S), more than 180,000 service members, accompanying equipment and supplies have been successfully moved through Greece taking advantage of the country's vast transportation capabilities and the largest port in the Balkans. The logistical assets used to move these troops and equipment have been considerable. For all these reasons, Camp KODRA can be considered "the breathing heart" of KFOR support in Greece. The 19 year of uninterrupted knowledge and experience is constantly available. COMMZ(S) played a key role in the redeployment of the



PICTURE: Afrim Hjarulahu(4)



Portuguese Forces through the port of Thessaloniki, in May 2017 and also for the debarkation of a US helicopter in the port and its direct flight to Kosovo in November 2017. Camp KODRA is ideally located halfway between the airport and the seaport. The camp site can be accessed by road and the movement to and from the city airport and seaport is very easy.

The Camp infrastructure is maintained at a very high standard and it can accommodate about 40 personnel providing all kinds of services (food, gym, Wi-Fi internet, refuelling) and has two state of the art conference rooms. Both KFOR and JFC Naples use the excellent conference facilities to conduct meetings.

The personnel in Camp KODRA are always available to welcome KFOR in Thessaloniki, to support and supply KFOR movements, host personnel and introduce KFOR contingents to Greek hospitality. Last but not least Camp Kodra is the gateway to downtown Thessaloniki. KFOR MWA regularly conducts tours to Thessaloniki and KFOR personnel can arrange accommodation in Camp KODRA. Thessaloniki is the second biggest city and market in Greece, offering great opportunities and a vast range of supplies and services for KFOR. Thessaloniki and its surrounding cities are excellent and offer lots of opportunities for cultural and historical recreation. Every corner of the city is a living history stretching back to ancient Greece, Alexander the Great, the Romans, the Byzantine Empire, and through to the modern Greek and European history. Modern Thessaloniki is fascinating with lots of choices for good food, shopping and night life. The personnel of the Camp



can assist you with suggestions for places to visit and ensure you have an enjoyable stay.

Now that you know the heart of KFOR in Greece is Communication Zone South in Camp KODRA you can plan your movements with full Hellenic support, stay there, conduct your conferences and experience the excellent Greek hospitality and culture. The officers and civilians of COMMZ(S) are

devoted to the KFOR mission. Col Oikonomidis and his staff provide excellent service and support. Find out for yourself.

Comdt. Michael Cullen  
OF-3 IRL ARMY



# KFOR CHRONICLE ANNUAL PHOTOGRAPHY AWARD CEREMONY 2018



The winners of the KFOR Chronicle Photography Competition received their prizes at an award ceremony on the 9th of March 2018, at the Public Affairs Office in Camp Film City. Col Vincenzo Grasso, Chief Public Affairs Office, presented the recipients with their certificates and prizes.

Prizes and certificates were awarded to 1st, 2nd and 3rd place.

**1st Prize** OR-9 Danut Balan (Romania)  
**3TB Hard Drive**  
**2nd Prize** OR-1 Matej Azbe (Slovenia)  
**2TB Hard Drive**  
**3rd Prize** Sec Ryan L Williams (USA)  
**1TB Hard Drive**

Certificates were presented to those who received honourable mention.

**OR-5 Adam Szabo (Hun)**  
**OR-4 Antonio Tommaso Calo (ITA)**  
**OF-3 Sven Blaschke (DEU).**

A new initiative to award T-Shirts to the winners of the KFOR Chronicle Photo of the Month competition was launched at the prize giving ceremony. MWA have generously provided funding for the special T-Shirt each month commencing from January 2018.

*The winners for January and February were:*  
**January, OR-7 Szilvester Szabados (HUN)**  
**February, OR-9 George Griffin (IRL).**

We would like to thank all the participants for taking part in the competition and throughout the year. We look forward to seeing the new photographs each month.

The KFOR Chronicle Team





# KFOR HSG - OUR SERVICES DURING 2017

## Moral and Welfare Activities

With a total of 3,446 Participants  
45 Trips outside Kosovo  
69 Trips inside Kosovo  
Language Lessons, 2,887 Participants  
Fitness classes, 1,566 Participants

Summer Festival  
New Year Event

Issued more than 1,000,000 litres of diesel  
Approved 2,700 Vehicle Requests  
Provided drivers for 400 of them  
Manages, Repairs, and Maintains 176 KFOR Transport  
Washed 2,300 cars  
Trained more than 50 Drivers

Film City Meals 663,299  
Nothing Hill Meals 128,185  
Total Meals 791,484  
Ecolog Personnel 78

122 ASDA Personnel  
Quality Assurance  
Health & Safety Issues  
Maintenance  
Repair of Living Quarters  
Camp Cleaning

70,000 users / NATO GYM  
Multifunctional Tent  
Beach Volleyball

Guard Force 24/7/365  
APOD Guard 24/7/365  
7,500 ID Cards issued  
3,500 Security Clearances

Fire Training - 688 participants  
Fire alarm activations 194  
Building inspections everyday

Library  
DVDs  
Cinema  
Games Room  
Pool Room, Dart Room  
Internet in Film City  
TV in Film City  
End of Tour Awards



You too play an important part with your comment cards and survey responses



HSG HIERARCHY OF NEEDS

**HSG PROJECTS**  
Improvement work at main gate  
Renovation of DFAC and kitchen  
Renovation of Accommodation  
New Guard Building at main gate  
New Guard Towers

975 Beds  
10,000 Items in the Warehouse



# Soldier of the Month

**Name:** Artur Klusek

**Rank:** Senior Corporal  
(OR-4)

**Nationality:** Polish

**Unit:** Manoeuvre  
Company



**Military Education:** I joined the Army in 2004 and completed regular basic military training. My first brigade was the 1st Warsaw Armoured Brigade and I served there for one year. I joined the Military Gendarmerie Special Unit in 2007 when I was 25 years old. I completed basic training in 2007, the course lasted 1 month. In 2013, I graduated from NCO school, it was a six-month course and I was promoted to the 1st NCO rank – corporal. I was deployed to the Military Gendarmerie Training Centre in 2015 and I did 1st and 2nd level English courses. I was promoted to lance corporal. Since 2017 I have been serving as a deputy section commander in the Military Gendarmerie Special Unit in Mińsk Mazowiecki.

**About the Mission:** I was deployed to Bosnia and Herzegovina in 2007 where I spent 6 months. In 2008 I served in Lebanon for 7 months. After that in 2012, I was in Islamic Republic of Afghanistan for 8 months and in 2014 I was in Central African Republic. At present I am in Kosovo, I have been here since November 2017. I am deputy section commander and I report to a section commander. I am responsible for my soldiers, their good shape and readiness to perform tasks. During this mission I have met many interesting people from all over Europe. Although it is a different mission from those I served before, it gives me a lot of satisfaction.

**Family Reaction:** I am married. My wife's name is Aneta and I have a son Antoni. I would like to thank my wife and son for everything. Despite my difficult career and constant separation caused by military service, they have great patience and an even bigger hearts.

**Hobbies:** I am one of those people who have many interests and cannot turn to only one of them. I am interested in shooting, sport and I like reading books but my favourite hobby is spending time with my family.



# WINTER OLYMPICS – THE KFOR CONNECTION

Major Eric Lacasse is part of J6 KFOR, and during February he travelled to the Winter Olympics in South Korea to meet his spouse Edna and to support the Canadian Women's Canadian Hockey Team. Genevieve Lacasse, his daughter, is one of the three goaltenders for the Canadian Women's Ice Hockey team. This was Genevieve's second Olympics and her team number is 31. She participated at the Sochi Olympics in 2014, where Canada won gold. During the Olympics in February she played in goals for one game against the USA and she had an outstanding performance. She saved 44 attempts out of 45 shots on goal in this preliminary round game. In a normal game the goaltender should receive about 25 shots. Canada won the game 2-1. The rivalry between Canada and the USA in Women's Ice Hockey is unmatched as they are the only teams in the world to have won the gold medal since the sport was introduced into the Olympics in 1998. The intensity of this rivalry is evident in the picture of a scrimmage that occurred during the last two minutes of the game, as the US players charged the Canadian net, attempting to put the goaltender off her game. In the resulting melee, Genevieve's helmet was taken off her head and she reacted as any hockey player would!

At the opening ceremony of the Olympics, Genevieve took the time to meet the Kosovo Olympic contingent because her father is currently serving with KFOR. She met Milaim Kelmendi, the President of the Ski Federation of the Republic of Kosovo and Albin Tahiri a skier representing his country at the Winter Olympics in PyeongChang.

Genevieve Lacasse is an outstanding athlete and ice hockey goal keeper. She became a goaltender as her brothers always put her in net when they played road hockey in the summer and ice hockey in the winter. In her rookie season, 2013, with the Boston Blades she became the first goaltender in 10 years to lead the Canadian Women's Hockey League in all six goaltending statistical categories. "There are many great goalies in this league. It is an honour to be up there with them. I had no expectations and that helps as well" Genevieve



commented at the time, displaying a sense of modesty to match her natural talents.

However, it is not just natural talent that has allowed her to achieve her success in ice hockey. While completing an undergraduate degree in marketing at Providence







College, she played in goal during those four years for the college's ice hockey team. She had actually left Canada at age 17 for the United States to finish her school, prior to college, in order to focus on becoming a professional ice hockey player. She remained in Providence College to complete the MBA programme. During this time she became the assistant coach to the women's college hockey team which involved training the goalies and providing logistical support. At the same time as completing her MBA, she was playing for the Boston Blades which required completing a 100 mile trip twice a week for training and playing games for the Blades at the weekend. She was also attending training camps with the Canadian national team and was aiming to be the first choice goaltender for the Sochi Olympics in 2014. She is the first Providence College player to be selected for the Canadian national team.

Genevieve is very proud of her family's military background. Her mother also served in the military for a short period of time. Her brother Alexandre and his wife Jennifer are both in the Canadian Air Force. They are stationed in Central Canada in Winnipeg. Alexandre and Jennifer and their eldest son Ethan also went to South Korea to support Genevieve and her teammates. In the Lacasse family, Genevieve is known as the General because she has the biggest Maple Leaf on her uniform, similar to the Canadian military generals.

Eric has over 32 years of military service completed, and this is his fifth overseas deployment. He has also completed overseas tours to Somalia, Rwanda, Afghanistan, Israel/West Bank and now Kosovo. Genevieve recalls fondly that while he was on his tour of duty to Afghanistan, during her freshman year, he returned home to surprise her at one of her hockey matches. It is a very special memory for her.

In 2016, she took part in an expedition to the North

Pole alongside national teammate Caroline Ouellette and a group of Canadian soldiers and businessmen. They completed the 120km journey in six days, raising money for research into Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder [PTSD]. Ice hockey helmets for goaltenders are individually designed. Genevieve always requests to have a 'Support the Troops' yellow ribbon on the back of her helmet because of her family connection with the military.

Unfortunately, Canada did not win the gold medal at the winter Olympics losing to the USA in the final. Genevieve was not selected for that game, but she has displayed resilience and perseverance in the past when being dropped from the Canadian Team in 2016. She had a month off at that time and worked hard to make it back on the team for 2018. We hope that she achieves her goal to be first choice goaltender for the 2022 Olympics.



Genevieve's message wherever she travels to is that she is proud to be a Canadian, and she likes to encourage children to get an education and to play sports. In the weeks after the Olympics, she is visiting schools in Canada where she is not just a role model for young girls, but also for any young person, sporting or otherwise, who has a dream. She likes to see the good in everyone and believes that it is important to have fun. She says 'Always have the dream in sight, but have fun in doing what you're supposed to be doing. Imagine having fun with that focus in mind. You'll be unstoppable.'

Comdt. Michael Cullen  
OF-3 IRL ARMY



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Printed by "Blendi"  
Tel.: 044 149 115

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## **PICTURES OF THE MONTH** **March 2018**



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"Prizren Fortress"  
Equipment Used: Huawei P9  
Photo by: OR-6 Roland Sandor







**Name:** Anna Piedl-Luxeder

**Rank:** 1LT (OF1)

**Nationality:** Hungarian

**Unit:** KRTBN

**Military Education:** I received a bachelor's degree in Military Economy and Supply at Zrínyi Miklós National Defense University (now: National University of Public Service) in 2011 which was the condition for being commissioned as a logistics officer. I started my career as a supply platoon commander in an infantry battalion. In 2014 I was assigned the task of managing multiple canteens and mess halls in Budapest, which was a great experience and learning process in procurement and financial frameworks. Currently, I am an S4 in an Infantry battalion. This year I was selected for a 3-month-long US Marine Corps Logistics Officer Course that helped me to broaden my knowledge in combat service support planning.

**About the mission:** This is my 3rd mission in Kosovo. I was the deputy company commander of the Portuguese-Hungarian Logistics Company at the former KTM in 2014. I returned in 2016 to serve as Chief S4 of KTM. Now again I am part of the S4 as Deputy Chief and my major task is to handle the budget of KTRBN. With a small team of eight, we are able to support a battalion level unit which has an important role in the theatre. It requires multilayered levels of planning and execution and the multinational environment makes it even more challenging.

**Family relations:** I consider myself a really fortunate person because even with the last busy seven years I am surrounded by many wonderful people. My husband is one that stands out. The fact that he also serves in the military can make our lives sometimes a bit complicated, but in exchange the time we are able to spend together is always epic. We are more than thankful for our family's and friends' support.

**Hobbies:** I have tried many sports because physical fitness is not just a military requirement but also of personal interest. Yoga is my ultimate favourite. It's more of a lifestyle that has an impact on my everyday decisions. I also love good music, books, food and series in foreign languages to maintain my language skills.



**NAME:** Zotea Denis

**RANK:** OR-7

**NATIONALITY:** Moldovan

**UNITY:** 22nd Peace Keeping Battalion

**Military education:** I joined the Republic of Moldova 22nd Peace Keeping Battalion in 2014. I started my career in the Moldovan Army as gunner and later I became a team leader. I attended the Junior Commander Leadership course and I was promoted to Warrant Officer becoming Deputy Platoon Commander. I speak two languages fluently: Russian and English.

**About the mission:** This is my first mission. I have been assigned for the next 6 months as Team Leader in an Infantry platoon in a company of the Multinational Battle Group West. I think it is a huge opportunity to discover a new environment, working together with people who come from other nations. My aim is to improve my military skills and to make a great contribution to maintaining peace in the region.

**Family relations:** I am married and I have a wonderful daughter, Beatrice, who is 9 months old. My family and my parents know very well how difficult it is to manage due to my absence on this mission abroad. But we support each other every day by a phone call or a video call. Every father in the world is happy when his daughter smiles. I am very proud of my family and they have the same feeling for me.

**Hobby:** I love all sports. I like to go to the gym and to play football with all my friends, including my brothers in arms.



