

# KFOR Chronicle



## Exercise Silver Sabre 2019-1



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## Exercise SILVER SABRE 2019-1

**Ferizaj/Urosevac, Kosovo – Soldiers from the Multinational Battle Group - East (MNBG-E) trained with municipal workers of Ferizaj/Urosevac and representatives of several institutions in Kosovo during Exercise “Silver Sabre 19-1”, a two-day Command Post Exercise held in April from the 24-25, 2019.**

The aim of this exercise is to test and provide advice for improving the capacities of the municipality of Ferizaj/Urosevac in applying their National Response Plan (NRP) and/or their local Standard Operating Procedures during a natural disaster. This is the first-time exercise Silver Sabre was conducted at the municipal level and the scenario focused on heavy rains, which led to flooding from the Nerodimje/Nerodimka River. It involved the coordination between all elements of outside organizations namely European Union Rule of Law Mission (EULEX), Emergency Management Agency (EMA), Kosovo Security Council (KSC), Kosovo Security Force (KSF)



and Kosovo Police (KP).

The citizens of Ferizaj/Urosevac are no strangers to natural disasters. Flooding due to heavy rain or wild-fires caused by dry heat conditions require a well-rehearsed response by municipality leaders to effectively minimize damage to property and maintain safety for all citizens.

Lt Col Kawakawi was appointed as the officer conducting the exercise, he had the responsibility for coordinating all aspects of the planning and execution of this exercise, building on lessons learnt of previous exercises while dealing with





## Exercise SILVER SABRE 2019-1



the demanding challenges of this new Flooding related exercise. "Throughout my life in the State of Hawaii, we've experienced a multitude of naturally caused emergencies due to heavy rains, hurricanes, tsunamis, earthquakes and volcanic eruptions," said U.S. Army Lt. Col. Kawakami, 29th Infantry Brigade Combat Team, Hawaii Army National Guard. "Being in the Hawaii Army National Guard, we conduct an annual hurricane exercise called Makani Pahili. This helped me with the operational design for the crisis management scenario for the Municipality of Ferizaj/Urosevac".

"Establishing an Emergency Operations Center (EOC) is a new concept to them versus an incident command

post that they are accustomed to," Kawakami said. In order to improve and provide feed-back, observer controller, trainers (OCTs) were assigned to municipal workers and representatives of institutions in Kosovo. U.S. Army Capt. Kyle Miyahana, Silver Sabre Core Planner & OCT, worked hand-in-hand with the municipality's operations section.

"We're the facilitators," said Miyahana. "We are giving the training to them. We're showing them a way they could use to track and respond to an emergency, and implement the U.S. Army way of running a command post exercise."

The Army National Guard OCTs drew from personal experiences as civilian police officers, fire-fighters and medical first-responders. Other OCTs shared experiences from serving in similar military capacity as the municipal workers they were paired with.

Throughout the two-day exercise a series of training problems known as "injects" occurred during the exercise. The injects create challenging scenarios that the EOC address and provide a tool of measurement on communication, coordination and cooperation for the OCTs to evaluate on. In addition to injects, the exercise included a mock press conference, which was the culminating event. The event enlisted the help of journalism students from AAB College in Prishtina/





## KFOR



Pristina, Kosovo. Three students participated as role-players acting as journalists and interviewed Arben Halili, acting deputy mayor during the exercise.

Commander of Kosovo Forces Maj. Gen. Lorenzo D'Addario, senior leaders of institutions in Kosovo and other distinguished visitors observed as Mr. Halili provided an update on the situation. The Mayor of Ferizaj/Urosevac Municipality Agim Aliu also shared his thoughts regarding the training. "I really feel privileged that as the municipality, our citizens thank you for these three days specifically," said Mayor Agim Aliu. *"On the critical day of simulation, yesterday we had 24 hours of high-vigilance."*

Exercise Silver Sabre demonstrates how the effective response of a well-prepared emergency operations

center can be the pivotal point between managing an incident with minimal disruption or utter chaos. "The success of the exercise was mainly due to the hard work and preparation done by everyone and especially the Municipality of Ferizaj/Urosevac and the EOC 112 Gjilan/Gjilani," said Kawakami. This is the first installment of the Silver Sabre exercise in 2019 with its second installment scheduled for later this year.

Capt. Darren Taylor,  
OF-2 US-A  
117th Public Affairs Detachment  
MNBG-E



## CHANGE OF COMMAND CEREMONY

# HSG



***“Change your leaves, keep intact your roots”, are words that described the Headquarter Support Group (HSG) Change of Command ceremony which took place between Col. David Goulding and Col. Mark Hearn of the Irish Defence Forces on Saturday, April 28 2019.***

Troops of the HSG lined out in the multi-functional tent in Camp Film City (CFC) to mark the end of Col Goulding’s six month tour of duty as the HSG’s Commander in KFOR. The Change of Command Ceremony was presided over by DCOM KFOR, Brig. Gen. Ruckenstein.

The soldiers on parade were drawn from the 12 different nations which represented the 167 personnel of the HSG. RSM Tom Mahon was I/C of the Flag Party that marched the HSG colours on parade. The troops on parade were reviewed by KFOR Commander Maj. Gen. D’Addario. The ceremony was attended by many guests, both military and civilian, who were there to support the Change of Command and to wish Col. Goulding the best of luck in his future career.

Col. Goulding opened his address

to the audience with a “cead mile failte”, which in his native Irish language is one hundred thousand welcomes. He expressed his sincere thanks by saying, “the Headquarters Support Group is an incredible unit and a most rewarding place to work, with 12 different nations the composition of experience, expertise and variance of culture could not be more diverse. As HSG Commander, my job was incredibly easy because I have an exceptionally talented and loyal band of men and women, civilian and military.” He had a feeling of nostalgia on leaving a family that he had lived with for the last 6 months but also happiness at going home to his family in Ireland. He thanked Maj. Gen. D’Addario, Brig. Gen. Ruckenstein and Brig. Gen. Boyd for their leadership, guidance and support that they afforded him during his deployment in KFOR.

DCOM KFOR Brig. Gen. Ruckenstein, responded to Col. Goulding’s speech by acknowledging his outstanding work and stating that the work carried out by the HSG can be described as the “guts” in the Human Body. “The wellbeing of every human depends essentially

on the status of the guts” and the HSG’s commanders responsibility covers all the needs of the KFOR troops in Camp Film City. He acknowledged Col. Goulding’s achievements in particular managing of the accommodation projects in the Camp. He recognised “Dave’s legacy is a big footprint here in Camp Film City and among KFOR” and he also took the opportunity to welcome the incoming Commander Col. Hearn to the job, stating that he envisaged that the HSG will soon be called “Hearn Support Group”.

The ceremony concluded with the traditional passing of the HSG Colours from Col Goulding, outgoing HSG Commander to



the incoming HSG Commander, Col. Hearn. This represented the formal and symbolic transfer of authority and responsibility between the two commanders. We wish Col. Hearn the best of luck for his tour ahead in KFOR.

OF-3 Comdt Joanne Naughton  
IRL-A  
PAO Chief Internal Information

## CHANGE OF COMMAND CEREMONY

## SWISSCON



**In a ceremony presided over by COMKFOR Major General D'Addario, the Transfer of Authority took place between the Commander of 39 SWISSCON Colonel General Staff Christophe Chollet and the Contingent Commander of Swisscoy Contingent 40, Colonel General Staff Xaver Sailer on 11 April 2019.**

In his opening remarks, Col (OF-5) Chollet welcomed HE Jean-Hubert Lebet, Swiss Ambassador to Kosovo, Lt. Gen Aldo C. Schellenberg, Chief Joint Operations, the KFOR Command Group, Contingent SNR's, guests and the soldiers of both 39 and 40 Swisscoy Contingents, addressing the latter as "my dear bees", an allusion to how hard they worked during the mission. Recalling the day of 11 October 2018 when

39 Swisscoy stood in the same spot at the beginning of their tour of duty, he remembered that the 38 SWISSCON were the experienced ones while the 39 Swisscoy Contingent stood at their side, maybe feeling a little bit intimidated by 38 SWISSCON's experience.

How much has changed in the interim! Col Chollet highlighted some of the events that 39 Swisscoy Contingent had witnessed during the previous six months, including the new Law on KSF transformation and the imposition of the 100% tax on Serbian goods coming into Kosovo. The Swisscoy Contingent Commander went on to say how busy the Joint Regional Detachment – North (JRD-N) were and how well the Liaison Monitoring Teams (LMT) in Mitrovica had performed, especially during periods of

heightened tension.

Col Chollet went on to mention some of the many highlights of 39 Swisscoy Contingent's tour of duty, including the two exercises of the Swiss Freedom of Movement Detachment (FOMD) with the KFOR Tactical Reserve Battalion (KTRBN) and the many convoys that were undertaken by Swiss drivers.

Ending his address, Col Chollet told his soldiers "I've once told you in SWITZERLAND that this mission would change us. And so it has. These encounters, these meetings, have enriched us. We are going home with good memories and with more experience."

COMKFOR in his address expressed his and the rest of KFOR's appreciation for everything that 39 Swisscoy Contingent had done to ensure a Safe and Secure Environment (SASE). Major General D'Addario said that Freedom of Movement, necessary for preserving that SASE, was always guaranteed by Swiss efforts and went on to wish Col Sailer and the men and women of 40 Swisscoy Contingent the very best of luck in their mission.

*OF-3 Greg O'Keeffe  
IRL-A*

*PAO Chief Internal Information*





## MEDIA TOUR

*On 09 and 10 of April 2019 a large group of Serbian media personnel were hosted in Camp Film City by KFOR.*

The visit was coordinated with the Atlantic Council of Serbia, a body which advocates from a pro-EU and NATO integration platform (see March 2019 edition of the KFOR Chronicle) and KFOR PAO. The journalists, from Serbian traditional TV and print media outlets such as Politika, Danas, PRVA TV, RTS, Blic, Telegraf.rs, Fonet and N1 were invited to visit KFOR in order to demystify the Force's activities and give Serbian media an opportunity to ask COMKFOR Major General Lorenzo D'Addario questions, the answers to which could be used to inform the wider Serbian Community in Kosovo.

COMKFOR outlined that the KFOR mission of creating and



maintaining a Safe and Secure Environment (SASE) for all of the people of Kosovo was an essential component of creating the necessary conditions for dialogue at all levels. He was at pains to point out that both media and politicians had a huge part to play in creating perceptions

of the environment. Rhetoric and reportage can create anxiety and confusion which is often not in keeping with the reality. Events can be over-dramatised and the impact of reporting them in a certain way can lead to unwanted consequences.





## PAO



The journalists also visited Camp Bondsteel and Camp Villaggio Italia, meeting with the respective Commanders of MNBG-E and MNBG-W where COMKFOR's message that the reality on the ground is quite different to what is often reported was reiterated. Commander of MNBG-E Col. Roy Macaraeg emphasised the close cooperation his personnel had with the Serbian Armed Forces through the conduct of joint patrols, whilst MNBG-W Commander Col Di Marco mentioned the excellent relationship his troops have with the people in Serb-majority municipalities in his area of responsibility. The media were given a practical demonstration of this when visiting the Serb-majority village of Gorazdevac/Gorazhdec where they witnessed a Liaison Monitoring Team (LMT) interact with the villagers.

The media tour went on to visit Decani Monastery, a significant holy place for Serbs and the only remaining site where KFOR is First Responder in case of incident. A later visit to Budisavici Monastery where Kosovo Police (KP) provide security let the journalists see that there was no difference in the SASE provided and people could be assured that both sites were equally safe.

Media tours such as this are an excellent way of dispelling pre-conceived notions and go a long way towards building trust between KFOR and all the communities in Kosovo.

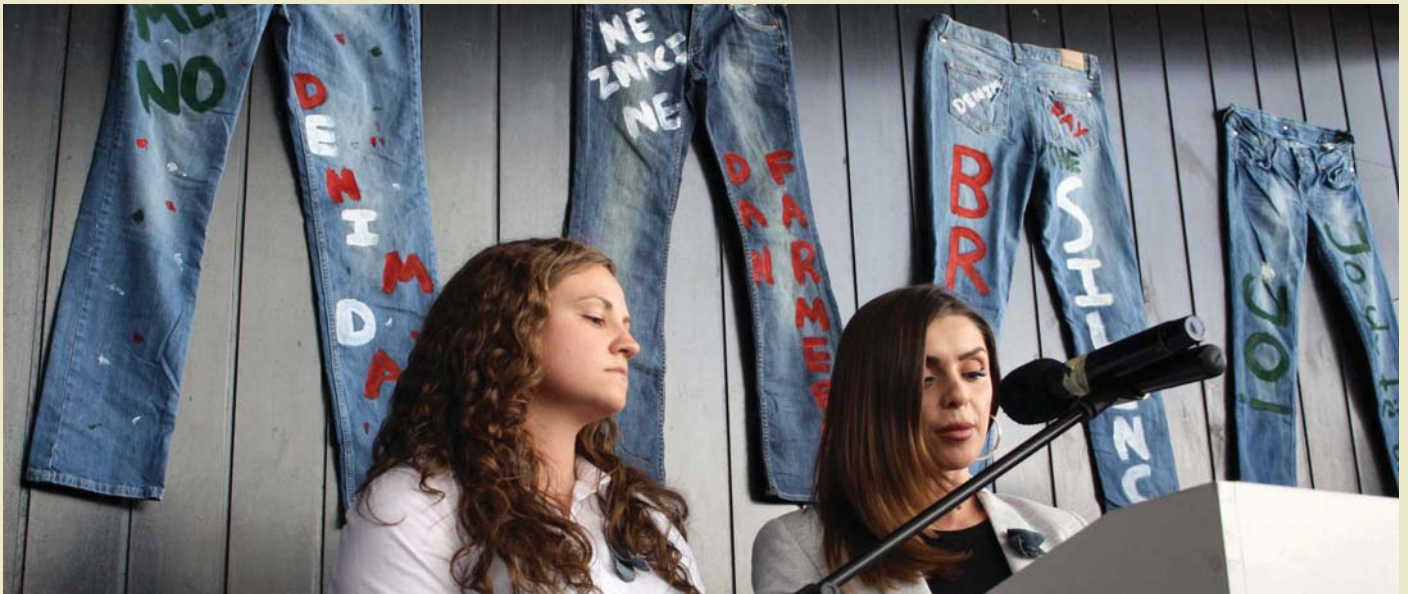
OF-3 Greg O'Keeffe  
PAO Chief Internal Information  
IRL-A





## DENIM DAY

# JRD-SE



***On the sunny afternoon of the 24 APR, JRD-SE hosted an event in close cooperation with the Director of Youth Sport and Culture, the Director of Clinics, the Director of Viti/Vitina and Klokot/Klokot and some civil societies called "Denim Day" at the VITINA Cultural Center.***

The purpose of the conference was to focus on awareness of sexual assault and domestic violence. The aim of this event is to help motivate victims to come forward and report incidents of rape and/or domestic violence. The Women's Shelter in Gjilan/Gnjilane takes any cases from Viti/Vitina, while the Women's Shelter in Artana/Novo Bordo covering cases from Klokot.

The event was widely supported with an impressive turnout of 150 personnel. In attendance at the event was Milot Lala, Vjollca Kadolli, members of the Kosovo Police, Col Macaraeg, Col Perrone and Lt.Col Kilbride. After the opening speeches, a short film on human trafficking was played and the event closed with a local

singer performing. Refreshments were served by the women of the women's shelter in Gjilan/Gnjilane and Artana/Novo Bordo.

"Denim Day" was a hugely successful event, bringing the community together to raise awareness of and to address an important issue in the lives of the everyday people of Kosovo. The high level of media coverage, Municipality participants, Civil society groups and KFOR presence signified the importance of this event that will be continued to

be supported on a yearly basis, until hopefully one day there will no longer be a need for "Denim Day". Both the Vitina and Klokot municipalities worked together for this event and were very grateful of KFOR's involvement and participation. Well done to all personnel involved in promoting "Denim Day" which was a truly beneficial event for the local communities.

*Comdt. Joanne Naughton  
OF-3 IRL-A  
Chief PAO Internal Information*





## KTRBN High Level Training



**KFOR Tactical Reserve Battalion (KTRBN) took part in three separate exercises in the middle of April and trained together with almost all stakeholders acting in Kosovo in order to maintain a safe and secure environment in the area.**

On 18 APR, KTRBN troops with the Ukrainian Freedom of Movement Detachment (FOMD) took part in a combined exercise 'JEWELLED SHIELD' to refine their capabilities with the equipment required for Crowd and Riot Control. This exercise was established to practice rapid deployments for KTRBN personnel, which were transported by helicopters to the vicinity of Besianë/Podujevo. The Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) Team from MNBG-E and the Hungarian soldiers provided the safe helicopter landing zone. On the field, Brigadier General Reinhard Ruckenstein, DCOM KFOR personally monitored the KFOR manoeuvres.

In addition Hungarian troops conducted a CRC (Crowd and Riot Control) 'FIRE PHOBIA TRAINING' on the 20 APR, by using "Molotov cocktails" as training aids to demonstrate their drills with the

MNBG-W. Hungarian and Austrian soldiers together standardised the procedures in order to be ready to react properly to petrol bombs and different CRC situations that can threaten a safe and secure environment. The Austrian soldiers successfully completed the training and further improved their own CRC capabilities.

Finally, a cross training exercise was organised by KTRBN in close cooperation with the European Union Rule of Law Mission in Kosovo (EULEX) to perform joint training in Camp Marechal de Lattre de Tassigny. The CRC training that was conducted in EX 'FIRE PHOBIA' – was practiced on 24 APR to reinforce the coordination between the units and improving

## KTRBN

their interoperability. Furthermore in accordance with the "Train the Trainer" philosophy, the Hungarian soldiers demonstrated to their Polish comrades how they can organize their own CRC exercises in the future.

The company size exercise was inspected by Brigadier General Reinhard Ruckenstein, Deputy Commander of KFOR and by Mr. Bernd Thran, EULEX Deputy Head of Mission who said: "I saw here a very high level of trained soldiers and this exercise today is a good example for the cooperation between the KFOR and the EULEX subordinate units."

The aim of these three exercises is to continue to train to the highest of standards so that we can guarantee the required capabilities to operate Kosovo wide in order to provide a safe and secure environment (SASE) and freedom of movement (FoM) for all the citizens in Kosovo.

*Lt. Csaba Búz  
OF-1 HUN-A  
KTRBN PAO*



## A VISUAL OVERVIEW



03 APR 2019

KFOR Commander Major General Lorenzo D'Addario met with H.E. Dodë Gjergji - Bishop of the Diocese Prizren-Prishtinë, at KFOR HQ.



04 APR 2019

KFOR Commander Major General Lorenzo D'Addario met with H.E. Bojan Bertoneclj Ambassador of the Republic of Slovenia to Kosovo, at KFOR HQ.



07 APR 2019

KFOR Commander Major General Lorenzo D'Addario met with M.G. Jeffrey HOLMES -the Adjutant General Tennessee National Guard, at KFOR HQ.



# COM KFOR



10 APR 2019  
KFOR Commander Major General Lorenzo D'Addario hosted Mr. Hashim Thaqi, at KFOR HQ.



24 APR 2019  
KFOR Commander Major General Lorenzo D'Addario welcomed H.E. Evangelos Apostolakis -Minister of National Defence of Greece on his visit to KFOR HQ.



24 APR 2019  
KFOR Commander Major General Lorenzo D'Addario welcomed B.G. Kenneth E. Brandt Chief Chaplain, Army National Guard Arlington, Virginia to KFOR HQ.

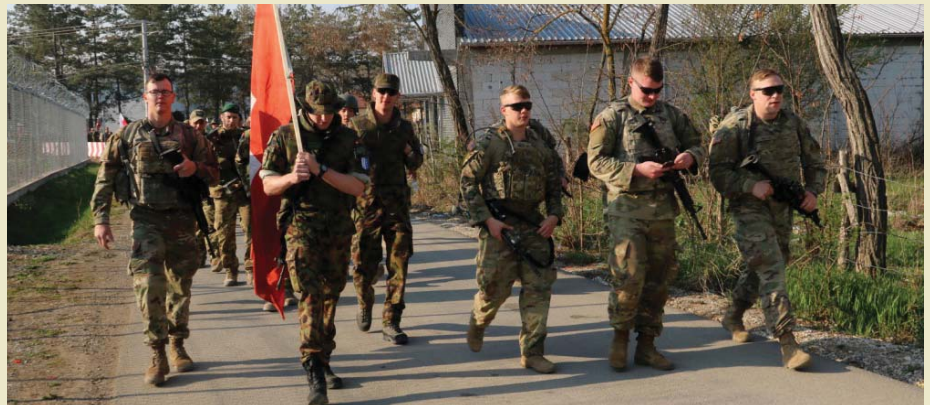


## DANCON March

*The famous and popular “DANCON March” events were held for the second time this year at Camp Maréchal de Lattre de Tassigny on 07 and 21 APR, with incredible support of approx 400 participants at each event.*

The DANCON March was held for the first time in 1972 in Cyprus. Since then, it has been part of the Danish International Operations and has been conducted in Cyprus, Bosnia, Kosovo, Iraq, Afghanistan, Croatia, Lebanon, Eritrea, Kuwait, Sudan and UAE and has even been held on a navy ship at sea in the Mediterranean. The first DANCON March in Kosovo was held in August 1999. The Danish Defence Forces invite allies and friends to participate in their tradition march with their focus on building bonds and relationships. Though the core function of the march still remains the same, to challenge and assess the physical preparedness of troops in a challenging and timed route march.

This month's Marches were in the format of the traditional 25km March carrying a weight of 10kgs in military attire. The Marches had ideal weather conditions of between 10-18 degrees and remained sunny and dry for the duration. The first march hosted an impressive attendance of 415, with another large support of 367 participants on 21 APR. The marches combined KFOR soldiers from 21 different nations, as well as EULEX officers and a small number of KSF soldiers. The main aim of the march was to focus on building relations and creating a good event



to strengthen bonds between all KFOR nations, EULEX and KSF participants.

The route itself featured a 25km ruck march in the terrain north of Camp Maréchal de Lattre de Tassigny (CMLT) in Novo Selo. The steep incline at the half-way mark proved challenging for many, and demonstrated the participant's true determination and high physical fitness levels having to overcome up to 650 meter heights along mainly asphalt roads.

Funds raised by the March are used to support Danish Veterans as well as local charities. The Danish Defence Forces have been gathering funds to donate to a local organization called “Let's do it Kosova”. This organization deals with raising awareness and organizing events in

order to help clean the environment of Kosovo.

Congratulations to all the participants who took part in the truly beneficial DANCON Marches and to the Danish Platoon for organizing such enjoyable and successful events.

Comdt. Joanne Naughton  
OF-3 IRL-A

PAO Chief Internal Information





## CHANGE OF COMMAND CEREMONY

# JLSG



**11 April 2019 saw the Change of Command of not only one of KFOR's major components, the Joint Logistic Support Group (JLSG), but also the Austrian Contingent (AUTCON), both commanded by Col (OF-5) Shahim Bakhsh who handed over the responsibility for both Units to his successor, Col Peter Schinnerl.**

An extremely important cog in the KFOR machine, JLSG is responsible for logistical support to the mission, dealing with Explosive Remnants of War (ERW) through the delivery of Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) services, ensuring mobility through the provision of Freedom Of Movement Detachments (FOMD), transportation of KFOR personnel, engineering, fueling and many more tasks essential to KFOR operations.

Col Bakhsh began his speech by thanking his national and international colleagues from both JLSG and AUTCON for their commitment and professionalism throughout their tour of duty. Much of the work done by JLSG is behind the scenes and is almost unnoticed, only obvious if there has been a failure to perform. This never happened due to the

dedication shown by JLSG and AUTCON personnel from the outset of their mission. The JLSG Commander ended his speech by welcoming Col Schinnerl and wished him the best of luck in his mission of Commanding both JLSG and AUTCON in the coming weeks and months.

In his address, DCOM KFOR Brigadier General Rheinhard Ruckensteinl noted the Austrian Army is contributing to the KFOR mission since the very beginning, with a commitment that has never wavered. Austria is the largest non-NATO Contingent in KFOR and one of the largest Troop Contributing Nations (TCN) in the entire Area Of Operations (AOO). In acknowledging that commitment, DCOM stated that

"a lot of things have improved but at any time a spark can reignite the flame; this is why KFOR is still necessary for ensuring safety and security in Kosovo." Addressing Col Bakhsh and his troops, DCOM told them "with your and your soldier's dedication we were able to strengthen KFOR's perception of being the only legitimate, credible and capable military force in KOSOVO".

Brigadier General Ruckensteinl went on to recognize the difficult task that Col Bakhsh had in commanding a vital component such as JLSG as well as leading the Austrian Contingent and wished Col Schinnerl and his Contingent well in continuing the excellent work of their predecessors.

The ceremony ended with the symbolic handover of flags between Col Bakhsh and Col Schinnerl, signifying the Transfer of Authority to the new Commander of both JLSG and AUTCON. The best of luck to both from the rest of the KFOR family!

*Comdt. Greg O'Keeffe  
OF-3 IRL-A*

*PAO Chief Internal Information*



## CHANGE OF COMMAND CEREMONY

# CANCON



***On 16 April 2019, the day finally arrived when some of the KFOR personnel who live farthest away from Kosovo got to move a little nearer home! The Transfer of Authority between the Commanders of 19 and 20 Canadian Rotations (ROTO) took place at Canada House, presided over by COMKFOR Major General Lorenzo D'Addario and attended by the colleagues and many friends of the Canadian Contingent.***

The Commander of 19 Canadian Rotation Lt Col (OF-4) Andre Delhommeau began proceedings by touching on a subject which is an integral part of most soldier's lives – how to explain to your family, and especially your children, why you have to go away for such a long time. Children don't often understand that according to the KFOR mission, we are here to provide a Safe and Secure Environment (SASE). Far more understandable for Andre's daughter was that her Dad was going away "so that little girls like you can have what you have; the promise of a better future."

Lt Col Delhommeau went on to thank his fellow Canadians for their contribution to the mission, telling them that they were "an outstanding team" that had handled "the goat rodeo" that is a deployment with ease and had made his job as Canadian Senior National Representative (SNR) so much easier. He ended his speech by welcoming the 20 Canadian Rotation Commander Lt Col Caroline Chartier and her troops and thanked COMKFOR for his leadership, support and open communication style which was

very much appreciated by all SNRs.

COMKFOR Major General D'Addario remarked on the similarity between his experience when explaining his forthcoming absence to his own daughter prior to his deployment to KFOR many years ago and Lt Col Delhommeau's. He said he also told her he was "going to help all the people there". He went on to say "this place [Kosovo] means so much to me; it is our Europe". In thanking the Canadian Contingent for their contribution to the mission, COMKFOR noted that "this is a special thing we do, after all these years it is still relevant. There can be no political solution without the security which we provide."

Major General D'Addario remarked that of course this is not the first contribution that Canada has made to European security. With a relationship forged in blood, stretching back to WWI, Canada's sacrifice on behalf of European peoples is unequalled and is still evidenced today by Canada's commitment to European security. COMKFOR ended his speech by asking the Canadian Contingent to say "thank you" to their families on his behalf, "they have shared the burden of providing security to the people of this region" and wished them a joyous reunion on their return home.

The ceremony ended with the exchange of a hockey stick, symbolising the Transfer of Authority between 19 Canadian Rotation and their successors 20 ROTO. We join with COMKFOR in wishing the outgoing Canadian Contingent a safe return home and welcoming 20 Canadian Rotation to the KFOR family!

Comdt. Joanne Naughton

OF-3 IRL-A

PAO Chief Internal Information





## Donation of Medical Products

## MNBG-W



***The Italian Contingent in Kosovo from the Multinational Battle Group West (MNBG-W) supported the regional hospitals of Pejë/Peč and Gjakovë/Djakovica and the polyclinics in Osojan/Osojane and Gorazdhec/Gorazdevaç with a recent donation of medicines.***

Italian CIMIC in Kosovo completed the delivery of an important quantity of medicines collected and made available by the "Italian Banco Farmaceutico ONLUS Foundation".

The donations took place at the Regional Hospitals of Pejë/Peč and Gjakovë/Djakovica, the two most important hospitals in the area of the country where the Italian contingent operates. Two other donations took place at two polyclinics located in areas inhabited by Serbian minorities: Osojane / Osojan and Gorazdevaç /Gorazdhec.

The distribution of medicines took place in proportion to the different users of the aforementioned health facilities and in full compliance with the principle of impartiality of assistance to the entire population of Kosovo. It was reported by Radio KIM and other media, that a member of the

Pejë/Peč municipality community office Slobodan Petrovic thanked KFOR for their help by donating the medicines. The health directors of the two hospitals and the two

polyclinics showed their gratitude for the effort made by KFOR and the Italian contingent who have given dedicated funding for projects that assist people most in need.

Lt. Col. Gennaro Troise  
OF-4 ITA-A  
Multinational Battle Group-West  
PAO Chief





## SOLDIER OF THE MONTH

**Name:** Mario Morando  
**Rank:** OR-4  
**Nationality:** ITA  
**Unit:** MNBG-W PAPA COY  
**Serving as:** Deputy Public Affair Officer

I joined the Army in July 1992 in Nocera (Salerno) as a conscript and I was assigned to the 9th Arty Regiment "rovigo" in (Verona). This is when I decided to permanently serve in the Army; I was assigned to the 24th Arty Regiment "Peloritani" in (Messina) as Sergeant Team leader.

I discharged in July 1995 and in October 1996 I re-joined the army and attended the Artillery School in (Bracciano) as OR-4, as an Artilleryman and I was assigned on February 1997 to the 8th Arty Rgmt "Pasubio" in (Persano). During my career I have served in several overseas operations: Bosnia (1997-1998), Kosovo (1999-2000-2000-2001), Afghanistan (2003) and Lebanon (2008).

This is my fifth mission in Kosovo, and it is with great pleasure that I am able to see an incredible civil and infrastructural evolution. In fact, when I first came here in June 1999, this country was really affected by the war; it was damaged, with no roads or cars circulating and only the rubble of the destroyed houses. Now the scenario is very different, and I am aware that I am an active pawn in this mission, with the aim of ensuring, maintaining and defending peace and balance in this country that is so rich in history and which has suffered too much. I am happy

to be here with my Regiment and with our flag; we are strongly amalgamated and motivated and proud to support KFOR.

I am married to Mrs. Lucia Donato and I have got two children, Francesco and Giovanni.

OR-4 Mario Morando has vast military experience, he is always highly motivated and he is marked by a deeply rooted sense of discipline and belonging in the Italian Army. In this mission, serving as Deputy Public Affair Officer (combat camera man), he has achieved outstanding results in all the activities which he has taken part in, specifically, as combat camera man in the training activities performed by MNBG-W units. Always dressed in full combat equipment, he joined MNBG-W units on the ground taking excellent pictures of the soldiers deployed, ensuring that the total information coverage of MNBG-W activities are captured in a very unique way. Evidence of his true workmanship was portrayed during "Jewelled Dagger 2", "Falcon in the Air 1 and 2", and "Snowman".

OR-4 Mario Morando is a punctual, highly motivated, loyal and hardworking soldier who has proven his self to be more than highly professional and thus to be capable to successfully operate in any situation, from the snows of North Kosovo to the wild fires of the Decane Forests. He also spends a lot of time in his "free time" and at the weekend creating videos and enhancing photos which shows his true passion for his job and he sets a great example to all members of the MNBG-W Units. Congratulations Mario on being a truly worthy winner of the Soldier of the Month award. Keep up the great work!





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## *Kosovo Detachment*

### ACTIVITIES

### KFOR CSM



A Certificate of appreciation was presented to CPL Alyssa GRAY of MNBG – E by the KFOR CSM on 08 April 2019. The certificate represents a token of esteem for the excellent professional contribution that CPL GRAY made to her UNIT (1-89 CAV FCP) and to the KFOR mission.



On 16 April 2019 the KFOR CSM OR – 9 Massimo CONTU awarded a Certificate of Appreciation to Narek BOSHYAN for the outstanding contribution that he made to his Unit and to MNBG - W



## Bondsteel's Basketball Blitz

**Youths throughout Kosovo competed in their first-ever "Road to Bondsteel" basketball tournament on 06 April 2019 in Camp Bondsteel.**

KFOR Joint Regional Detachment South-East Liaison and Monitoring Team (LMT) hosted the tournament as a way to foster relationships and continue to build friendships across ethnic, religious and political barriers.

"Each team that you see out here today has kids from Kosovo Serbian and Kosovo Albanian communities," said 1st Lt. Sean Nestor, LMT, 1st Squadron, 89th Cavalry Regiment, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 10th Mountain Division. The whole concept being that we can bring multiethnic communities together and have no issues with the culminating event here on Camp Bondsteel, Nestor added.

The children named their teams after regions in the U.S. The team names included: Big Apple, Big Sky Country, Motor City and the Heartland. The Big Apple was comprised of youths from Artana/Novo Brdo, Fushë Kosova/Kosovo Polje. Big Sky Country team was made up of youths from the municipality of Dardana/Kamenica. The Heartland team was made up of youths from the municipality of Ranilluga/Ranilugu and Fushë Kosova/Kosovo Polje and Motor City was comprised of youths from the municipality of Gjilan/Gnjilane. Teamwork, communication and great sportsmanship was evident amongst all teams playing their hardest to win.

"We would not have been able to do this without the help and support of the International Office

of Migration," said Nestor. "We specifically received help from Nebojsa Tasevski and Svetlana Djuric who were absolutely instrumental in making this basketball tournament happen. Also the various mayors of municipalities in Kosovo, the kids, and we also had funding from Spirit of America and Nick Israel who were generous enough to donate to causes like this."

Nebojsa Tasevski, a Kosovo resident with the International Office of Migration, said he enjoyed the multi-ethnic basketball tournament and was glad his son was able to participate.

"The event turned out to be very positive voyage for all of us, both who organized the event and for the kids," said Tasevski. "The kids have shown that they can play together on teams, and if they can play on teams today...they can work in teams tomorrow."

"As part of this peace support operation I think that the people themselves are the mission," said Nestor. "Being able to work with institutions, different ethnic

groups, and your everyday person in Kosovo is what is going to help the people here build a greater future."

This was the first multi-ethnic basketball tournament hosted by KFOR Soldiers with Multinational Battle Group-East. Because of its success, LMTs, coaches, players and community leaders plan on establishing this basketball tournament as an ongoing event with incoming KFOR rotations.

"The youth are going to be the future leaders of Kosovo and the future leaders of their community," said Nestor. "If we can bring these kids together for one common purpose or goal of simply playing basketball and they can learn and get the concept or idea of tolerance and coexistence in their head then hopefully it sets a precedence for them to work together."

*SGT. Tinisha Mellein-Fortson  
OR-6 US-A*





## BLACK CAT and THUNDER STRIKE EXERCISES

## MNBG-W

**MNBG-W closed the month of March with exercise "Thunder Strike" and begun preparations for exercise "Black Cat" which tested their operational readiness in Air Mobile Operations and Crowd Riot Control (CRC)**

MNBG-W's exercise "Thunder Strike" in the Rahovec/Orahovac area, deployed 1 x PLT (S-COY) with supporting elements IOT conduct an air mobile operation by seizing two simulated objectives. The aim of this training exercise was to plan and train for quick HELI OPS, Improve basic infantry ground skills, practice and improve techniques and procedures of navigation, ground navigation and fight in both forestry and rural environments.

This exercise combined HELI insertion and extraction and dismounted close combat (DCC) operations, gaining an understanding and enhancing the interoperability regarding Troops Tactical Procedure (TTPs) and capacities related to hybrid threats to a Safe and Secure Environment (SASE) and Freedom of Movement (FOM). MNBG-W TOC and manoeuvre units trained properly to perform synchronized planning at the tactical level to operate in a well-coordinated and safe manner.



On 16 APR MNBG-W conducted their second exercise called "Black Cat" covering a local civil disturbance scenario by using opposing forces for a realistic training exercise.

The main aim of the exercise was to access the MNV BN's COYS capabilities, by conducting field training to evaluate its readiness to deal with hybrid threat by providing a SASE and FOM in a CRC scenario. The scenarios were characterised by ethnic tensions in an area which involved insertion of troops by both ground and Heli and extracting of a CRC capable component in the Grabac and Bica area.



The exercise consisted of 1 Slovenian Platoon (+) reinforced by 1 Italian PLT. The COY was supported by one Moldavian EOD

Team, 1 MED Team (ITA), 1 MP Team (1 ITA) providing escorts by road, 1 Firefighting Team (ITA) and 2 MNBG-E RW (Mi-8 CRO) crews.

"Black Cat" exercise was planned to improve basic infantry ground skills aimed at enhancing capability by planning, preparing and maintaining a high level of coordination between ground and Heli CRC activities in order to reach the best results.

Both exercises were planned and executed to the highest of standards. They portrayed the soldiers high level of professionalism and operational effectiveness in MNBG-W, with particular attention been given to the requirement for multinational assets to be deployed quickly to reaction to a compromised SASE.

Comdt. Joanne Naughton  
IRL-A

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## PICTURE OF THE MONTH

### April 2019



"Bear Sanctuary in Prishtina"

OF-1 Lorenz Olgiati,  
Air Ops, Member of Swisscoy  
Contingent 40  
Camera/Phone: Samsung Galaxy S8+

## Contribute to the KFORChronicle!

Just send your photos to:

[kforchronicle@hq.kfor.nato.int](mailto: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:** Niina  
Heinonen  
**Rank:** OR-7  
**Nationality:** Finnish  
**Serving As:** FINCON  
NSE

**Military Career and education:** I have served in the Finnish Border Guard for 12 years. I've had many opportunities to do different tasks during my career. I have served two tours of duty in Greece as a part of the Poseidon mission and two tours of duty here in KFOR in the Finnish NSE.

**About the mission:** I am the NSE for the Finnish Contingent. We have 20 persons deployed within KFOR, 10 here in Camp Film City and 10 at the LMT house. I am the only one who works at the NSE, so I take care of all FINCON matters under the supervision of my SNR. I make sure they have everything that they need here. I mainly do administrative work, such as contingent rotations of personnel, liaison with HQ in Finland and liaison with KFOR personnel. I look after the logistical elements for FINCON also. This includes working closely with customs and shipping companies. I also act in the role as the FINCON CSM for in camp KFOR matters. Last, but definitely not the least, I'll make sure that the sauna is warm every evening at the NSE, this has massive effects on FINCON morale!! I have really enjoyed my missions here in KFOR and it has a lot to do, with all the people I have been able to work with here.

**Family Reaction:** I am from a small village and I was the first woman to go into a military career at that time. My family has been always very supportive of me and also when I deploy on missions abroad. I am definitely looking forward to going back home to my family.

**Hobbies:** I have played the piano since I was four years old. Otherwise I do a lot of different kind of sports, enjoy Muay Thai (Thai boxing), but I have been a bit unlucky with injuries. I like to go to the gym, running, cycling all year round. I play golf, but for the last few years I have not played as much as would like to, but maybe next summer. I also love hiking and outdoor activities.



**Name:** Arian  
Ballanca  
**Rank:** ICC-7  
**Nationality:** Albanian  
**Unit:** KHQ J1

**Education:** I obtained my University Degree (BSc) in Management and Information Studies over 12 years ago. Currently I am studying for Master of Science in Organizational Psychology with Dardania College in Pristina. Alongside degree that I have obtained I have also completed HR education creds with American Management Association in United States in HR Management and Recruitment, Selection and Hiring of employees. I accomplished numerous other trainings in the field of finance management, automated data processing and resource management here in Pristina.

**About the mission:** My most memorable experiences with NATO started on 11 Jun 1999 with the British forces in Petrovec, North Macedonia, prior to them entering Kosovo. As an interpreter I had the pleasure to live and work alongside soldiers and officers, responsible for providing a safe and secure environment for the people in Kosovo. From the age of 23 I spontaneously embraced the military way of living and have served with NATO in different capacities for over 18 years now. Since 2003, I have worked in the area of Human Resources and have enjoyed life and continuous career development in this profession ever since. In 2011 I was eager to test myself in the private sector (the other side of the HR coin) and started off as HR and Recruitment Manager with Crimson Capital – a company implementing USAID projects in all continents. For the next three years, I served as a Recruitment Manager for NATO International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) stationed in Kabul, HQ ISAF. My career was augmented with another nine months of service with NATO Communication and Information Agency (NCIA), which I gained valuable experience in The Hague. I found this to be another interesting side of this great organisation. I was thrilled to return to KFOR in Jun 2016 and I am excited for all the challenges to come in my career with KFOR. I enjoy working with people of all nationalities, with different religious background and different cultural norms, and the more I interact with people I can see how similar in essence we all are.

**Family relations:** I am married to an incredibly supportive and loving wife. My adoring son is aged 13. He makes me proud and motivates me in different aspects of my life. To both of them I am forever grateful.

**Hobbies:** Apart from occasionally playing football with friends, as well as grabbing a drink or two with them, many hobbies from younger years have faded out or have been put on hold for less busier times, such as painting and playing guitar (learning really).



