

# 20 YEAR ANNIVERSARY KFOR CHRONICLE



# CONTENT



## KFOR HQ

Camp Film City 1999 and 2019  
page: 3



## COM KFOR XXIII

Major General Lorenzo D'Addario  
page: 6,7



## KFOR 1999

Photo Collage  
page: 10,11



## KFOR COMMANDERS

1999-2019  
page: 14,15



## KFOR HQ

Commemoration Monument  
page: 17



## Deployed Past and Present

Harri Pelkonen OF-4 FIN-A  
page: 19



## Deployed Past and Present

Adrian Kramer OR-2 CHE-A  
page: 21



## ARRC

Back to Kosovo  
page: 24,25



## 20 Years of Experience with KFOR

Nexhad Demolli, Broadcaster/Journalist  
page: 27



## COM KFOR I

Lt. General Sir Mike Jackson  
page: 4,5



## UNSCR 1244

page: 8,9



## KFOR Chronicle Twenty Years Ago

A Different Approach  
page: 12,13



## 'BAT CAVE'

Implementing the Undertaking 1999  
page: 16



## Deployed Past and Present

Antonio Mura OR-9 ITA-A  
page: 18



## Deployed Past and Present

Zsolt Rakozov OR-7 HUN-A  
page: 20



## KFOR RADIO

RADIO K4  
page: 22,23



## 20 Years of Experience with KFOR

Vlora Braha, Albanian Interpreter  
page: 26



<http://jfcnaples.nato.int/kfor>



<http://www.facebook.com/NATOKFOR/>



<https://flic.kr/ps/39kEDh>



[twitter.com/NATO\\_KFOR](https://twitter.com/NATO_KFOR)





# “Camp Film City” 1999- 2019

# KFOR HQ





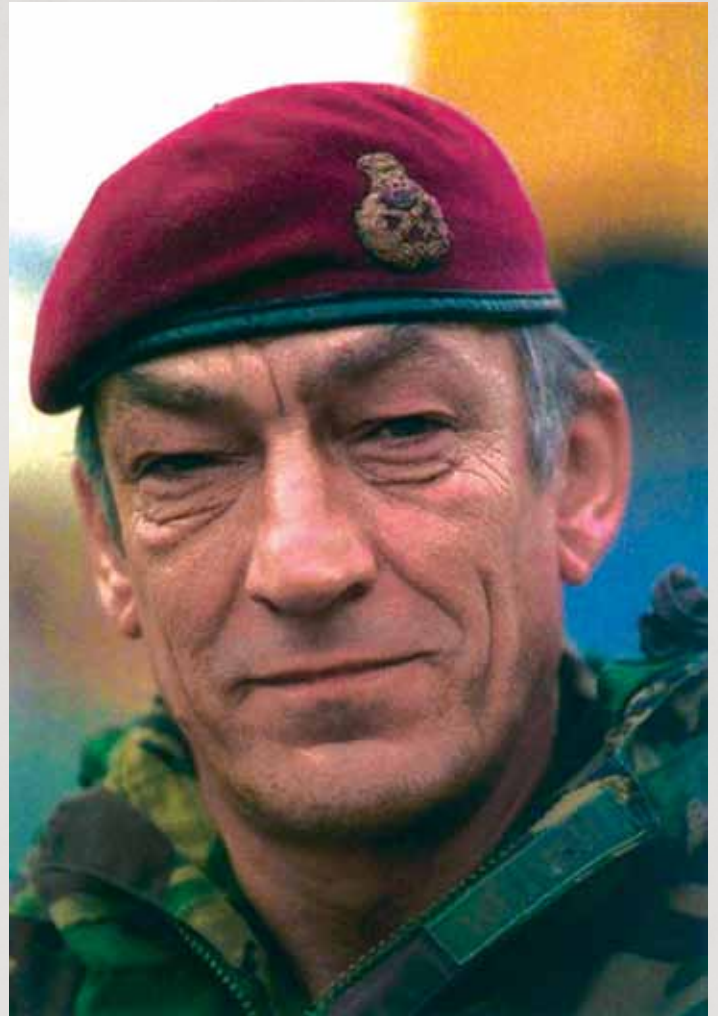
# KFOR: Providing security for building a better future for Kosovo

## *Lt. General Sir Mike Jackson*

*Within days of Belgrade's acceptance of a peace deal and the suspension of the Allied air campaign, the NATO-led Kosovo Force (KFOR) began deployment to secure the province for the return of refugees. General Jackson, Commander, KFOR, describes the rapid and synchronised deployment of over 40,000 KFOR troops from 39 nations and the challenges they face helping to restore order, rebuild the shattered infrastructure and speed the return to normality in Kosovo.*

KFOR entered Kosovo from the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia on 12 June ("D-Day"), with a force of 20,000 troops split up into six brigades led by France, Germany, Italy, the US and two from the UK. Within six days all lead elements had entered Kosovo in an operation that demanded considerable skill and professionalism from the staffs and soldiers of HQ KFOR and the multinational brigades. Serious challenges faced KFOR upon arrival in Kosovo. Yugoslav military forces were still present in large numbers. The Kosovo Liberation Army (UCK), too, were armed and highly visible. Fighting was still going on. Nearly a million people were refugees outside Kosovo. Those who remained lived in daily fear for their lives. There was little electricity or water. Homes were destroyed, roads were mined, bridges down, schools and hospitals out of action. Radio and TV was off the air. Ordinary life in Kosovo was suspended.

The immediate priority was to ensure that no security vacuum should be allowed to develop between the outgoing and incoming forces that could have been filled by the UCK or any other armed group. In 11 days, the operation achieved the stated aim: the withdrawal of the Yugoslav forces from Kosovo and their replacement by KFOR as the only legitimate military force under UN Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1244. All this took place in a volatile and fast-moving environment, where the eyes of the world's media were watching and recording every move.



The outcome on 9 June was a Military Technical Agreement (MTA) that set out in detail what was to be in effect a "relief in place" between the withdrawing Yugoslav forces and the advancing KFOR troops. One day later, on 10 June, the United Nations Security Council adopted Resolution 1244 which formalised the mission for the International Security Presence, provided by the NATO-led KFOR, and the International Civilian Presence known as UNMIK (UN Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo).

The MTA called for a phased withdrawal of the Yugoslav forces from three pre-determined zones out of Kosovo through four designated gates into Serbia proper. This was to happen within 11 days and was to be fully synchronised with the advancing KFOR troops. Following a Yugoslav request for a 24-hour delay in the KFOR advance, the VJ was given two days for preparatory work and the withdrawal of logistics troops before KFOR moved in at 5 a.m. on 12 June.



## COM KFOR I

The French Framework Brigade (FFB), crossed the border on D-Day just north of Kumanovo. Their task was to occupy the eastern area of Zone 1 around Gnjilane until relieved by the US Brigade, then move north to Kosovska Mitrovica and expand into what is now known as Multinational Brigade (MNB) North.

The German 12th Panzer Brigade, with a Dutch Artillery battery already under command, used two axes of advance. One was up Route FOX north into Kosovo, heading for what was to be their final headquarters location in Prizren. The other axis took one battalion through Albania in a wide south-westerly sweep to enter Kosovo through the Morina crossing-point.

The UK's 4th Armoured Brigade had been joined just before D-Day by the UK's 5th Airborne Brigade, which provided much needed additional forces to KFOR. On D-Day, the 5th Airborne - with one parachute battalion and a Gurkha battalion - deployed by helicopter to secure the strategically vital Kacanik defile on Route HAWK. Elements of this brigade, including the headquarters, subsequently moved on to Pristina airfield. This allowed the 4th Armoured Brigade to deploy forward to the northernmost point of Zone 1 and secure the provincial capital of Pristina.

Once the UK and German Brigades were firm, the Italian Garibaldi Brigade moved through the Kacanik defile on its way into the devastated area of western Kosovo. The brigade now forms the core of MNB (West) with forces from Italy, Spain and Portugal.

The US Brigade based on Task Force Falcon (TFF) moved into eastern Kosovo on the second day of the operation, to begin to relieve the FFB who moved north into Zone III. The US now forms the core of MNB (East) that comprises a US brigade headquarters in Gnjilane and forces from the US, as well as Greece, Poland, Russia and Ukraine.

On 20 June at 5.25 p.m., the full withdrawal of Yugoslav forces from Kosovo was confirmed, over six hours ahead of schedule.

The intervening period has seen dramatic changes and Kosovo is a very different place to that which greeted us on 12 June. The VJ and MUP have withdrawn and KFOR is in place. The demilitarisation of UCK has been achieved in accordance with the terms of the Undertaking. But perhaps most significant of all, in the first few weeks nearly 750,000 people returned to rebuild their homes and their lives, in an overwhelming display of confidence in KFOR and the international



presence in Kosovo.

UNSCR 1244 gave KFOR full responsibility for Kosovo until the arrival of the UN Civil Authority. While primarily concerned with providing security and law and order, it was vital that KFOR begin to rebuild the shattered infrastructure and prepare the way for a speedy return to normality.

The military manoeuvre phase of the operation is now over. It has not been an easy task, but one which the officers and soldiers of KFOR have performed very professionally and with great skill and perseverance. There are now over 40,000 KFOR troops deployed in Kosovo from 39 nations. They continue to provide the secure environment within which the people of Kosovo have the opportunity to build a better future. There will undoubtedly be challenges ahead as Kosovo looks to establish itself as a truly free, open and democratic society. The onset of winter is not far away and there is much to be done. In October, I will be handing over the reins to General Klaus Reinhardt, my successor as Commander of KFOR. The next chapter in the history of Kosovo is being written. I hope it ends well: *Audentis Fortuna Iuvat*.

*Lt. General. Jackson. Michael, Commander, Kosovo Force (COMKFOR), "KFOR: Providing security for building a better future for Kosovo", Autumn 1999, Extracts from p16-19.*



## COMKFOR INTERVIEW – 20th Anniversary of KFOR

***COM KFOR Major General Lorenzo D'Addario gives an interview marking the 20th Anniversary of the deployment of NATO troops into KFOR since 1999. He has served as a Staff Officer in Operation Joint Guardian in the summer of 1999, returning as Battalion Commander in 2004 and now he is Force Commander of the 3,525 strong mission in 2019.***

***Sir, can you describe the appointments you held in 1999 and 2004?***

In 1999, I was staff officer so I was focused on performing my duties to assist my commander, as staff do, and therefore my interaction was a lot more limited, but on the other hand I have vivid memories of this sense of adventure that we all have in starting something new and wanting to do it in the very best way.

In 2004 I was Battalion Commander so my focus was on accomplishing my mission carrying out all my tasks. I had enormous pride in my soldiers, some of whom are still here with me in the close protection team and the emotions that being a commander carries and rediscovering Kosovo in a new way. Of course, every operation, every time you return, is different from the previous one. This time is the enormous sense of gratitude for NATO and all soldiers of KFOR. It was my seventh appointment in NATO, in operations, in the NATO Command or Force Structure and it is an extremely rewarding experience. I think that we are all part of a system of shared security which is incredibly important to the way Europe lives now and most likely for the future of Europe and indeed of the Euro-Atlantic region. But also it's a sense of being part of one of the best organizations I have come across, not just for the people it embraces, but also for the way it goes about its business, the means, particularly the intellectual means that brings to our disposal in carrying out this mission, it is fantastic.

***Sir, could you draw some parallels and compare your view of Kosovo during these three points in time?***

Well, first time in 1999, it was an emergency situation, a lot of grief, people were desperate, uncertain, so for



many months people were very tense. In 2004 you could see there were already many changes but there were still also many tensions. Nowadays, what I find is a Kosovo that is on its way to take the future in its own hands and continue with progress. So much has changed, there is construction everywhere; people are just enjoying their lives, really getting on with their lives. So it is a lot, lot better and this gives me a very warm feeling that when people want, there can be progress.

***In your view how important was KFOR's role on all developments in Kosovo during the past two decades?***

I think we have an important role in the sense that we try and ensure that we act impartially to provide security to all the people but, in retrospective what we did, we really did with the people, also working with all those institutions that have been created in the last 20 years. So it really is a joint effort.

***What are the most important foundations of KFOR's mission and successes in Kosovo?***



## COM KFOR XXIII



First is the commitment of the nations that participate and of individual soldiers, these men and women who come over and really give it all to ensure that their mission is properly carried out. I think consecutive to that, is the spirit of service that I found in everybody who is part of this mission, not just soldiers but also the civilian staff. It is the sense that we are doing something that is for the future. And lastly is the fact that we work with the people. What we do, we do it in the interest of the people. Of course, as I said, we want to remain impartial; sometimes not everybody will be pleased with what we do, but, in the end, everybody will be pleased with what we have done for them.

#### *What are the future plans for KFOR?*

The near future plans are to continue to focus on enabling security, which is no trivial thing; it is that important condition that enables the dialogue, and so we are like the water that comes out of the tap. The moment there is no water, you feel how important it is, so we will continue to concentrate on our military mission knowing fully that this is our contribution. This contribution can be decisive for the dialogue, resulting in benefits of all. We really will focus on the

people of Kosovo because they are our stakeholders. So we will keep concentrating on the people of Kosovo, our stakeholders of this very beautiful part of Europe.

#### *COM KFOR's message to the soldiers on the 20th Anniversary of KFOR.*

To the soldiers and indeed to all the people who are part of KFOR, I would like to say a big Thank You as the Commander of the Force and Senior NATO Member. Thank you not just to you, but to your families as well. I really feel the warmth of your service, which you do in a selfless way, but also you provide out of the limelight. A real thank you to your families who, often, have to face the most difficult challenges of our operations, but at the same time are very proud of us. What we are doing is very important for the security of Europe and therefore each one of us, every day, is writing a little sentence in the big book of our continent. So from me, it would be very much a message of appreciation and gratitude to my fellow KFOR soldiers and their families.

# UN SCR 1244 - The Original Resolution of KFOR

## UNITED NATIONS



### Security Council

S

Distr.  
GENERAL  
S/RES/1244 (1999)  
10 June 1999

#### RESOLUTION 1244 (1999)

Adopted by the Security Council at its 4011th meeting,  
on 10 June 1999

### 1. United Nations Security Council Resolution 1244 was the founding document of KFOR mission and still remains fundamental. It specifies clearly the reasons for the international intervention:

#### The Security Council,

Bearing in mind the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations, and the primary responsibility of the Security Council for the maintenance of international peace and security,

Recalling its resolutions 1160 (1998) of 31 March 1998, 1199 (1998) of 23 September 1998, 1203 (1998) of 24 October 1998 and 1239 (1999) of 14 May 1999,

Regretting that there has not been full compliance with the requirements of these resolutions,

Determined to resolve the grave humanitarian situation in Kosovo, Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, and to provide for the safe and free return of all refugees and displaced persons to their homes,

Condemning all acts of violence against the Kosovo population as well as all terrorist acts by any party,

Recalling the statement made by the Secretary-General on 9 April 1999, expressing concern at the humanitarian tragedy taking place in Kosovo,

### 2. It hints guidelines for a possible solution:

Reaffirming the commitment of all Member States to the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and the other States of the region, as set out in the Helsinki Final Act and annex 2,

Reaffirming the call in previous resolutions for substantial autonomy and meaningful self-administration for Kosovo,

### 3. It authorises an International Military Presence (KFOR):

5. Decides on the deployment in Kosovo, under United Nations auspices, of international civil and security presences, with appropriate equipment and personnel as required, and welcomes the agreement of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia to such presences;

7. Authorizes Member States and relevant international organizations to establish the international security presence in Kosovo as set out in point 4 of annex 2 with all necessary means to fulfil its responsibilities under paragraph 9 below;

### 4. It defines the responsibilities of KFOR, some outdated some still valid:

9. Decides that the responsibilities of the international security presence to be deployed and acting in Kosovo will include:

(a) Deterring renewed hostilities, maintaining and where necessary enforcing a ceasefire, and ensuring the withdrawal and preventing the return into Kosovo of Federal and Republic military, police and paramilitary forces, except as provided in point 6 of annex 2;

(b) Demilitarizing the Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA) and other armed Kosovo Albanian groups as required in paragraph 15 below;

(c) Establishing a secure environment in which refugees and displaced persons can return home in safety, the international civil presence can operate, a transitional administration can be established, and humanitarian aid can be delivered;



(d) Ensuring public safety and order until the international civil presence can take responsibility for this task;

(e) Supervising demining until the international civil presence can, as appropriate, take over responsibility for this task;

(f) Supporting, as appropriate, and coordinating closely with the work of the international civil presence;

(g) Conducting border monitoring duties as required;

(h) Ensuring the protection and freedom of movement of itself, the international civil presence, and other international organizations;

## 5. It describes the nature of the Force, its relations to Serbian personnel and anticipates the establishment of the Institution in Kosovo:

### Annex 2

Agreement should be reached on the following principles to move towards a resolution of the Kosovo crisis:

4. The international security presence with substantial North Atlantic Treaty Organization participation must be deployed under unified command and control and authorized to establish a safe environment for all people in Kosovo and to facilitate the safe return to their homes of all displaced persons and refugees.

5. Establishment of an interim administration for Kosovo as a part of the international civil presence under which the people of Kosovo can enjoy substantial autonomy within the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, to be decided by the Security Council of the United Nations. The interim administration to provide transitional administration while establishing and overseeing the development of provisional democratic self-governing institutions to ensure conditions for a peaceful and normal life for all inhabitants in Kosovo.

6. After withdrawal, an agreed number of Yugoslav and Serbian personnel will be permitted to return to perform the following functions:

- Liaison with the international civil mission and the international security presence;
- Marking/clearing minefields;
- Maintaining a presence at Serb patrimonial sites;
- Maintaining a presence at key border crossings.

## 6. It indicates the need for a complementary military technical agreement for the relations with Serbian personnel:

10. Suspension of military activity will require acceptance of the principles set forth above in addition to agreement to other, previously identified, required elements, which are specified in the footnote below. A military-technical agreement will then be rapidly concluded that would, among other things, specify additional modalities, including the roles and functions of Yugoslav/Serb personnel in Kosovo:

### Returning personnel

- Equipment associated with returning personnel;
- Terms of reference for their functional responsibilities;
- Timetable for their return;
- Delineation of their geographical areas of operation;
- Rules governing their relationship to the international security presence and the international civil mission.

### Notes

<sup>1</sup>Other required elements:

- A rapid and precise timetable for withdrawals, meaning, e.g., seven days to complete withdrawal and air defence weapons withdrawn outside a 25 kilometre mutual safety zone within 48 hours;
- Return of personnel for the four functions specified above will be under the supervision of the international security presence and will be limited to a small agreed number (hundreds, not thousands);



# KFOR - 1999









# Article in KFOR Chronicle Twenty Years Ago



## A Different Approach

***Gornji Livoc: The ethnically mixed village of Gornji Livoc was known as a trouble spot, near daily gunfire and mortar attacks from both the Serb and Albanian side. A US tank platoon was assigned to go in and provide 24 hour presence and see what they could do. Since that hot summer day when they rolled their four tanks into town, not a single shot has been fired.***

We are walking down Anita Avenue in the mixed town of Gornji Livoc, where the platoon leader, 1st Lt James Taumoepeau (24) and his soldiers have named the narrow, dusty streets after their wives and girlfriends. 1st Lt Taumoepeau, known as Lt James among the local people, and his soldiers have an unorthodox and proactive approach to their peacekeeping mission.

They are listeners, diplomats, negotiators and problem solvers. Lt James goes out of his way to try to help people with whatever problems they may have.

"I make them understand that their problems are my problems. And that if we are to be able to focus on how to help them, instead of just worrying about the security situation, they need to cooperate. And in order to cooperate with me, they need to cooperate with each other."

### ***What's going on?***

On the first day in Gornji Livoc, 1st Lt Taumoepeau tells us, he went out to find the Albanian leader and the Serb leader. He told them that they could come to him with any concerns they had, and basically provided an open forum for them. Then he went out and met people, got to know their names, who were the big families around and what was going on.

"We are just friendly. We talk to people. Listen to their problems. Identify them before they turn into fires. That is where we are different," says 1st Lt Taumoepeau. When these US soldiers are out on foot patrols, they are followed by large crowds of children, some of them holding their hands. The locals wave and smile when the soldiers pass by, greeting them in their own languages. The old women kiss and hug them, the men exchange earnest handshakes with them, and the invitations to come in and drink coffee or tea and chitchat are countless.

### ***Used to be scared***

We go to visit Slavko Arsiq, the Serb leader in the town. His house has been destroyed, and he is living with his parents while he is rebuilding it. The soldiers sit down with Slavko. 1st Lt Taumoepeau asks him what's going on, and if anything is bothering him. Slavko's mother Dobrinka is chopping wood in the backyard. She says that the US soldiers in Gornji Livoc are great men, and that she respects them for the good job they have done. "We used to be scared," she says. "Now we are not."

1st Lt Taumoepeau says that the 12 soldiers in 2nd Platoon, Company B, 1st Battalion, 77th Armoured Regiment who are working with him in Gornji Livoc, are very highly motivated and excited about what they are doing in this town. And his men acknowledge he is special too.



## October 1999



### Fighting Waves

The security situation in Gornji Livoc quickly improved after the arrival of the tank platoon. But, 1st Lt Taumoepeau emphasizes, in the first weeks, the situation wavered

back and forth. It could have gone either way. But not a shot has been fired since the arrival of the tank platoon. Serbs and Albanians are not talking to each other yet, but tension has reduced, and they coordinate through the US soldiers. "The situation is different now. The Serbs are not afraid to go out to their wheat and corn fields to do their work. They are confident now, and go without escort to Gnjilane to sell their cheese and eggs, which is not what a lot of other towns can say. And the soldiers do not anymore have to have their weapons at ready, unsure of the situation, when they are on patrol. We are reaping the benefits of the very hard work that we did in the first weeks.

warmly greets 1st Lt Taumoepeau by saying "Vëllau jem" (my brother), and we sit down and drink the sweet coffee that his daughters bring us. "KFOR is here for all people. After they came here, we are not afraid anymore. But we cannot forget what has happened. I fear what will happen if KFOR leaves," he says. "Even here, Serb and Albanian children still do not play together. Our biggest challenge is getting Serbs and Albanians to reconcile. But that is going to take time. It has to come from inside. But we can start processes where they work together for survival and for the future of their children, living together more peacefully".

Text: Maj Grethe Oestern  
Photo: Sgt Francis Trachta  
October 1999



### The Challenge

Just a couple of houses down the street we stop to visit Hafish Kurtezi, who is an ethnic Albanian. He



# KOSOVO FORCE COMMANDER



LTG Sir Mike Jackson GBR  
10 JUN 99 – 08 OCT 99



GEN Dr. Klaus Rheinhardt DEU  
08 OCT 99 – 18 APR 00



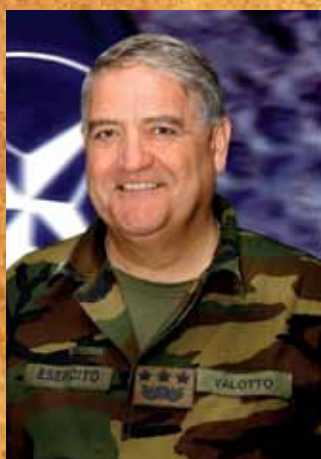
LTG Juan Ortuno ESP  
18 APR 00 – 16 OCT 00



LTG Carlo Cabigiosu ITA  
16 OCT 00 – 06 APR 01



LTG Yves de Kermabon FRA  
01 SEP 04 – 01 SEP 05



LTG Giuseppe Valotto ITA  
01 SEP 05 – 01 SEP 06



LTG Roland Kather DEU  
01 SEP 06 – 31 AUG 07



LTG Xavier B. de Marnhac FRA  
31 AUG 07 – 29 AUG 08



MG Volker Halbauer DEU  
07 SEP 12 – 06 SEP 13



MG Salvatore Farina ITA  
06 SEP 13 – 03 SEP 14



MG Francesco P. Figliuolo ITA  
03 SEP 14 – 07 AUG 15



MG Guglielmo L. Miglietta ITA  
07 AUG 15 – 01 SEP 16





LTG Thorstein Skiaker NOR  
06 APR 01 – 03 OCT 01



LTG Marcel Valentin FRA  
03 OCT 01 – 04 OCT 02



LTG Fabio Mini ITA  
04 OCT 02 – 03 OCT 03



LTG Holger Kammerhoff DEU  
03 OCT 03 – 01 SEP 04



LTG Giuseppe E. Gay ITA  
29 AUG 08 – 08 SEP 09



LTG Markus J. Bentler DEU  
08 SEP 09 – 01 SEP 10



MG Erhard Bühler DEU  
01 SEP 10 – 09 SEP 11



MG Erhard Drews DEU  
09 SEP 11 – 07 SEP 12



MG Giovanni Fungo ITA  
01 SEP 16 – 15 NOV 17



MG Salvatore Cuoci ITA  
15 NOV 17 – 28 NOV 18



MG Lorenzo D'Addario ITA  
28 NOV 18 – Present





## Implementing the Undertaking 1999

## ‘BAT CAVE’

The oil painting ‘Implementing the Undertaking, Kosovo 1999’ is a familiar sight to anyone who has served as a member of KFOR HQ or at the Allied Rapid Reaction Corps (ARRC) in Gloucester, England.

The painting itself depicts a memorable episode at KFOR’s headquarters building in 1999 during the negotiations between NATO’s first commander in Kosovo, British Lieutenant General Mike Jackson, and Agim Çeku, the military commander of the Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA).

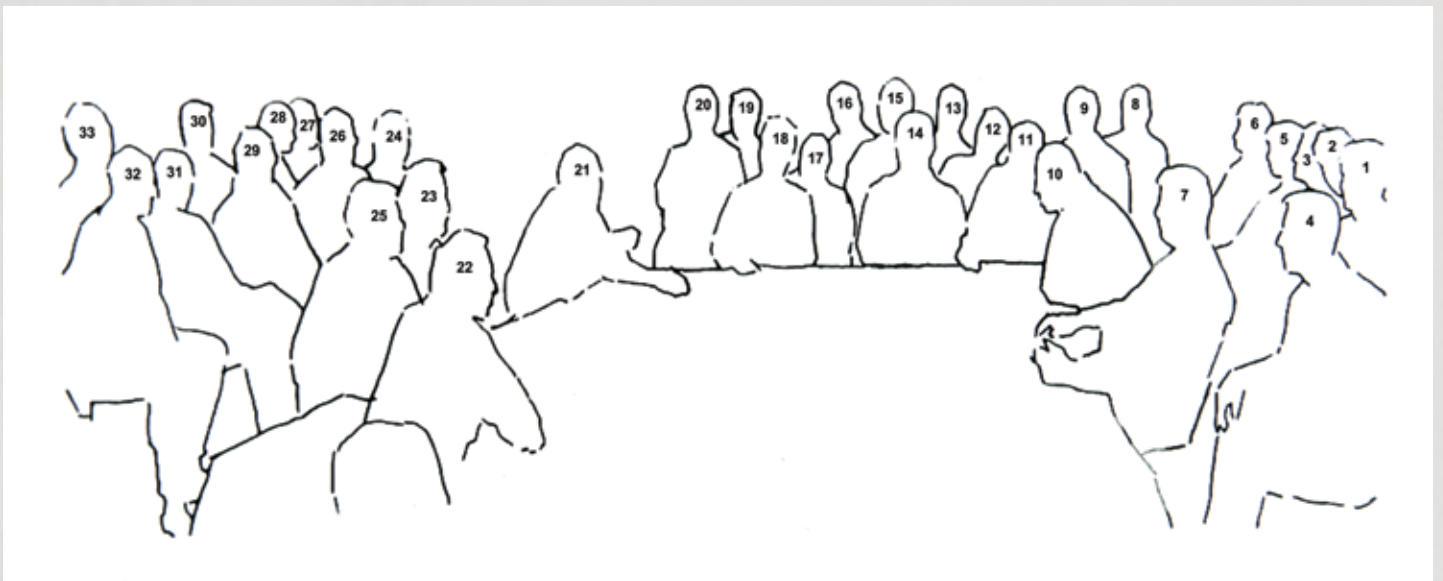
Writing in his autobiography, General Jackson described the painting as illustrating the ‘very difficult’ negotiations on the transformation of the KLA into a peacetime organisation. The General recalled: “Negotiations were very difficult and continued until after KFOR imposed a deadline.”

“We held regular meetings in the ‘Bat Cave’ at KFOR HQ, a huge room in a deserted film studio,” added



Jackson. “Artist in residence Nick Bashall painted a moment in one of our sessions when I confronted Çeku across the table.”

Today, the original painting hangs in the Officers’ Mess at the NATO barracks in Gloucester, in the South West of England.



(1) Rustem Mustafa “Remi” - OZ Llap - (2) Tahir Sinani - OZ Pastro - (3) Ahmet Isufi - OZ Karadak - (4) Ramush Haradinaj - OZ Dukagjini - (5) Rrahman Rama - OZ Shala - (6) Shukri Buja - OZ Nerodime - (7) Sylejman Selimi “Sultan” - National Guard Commander - (8) BG Dieter Schuster (9) MG Alexander Perelyakin (10) BG Agim Çeku (11) Mr Jock Covey (12) MG Klaus Olshausen (13) BG Keith Skempton (14) Mr Sven Frederickson (15) MG Pier Giovanetti (16) BG John Hoskinson (17) MG Jean Claude Thomann (18) Mr Bernard Kouchner (19) BG Bill Brandenburg (20) MG Andrew Ridgway (21) LTG Sir Mike Jackson (22) Mr Mike Vonables (23) Mr Faik Ispahiu (24) BG Mauro del Vecchio (25) BG Jonathan Bailey (26) BG Fritz Von Korll (27) LTC James Everard (28) Maj Ted Shields (29) BG John Craddock (30) CPT Ed Sandry (31) BG Bill Rollo (32) MG Bruno Cuche (33) LTC Phillip Cox



## Commemoration Monument

# KFOR HQ

### *Lest We Forget...*

The commitment of KFOR soldiers in the last 20 years will never be forgotten. The Commemoration Monument represents the ultimate sacrifices made by soldiers, from different nations, who devoted their lives for the restoration of peace and stability in Kosovo. The path from 1999 to 2019 wasn't a paved road, but it is a testimony, that during KFOR's 20 years in Kosovo, so many lives have been changed for the better, as we continue our mission to provide a better future for the people of Kosovo.

*The Commemoration Monument is a silent message that encourages all, to stop and remember.*







**Antonio Mura**  
**OR-9 ITA-A**  
**MNBG - W**

### ***First impressions of KFOR and Kosovo in 1999:***

I conducted my first pre-mission briefings in North Macedonia and we waited in Katlanovo for over a month prior to deployment in Kosovo. My first impressions of KFOR was the Logistic and Operational organization, there was a great sense of harmony and amalgamation between the different contingents. I was proud to be a part of such a mission and I was not aware at the time that I would be part of its history 20 years on.

My first impressions of Kosovo was of the houses that were destroyed everywhere, some were still burning and damaged with bullets, car burnt out, were seen on corners and there were very few people on the streets.



### ***Military appointment in 1999:***

I was deployed in Gorazdevac (a small Serbian enclave in the municipality of Pec/ Peja) with my Artillery Battalion which had M109L howitzers. At the time I held the position of Artillery Observer Officer (as part of Reconnaissance Surveillance and Target Acquisition Team), but in addition to performing the normal functions of observation and reconnaissance, I was conducting patrols in the Serbian enclave of Gorazdevac, in the area of the Decane Monastery and at the Pec/Peja Patriarchate.

### ***Biggest Changes since 1999:***

I returned to Kosovo on the 28 November 2018 and immediately I felt like I was in a new place for the first time. The memory of Kosovo in 1999, which is still well impressed in my mind, was that of a martyred land lacking everything. Today I am in a completely different country that has made great development both socially and economically. Even the tasks that KFOR carries out are completely different which is thanks to the desire of the different ethnic groups and new generations to live together peacefully. The number of KFOR troops present today is a lot less than the past and this means that the security situation in Kosovo has improved.

### ***Present Deployment:***

In this mission I hold the position of Command Sergeant Major and JVB Chief of the MNBG-W. The same appointment that I hold in Italy. The several missions that I carried out and the experiences gained in the 20 years following 1999, like Afghanistan and Lebanon, are essential in my job due to the greater responsibilities that I have. The only regret I feel right now is being 20 years older!

### ***20th Year Anniversary:***

Remembering our fallen KFOR soldiers in Kosovo on the June 11th Ceremony is the best way to honor their memory and at the same time a time to thank all the men and women who have sacrificed their affections, interests and passions to serve their countries and KFOR over the last 20 years.

Lt. Col Gennaro Troise  
OF-4 ITA-A  
PAO Chief MNBG-W



## Deployed Past and Present

# Military



**Harri Pelkonen**

**OF-4 FIN-A**

**JIC SSO PLANS/MA**

### ***First impressions of KFOR and Kosovo in 1999:***

20 years ago, I was a very young officer; I had just arrived after one year since my deployment to Bosnia. I was based in Camp Ville in Lipljan. My first impression was that Kosovo was a very nice country, it has beautiful scenic mountains in comparison to where I live in Finland is very flat terrain. However I also noticed that there was a lot of tension and grief, which was understandable after all that had happened in this country.

### ***Military appointment in 1999:***

I was deployed as an EOD Officer in 1999; my main focus was on our scheduled tasks. We worked in 12/14 hour shifts as de-miners clearing unexploded ammunitions in the surrounding areas. Our secondary task was to improve our camp, we lived in tents for the first 2 months and then we began the construction of Corimecs. We were responsible for improving the camp for the welfare of approx. 800 Finnish soldiers.

### ***Biggest Changes since 1999:***

The biggest changes I have noticed since 1999 is in the infrastructure of the country. Roads have been tarmacked and there has also been improvements to many of the buildings. The people are extremely nice and polite, and very accepting of our presence here.

### ***Present Deployment:***

In 1999, I was deployed at the operational level conducting demining operations. I returned in 2008/2009 as a Captain in a role in the task force centre, DACOS in the Engineer section in Camp Ville, Lipljan. Today I work in the Force HQ in Pristina as SSO Plans and Military Advisor in the Joint Implementation Commission cell. This deployment is totally different to my other deployments which have changed from working at the operation level to the diplomatic level. I work in a liaison capacity with the Serbian, Albanian, Macedonian and Montenegro Armed Forces and Chief of Defence of those countries.

### ***20th Year Anniversary Commemoration:***

It is tragic that KFOR personnel have paid the ultimate sacrifice in Kosovo and as soldiers we accept the risks involved in all our overseas missions. But I am not looking at the past, we need to focus on the future, life must go on but we will honour the fallen on the 11 JUN at the 20th anniversary ceremony. They have done their job and now it is our turn to do our job. I am delighted to be here working in this international environment, it is a very nice place to work and a great learning environment.

Comdt Joanne Naughton

OF-3 IRL-A

PAO Chief Internal Information





**Zsolt Rakozov**  
**OR-7 HUN-A**  
**KTRBN**

### ***First impressions of KFOR and Kosovo in 1999:***

I joined the Army in 1997. After two years in the army, I was deployed to KFOR. My first impression of KFOR was that we were here to provide a safe and secure environment in Kosovo and the citizens were very friendly to us. I never felt fear but sometimes we heard shooting sounds.

### ***Military appointment in 1999:***

I joined the Army in 1997. After two years in the army, I was deployed to KFOR. My first impression of KFOR was that we were here to provide a safe and secure environment in Kosovo and the citizens were very friendly to us. I never felt fear but sometimes we heard shooting sounds.



### ***Biggest Changes since 1999:***

In Kosovo big changes have taken place. For example, twenty years ago here the road network was not as good as today. At that time you saw several demolished buildings but nowadays they have been rebuilt or the owners have repaired them. The local citizen's lives are similar to ours at home. They can go to work and they can live a normal life. On the other hand, the Internet reformed the whole world and these changes have made life faster and KFOR is well suited to these new challenges. In the first period of 1999, KFOR HQ consisted of only tents and now it is a little city.

### ***Present Deployment:***

Altogether this is my 10th deployment and the 6th here in Kosovo. In the last twenty years changes have taken place in my military career as well. In the first mission I served as an infantry man (private OR-2) and currently I am a platoon sergeant (sergeant first class OR-7). In 1999 my task was to guard the KFOR HQ as a "simple soldier" so that time I executed the orders, but now I am responsible for twenty people so I make the orders at my level. The tasks have changed as well because the KTRBN takes part in several Crowd Riot Control joint training and we have exercises on a monthly basis with KFOR troops.

### ***20th Year Anniversary:***

In my opinion, it was good for Kosovo, that KFOR came and still is here. Those who lost their lives during deployment contributed to the SASE. The sacrifices have initiated a change, which have improved the circumstances here for the better and in the last 20 years Kosovo has really improved.

Lt.Csaba Búz  
OF-1 HUN-A  
KTRBN PAO



## Deployed Past and Present

# Military



**Adrian Kramer**  
**OR-2 CHE-A**  
**Swiss Coy**

### ***First impressions of KFOR and Kosovo in 1999:***

I was deployed as a driver within the convoy into the operation room. During the deployment, we stopped in Koper/Slovenia and Thessaloniki/Greece where we got to know, soldiers of other nations, and exchanged our experiences, which I remember very well. In Kosovo itself we only made slow progress with the convoy and it was difficult to stay together. I remember that the first KFOR soldier we met was an American. The journey with the convoy lasted an extremely long time and when we finally arrived at Camp Casablanca in Suva Reka, we were very tired and went straight to sleep. We didn't have any mattresses yet, but the sleeping bag and the bed frame were enough for sleeping. Already on the second day we felt an incredibly strong sense of community in the camp. In the country itself one could see burnt out and destroyed houses or graffiti, which testified to the acts of war.

### ***Military appointment in 1999:***

The biggest challenge at the beginning was certainly the lack of local knowledge. Navigation of the roads was not always easy for us drivers, especially with the heavy trucks. In Prizren, for example, even market stalls were cleared away so that we could pass with the trucks. A lot of patience was required by us and the locals. In Dulje Pass, the road was partly damaged by bombs, so the

two-lane road was no longer passible and everything took much longer.

### ***Biggest Changes since 1999:***

It seems to me that agriculture in Kosovo has undergone major changes. At the time, Switzerland sent cows to Kosovo to support the creation of an agricultural basis. Today we can see that the fields are cultivated and crops are being grown. In my first assignment, this was not yet the case.

### ***Present Deployment:***

I am still in the same appointment as I was in 1999. In the past, we had the "Fortress Guard Corp", which was armed with a long range weapon to provide protection. That's how you got to know a lot of people. Today we always drive with a double crew, which is much less tiring. In my first assignment I only drove trucks. Today I also drive a coach and so I still have a lot of international contact, which I really appreciate. In 1999 we also transported water to the villages; it was nice to see how grateful the population was that we could support them. Today, the Swiss aren't involved in CIMIC projects but I am delighted that we can convey a feeling of security for the Kosovo people.

Capt. Stefanie Waltenspül  
 OF-2 CHE-A  
 PAO CHE





# KFOR Radio

**Radio KFOR celebrates its 20 years of broadcasting this year, beginning as Galaxy Radio in 1999 broadcasting live in a small truck. It has won the hearts of many listeners throughout the years and today is one of the top 5 most listened too and famous radio station among the Kosovo population.**



Radio KFOR was established in 1999 by the British Forces – Green Jackets stationed in Pristina, and it became the voice of all KFOR troops in Kosovo. It started broadcasting in three languages Albanian, Serbian and Turkish (Only news was broadcasted in Turkish). The shows contained Kosovo Albanian and Kosovo Serbian broadcasters (both speaking each other's language) in a multi-ethnic platform program which mainly focused on youth education, culture, sport as well as broadcasting the 'Top 40 UK' hits. In 2000, KFOR decided to split Radio KFOR frequencies into Albanian & Serbian, but always kept the same platform of bringing people together. This proved to be the best way possible to transmit KFOR's messages about peace and tolerance to the people of Kosovo. The Radio KFOR mission continues to be the

same up to this day, to produce reliable content that informs, educates, entertains and engages all people in Kosovo to care and respect each other by sharing the values of a common multiethnic culture.

***“Radio KFOR is the soundtrack of progress that KFOR has achieved together with the people of Kosovo!” Maj Gen Lorenzo D’Addario***

On the 14 JUN 19, KFOR celebrates its 20 year anniversary and still continues with the same vital mission to which is to provide a safe and secure environment and freedom of movement for all communities living in Kosovo. Radio KFOR has been a very valuable and crucial asset of KFOR since 1999 and it continues to make its contribution to Kosovo's society through messages, information and activities that it conducts and organizes.

One person in particular who has

been the backbone of Radio KFOR and ensured its success over the years is Emina Hyseni Shala. Emina was a member of the KFOR Radio team since the very beginning in 1999 and has been a devoted and



inspiring broadcaster spreading the KFOR message for 20 years. She was promoted to Radio Manager in 2017 and her outstanding 20 years of experience and dedication as a broadcaster in Radio KFOR is inspirational. She is widely known as the voice of Radio KFOR and has often been stopped by listeners





# KFOR RADIO



praising her interpreted peaceful message that she broadcasts on the radio. Her enthusiasm and love for KFOR Radio is infectious and can be echoed in her voice daily as she spreads hope, positivity and motivation to the youth in Kosovo today. She has contributed to over 20 years in projecting the messages of KFOR to her country and she has also organized different campaigns which have involved tolerance, living together, peace, the future, education, sport and music. She says that "I feel happy and honored to be apart of Radio KFOR and that it has been enjoying good reputations in Kosovo for 20 years".

Radio KFOR has organized and played a crucial role throughout Kosovo by connecting the youth through music. They organized several activities with Kosovo Albanian and Kosovo Serbian young people, such as: "Charity Multiethnic Concert" – which for the first time in 20 years, this kind of event was organized, where the Kosovo Albanian and Kosovo Serbian young people played classical music together, interacted with each other and at the end of the concert they sang a peaceful song "We are the World". This event was held in

National Theatre of Pristina with a presence of around 400 spectators.

Since its establishment, Radio KFOR has continuously evolved thanks to new technology and new trends. It has evolved in the last 20 years from broadcasting live in a small truck to an upgrading of a new studio for Radio KFOR in the very close future.

KFOR Commander, Maj Gen Lorenzo D'Addario during an interview on the 20th Anniversary of KFOR stated to KFOR radio staff and its listeners: "Radio KFOR is the soundtrack of progress that KFOR

has achieved together with the people of Kosovo!"

So, Radio KFOR though the outstanding work of Emina Hyseni Shala and her team will definitely continue to be the soundtrack and will offer the best possible content to its audience for the best possible future!

Comdt Joanne Naughton  
OF-3 IRL-A  
PAO Chief Internal Information  
&  
Contributor: Ms Emina Hyseni  
Shala





# Back to Kosovo

## British Veterans deployed in the first KFOR mission return to Kosovo after 20 years.

Troops serving with NATO's original KFOR mission have made an emotional return to the territory of Kosovo for the first time since 1999 to complete a personal pilgrimage to the precise locations where they served twenty years ago.



The pair of British officers from the Allied Rapid Reaction Corps (ARRC) based in Gloucester, England completed the trip last month to witness the progress made in the country since 1999, with a visit to the capital Pristina, as well as, to the two locations where they had been originally based - Lipljan and Podujevo.

The first KFOR mission in 1999 was commanded by the UK-led 'Allied Rapid Reaction Corps' (ARRC), which had been stood up for the task given its recent operational experience from the Bosnia conflict only a couple of years earlier.

By pure coincidence, our two Kosovo veterans, Lieutenant Colonel Nathan Webber of the Royal Artillery and Royal Air Force officer Squadron

Leader Owen Newman, find themselves serving with the ARRC once again at the very moment the UK-led Corps marks twenty years since it led the ground intervention in Kosovo.

### Field Trip

Owen Newman looks at the scrubby field on the edge of Lipljan village and attempts to piece together the site's 1999 layout from memory.

As a member of the RAF's Tactical Supply Wing, the squadron leader had been part of a team of specialists responsible for providing a 24-hour service refuelling NATO's mixed helicopter fleet. The airmen had crossed the border during the early days of KFOR's advance into theatre before setting up in Lipljan.

Just as he is reminiscing about the Gurkha soldiers who had responsibility for the camp's outer security – and for operating the catering tent, with its regular servings of Nepalese curry – that he is approached by the farm's smartly-dressed landowner, Valon Vehapi.



Speaking through our interpreter, the pair quickly discover that twenty years ago they had shared that very same Gurkha kitchen, where Vehapi had worked as a locally-employed teenager.



On establishing that the RAF officer is the first UK military serviceman to return there in two decades, the men warmly embrace. Vehapi declares it the “best day of his life” when the





British first arrived in 1999.

Soon afterwards the pair are sharing Turkish coffee and memories in Vehapi's family home.

### *Northern Exposure*

Our party continues its brief return visit with a drive north of Pristina towards Podujevo – to mirror the journey first taken by Lieutenant Colonel Webber, then a freshly-minted troop commander. We pull up at a shiny factory complex at Lebane.

A glance at Webber's well-thumbed photos and then back across to the current landscape in front of us, it is quickly apparent that the view over the rolling countryside remains relatively unchanged.

The colonel points out to us the original positions of his AS-90 guns and we find the very spot where



his war snaps had been taken. The war-scarred factory buildings have been replaced by a thriving window manufacturer.

Webber recalls the refugee families at the camp gates and the destruction caused by the armed conflict in Kosovo as he reflects, "To me this place always summed up the best and worst parts of our tour. It's great

to see such a thriving community now."

Major Laurence Roche  
OF-3 UK  
Allied Rapid Reaction Corps  
&  
Photographer  
Warrant Officer Mark Nesbit





# 20 Years of Experience with KFOR



## ***Vlora Braha: Albanian Interpreter***

### ***Kosovo in 1999:***

I was very young and in a way, it was probably difficult for me to manifest the fear. Every day was filled with lots of uncertainties. I stayed in Prishtina during the entire war conflict in 1999, and once the conflict ended, I promised myself I will never go back and think about that particular period of time, I wanted to focus on the future. The deployment of KFOR troops into Prishtina brought incomparable joy in my life. My hope was restored and I was able to walk through the streets of Prishtina for the first time after a while and not have the feeling that something will happen to me. I remember the exact time when the first NATO

KFOR helicopters flew over my neighbourhood.

### ***Working with KFOR:***

The first memory I can share with you is the very first day of my employment with KFOR, which was on the 14th of June, 1999. KFOR Headquarters Main was downtown Prishtina where the Kosovo Police HQ is now. I saw a British officer, who was standing at the front door of the building. I approached him and the first question I asked him was: Are you going to stay here for five years (implying that the entire KFOR I staff will be staying in Kosovo that long). He started laughing and said: Well, I don't know whether our families will allow us to be deployed that long, but we'll see what the future will bring us. I started working for the Joint Implementation Commission because at that time it was divided into two sectors: Kosovo Protection Corps sector and VJ/MUP sector. Since I became part of the KFOR family, I have worked as Senior Interpreter / Translator in different branches and offices. On 14 JUN 19, I will have worked 20 years for KFOR/ NATO. That's a long time, right!

### ***Biggest Changes in the last 20 Years:***

I think there are many challenges and problems that my country is encountering, such as the education system, the health system and welfare. However, I would not trade it for any other place in the world, I have travelled to many beautiful and breath-taking countries, but nothing compares to my country. At the end of the day, I want to invest all my knowledge and experience here and not somewhere else. In

1999 in the HQ, we only had the main building, nothing else. Offices were in improvised trucks and the kitchen/dinning facility was in a tent. I remember the very first meeting we had in 'Batcave': 19th of June, 1999. It was the first meeting with the, back then, Kosovo Liberation Army leaders. 20 years later, KFOR HQ has turned into a small town.

### ***Best Experience:***

My best experience working with KFOR could be highlighted in several aspects: the demilitarisation process of the Kosovo Liberation Army and transformation into Kosovo Protection Corps. I remember spending hours and hours in meetings and visits throughout Kosovo just so that the best possible solution was found. We had to work without any fixed schedule until September of 1999, when officially the transformation agreement of the KLA into KPC was reached and signed. Another experience worth mentioning is the involvement of KFOR in finding a solution between the UCPMB (Liberation Army for Presheva, Medvegja and Bujanoc) and Serbia's military forces; then March riots in 2004 and Kosovo's independence in 2008. One thing that I want to underline is different cultures I was able to notice within the KFOR. It is a very unique experience.

### ***Future:***

I would like to work for KFOR for another couple of years, but perhaps switch my career to teaching. My plan is to teach in the University and maybe, if I don't get too lazy, write a book about all my work experience with NATO / KFOR.





# Civilian Staff



## ***Nexhad Demolli: Broadcaster/ Journalist at Radio KFOR***

### ***Kosovo in 1999:***

Life was very difficult in 1999. The situation was bad and there was no safety, no freedom of movement, and not enough supplies for a normal life. At the time when KFOR troops were deployed in Pristina, no one knew what to expect. There was still a real danger of conflict among the two ethnic groups, i.e. Serbs and Albanians, but the KFOR presence gave us hope that things will improve.



### ***Working with KFOR:***

When I started working for KFOR in 1999, I was initially amazed at how many nations were present and working together in Film City HQ. We broadcasted from a small container and broadcasting was conducted in three languages: Albanian, Serbian and Turkish, we were a really unique radio station in Kosovo. For the past two decades, I have worked in Radio KFOR (previously known as Galaxy Radio) which is now one of the most famous radio stations in Kosovo.

My best experience working with KFOR is my audience/listeners that I get to talk to and meet every day, on various occasions and on the field. During the last 20 years of working with KFOR I have gained many friends of different nationalities and I am still in touch with them. For all these years, I know that I have become a recognizable voice in Kosovo, that the listeners trust me, and that they have remained faithful all these years.

### ***Biggest Changes in the last 20 Years:***

Biggest change in Kosovo and KFOR is the trust that all ethnic groups have in KFOR. People are no longer reserved when they see KFOR and everybody accepted them as one

of their own. There has been a lot of economic progress of Kosovo, primarily infrastructure including highways. I hope that in the next 20 years Kosovo will develop even more and thus provide people with a better future.

### ***Future:***

I hope that in the next 20 years I will be part of the KFOR radio, that we will continue to be leaders in providing support to all communities in Kosovo, and that I will continue to be their favorite broadcaster!

Comdt Joanne Naughton  
OF-3 IRL-A

PAO Chief Internal Information

**Commander KFOR XXIII**  
Major General  
Lorenzo D' Addario,  
Italian Army

**Chief Public Affairs Office &  
COMKFOR Spokesperson**  
Col. Vincenzo Grasso,  
Italian Army

**Chief Internal Information &  
Editor KFOR Chronicle**  
Comdt. Joanne Naughton,  
Irish Defence Forces  
[naughtonj@hq.kfor.nato.int](mailto:naughtonj@hq.kfor.nato.int)

**Front Cover**  
OR-4 Carlo Fenu  
OR-4 Monica Bascelli

**Design & Photographer:**  
Mr. Afrim Hajrullahu

**E-mail and Web**  
[kforchronicle@hq.kfor.nato.int](mailto:kforchronicle@hq.kfor.nato.int)  
<http://jfcnaples.nato.int/kfor>

Printed by "Blendi"  
Tel.: 044 149 115



UNITED IN COMMITMENT  
FOR A BRIGHTER FUTURE

