

## MINISTRY FOR THE KOSOVO SECURITY FORCE

### From the Minister's Desk



Dear friends, welcome to the 17<sup>th</sup> edition of the KSF's newsletter.

We are leaving behind a remarkable month full of important activities. These activities clearly put KSF in a much-deserved role as a regional peace promoter. It is important to mention that our joint activities with our allies are getting more frequent, which is also part of our objective as a Ministry and of our Government as well.

Ministry of KSF and its leadership is strongly committed to support all domestic and regional civil society events that deal with security issues. Therefore, I participated in several of these activities where I had a chance to express my views on regional and global security developments. One cannot expect that in today's interconnected world taking a passive standpoint toward security threats is possible without being ready to contribute in diminishing those threats by promoting sustainable cooperation between nations.

Have a pleasant reading.

Sincerely Yours

AGIM ÇEKU

## MINISTER ÇEKU PARTICIPATES IN U.S.- ADRIATIC CHARTER DEFENSE MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE

On 14 June, Minister Agim Çeku attended the U.S. - Adriatic Charter Defense Ministerial Conference in Ohrid, the Republic of Macedonia. The meeting attendees included Ministers of Defense of the Adriatic Charter countries as well as other high level representatives from Western Balkan countries. The goal of the conference was to promote regional dialogue and strengthen regional cooperation. Participants at the conference discussed bilateral cooperation, joint contributions in Afghanistan after 2014 and future projects supporting the “Smart Defense” concept. Minister Çeku stressed that the Western Balkan countries can serve as an example that mutual trust can be reached through dialogue, disputes can be solved peacefully through negotiations, and regional security can be realized through cooperation. “Kosovo is calling for deeper and more profound cooperation, common policies and doctrines, coordinated decisions and actions, combined efforts and capabilities. This will be the key to our success. This will be the key to our dream – sustainable peace and stability,” said Çeku.



## MINISTER ÇEKU REPRESENTS KOSOVO IN THE FORUM “TO BE SECURE”

In June Minister Ceku alongside numerous high officials, prominent academics and experts in security policy took part in the “To Be Secure Forum” held in Budva, Montenegro. In this annual forum, participants discussed a wide range of political and security issues to include global security, Euro-Atlantic security and security in Southeast Europe. Forum participants spoke about the enlargement of NATO and the Alliance's open door policy, partnership on Afghanistan, the situation in Syria, relations between the Russian Federation and the U.S., and the impact of the dialogue between Serbia and Kosovo on the region. Minister Çeku represented Kosovo during the panel discussion “New Momentum for Serbia and Kosovo: Regional Implications.” He stressed that the agreement signed on 19 April between Belgrade and Pristina is historical for the entire region. The essence is reflected in the understanding that both parties have made a big step toward the road to EU membership and away from the past.



## MKSF AND THE SLOVENIAN MINISTRY OF DEFENSE SIGN MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

On 11 June, Minister Agim Çeku signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Slovenian Defense Minister Roman Jakič, creating the basis for further cooperation between the two countries in the security field. The MKSF and the Slovenian Ministry of Defense will cooperate in the following areas: international security and stability, education and training, logistics, planning and financing, legal and environmental matters. The KSF will expertise and experience from its Slovenian counterpart in the areas of Euro-Atlantic integration and security capacity building. Minister Jakič stated that the stability of Kosovo and the broader region was of strategic significance for Slovenia and pledged its continued support for the KFOR mission as long as necessary.





## COMKSF LIEUTENANT GENERAL KASTRATI VISITS THE U.S.

In June, COMKSF Lieutenant General Kastrati paid a visit to the United States where he observed the Iowa National Guard's Annual Training operations. Lieutenant General Kastrati met with KSF members who were participating in this field exercise as well as five other KSF members who were at the Emergency Management Center at Camp Dodge. During his visit, the COMKSF met the Iowa National Guard Commander, Major General Timothy Orr and the state staff of the Iowa National Guard to discuss ways to further enhance the partnership between both forces. Major General Orr awarded Lieutenant General Kastrati with the Iowa National Guard Medal of Merit for exceptionally meritorious service while serving as Commander of the KSF. Lieutenant General Kastrati also attended Lieutenant Colonel Agron Bajrami's graduation ceremony from the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College (CGSC). CGSC is the cornerstone for the academic development of mid-grade military officers; the State Department's International Military Education and Training (IMET) program funded his attendance.



## KSF PARTICIPATES IN A REGIONAL EXERCISE “JOINT REACTION 2013”

In Albania from 2 to 7 June, the KSF alongside Albania, Macedonia and Montenegro, participated in a regional training exercise “Joint Reaction 2013.” During the four day exercise, search and rescue operations took place in the sea, on the land and in rough mountainous terrain. The KSF operated in the steep terrain of the Bovilla Mountains searching for and rescuing passengers who, according to a scenario, were involved in a plane crash. “Joint Reaction 2013” served as a proof of concept for the evaluation and consolidation of capabilities necessary to resolve civil emergency situations and search and rescue operations. The secondary benefit of the exercise is the continued interoperability developed between the troops of the regional countries.





## THE KSF FOR THE FIRST TIME IN A U.S. EUROPEAN COMMAND EXERCISE

On 6 June, the KSF completed their first-ever participation in a U.S. European Command (EUCOM) Exercise; a major milestone in cooperation with EUCOM. The scenario for “Shared Resilience 2013 (SR 13)” was based on a large earthquake which exceeded the capacity of the host nation and requiring regional assistance. SR 13 was hosted by Macedonia and organized by EUCOM. The KSF had the lead for search and rescue in the exercise. The 11 KSF search and rescue and medical personnel were commended by U.S. Army Europe for their excellent work. The exercise included participants from seven countries: the United States, Kosovo, Macedonia, Bosnia, Slovenia, Albania, and Montenegro. Shared Resilience is an “In the Spirit Of” Partnership for Peace, Joint Chiefs of Staff-sponsored regional multinational exercise supporting Commander USEUCOM's security cooperation strategy.



## CADETS TAKE PART IN “SUMMER CAMP 2013” IN MACEDONIA

In June, 11 KSF cadets took part in the 2013 Summer Campus held in Krivolak, the Republic of Macedonia. In ten days, over 250 students and cadets from six countries had the opportunity to receive academic training in the field of post-conflict operations. They were familiarized with procedures essential for participation in humanitarian operations, support to natural disasters and how to effectively work with the media. The camp enhanced the cooperation between the regional countries and demonstrated the fact that the Western Balkan countries are determined to work together to contribute to global peace and stability.





## EUCOM CONDUCTS MEDIA TRAINING FOR MKSF LEADERSHIP AND PUBLIC AFFAIRS PERSONNEL

In June, a joint team from EUCOM and U.S. Army Europe conducted communication training for the leadership of the MKSF, the KSF and their public affairs personnel. The goal of the training was to provide public affairs guidance, training and assistance and to demonstrate the importance of communicating with one voice. "U.S. EUCOM saw this visit as a great forward step in our ongoing strategic communication and public affairs mentoring and training program with Kosovo. With direct access not only to public relations personnel but also to the leaders, we were able to reinforce the importance of institutional synchronization, and how integrated efforts across government create success for everyone. Nothing can replace face-to-face learning and sharing of best practices, and this visit achieved both," said Rebecca Wriggle, Deputy Director of Strategic Communication, U.S. European Command, adding that they look forward to continued engagement to assist Kosovo's efforts to achieve its highest aspirations.



## MINE CLEARING PROJECT IN GERMIA PARK SUCCESSFULLY COMPLETED

On 7 June, a closing ceremony was held in Germia Park marking the end of the mine-clearing project executed by KSF EOD specialists and supported by the Swedish Göta Engineer Regiment. Germia, the largest and the most beautiful park of Pristina, is the most popular recreational area for the residents and guests of Pristina. Unfortunately, until now, it was also an area which contained unexploded ordnance thus endangering lives of its visitors. "The dense vegetation and the damaged buildings made the demining work in Germia Park very complicated," said Minister Agim Ceku, "therefore we are thankful to the Swedish Armed Forces and especially to the Göta Engineer Regiment for providing the needed armored excavators. They were essential for proper completion of the project." Swedish Chargé d'affaires Ingrid Johansson noted that, "Today, we open this part of the park again and can truly say that it no longer poses a threat to visitors. No warning signs and no barbed wire is any longer needed." She also thanked the residents of Pristina for their patience during the time when parts of the park had been closed due to the mine-clearance. Since 2<sup>nd</sup> of April, when mine clearing works were started, over 25,000 square meters were cleared, with 38 cluster bombs and 3 hand grenades demolished.





## KSF ENGINEERS PUT A TEMPORARY BRIDGE IN KRAMOVIK

In June the KSF Engineering Battalion constructed a temporary bridge over the Drini i Bardhe River in Kramovik, to connect the municipalities Gjakova and Rahovec while the permanent bridge over the river is being repaired. Gjakova's Mayor Pal Lekaj thanked the KSF for their work and stressed that the temporary bridge will help citizens avoid the danger posed by the damaged bridge. The construction of the temporary bridge lasted two weeks, with 30 KSF specialists installing a 52-meter long and 75-ton metal bridge. The MKSF receives many requests from national and local institutions to support their needs. The increasing number of requests is evidence that both national institutions and municipalities are aware of KSF professionalism and superior performance.

