

## MINISTRY FOR THE KOSOVO SECURITY FORCE

### From the Minister's Desk



Dear friends, welcome to the 15<sup>th</sup> edition of the KSF's newsletter.

Ministry of Kosovo Security Force is dedicated to strengthen the relationship with both NATO and regional countries. Last month's activities demonstrate that such commitment is growing strong within MKSF. The Commander Allied Joint Force Command Naples, Admiral Bruce Clingan and other high-ranking regional officials visited MKSF. They reflected on KSF's progress by offering their continuous support for further development of our institution.

I am also very proud to mention that our Second Lieutenant Mentor Ibrahim graduated from one of the most prestigious Military Academies in the world, the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst. This is another indicator that the KSF's future will be handled by capable and highly professional people who are ready to lead the way for the next generation of men and women who will serve and protect their country.

Have a pleasant reading.

Sincerely Yours

AGIM ÇEKU

## ADMIRAL BRUCE CLINGAN VISITS KOSOVO

On April 25, Minister of the Kosovo Security Force (MFSK) Agim Çeku and Commander of the Land Force, Major General Rrahman Rama had a meeting with Commander Allied Joint Force Command Naples, Admiral Bruce Clingan and Commander KFOR, Major General Volker Halbauer. Minister Çeku informed Admiral Clingan on the recent KSF developments and activities, including KSF's perspective and the efforts towards the fulfillment of annual plans and objectives. In the joint meeting, Minister Çeku and Admiral Clingan focused on the continuation of the cooperation between the Kosovo Security Force (KSF) and Allied Joint Force Command Naples.



## NATO DELEGATION IS BRIEFED ON GENDER EQUALITY IN THE KSF

On April 16, a NATO delegation led by Mari Skaare, NATO Secretary General's Special Representative for Women, Peace and Security, Liliane Maes, International Staff Operations HQ NATO, and Lieutenant Colonel Nicholas Theakston, International Military Staff Operations Division HQ NATO, visited the KSF. Commander of the KSF Lieutenant General Kadri Kastrati informed the delegation about achievements of the KSF, gender equality in the KSF and areas of cooperation with NATO, KFOR and other international institutions with missions in Kosovo, who have helped and continue helping the advancement of the KSF. Special Representative Skaare pointed out that the percentage of women serving in the KSF is very satisfactory, and promised to support the KSF in sustaining gender awareness. The purpose of the visit was regarding the implementation of UN Resolution 1325 "Women, Peace and Security" in the KSF, as well as gender equality in the KSF and cooperation between KFOR and the KSF.



## COOPERATION BETWEEN KOSOVO AND MACEDONIA IN SECURITY ARE WILL BE STRENGTHENED

On April 19, Minister Agim Çeku welcomed the visit by the Macedonian Defence Minister Talat Xhaferi. During his visit, Minister Xhaferi was briefed on the progress of fulfilment the Ministry for Kosovo Security Force 2013 priorities, the ongoing Strategic Security Sector Review and other issues. Minister Çeku thanked his colleague for providing the opportunity to educate KSF cadets at the Macedonian Military Academy. Defence Minister Xhaferi promised the continuation of cooperation between the two ministries, as well as his readiness for continuing support to the KSF. Macedonia shares a big and important part in building up and advancing the KSF. Co-operation between the both countries in the security field includes official visits, expert talks, seminars, workshops, expertise, education and training.



## IOWA GUARD ASSISTS KSF IN OPERATIONAL READINESS

From April 22-24, members from the Iowa National Guard assisted KSF leaders in identifying ways to enhance the ability of the KSF to provide humanitarian assistance in Kosovo and in other countries. The leaders from Iowa, Kosovo's State Partnership Program partner, brought the experience gained from preparing and sending many Iowa National Guard units to operations within the United States and to other countries. KSF leaders incorporated the lessons learned from these operations in order to better prepare KSF units to conduct operations domestically and abroad in the future. The Iowa National Guard and Kosovo Security Force partnership is considered to be one of the most active State Partnership Programs.



## U.S. EMBASSY SUPPORTS EXPLOSIVE ORDNANCE DISPOSAL TRAINING

At the end of March, the U.S. Embassy's Office of Defence Cooperation (ODC), in cooperation with the United States European Command's Humanitarian Mine Action (HMA) Program, coordinated a week-long U.S. Navy training course for 15 KSF Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) and Demining Company Medical Personnel. All 15 of the KSF personnel graduated with high marks, gaining new skills in comprehensive Basic and Advanced Life Support, Casualty Evacuation and sustainment of personnel during extended training. This was the first of a three phase medical training for the EOD company. Phases 2 and 3 will take place later this year and will focus on instructor training. This will set the stage for KSF instructors to become certified and capable of training their entire company. As part of this program, the ODC and EUCOM's HMA Program transferred over \$89,000 in medical equipment to the KSF.



## U.S. DONATES VEHICLES FOR THE MINE ACTION CENTER

On April 17, the US Department of State, through the US Embassy in Pristina donated three vehicles, which will be used by the Mine Action Center of the MKSF. At the donation ceremony, Minister Çeku stressed that clearance of Kosovo's mine fields is a dangerous but rewarding job and that one cleared mine is at least one human life saved. "We are grateful that the United States is playing an important and a very needed role in ensuring that the KSF is more efficient in fulfilling its duties. The KSF can always count on US support, and this donation is another step in cooperation with the US, another proof that KSF's capacities are being built jointly with US," said Çeku. Since the end of the 1998 – 1999 conflict, cluster bombs and mines have killed 115 people and wounded more than 450. Therefore, the EOD mission is very important to the people of Kosovo and the donated vehicles will help KSF demining specialists be even more efficient in fulfilling their duties and saving





## THE SWEDISH ARMED FORCES SUPPORTS MINE CLEARANCE IN GERMIA PARK

In April a mine clearance operation in Germia Park was started and is conducted by the KSF with support of the Swedish Armed Forces. The range of the project is estimated to be 30,000 square meters and is expected to be finalized at the end of June. Seven Swedish soldiers from the EOD Company of Göta Engineer Regiment support the project. The Göta Engineer Regiment also provides armored excavators that can be remotely controlled to perform the excavation of the buildings. Germia Park is a popular recreational area for the residents of Pristina and is especially busy during the weekends. During the NATO Air Campaign in 1999, the buildings in the Germia Park, then occupied by Serbian Police, were bombed resulting in unexploded ordnance remaining under and around the collapsed buildings. After the completing the project, local residents and visitors will be able to move freely in the area without fear of being hurt by mines and other unexploded ordnance.



## RESERVE COMPONENT COMPLETES THE BASIC TRAINING

On April 12, 151 members from the KSF Reserve Component completed five-week basic training at the Training and Doctrine Command. 10 members from the Reserve Component were awarded for the achievement of good results. The US Defence Attaché James Kott stressed that the Reserve Force and the National Guard are major pillars of US security, and commended the reservists for completing the basic course.





## KSF OFFICER GRADUATES FROM THE ROYAL MILITARY ACADEMY SANDHURST

In April Second Lieutenant Mentor Ibrahim graduated from the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst of the United Kingdom. He has also won the “The Bahrain Communication & Behavioral Science Prize” for outstanding performance. M.Ibrahim is currently inducted as a Platoon Commander in the Third Rapid Reaction Battalion in Mitrovica.

M.Ibrahim is the sixth Officer from the KSF completing the course at the Academy. In August the graduation of Manushaqe Nura and Mimoza Budeci is expected, whilst Albert Asllani will start his studies in May on the same program. Funding for the officers attending the Royal Military Academy is covered by the United Kingdom, allocating approx €100,000 for each student.

The Royal Military Academy Sandhurst has a history of over two centuries in preparing British Army Officers. The current 48 week course at Sandhurst has been established to train officers to serve in all branches of the British Army including the Infantry, Artillery, Engineers, Signals and Logistics. Today Sandhurst is a center for military leadership development not only for British Military but also for selected candidates from the armed forces of other countries.





## THE MKSF FOSTERS COOPERATION WITH CIVIL SOCIETY

On April 30, the MKSF received representatives of civil society, foreign embassies in Kosovo and regional defence attachés to the semi-annual meeting. Participants were briefed on a progress of meeting 2013 priorities; MKSF's transparency policy and activities to provide public with timely and accurate information; non-majority ethnic communities outreach activities; and KSF's community projects. MKSF leaders stated that Kosovo can be proud of its civil society, which is active and articulates citizens' interests, demands and concerns. By being actively involved in socio-political issues, civil society makes the state and its institutions more accountable, responsive and effective, fostering freedom and democracy and helping to make needed changes happen.



## THE KSF MARKS THE EARTH DAY WITH PLANTING TREES IN GJILAN

On April 22, one hundred KSF members as well as soldiers from Camp Bondsteel, students from Malisheva and Gjilan high schools, and citizens of the area, participated in a sapling planting activity to mark Earth Day. The activity was carried out in cooperation with the Kosovo Forestry Agency, with over 3,000 saplings of coniferous trees being planted, thus afforesting barren hills in Malisheva village of Gjilan municipality. Minister Çeku appreciated the efforts of Gjilan Municipality to provide a clean, safe, and enjoyable environment. “It is our common responsibility to recognize the need for environmental responsibility and be active in protecting and taking care for our environment. Environmental awareness should be a part of our thinking, behavior and action, and our common task is to improve the community in which we live and work. Tree planting is one of the ways to do it. At the same time, planting of trees bears a symbolic meaning— trees grow over our lifetime and unite us with the generations to come,” said Çeku.





## KSF CELEBRATES THE NATIONAL SOVEREIGNTY AND CHILDREN'S DAY OF TURKEY

On April 22, the KSF marked the National Sovereignty and Children's Day of Turkey. On the occasion of this event, the MKSF organized a reception for the Turkish community serving in the KSF. At the same time, this event laid the ground for a tradition to celebrate a national day of ethnic communities serving in the KSF. Minister Çeku appreciated the dedicated service of 54 Turks who serve in the KSF and their personal contribution in building the KSF as professional, well trained and deployable force.

Turkey and Kosovo have excellent bilateral relations stemming from shared history and brotherhood ties. Kosovo citizens of Turkish origin, whose number is around 19,000, are an important bridge between the two countries. Turkey played an important role in Kosovo's independence and was among the first countries that recognised Kosovo's independence. Turkey strongly supports the strengthening of security in Kosovo and is an advocate of Kosovo's aspirations to integrate with Euro-Atlantic organizations.

