



REPUBLIC OF KOSOVA
MINISTRY OF DEFENSE



NEWSLETTER

February 2023

KSF CONTINGENT SUCCESSFULLY CONDUCTED SEARCH AND RESCUE OPERATION IN TÜRKIYE



KSF contingent has successfully completed a noble mission in saving lives from the tragedy in Türkiye, during the search and rescue operation in the areas affected by the earthquake.

The KSF Search and Rescue teams, during the search and rescue operation, showed professionalism, dedication and high performance that resulted in the saving of four lives of citizens of the Republic of Türkiye.

To congratulate them for the contribution, commitment and success shown during this two-week operation, at the International Airport of Pristina they were solemnly hosted by the Prime Minister of the Republic of Kosovo, Albin Kurti, the Minister of Defense, Armend Mehaj together

with the Commander of the Kosovo Security Force, Lieutenant General



Bashkim Jashari,
Commander of the
National Guard,
Brigadier General
Naim Haziri,
Ambassador of
Türkiye in Kosovo,
officers of the KSF
and the contingent
from Türkiye serving
in Kosovo as well as
family members.



On this occasion, the Commander of the Kosovo Security Force rewarded the members who returned from Türkiye with the “Save Lives” motivation. After the decision taken by the state institutions of the Republic of Kosovo and in coordination with the authorities of the Republic of Türkiye, the KSF contingent was deployed on the same day in the areas affected by the earthquake, offering the professional capacities of the Kosovo Security Force units (Urban Search & Rescue, K9, Emergency Medicine) to assist the Republic of Türkiye cope with easier this tragedy.



President of Republic of Kosovo, Vjosa Osmani, has decorated with Presidential has decorated with the Presidential Military Medal the members of the Kosovo Security Force Contingent, engaged in the humanitarian search and rescue mission, after the earthquake in Türkiye. Atetnded to this ceremony Minister of Defense, Armend Mehaj, Comamnder of the KSF , LTG. Bashkim Jashari, Ambassador of Türkiye in Kosovo, Tunç Angili, generals and senhioprnn officers of the KSF as well as family members of that KSF Contingent that were part of mission in Türkiye.



On this occasion, President Osmani stated that the KSF Contingent was honored for bravery, courage and unparalleled sacrifice for saving the lives of people affected by the terrible tragedy of the earthquakes in Türkiye, stressing that: “Our Security Force remains synonymous with peace and security in the country and in the world”.



MINISTER MEHAJ CONGRATULATED THE ASSOCIATION FOR SEARCH AND RESCUE FOR THE ASSISTANCE GIVEN IN THE CASE AFTER THE EARTHQUAKE IN TÜRKIYE

After the successful completion of the humanitarian search and rescue mission in Türkiye, where Minister Mehaj hosted the members of the Kosovo Association for Search and Rescue, headed by Milaim Kelmendi. On this occasion, Minister Mehaj heartily congratulated them for their voluntary contribution and the professionalism shown in the search and rescue operation, in the areas affected by the earthquake in Türkiye, where they succeeded in extracting two people alive from the ruins, among of them a child, as well as the removal of dozens of corpses from the ruined buildings.



MINISTER MEHAJ HELD VERY USEFUL MEETINGS AT NATO HEADQUARTERS IN BRUSSELS

Many important topics related to security, challenges, achievements and opportunities of Kosovo's cooperation with NATO were discussed between Minister Mehaj and Deputy Assistant Secretary General for NATO Operations, Burcu San, during his official visit at the NATO headquarters in Brussels.

During this visit, Minister Mehaj was accompanied by the Ambassador of the Republic of Kosovo to NATO, Astrit Zemaj, Acting Chief of Staff of the General Staff of the KSF, Colonel Ejup Maqedonci and the Chief of the Cabinet of the Minister of Defense, Hasan Hoxha.

The second meeting was held with the Ambassadors of the Quint countries in NATO, while the central meeting was held in the NATO conference hall, where initially, Minister Mehaj presented and informed the ambassadors of the NATO countries about the security situation in the world and the impact in the Western Balkans, then for its objectives for the development of the Force, bilateral and multilateral international cooperation, cooperation with NALT and KFOR, as well as the way forward in terms of cooperation with NATO.

Afterwards, ambassadors from different countries in their addresses highly appreciated the development process of the KSF, its engagement in international operations, the commitment of the Ministry of Defense for cooperation in the management of the situation with Afghan refugees, as well as the dedication of Kosovo for the joint effort of allies and partners after the Russian aggression in Ukraine.

In the end, Minister Mehaj and the delegation from Kosovo held a fruitful meeting with the Dep/Head of the NATO Military Committee, Lieutenant General Lance Landrum, with whom they shared the vision for the development of the KSF in accordance with NATO standards, the joint commitment to maintaining peace and stability as well as increasing cooperation with NALT and KFOR. Among other things, General Landrum discussed the importance of the KSF's participation in the exercise "Defender Europe '23" as well as the status of the Republic of Kosovo, among the host countries of this exercise.

The host of the Kosovo delegation at the NATO headquarters was the ambassador of the United Kingdom to NATO,

David Quarrey, who highly praised the progress of the KSF in all areas. Ambassador Quarrey and his staff accompanied and supported the Kosovo delegation in all the activities developed at the NATO headquarters.

In all the meetings, all the participants emphasized the need to increase the frequency of such meetings in order to support Kosovo on the path of integration into the Euro-Atlantic structures.



THE ACTING MINISTER OF DEFENSE OF FINLAND, MIKKO SAVOLA, AND THE MINISTER OF DEFENSE OF MONTENEGRO, FILIP ADZIC VISITED THE MINISTRY OF DEFENSE



In the month of February, Ministry of Defense was visited by Acting Minister of Finland, Mikko Savola as well as acting Minister of Defense of Montenegro, Filip Adzic, who were hosted by Minister Mehaj.

In this meeting between Minister Mehaj with Acting Minister of Defense of Finland was discussed about current geopolitical situation, impact of the [Russian aggression in Ukraine, as well as security situation in Kosovo, cooperation with KFOR as well as joint objectives for membership in NATO.

The topic of discussion was also cooperation in the field of security, joint winter training between the two forces and the exchange of experience of the Finnish Army, regarding the concept of the voluntary reserve, which

will soon be a form of service in our army as well.

On this occasion, the Minister in charge, Savola, highly appreciated the cooperation of the KSF with KFOR and expressed his readiness for cooperation in a situation where the goal of membership in NATO and the preservation of stability and peace remain the main efforts of daily engagement.

While in the meeting between Minister Mehaj and the Minister of Internal Affairs and at the same time the Minister of Defense of Montenegro, Filip Adzic, it was discussed about the neighboring cooperation, the development of professional military capacities through the realization of joint exercises and trainings between the two armies, and also about the “Defender Europe ‘23” field exercise. Also, Minister Mehaj informed his Montenegrin counterpart about the developments of the KSF, the implementation phase of the Transition Plan, legal changes, about the latest recruitments, and also about the clear intentions for membership in regional initiatives, in A5, RACVIAC and Partnership for Peace Program.

For his part, Minister Adzic expressed the commitment that the Republic of Kosovo will have the support of Montenegro for membership in the Partnership for Peace Program, as a path to membership in NATO.



Also, also the Minister of Defense of Montenegro, Mr. Filip Adzic was hosted by the Commander of the KSF, Lieutenant General Bashkim Jashari, who informed Minister Adzic, with the achievements, developments, plans of the KSF and the final preparations for the international exercise “Defender Europe 2023”.

The topic of the meeting was the current situation in Ukraine and its impact on our region.

General Jashari and Minister Adzic agreed to continue cooperation in areas of common interest as two partner states.





MINISTER MEHAJ AND GENERAL JASHARI ATTENDED THE MEETING OF THE UKRAINE DEFENSE CONTACT GROUP

In the ninth meeting of the Contact Group for the Defense of Ukraine, held in Brussels during the month of February, among the ministers and chiefs of defense of 54 countries, the Minister of Defense Armend Mehaj and the Commander of the KSF, Lieutenant General Bashkim Jashari, also participated, accompanied by their cabinet chiefs, Hasan Hoxha and Brigadier General Ilir Qeriqi. The meeting was chaired by NATO's General Secretary, Jens Stoltenberg, The Secretary of Defense of the United States, Lloyd Austin and the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, General Mark Milley, who once again emphasized the importance of each of the countries

providing all the necessary assistance to Ukraine and the Ukrainian people who are facing with Russian aggression, an unfair war that must be ended.

THE FIRST KSF CONTINGENT RETURNED FROM A MISSION TO THE FALKLAND'S ISLANDS



The first contingent with KSF troops, which was attached to the British Army, after the successful completion of the mission in the Falkland Islands, "Atlantic", returned to Kosovo at the beginning of February.

To congratulate them for their return home and success in the mission, at the International Airport of Pristina, the members were welcomed by their families, Minister Mehaj, the Commander of the KSF, General Jashari and senior officers and non-commissioned officers of the KSF. The KSF Commander Lieutenant General Bashkim Jashari, based on evaluations and discussions with British partners, has highly appreciated the performance and professionalism shown. Furthermore, COMKSF emphasized that this

mission is a continuous testimony to the establishment and development of the KSF and the journey towards membership in NATO and other security organizations. This is the second mission abroad of the Kosovo Security Force after the one in Kuwait alongside the American army. Currently, the KSF continues its mission in the Falkland Islands, with the second contingent having deployed this month.



15 YEARS AS A STATE



On the occasion of the 15th anniversary of the country's Independence, the ceremony began with the raising of the flag in the courtyard of the Government of Kosovo and tributes at the "Adem Jashari" memorial complex in Prekaz. In honor of this holiday, the Kosovo Security Force and the Kosovo Police paraded in Pristina, which were applauded by many citizens who came out to celebrate together.



Minister Mehaj on this occasion pointed out that:

"February 17th marks our entire centuries-old past, thousands of years of prisons and battles, civilians killed, men and women raped, and martyrs fallen on the altar of freedom, which like the roots of a trunk keep us bound and steadfast in the Illyrian land. On February 17, 2008, a state that carries democratic values was added to Europe, while the right denied for centuries was established for the people of Kosovo. Nothing would have been possible without the struggle of the Kosovo Liberation Army, the iron will of the activists of the national cause and the help of our international partners, so we are always grateful to them forever".



BERETS CEREMONY FOR KSF UNITS

After the decree of the berets by the President of the Republic of Kosovo, in the “Adem Jashari” Barracks in Pristina, in the presence of the Minister of Defense, Armend Mehaj, the Commander of the KSF, Lieutenant General Bashkim Jashari,



as well as senior officers of the Kosovo Security Force, they were distributed in a solemn ceremony. The Minister of Defense and the Commander of the KSF congratulated the members of the Kosovo Security Force on the new berets that will have different colors symbolizing the units of the KSF. The placement of the berets of the KSF units comes alongside professional advancement and the



increase of operational capacities.

COORDINATION MEETING AT THE BEGINNING OF THE YEAR IS HELD BETWEEN MoD, KSFGS, NALT AND ISG



The Ministry of Defense and the General Staff of the KSF held the coordination meeting between the NATO Liaison Office (NALT) and the American Institute for Security Governance (ISG). During his speech, Minister Mehaj enumerated the achievements for 2022, where, among others, was the addition-amendment of the three basic laws of the MoD and the KSF, the Law on Military Police and the increase in the number of

recruitments.

The focus for 2023 is the drafting and approval of the Defense Strategy, the Draft Law for the Intelligence and Security Agency, the Concept-document for the reserve component, etc. Further in his speech, Minister Mehaj emphasized that the integration of the Republic of Kosovo into NATO should be done as soon as possible and for this he asked for the help and support of international partners.

For his part, the Director of NALT, Brigadier General Joachim Hoppe, congratulated the MoD and the KSF for the organization, stressing that the good cooperation will continue in the future.



COMKSF LIEUTENANT GENERAL BASHKIM JASHARI REPORTED BEFORE THE PARLIAMENTARY COMMITTEE ON SECURITY AND DEFENSE OF THE ASSEMBLY OF THE REPUBLIC OF KOSOVO



In the Parliamentary Committee for Security and Defense Issues of the Assembly of the Republic of Kosovo, General Jashari informed the deputies about the development, achievements, plans and challenges that the KSF is going through. Në Komisionit Parlamentar për Çështje të Sigurisë dhe Mbrojtjes të Kuvendit të Republikës së Kosovës, Gjeneral Jashari i njoftoi deputetët me zhvillimin, të arriturat, planet dhe sfidat që FSK po kalon. The deputies of the parliamentary committee for Security and Defense Affairs confirmed to General

Jashari their unconditional support for the development of the KSF, in the further development and addressing the challenges.

REPRESENTATIVES OF THE INTERNATIONAL MEDIA VISITED THE KSF

The National Guard Command in Pomozotin was visited in February by a team of international journalists from Geneva, representatives of the world media. The journalists were welcomed by the Deputy Minister of Defense, Shemsi Sylja, the Commander of the National Guard, Brigadier General Naim Haziri, acting Chief of Staff, Colonel Ejup Magedonci, as well as KSF officers.



Deputy Minister of Defense Mr. Sylja, who after welcoming them, informed them about the mission of the KSF. During this visit, the team of journalists had the opportunity to learn about the tasks of the Demining Company, the International Search and Rescue Center and to see closely the conditions in which the members of the KSF and the international ones operate and are trained.

The purpose of this visit was for the international team of journalists to be informed about the mission, duties and capacities of the Kosovo Army, which are available for peace and security in the world.

DEPUTY COMMANDER OF THE KSF, MAJOR GENERAL CIKAQI HOSTED A MEETING WITH DEPUTY COMMANDER OF KFOR, GENERAL SZPISJAK

Within the framework of the cooperation that the Kosovo Security Force has with KFOR, in areas of support of common interest, the deputy commander of the KSF, Major General Enver Cikaqi, received the deputy commander of KFOR, Brigadier General Jozsef Szpisjak

In the friendly meeting, it was discussed about the lines of cooperation, raising the level of coordination between the KSF and KFOR, as well as keeping the lines of communication open between the two institutions.

forms of cooperation in the future, also DEP/COM KFOR, thanked the KSF, for the cooperation so far in areas of common interest, and in the interest of all citizens of the country, he also expressed his willingness to continue cooperation in the future.



BILATERAL PLAN BETWEEN MINISTRIES OF DEFENSE OF KOSOVO AND ALBANIA IS SIGNED

Në muajin shkurt është nënshkruar plani bilateral ndërmjet Drejtorit të Drejtorisë për Politika të Mbrojtjes, Faruk Geci dhe homologut të tij nga Ministria e Mbrojtjes e Republikës së Shqipërisë, Blerim Çaka.

Bashkëpunimi ndërmjet dy shteteve shqiptare është shumëfishuar ngase natyrshëm bashkë mund të arrijmë më shumë.

Dy shtete, një komb, në funksion të ruajtjes së paqes dhe stabilitetit në Ballkanin Perëndimor por edhe më gjerë.



MEMORANDUM OF COOPERATION BETWEEN MINISTRY OF DEFENSE AND ECONOMIC CHAMBER OF KOSOVO IS SIGNED

In order to improve the well-being of KSF members, Minister of Defense Armend Mehaj on behalf of the MoD and Lulzim Rafuna on behalf of EChK signed the Memorandum of Cooperation, thus making EChK part of the initiative that has for the purpose of cooperation with businesses, for the discounts that will be offered on their products and articles for the military staff.

On this occasion, Minister Mehaj and the Director of OEK were of the opinion that being the most reliable security institution in the country is a great responsibility, which requires sacrifice and dedication, values that personify every soldier of the Republic, the work of which is not limited to frames, but reflects on the readiness with which each of them responds to the task.



COOPERATION BETWEEN KSF AND US ARMY FROM CAMP BONDSTEEL

The increase in cooperation between the KSF and the US Army from the Bondsteel Camp is being carried out within the framework of raising professional, educational and training capacities in the Doctrine and Training Command (TRADOC).

The Commander of the TRADOC, Brigadier General Jeton Dreshaj and the Commander of Bondsteel, Colonel

Mabis, held a meeting in the context of looking at opportunities and expanding cooperation at the operational level. The expertise provided by the USA is essential in the construction and development of training and profiling of specialist areas in the TRADOC, and assistance in the advancement and training of the non-commissioned officer corps.

BE PART OF KSF SPECIAL OPERATIONS!

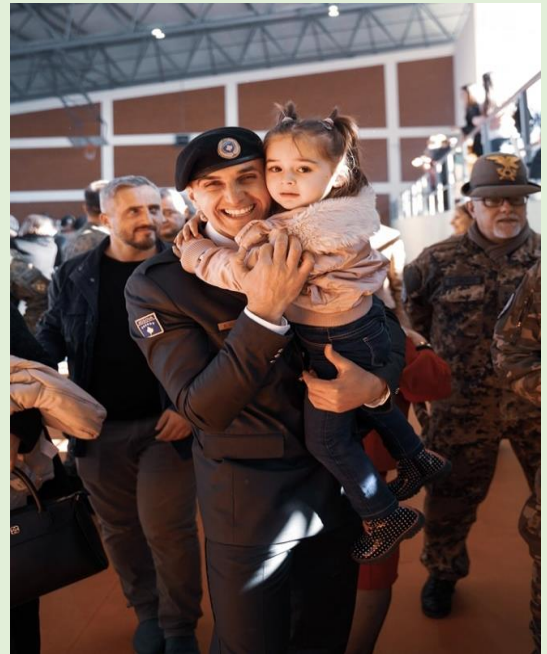


During the month of February, the Special Operations of the KSF have developed the selection process which selects the girls and boys of the KSF who want to become operators of the future.

The selected participants will have the opportunity for training in various fields with our local and international partners, sharing experiences and skills so that our country can enjoy lasting peace and stability.

31 NEW OFFICERS ARE ADDED TO THE KSF

After the completion of the Officer's Basic Course, 31 new officers were added to the KSF in February. The certification of the candidates took place after 4 months of training at the School of Officers of the Doctrine and Training Command.



OUR DEFENSE ATTACHE IN GERMANY, LIEUTENANT COLONEL BESIM GASHI, IS ALSO APPOINTED NON-RESIDENT ATTACHE FOR SLOVENIA

In the framework of international cooperation, namely the deepening of the bilateral partnership with Slovenia in the field of defense and security, from February, our defense attaché in Germany, Lieutenant Colonel Besim Gashi, has started his official engagement, as a non-resident attaché in Slovenia.

On this occasion, at the Embassy of the Republic of Kosovo in Ljubljana, he was hosted by our Ambassador, Valdet Sadiku, and his staff.

Expanding the network of defense attachés in partner countries is among the objectives of the Ministry of Defense for the further strengthening of our defense diplomacy as very important in the development perspective of the country in the field of defense and security.



KSF AND FARoA SOLDIERS TRAIN TOGETHER



At the Professional Education Center for Non-Commissioned Officers in Zallherr, Albania, members of the KSF, together with non-commissioned officers of the Armed Forces of the Republic of Albania, successfully completed the “Basic Non-Commissioned Officer Course”. The course contained the theoretical and the practical part and aimed to prepare the trainees as leaders in the role of team commander.

The Kosovo Security Force and the Armed Forces of the Republic of Albania constantly carry out joint training and exercises with the aim of increasing interoperability and operational capacities.

The high commitment of the participants and the results shown during the eight-week course were highly

appreciated by the Commander of the National Army, Colonel Ardian Lilo.

SERGEANT MAJOR OF THE KSF HOSTED IN A VISIT BY THE SERGEANT MAJOR OF U.S ARMY EUROPE AND AFRICA (USAREUR-AF)

KSF Sergeant Major Bedri Zuka hosted Sergeant Major Jeremy Inman, US Army Europe and Africa (USAREUR-AF) on a visit to KSF. With this, the Sergeant Majors had the opportunity to visit the Command of Doctrine and Training, with a focus on the NCO School, where they were informed and discussed about the training capacities of the TRADOC, into function of the professional development of NCOs troops and role in the Kosovo Security Force.

Sergeant Major Inman congratulated Sergeant Major Zuka and the KSF NCOs on their accomplishments and development. In the end, it was agreed that there will be an increase in cooperation and further activities.



KSF MEMBERS CLIMB KILIMANJARO

The non-commissioned officers of the Kosovo Security Force, after several days of quite challenging hikes, today managed to climb Kilimanjaro, the highest peaks on the African continent with a height of 5895 meters.

Part of this expedition, which begins on February 19, are four members of the International Training Center for Search and Rescue, of the National Guard of the Kosovo Security Force, who, together with the Prishtina Alpine Club, manage to achieve this very challenging climbing.

With such achievements, the boys and girls of the Kosovo Security Force continuously prove their professional and physical preparation to show high results wherever they participate.

NEW AMBASSADOR OF TÜRKIYE IN KOSOVO, TUNÇ ANGILI WAS HOSTED BY MINISTER MEHAJ AND GENERAL JASHARI

In the framework of international cooperation, the Minister of Defense, Armend Mehaj, received the new ambassador of the Republic of Türkiye, Tunç Angili, in a meeting.

In this informative meeting, issues of bilateral and international importance were first discussed, as well as the very good relations between the two countries were discussed.

On this occasion, Minister Mehaj expressed gratitude for the help and contribution given to Kosovo by the people and the Turkish state, as a proven friend and partner of the people and the Republic of Kosovo.

Also, Minister Mehaj expressed his condolences to the Turkish ambassador for all the victims of the devastating earthquake that hit Türkiye, in which case Ambassador Angili thanked Minister Mehaj



for the unsparing support given by the KSF in the search and rescue operations in the areas affected by this earthquake.

In this meeting, they discussed the possibilities of further expansion of bilateral cooperation, especially in the field of defense and security, where the possibility of further increasing cooperation in the field of education and military training was emphasized.

Also, General Jashari wished Ambassador Angili welcome and success in his work and thanked him for Türkiye's contribution and continuous support for the Republic of Kosovo and the KSF in particular. General Jashari once again expressed his sincere condolences to the victims and those affected by this disaster.



MINISTER MEHAJ TOOK PART IN THE CELEBRATION OF ASHKAL DAY

Minister of Defense, Armend Mehaj, together with KSF soldiers from the Ashkali community, participated in the central manifestation of Ashkali Day, February 15, which was held in the "Bill Clinton" sports hall in Ferizaj.

Members from the Ashkali community have an important place in the Kosovo Security Force, who perform their service and military duties with honor, professionalism and high commitment to the country.

It is worth noting that the largest number of candidates for recruitment in the KSF, in the last competition, is from this community.

On this occasion, on behalf of the Ministry of Defense and the KSF, Minister Mehaj congratulated all the soldiers of the Ashkali community in the KSF, and the Ashkali community in the Republic of Kosovo, on their flag day.



MoD AND KSF PERSONNEL DONATE BLOOD



In the Ministry of Defense, on February 22, the first session of voluntary blood donation began, now traditional for the needs of the Kosovo National Center for Blood Transfusion (KNCBT), an action which will continue until March 22 in all barracks of the KSF. Since the first day, most of the personnel of the Ministry of Defense have responded positively to this action, where a significant number of blood doses have been collected. On this occasion, the Minister of Defense, Armend Mehaj, was also present as a blood donor, who emphasized that

donating blood means saving lives and this is a very high motivation for all voluntary blood donors, to come to the aid of

all the citizens of the Republic of Kosovo in need. From the side of the KNCBT, Dr. Xhemile Sllamniku, emphasized that as in every aspect that the KSF helps the citizens of the country, it also helps in voluntary blood donation, which is always carried out with great success. Also, she emphasized that the number of voluntary blood donors from the Ministry of Defense and the KSF is increasing every year. The traditional action of voluntary blood donation, which is held twice a year, is within the framework of the cooperation between the Ministry of Defense and the KSF with the Kosovo National Center for Blood Transfusion (KNCBT). In addition to the organized action, the members of the KSF have been and are always ready to respond to the requests of the (KNCBT) even for sporadic needs in specific cases.

