



REPUBLIC OF KOSOVA
MINISTRY OF DEFENSE



NEWSLETTER

February 2024

KOSOVO CELEBRATES ITS 16th ANNIVERSARY OF INDEPENDENCE



The 16th anniversary of the declaration of Kosovo's independence was marked through numerous events. The state leaders have thanked the allies and international partners for their contribution to the liberation and independence of Kosovo.

On this day, Minister Maqedonci and General Jashari, together with state leaders and senior staff of the Ministry of Defense and the KSF, paid tribute and laid wreaths at the “Adem Jashari” Memorial Complex in Prekaz, where freedom and independence of our state originates from.

THE MINISTER OF DEFENSE OF THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF GERMANY, BORIS PISTORIUS, VISITED THE MINISTRY OF DEFENSE



Minister of Defense, Ejup Maqedonci hosted the Minister of Defense of the Federal Republic of Germany, Boris Pistorius, on an official visit, accompanied by members of the Bundestag and the ambassador of Germany in Kosovo, Jörn Rohde.

The two defense ministers held a meeting with the deputies of the Bundestag and the members of parliament of the Republic of Kosovo from the Committee on Security and Defense Affairs, where they discussed current security topics in the country and the region.

Minister Maqedonci and his German counterpart visited the units of the National Guard of the KSF, specifically the SAR International Training Center Kosovo, in Pomozatin, where they were received by the commander of the

National Guard of KSF, Brigadier General Naim Haziri and the director of SARITC, John Doone, who informed them about the history, mission, organizational structure, scope, achievements so far, personnel, equipment, infrastructure, training facilities, current activities, challenges and projects for the future.

In his speech to the staff of the KSF National Guard and other attendees, the German Minister of Defense, Boris Pistorius expressed his gratitude for the reception and emphasized that he is pleasantly surprised with the impressive developments within the KSF, especially with the capacities of the SARITC. At the bilateral meeting presented, also Dep/Minister Sylja, the commander of the KSF, lieutenant general Bashkim Jashari, the director of the NATO Advisory and Liaison Team (NALT), brigadier general Ralph Hammerstein, as well as senior officials of the Ministry of Defense and the KSF.



FINLAND WILL CONTINUE TO STRONGLY SUPPORT KOSOVO'S INTEGRATION INTO THE EUROPEAN UNION AND NATO MEMBERSHIP



At the invitation of the Ministry of Defense of the Republic of Finland, the Minister of Defense, Ejup Maqedonci, has stayed in Finland, where he was received in a meeting by the Minister of Defense, Antti Hakkanen. In this meeting, the Minister Maqedonci informed his Finnish counterpart about the latest security developments in the Western Balkans region, with special emphasis on security in the Republic of Kosovo and the threats our country is facing. Also, he informed him about the development of defense capacities and the need for support from partners at this time when democracy and global security are being undermined by the hegemonic approach of autocratic stakeholders.

From his part, Minister Hakkanen emphasized that Finland will continue to strongly support Kosovo's integration into the

European Union and NATO membership, as well as expressed his willingness and that of the Ministry of Defense of Finland to deepen cooperation with the Republic of Kosovo, in the field of defense and security. During the meeting, they also discussed the need to continue supporting the righteous struggle of the Ukrainian people, as well as the opportunities for cooperation between our countries in the field of the defense industry. During the visit to the Ministry of Defense of Finland, the Minister Maqedonci held meetings with the Directors of the Directorate of Defense Policies and Material Resources.

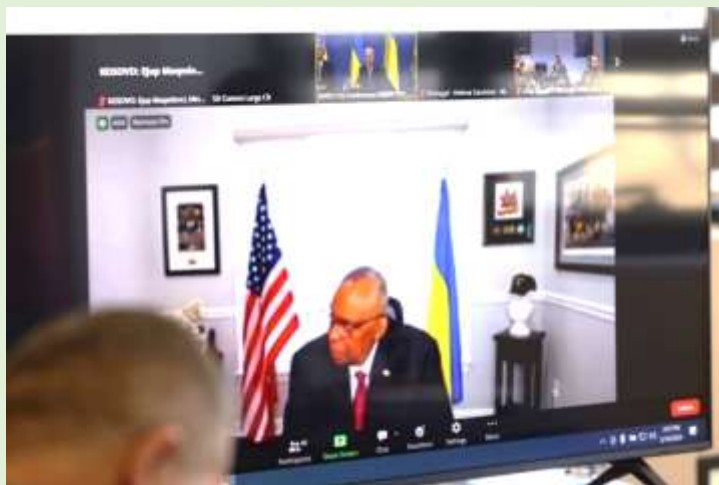
Also, minister Maqedonci and his delegation of the MoD visited the Center of Excellence of NATO and the EU for hybrid threats (Hybrid CeO), where with the director of this Center they discussed the possibilities of mutual cooperation, in order to deal with hybrid threats.



THE MINISTER OF MAQEDONCI AND GENERAL JASHARI PARTICIPATED IN THE VIRTUAL MEETING OF THE CONTACT GROUP FOR THE DEFENSE OF UKRAINE



Minister Maqedonci and Lieutenant General Bashkim Jashari participated in the 19th virtual meeting of the Contact Group for the Defense of Ukraine, led by the US Secretary of Defense, Lloyd Austin III. The focus of the meeting was the continuation of the



provision of military assistance in weapons, equipment and training to the armed forces of Ukraine from the countries of this coalition. All 54 member states, including Kosovo, once again reaffirmed their unconditional support for Ukraine, which continues to face Russian aggression.

MINISTER MAQEDONCI AND GENERAL JASHARI HOSTED A DELEGATION FROM THE DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE OF THE USA

Minister of Defense, Ejup Maqedonci, together with the commander of the KSF, Lieutenant General Bashkim Jashari, as



well as officials and officers of the Ministry of Defense and the KSF, hosted a delegation from the US Department of Defense with whom they held bilateral defense consultations. Together they agreed on the way forward with the joint commitment to the implementation of the Comprehensive Transition Plan, which will culminate in the achievement of full capacities

towards a professional, multi-ethnic force, interoperable with NATO and ready to develop the territory defense mission.

IOWA NATIONAL GUARD COMMANDER MAJOR GENERAL STEPHEN OSBORN VISITS KSF



The Commander of the Kosovo Security Force (KSF), Lieutenant General Bashkim Jashari, in February hosted the Commander of the IOWA National Guard, Major General Stephen Osborn. During the meeting, it was discussed about the cooperation between KSF and IOWA so far, and the way forward. As part of the visit, the generals observed the activities of the medical exercise - ROL1, which is organized by the American army and which is the continuation of the exercise carried out in the Republic of Montenegro during the past week. The purpose of

the exercise is to raise ROL1 medical capacities, exchange experiences, raise interoperability between regional states, as well as support from the KSF team for Albania and Montenegro for past experience during the validation process. Apart from KSF, Albania, Montenegro, IOWA National Guard, MAINE National Guard and USAFE/EUCOM are also part of the exercise.

They also visited the General Headquarters of the KSF. During this visit, cooperation between the KSF and the Iowa National Guard was discussed, including plans and objectives for the next three years. In line with the objectives of the COMKSF, the details of the cooperation plan between the two institutions are revealed, focusing on the areas of



maneuver, logistic support, medicine, cybernetics, as well as training of non-commissioned officers. These discussions were held in the context of common goals for raising the level of cooperation and coordination between the two forces. Following the visit, Lieutenant General Bashkim Jashari, and the Commander of the Iowa Guard, Major General Stephen E. Osborn together with their delegations, visited the Third Infantry Regiment of the Land Forces in Mitrovica, where both generals were informed about the activities, training and achievements of this unit. The regiments of the Land Forces of the Kosovo Security Force are carrying out activities according to the planning and development of combat capacities with the aim of validation according to the Comprehensive Transition Plan (CTP).



MINISTER MAQEDONCI HOSTED THE MEMBERS OF THE SECURITY AND DEFENSE COMMITTEE OF THE GERMAN BUNDESTAG AT THE MEETING



Minister of Defense, Ejup Maqedonci hosted the members of the Security and Defense Committee of the German Bundestag, led by the chairman of this Committee, Marie Agnes Strack Zimmermann. Minister Maqedonci informed the attendees about the security situation in the country. In particular, the minister emphasized the threat posed by the military bases of Serbia, located along the border with Kosovo, for the stability of the country and the region, asserting that it should be a concern for the entire international factor. Likewise, minister Maqedonci informed the members of this Committee about the current capacities that the KSF has to guarantee the protection of the territorial integrity of the Republic of Kosovo and the lives of our citizens. He reiterated that our goal as a country is NATO membership, according to the standards of which the alliance is continuing with the implementation of the Comprehensive Transition Plan, building the professional and operational capacities of our army. At the end of the meeting, the minister expressed his gratitude for the long-term support of the German state to the Republic of Kosovo, the increased presence of German troops within KFOR, as well as the commitment of this Committee in the direction of deepening the cooperation between our countries in the field of security and defense, as two states that share common interests. Also, in this meeting was the Commander of the KSF, Lieutenant General Bashkim Jashari, the Deputy Minister of Defense, Shemsi Sylja, Deputy General Secretary of the Ministry of Defense, Gafurr Dugolli, the military attaché of the KSF in Germany, lieutenant colonel Besim Gashi and the head of the cabinet of minister Maqedonci, Afërdita Zeqiri.

DEPUTY MINISTER SYLA AND MEMBERS OF THE SECURITY AND DEFENSE COMMITTEE OF THE GERMAN BUNDESTAG VISIT THE KSF NATIONAL GUARD



After the official visit to the Ministry of Defense, the members of the Security and Defense Committee of the German Bundestag, accompanied by the Deputy Minister of Defense, Shemsi Sylja, have visited the barracks of the National Guard of the Kosovo Security Force, in Pomezatin. They were welcomed by the commander of the National Guard, Brigadier General Naim Haziri, who informed them about the progress of the activities, the operations carried out by the National Guard, the personnel, the objectives, the training capacities offered by the International Training Center for Search and Rescue, etc. As part of the visit, this delegation was informed about the training facilities of the SAR International Training Center, as well as the capacities

and activities of this Center.



KSF PART OF THE “KFOR 33” FIELD EXERCISE IN GERMANY

Within the framework of bilateral cooperation and the invitation accepted by the USA, a contingent of the Kosovo Security Force with members of the EOD and observers/controllers, participated in the Field Exercise “KFOR 33” in Hohenfels, Germany. Field exercise “KFOR 33” is a multinational exercise in which more than ten partner states of the USA participate and is carried out at the American military base in Germany (JMRC- Hohenfels). The exercise is designed to test and assess the readiness of the combat units of the Infantry Brigade Combat Teams (48 IBCT) as part of rotations for the KFOR mission in Kosovo and also prepares partner states for joint operations.

THE TRAINING CURRICULUM FOR THE STATE CYBER SECURITY TRAINING CENTER WAS APPROVED



In the premises of the Ministry of Defense, the Training Curriculum for the State Training Center for Cyber Security has been approved. The drafting of this curriculum, which was approved by the Minister of Defense, Ejup Maqedonci, has been supported by the Embassy of the United Kingdom and implemented by DCAF with local and international experts. Minister Maqedonci emphasized the importance of this event, describing it as a very important step in the fight against hybrid attacks and threats, which is now being faced by Kosovo and other countries in the region and beyond. These threats and attacks are now also of global proportions. The minister thanked the Embassy of the United Kingdom, DCAF and all the representatives of the institutions, who contributed to the drafting of the Curriculum, and expressed his gratitude to all contributors.



MINISTER MAQEDONCI HOSTED FOR A VISIT THE AMBASSADOR OF ISRAEL, TAMAR ZIV

In the premises of the Ministry of Defense, the Minister of Defense, Ejup Maqedonci welcomed the Ambassador of Israel, Tamar Ziv, with whom, among other things, they discussed about the development of the Kosovo Security Force, security in the country, the region and beyond. In addition, Minister Maqedonci and Ambassador Ziv also discussed the continuation and deepening of cooperation between the two countries in the field of security and defense.

THE DIRECTOR OF THE DEFENSE POLICY DIRECTORATE, FARUK GECI, HOSTED THE OFFICIALS FROM THE DEFENSE POLICY DIVISION OF THE GERMAN MINISTRY OF DEFENSE

On this occasion, the two parties held a two-day work session, with the activity “ Staff Talks “, an event, which was held for the first time, where strategic level topics on security and defense policies between the Republic of Kosovo and the Federal Republic of Germany were addressed. Also, talks were held on the current situation in the country and the region, the potential for increased cooperation and joint commitment in this regard.



THE BILATERAL PLAN IN THE FIELD OF DEFENSE AND SECURITY BETWEEN KOSOVO AND THE HASHEMITE KINGDOM OF JORDAN IS SIGNED

In the Ministry of Defense, a bilateral meeting was held in the field of defense and security between the Department for International Cooperation of the MoD and representatives of the Armed Forces of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan. On this occasion, the bilateral plan of activities for the year 2024 was signed, a plan which will offer professional and advanced training for members of the KSF. The bilateral plan was signed by the Director of Defense Policy, Faruk Geci and the Director of Planning and Organization from the Jordanian army, Brigadier General Tariq Al Hayaia.



THE MINISTRY OF DEFENSE AND KSF SIGN A MEMORANDUM OF COOPERATION WITH THE MINISTRY OF INTERNAL AFFAIRS-THE KOSOVO ACADEMY FOR PUBLIC SECURITY



Deputy Minister of Defense, Shemsi Sylja and Acting Secretary General of the Ministry of Defense, Gafurr Dugolli, have received the deputy director of the Kosovo Academy for Public Security (AKSP) Kastriot Jashari, accompanied by his colleagues. On this occasion, a Memorandum of Cooperation was signed, which aims to define mutual cooperation between KSF and AKSP, in raising

and developing the capacities of security and defense members. This Memorandum was signed by the head of the Operations and Training Sector of the General Staff of the KSF, Colonel Astrit Haliti and the deputy director of AKSP Kastriot Jashari. Within the scope of cooperation, among others, the provision of training programs is also included, as well as mutual cooperation in raising the quality and professional capacities, the exchange of experiences and knowledge of training, research and development in the field of security and defense through the exchange of personnel, etc.



MINISTER MAQEDONCI HOSTED FOR A MEETING THE MAYOR OF THE MUNICIPALITY OF GILAN, ALBAN HYSENI

In the framework of inter-institutional cooperation, the Minister of Defense, Ejup Maqedonci, hosted the Mayor of the Municipality of Gjilan, Alban Hyseni. In the meeting, among other things, was discussed the level of cooperation so far, assessing the need for further intensification in the areas of general interest, with special emphasis in the field of emergencies and infrastructural projects of vital importance to citizens. Cooperation between local and central government

institutions is continuous and in the service of improving the life and safety of citizens.

DEPUTY MINISTER OF DEFENSE, SHEMSI SYLA, TOGETHER WITH HIS TEAM, VISITED THE MUNICIPALITIES OF DRENAS, OBILIQ, FUSHE KOSOVO AND FERIZAJ



Following the working meetings with the municipalities, the professional team from the Ministry of Defense, led by the Deputy Minister of Defense, Shemsi Sylja, in February visited the municipalities of Drenas, Obiliq, Fushë Kosovës and Ferizaj. Issues of emergency preparedness at the local level, for the management of natural disasters and other disasters, were discussed with the mayors of these municipalities.

The emphasis of the discussions was on the assessment of risks and dangerousness and the parts of this assessment such as: preventive plans, scenarios for exercises and the definition and preparation of shelters in cases of evacuation and shelter of the affected population, from natural disasters or any other disaster. They also discussed the issues of drafting Emergency Operational Plans, the establishment of Municipal Committees for Protection and Rescue and the establishment of Local Operational Centers, then the drafting of Emergency Response Plans for facilities of special importance such as schools and nurseries, as well as the establishment, training and certification of response units, whether professional or voluntary. Deputy Minister Sylja, offered support to the mayors of these municipalities both in the drafting of basic documents, as well as in the training and certification of response units, whether professional or volunteer teams in urban search and rescue, mountain search and rescue, water search and rescue, first aid, hazardous materials, etc.





Ashkali Day and the 21st anniversary of their national flag day were marked at the Ministry of Defense, where the Minister of Defense, Ejup Maqedonci has organized an official reception for the KSF soldiers from the Ashkali

community. Also, the Deputy Minister of Defense, Adnan Rexhepllar, participated in this ceremony, Deputy Commander of the KSF, Major General Enver Cikaqi, Deputy Minister of the Ministry of Industry, Entrepreneurship and Trade, Resul Makreshi, Director of the NATO Advisory and Liaison Team (NALT), Brigadier General Ralph Hammerstein, and the chairman of the Ashkali Party for Integration, Hetem Arifi. Minister Maqedonci, in his speech, emphasized that the Ashkali community has proven with their contribution to the construction of Kosovo and that this community, which has traditionally served in the Kosovo Army, has conveyed the best example of integration. Meanwhile, the deputy commander of the KSF, Major General Enver Cikaqi, congratulated the present members of the Ashkali community on their national holiday, affirming that this community has made an extraordinary contribution to the state building of Kosovo and the KSF in particular. Likewise, the director of NALT, Brigadier General Ralph Hammerstein, wished the national holiday to all members of the KSF from the Ashkali community, in which case he emphasized that NATO offers support in increasing the representation of non-majority communities in the country's security organizations, especially in the KSF. Following this ceremony, the adviser to the Minister of Defense, Asllan Kryeziu, expressed his gratitude for this organization, emphasizing that the members of this community serve with honor and pride in the Army of our country, for the common good of all citizens.

The Kosovo Security Force is the professional and multi-ethnic Army, which is made up of its citizens regardless of ethnicity.



KSF OFFICER GRADUATED IN REPUBLIC OF CROATIA

Second Lieutenant Elvir Rastoder graduated from the Croatian Defense Military Academy in Zagreb in "Military Management and Leadership".

During the four years of his studies, Second Lieutenant Rastoder has shown discipline, dedication and commitment in successfully fulfilling all the conditions set by the study program plan and completing his studies with high success. After completing his studies, the second lieutenant will join the Kosovo Security Force to contribute to the service of the country.

KSF SUCCESSFULLY CONCLUDES THE “DYNAMIC FRONT 24” EXERCISE



At the invitation of USAREUR-AF, the KSF contingent, deployed in Polatli, Republic of Türkiye, has successfully completed the “Dynamic Front 24” exercise aimed at increasing interoperability in the field of artillery and fire support, where KSF soldiers, had the opportunity to demonstrate the skills of firing artillery with real fire alongside the allies USA and Türkiye during the exercise. On the occasion of the distinguished visitors' day, the KSF was represented by the Commander of the Land Forces, Brigadier General Hysen Dreshaj, Colonel Astrit Haliti and the attaché of Kosovo in Türkiye Colonel Bekim Zejnullahu, who were received by the Commander of Doctrine, Lieutenant General Zorlu Topaloglu and 56th Artillery Commander, Major General Andrew C. Gainey. General Dreshaj thanked General Topaloglu for the continued support for Kosovo and in particular for the KSF, giving the opportunity to be part of joint exercises such as this time the participation of the KSF contingent in the “Dynamic Front “exercise 24”, it is worth emphasizing that this exercise was also held in Germany as a command location exercise at the same time. The contingent of the KSF, on the occasion of the Independence Day of Kosovo and support from the commander of the KSF, has organized a reception for the countries participating in this exercise, the USA, Türkiye, Slovakia and the Czech Republic, present in this evening was the commander of the school of Turkish Artillery, Major General Ahmet Ibis, officers and non-commissioned officers of the armies participating in the exercise were received by the commander of the KSF contingent, Captain Bardhyl Dugolli. General Ibis thanks the KSF troops for the invitation and congratulated the independence of the state of Kosovo as an important ally for Türkiye. At the end of the day, distinguished visitors Lieutenant General Topaloglu, Major General Gainey and Brigadier General Dreshaj decorated the distinguished soldiers who showed skill, discipline and interoperability with other soldiers in the exercise for their work and commitment.



KSF NCO OFFICERS GRADUATE IN ALBANIA

In the framework of cooperation with the Armed Forces of the Republic of Albania, the 56th Advanced NCO Course has been successfully completed at the NCO Professional Education Center. This course prepares non-commissioned officers capable of acting and being ready to face challenges in various crisis situations. The Commander of the Academy, Brigadier General Bardhyl Nuredini, the attaché of the Republic of Kosovo, Colonel Enver Hoti, Com PECNCO Colonel Besim Bala, staff officers and non-commissioned officers participated in the certification ceremony.



KSF OFFICER GRADUATED IN USA

KSF officer Drin Merturi has graduated from the Basic Course for Infantry Officers in the United States of America (USA), showing high results in education, and representing Kosovo and the KSF, among many countries from the whole world. The IBOLC training held at the “Fort Moore” military base in Georgia, USA, is basic training for infantry officers which lasts 20 weeks. During this time, officers are tested in individual tasks such as navigation, shooting, physical preparation and in professional and team tasks such as: leading a platoon in military missions. The Kosovo Security Force is increasing the number of officers trained by strategic partners with the highest standards of NATO countries, with the aim of interoperability with partners.