REPUBLIC OF KOSOVA
MINISTRY OF DEFENSE

NEWSLETTER

June 2023

THE 2023 CLASS OF KOSOVO SECURITY FORCE CADETS HAS GRADUATED

The ceremony of the graduation of 15 young KSF cadets was held in June at the "Adem Jashari" Barracks in Prishtina, and it was attended by Prime Minister Albin Kurti, Minister of Defense, Armend Mehaj, Commander of the KSF, Lieutenant General Bashkim Jashari, as well as senior officials of the Ministry of Defense and the KSF, as well as family members and friends of the cadets. On this occasion, Prime Minister Kurti addressed the attendees as a sign of appreciation for the success shown during their education, as well as the decision taken to serve the country, where, among other things, he emphasized that this graduation from the University Study Center of the KSF Defense Academy gives us hope for the future and makes us proud of the past.

“As we mark the graduation of the 15th generation of cadets, the University Study Center of the KSF has already built the image of a military education institution that produces officers who excel in subsequent military education, in well-known schools and colleges of partner and friendly countries. Together with the generations, the opportunities for further advancement are also increasing”, emphasized Prime Minister Kurti.

Addressing the young cadets, Prime Minister Kurti emphasized that they will be ready to shoulder the responsibilities entrusted to them, in addition to the rank of officer, to protect the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Republic, the preservation of citizens' lives and supporting peace and security in the region and the world.

“Four years of hard work and efforts are paying off today, accepting the title of officers of the Republic and the Force that was built on the foundations of the Kosovo Liberation Army. Of this Force, which in the near future will be part of NATO, the alliance that politically and militarily supported the liberation and freedom of our country”, the Prime Minister added.

MINISTER MEHAJ AND THE AMBASSADOR OF THE REPUBLIC OF KOSOVO TO NATO, ASTRIT ZEMAJ, PARTICIPATED IN THE MEETING OF THE CONTACT GROUP FOR THE DEFENSE OF UKRAINE, HELD IN BRUSSELS

In the meeting of the Contact Group for the Defense of Ukraine held in Brussels, Belgium, with the participation of representatives of the defense and security institutions of over 50 countries, among them Kosovo also participated with representatives such as the Minister of Defense, Armend Mehaj, the ambassador of the Republic of Kosovo in NATO, Astrit Zemaj, as well as the Military Advisor, Colonel Ejup Maqedonci.During this meeting led by the Secretary of Defense of the United States of America, Mr. Lloyd Austin, the Minister of Defense of Ukraine, Oleksii Reznikov announced on the latest developments of the war on the ground, and also on the requirements on the necessary capacities and the continuous support that should be provided to Ukraine, this country that has been fighting for more than a year stoically against Russian aggression, with the force that hardly anyone would believe would oppose the attack of the Russian imperial invader, but Ukraine is standing strong because on its side it has the indisputable right and support of countries that see Ukraine's war as their battle, because the violation of freedom there is a danger to peace everywhere.

Kosovo stands with Ukraine because it is on the right side of history, supports the freedom of the people and the indisputable sovereignty of states.

THE BILATERAL COOPERATION WITH THE STATE OF IOWA IN VARIOUS MILITARY DIRECTIONS IS ENHANCING

In a friendly meeting with Governor Kim Reynolds, Minister of Defense, Armend Mehaj exchanged views regarding developments in the country, as well as the possibility of deepening mutual cooperation with the state of Iowa in many military directions, as our friendly state with which we have excellent cooperation.

Among other things, the minister informed the governor about the development of the KSF, the contribution of the Republic of Kosovo to the evacuation of Afghan refugees, as well as the readiness to provide support as part of the Contact Group for the defending of Ukraine.

As an important contributor to the development of the Republic

of Kosovo as a democratic state, the minister expressed high appreciation for the excellent relations and steadfast partnership between the Republic of Kosovo and the United States of America, in the function of peace and the protection of democratic values. While the Government and institutions of the Republic of Kosovo, including the Ministry of Defense, along with the development of the country, remain committed to the integration of Kosovo into the EU and NATO.

We welcome the support of the US in the process of the Partnership for Peace Program and in other international organizations.

IOWA NATIONAL GUARD COMMANDER MAJOR GENERAL STEPHEN OSBORN VISITED THE KSF

The Commander of the KSF, Lieutenant General Bashkim Jashari, hosted the Commander of the Iowa National Guard, Major General Stephen Osborn, in a meeting, where he thanked him for the visit and for the excellent cooperation since taking office as Commander of the Iowa National Guard. Furthermore, during the meeting, the generals discussed mutual cooperation during the U.S. "Defender Europe 23" exercises, cooperation in other fields and the deepening of cooperation between Iowa NG and KSF, where they also agreed to start planning for the Dynamic Plan Iowa NG-KSF 2024- 2025.

EDUCATION ON SECURITY

In cooperation with the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology, the compilation of the curriculum for the subject "Education on Security" has been completed, so that the young generations, inseparable from their educational formation, cultivate feelings of belonging to the country and service to country.

In the framework of this, in June, the Minister of Defense, Armend Mehaj, met the Minister of Education, Arbërie Nagavci, to discuss the next steps for the implementation of the subject "Education on Security".

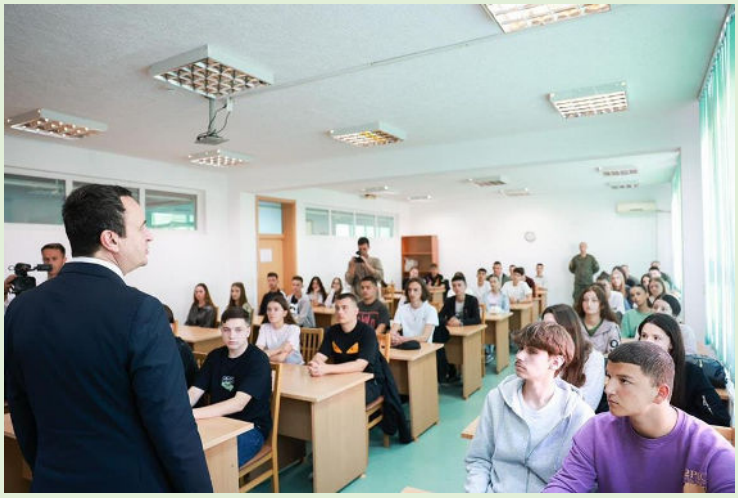
In the framework of this project, Prime Minister Kurti, together with Minister Mehaj, visited the Skënderbeu barracks in Ferizaj, where groups of students attended lectures and at the same time developed practical activities within the pilot project of the subject "Education on Security", which is expected from September part of the curriculum for more than 2000 students.

Also, the implementation of the "Education on Security" program has continued in eight barracks of the KSF, in which case the instructors have lectured the students on the planned topics according to the plan for this school year, including the practical part.

Barracks "Adem Jashari" in Prishtina and "Lidhja e Prizrenit" in Prizren, were the two barracks that Minister Mehaj visited to see the young people closely as they receive basic knowledge about defense security, armaments and explosive devices.

Minister Mehaj said that the knowledge gained during this period will be a life lesson for all students, as long as their training will serve the security of the country.

On this occasion, the young people of the upper secondary cycle are being trained to be ready to protect themselves but also to help others.

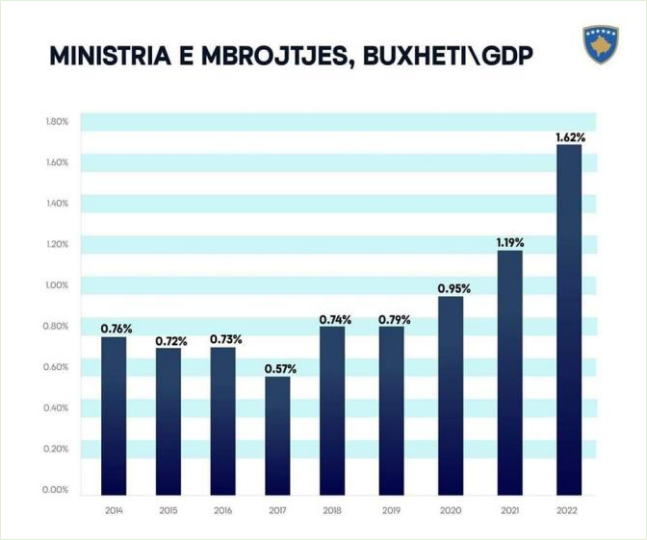


SECURITY OF CITIZENS AND PRESERVATION OF TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY IS THE PRIORITY OF THE GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF KOSOVO

The safety of citizens and the preservation of territorial integrity is the priority of the Government of the Republic of Kosovo and the fact that the budget allocated to the Ministry of Defense is continuously increasing proves this.

The total budget allocated for defense issues at the end of 2022 has reached the value of 1.6% of GDP, from the 2% foreseen by the NATO Council. This value has been fulfilled so far only by seven states among the thirty-one states that are part of this alliance.

The visible increase in the budget and investment in human resources, training of military personnel and raising operational capacities through investment in weapons, is a clear indicator that this sector has the right attention and will be continuously strengthened, not only to protect the state but and to contribute to any international operation aimed at maintaining stability and peace.



KSF TEAMS HELPED THE CITIZENS OF PEJA

Our teams of the Kosovo Security Force were engaged in their work to help the citizens of Peja, who were affected by the catastrophic floods in June, where two citizens lost their lives and caused great material damage. Likewise, the state of readiness was increased in the Sustainability Regiment of the Logistics Command and the Genius Regiment of the NG.

On this occasion, Minister Mehaj also communicated with the Minister of Defense of Albania, Niko Peleshi, who had offered the readiness of the Albanian army to come to our aid, in case of need, to which Minister Mehaj expressed his gratitude for the shown readiness.

THE 24TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE LIBERATION OF PRISHTINA

In a joint activity between the Municipality of Prishtina and the Kosovo Security Force, the 24th anniversary of the liberation of Prishtina was marked.
In this case, the soldiers of the KSF together with the children who are the present and the future of this country, paraded along the square as two generations that mark three different time periods of the citizenship of the Republic of Kosovo.
24 years after liberation, Kosovo ranks first among the countries of the Western Balkans in terms of press freedom, electoral freedom, transparency and the fight against crime and corruption, while it has recorded 17% economic growth in the last two years and has doubled the rate of export.
Freedom accompanies development and development exponentially follows time, so that inseparably and together, the institutions and citizens of the Republic of Kosovo with continuous work will mark other achievements in terms of overall social well-being.

THE COMMANDER OF KSF ATTENDED THE CONFERENCE OF EUROPEAN ARMIES

The commander of the KSF, Lieutenant General Bashkim Jashari, at the invitation of the Chief of Staff of the United States Army, General James McConville, is participating in the Conference of European Armies 2023 in Germany.

This conference is among the main events of the US Army Europe and Africa (US Army Europe and Africa) of the high level of generals, which is led by the USA, is used as a platform for coordination of security and defense cooperation.

Senior military officers, commanders of ground forces, and other representatives of European allies and partner countries with the US, used the conference to discuss security challenges in Europe, the region and beyond. The conference is an initiative that promotes cooperation and the improvement of relations between the armies in Europe.

DEPUTY MINISTER SYLA VISITED THE TRAINING AND DOCTINE COMMAND IN FERIZAJ

The Deputy Minister of Defense, Shemsi Syla, visited the Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC) in Ferizaj, where he was welcomed by the Commander of the TRADOC, Brigadier General Jeton Dreshaj, who was congratulated on his new position.

In this visit, deputy Minister Syla was informed about the general situation, the achievements so far, the developments in the transition process, the challenges as well as the projects and objectives of the TRADOC for the future.

Also, Deputy Minister Syla was informed by General Dreshaj that the final preparations are already being made for the start of basic training for the first group of 612 new recruits in the KSF, who will be trained professionally, with work and dedication of the highest level.

In this case, deputy Minister Syla expressed his high appreciation for the results so far and the demonstrated professionalism of the TRADOC as well as the willingness and readiness of the Ministry of Defense to respond positively to the demands and needs of the TRADOC to accurately implement their education plan and training, with the most modern doctrines and standards of the armies of NATO countries.

THE DEPUTY COMMANDER OF THE KSF, PARTICIPATED IN THE LAND WARFARE CONFERENCE, IN THE UNITED KINGDOM

At the invitation of the Chief of Staff of the United Kingdom Army, General Sir Patrick Sanders, the Deputy Commander of the KSF Major General Enver Cikaqi, participated in the annual "RUSI Land Warfare Conference", which this year focused on lessons learned during the war in Ukraine, the mobilization and modernization of forces to face the escalation of tensions and threats to global security and defense, with emphasis on the threats and risks faced by members and partners of NATO member countries.

THE WORKSHOP ON IDENTIFICATION OF THE CURRICULUM REGARDING THE NEEDS FOR INCRESAING THE CAPACITIES OF THE STATE CYBER SECURITY TRAINING CENTER

In the premises of the Ministry of Defense, the Department of Communication and IT, with the involvement of all institutions, held a two-day workshop to identify the curriculum related to the needs for increasing the capacities of the State Training Center for Cyber Security.
During the visit to this workshop, Minister Mehaj emphasized the importance of raising capacities in the field of cyber security at a time when hybrid attacks from Russia and other states with expansionist tendencies are the most frequent form of war against democratic states.
As the bearer of the process for the construction of the Center for Cyber Security, the Ministry of Defense together with the Ministry of Internal Affairs will determine the procedure and format of specialized programs for training and certification of personnel engaged in the field of cyber security in accordance with the competences that exercise.
In addition to specialized training in cyber security, this training center will also offer practical exercises for all government institutions, digital service providers and operators of essential services.

MINISTER MEHAJ HOSTED COLONEL SEVILAY CETIN ÇAMUR IN A FAREWELL MEETING

Defense Minister Armend Mehaj hosted in a farewell meeting the bilateral military adviser from the Republic of Türkiye, Colonel Sevilay Çetin Çamur.
On this occasion, Minister Mehaj thanked the colonel for her cooperation and engagement in professional counseling.

For her part, Colonel Çamur expressed her gratitude for the close cooperation during her mandate as a leadership advisor in the Ministry of Defense, emphasizing the special honor of the service for the development perspective of the KSF. As a sign of gratitude for her commitment, Minister Mehaj awarded her a medal.

THE COMMANDER OF THE KSF, PARTICIPATED IN THE CHANGE OF COMMAND CEREMONY IN THE REGIONAL COMMAND-EAST AT CAMP BONDSTEEL

The KSF Commander, Lieutenant General Bashkim Jashari, participated in the change of command ceremony in the Regional Command-East (RC-E), which took place in the Bondsteel camp, Ferizaj.

General Jashari thanked Colonel Mabis for the excellent cooperation between the RC-E and the Kosovo Security Force, at the same time, COMKSF expressed gratitude to Colonel Mabis for his contribution as Commander of the RC-E, in advancing the cooperation between the KSF and the RC- E.

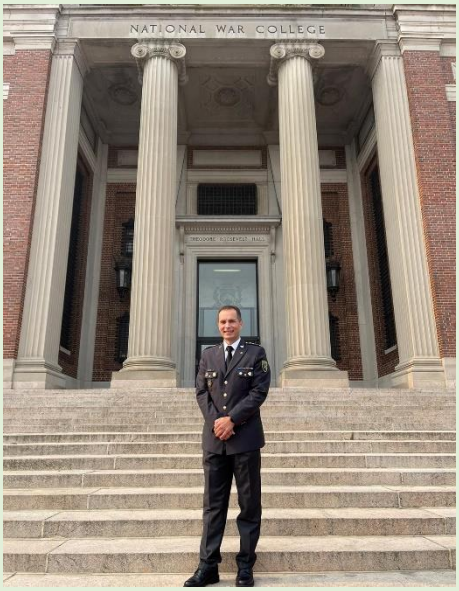
MINISTER MEHAJ IS DECLARED "HONORARY CITIZEN" OF GOSTIVAR

The Minister of Defense, Armend Mehaj, during the official visit he is conducting today in Gostivar of the Republic of North Macedonia, was declared an Honorary Citizen by the Mayor of Gostivar, Arben Taravari.
Also, at this meeting was the Inspector General of the KSF, Major General Irfete Spahiu, the Chief of Cabinet of the Minister of Defense, Hasan Hoxha, The Deputy Minister of Defense of the Republic of North Macedonia, Bashkim Hasani, as well as senior officials of the Municipal Assembly of Gostivar.
In the ceremony organized today in the Municipal Assembly of Gostivar, Minister Mehaj said that he was very happy, stressing that "holding the key to the Municipality of Gostivar has a great significance. For me, this represents a privilege, but at the same time a moral and national obligation to keep Gostivar in my mind and heart in my activity for as long as I am alive". Then, Minister Mehaj wished that this would be a start for the continuation of activities, for the benefit of the municipality and the citizens of Gostivar.

MINISTER MEHAJ VISITED THE MEDICAL REGIMENT AT "ADEM JASHARI" BARRACKS IN PRISHTINA

The Minister of Defense, Armend Mehaj, has visited the Medical Regiment at the "Adem Jashari" Barracks in Prishtina, to see closely how the process of medical tests for new recruits is going. These tests are being carried out in coordination with the Ministry of Health, whom Minister Mehaj thanked for the correct cooperation during the tests.
"The excitement and desire to serve the country was visible on the face of each of the candidates. I wish you all success, wearing the uniform is an honor, pride, but also a very big responsibility. I am convinced that everyone feels this responsibility", emphasized Minister Mehaj during this visit.
Medical tests are the final stage of the selection process for new recruits.

THE KSF COLONEL GRADUATED FROM THE U.S. NATIONAL DEFENSE UNIVERSITY



After one year of studies, Colonel Ismajl Brahimi graduated with high success from the U.S.National Defense University, in Fort McNair, Washington DC.

The National Defense University is the most advanced institution for the education of strategic leaders, operating under the authority of the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, as the highest military authority in the US.

Colonel Brahimi is the first officer from Kosovo who attended the program at the National War College, whose mission is to educate the future leaders of the Armed Forces, the State Department and other civilian agencies, conducting a high-level study in national security strategy.

In parallel with the diploma of professional military education, Colonel Brahimi has also graduated in the degree of Master in the Sciences of National Security Strategy.

This education is made possible with the support of the Defense Cooperation Office of the US Embassy in Prishtina.

KSF SNIPERS ACHIEVE HIGH RESULTS IN THE REPUBLIC OF TÜRKIYE

The team of the Kosovo Security Force participating in the “Best Sniper Competition 2023” held in Egirdir of the Republic of Türkiye, at the Commando School held from 29.05 - 09.06.2022, has achieved high results and has been evaluated for cooperation and interoperability with the participants in the competition.

This competition every year gathers many teams from different countries of the world to compete with their special teams of snipers, this competition, in addition to the competition purpose, was aimed at getting to know, receiving and exchanging new knowledge from the participating snipers. The race took place in various disciplines and very challenging scenarios based on real situations.

The KSF team showed a very high commitment and professionalism by representing the KSF and the state of Kosovo in a dignified manner.

NCO OFFICERS OF KSF COMPLETE HIGHER EDUCATION IN THE REPUBLIC OF TÜRKIYE

In the framework of the cooperation of the KSF with the Republic of Türkiye, Sergeant Besiana Hykaj and Sergeant Ridvan Kalludra have successfully completed the Higher Educational Education for NCO Higher Headquarters Service Education (NCO Higher Headquarters Service Education), which was held at the school of Sergeant Major in Ankara Türkiye.

The purpose of this course is to train NCOs to be adaptive in the new environment and be prepared to work effectively in higher Headquarters by demonstrating leadership for training, performing tasks during field exercises and performing other NCO duties.

There were a total of 80 participants in the Course, 3 international, of which 2 were members of the KSF, and 1 from Somaila.

COOPERATION BETWEEN KSF-AFRA MILITARY POLICE

In the framework of the cooperation between the Ministry of Defense of the Republic of Kosovo and the Republic of Albania, the training "On the development of the concept of investigations in the Military Police" was carried out, where the methods of developing the concept of investigations and the examination of opportunities for cooperation were discussed in many areas of common interest to both military police.

The training was carried out in the Republic of Albania, and at the end of the training they agreed to continue the cooperation for the benefit of both countries and the respective police.

THE INCREASE OF HUMAN MEDICAL CAPACITIES IN KSF CONTINUES

The ongoing cooperation between the Ministries of Defense and the Military Forces of Türkiye and Kosovo is also crowned with the graduation of the Non-Commissioned Officer of the KSF, Donika Gashi, at the Gulhane University of Medical Sciences in Ankara.

The graduation of non-commissioned officer Gashi among 687 students, of which 6 are international, is in function of raising professional military medical capacities within the KSF.

The senior staff of the Gulhane University of Medical Sciences, senior representatives of the Ministry of National Defense, representatives of the Turkish Armed Forces and representatives of other countries participated in the graduation ceremony.

NCO Gashi received the diploma from the Defense Attaché of Kosovo in the Republic of Türkiye, Colonel Bekim Zejnullahu.