



REPUBLIC OF KOSOVA
MINISTRY OF DEFENSE



NEWSLETTER

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Kosovo and Belgium Reaffirm Commitment to Defense Cooperation



In January, a significant defense meeting was held, during which the Acting Minister of Defense, Ejup Maqedonci, hosted the Minister of Defense of the Kingdom of Belgium, Theo Francken, in a military ceremony. During the meeting, discussions focused on the imminent accreditation of the defense Attaché of the Republic of Kosovo in Belgium, the advancement of military cooperation between the two countries, as well as concrete opportunities for collaboration in the field of defense industry. On this occasion, Minister Francken reaffirmed Belgium's support for the Republic of Kosovo's membership in NATO and the European Union, emphasizing the commitment of this friendly state to Kosovo's Euro-Atlantic future. Kosovo and Belgium enjoy excellent bilateral relations, grounded in shared Euro-Atlantic values, a sustainable partnership, and continued cooperation in the fields of security and defense.



Minister Maqedonci Included in the Hall of Fame Gallery of Distinguished Personalities

The Acting Minister of Defense, Ejup Maqedonci, was included in the gallery of distinguished personalities with his portrait displayed in the Hall of Fame of the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College at Fort Leavenworth. In addition to this honor, the Minister received a certificate of recognition dedicated to service, sacrifice, and commitment to the homeland, as well as to all those who have contributed to the security and freedom of Kosovo. This recognition represents a source of national pride and a testament to the strong and enduring partnership between Kosovo and the United States.



Advancing Operational Readiness through OMTAS Missile Systems

The Ministry of Defense has received the next shipment of OMTAS anti-tank missile systems, intended for the Kosovo Security Force, contracted with the Turkish state manufacturer Roketsan in December 2023. OMTAS (Medium-Range Anti-Tank Missile System) is a modern medium-range anti-tank missile system, devel-



oped for the neutralization of modern armored vehicles, including tanks with reactive armor, as well as military defensive fortifications. The increase in the variety and quantity of anti-tank missile systems for the Kosovo Security Force is aimed at covering different opera-

tional distances, terrains, and threat scenarios, thereby enhancing operational flexibility and readiness. The Ministry of Defense remains committed to strengthening defense capability and the continuous modernization of the Kosovo Security Force.

High Honors Reception for the Commander of the KSF during the Official Visit to Iowa



At the invitation of the Adjutant General of the Iowa National Guard, Major General Stephen Osborn, the Commander of the Kosovo Security Force, Lieutenant General Bashkim Jashari, conducted an official visit to the State of Iowa, USA. The visit included a solemn reception and high institutional honors, reflecting the advanced level of relations between the Republic of Kosovo and the United States of America. During meetings with the leadership of the Iowa National Guard and state authorities, the strategic importance of the State Partnership Program was reaffirmed as a key pillar for building capacities, professionalization, and interoperability of the Kosovo Security Force with NATO forces. The visit was recognized as a demonstration of mutual trust and of the KSF's increasingly important role as a factor

of stability and security in the region. As part of the official agenda, Lieutenant General Jashari attended the annual address of the Governor of Iowa, Ms. Kim Reynolds, and was received with high honors in the Iowa legislature during Major General Osborn's annual briefing before senators and congressmen. This engagement confirmed the strong institutional support of the United States for the development of Kosovo's defense capacities.



The visit also included a tour of the Iowa National Guard Aviation Base and an agreement to establish joint working groups for the development of KSF aviation capacities, including Black Hawk helicopters, which constituted a concrete step toward modernization, sustainability, and enhanced operational capability.



In addition, the KSF Commander participated in an event organized by the Kosovo Consulate in Iowa, where he met with the Iowa Secretary of State, Mr. Paul Pate, mayors of Johnson and Norwalk, and other state officials. General Jashari praised the cooperation and partnership and thanked them for their continued support to the Kosovo Security Force.



During the visit, Lieutenant General Jashari also visited the Iowa Veterans Home, where he was briefed on the institution's activities and its role in supporting veterans. He expressed gratitude to U.S. veterans for their contributions to global peace and security, especially those who served in Kosovo. The engagements reaffirmed the strategic depth of the Kosovo–United States partnership and emphasized the Kosovo Security Force's continued progress as a credible, professional, and interoperable security partner.

Minister Maqedonci Met with the Commander of NATO's Joint Force Command



Acting Minister of Defense Ejup Maqedonci met with the Commander of NATO's Joint Force Command in Naples, Admiral George M. Wikoff, together with the Commander of KFOR, Major General Özkan Ulutaş. Discussions focused on the security situation in Kosovo and the wider region, the ongoing development and enhancement of the Kosovo Security Force's (KSF) capabilities, and continued cooperation with the KFOR mission. The meeting reaffirmed the commitment to strengthening KSF capabilities through officer education and training in line with Western and NATO standards, as well as through the modernization of equipment and weapon systems provided by NATO member states.

These efforts were highlighted as essential to enhancing the security of citizens and advancing Kosovo's strategic objective of integration into NATO.

Official Reception for Representatives of the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States



fice, Mr. Ryan Gallucci. During the meeting, the excellent relations between Republic of Kosovo and the United States of America were assessed, built upon shared values, sacrifice, and strategic partnership. The important role of the VFW Organization in providing continuous support to Kosovo and the Kosovo Security Force was emphasized, as well as the contribution of American veterans to the preservation of peace and security, particularly in Kosovo. The meeting reaffirmed the mutual readiness to deepen cooperation and further strengthen the Kosovo-United States partnership, confirming strong American support for the development of the Kosovo Security Force's capabilities and its interoperability with strategic allies.

The Acting Minister of Defense, Ejup Maqedonci, together with the Deputy Minister, Shemsi Sylja, and the Commander of the Kosovo Security Force, Lieutenant General Bashkim Jashari, hosted in an official meeting the representatives of the Organization of American Veterans of Foreign Wars (Veterans of Foreign Wars – VFW), the National Commander, Ms. Carol Whitmore, and the Executive Director of the Washington Of-



KSF Commander Hosted U.S. Army National Guard Director

The Commander of the Kosovo Security Force, Lieutenant General Bashkim Jashari, hosted in an official meeting the Director of the United States Army National Guard, Lieutenant General Jonathan M. Stubbs, accompanied by Major General Levon E. Cumpston and his delegation. During the meeting, the excellent cooperation between the Kosovo Security Force and the United States National Guard Bureau, in particular with Iowa National Guard, was discussed. The support in



building professional capacities, the development of joint training, and the advancement of interoperability that the KSF has established with its partners was highly appreciated. During the meeting, the parties agreed that the State Partnership Program (SPP) between the Iowa National Guard and the Kosovo Security Force is an example of success and joint achievements in various activities. At the conclusion of the meeting, both generals agreed that deepening cooperation is essential for advancing the interoperability of our forces, and the need for U.S. support in achieving our strategic goal of membership in international security organizations, in the service of peace, security, and regional stability, was also emphasized.

Strengthening Civil-Military Cooperation in Emergency Management



Deputy Minister of Defense Shemsi Sylja visited the Municipality of Obiliq, where he met with Mayor Halil Thaçi and municipal officials. They discussed inter-institutional cooperation and support from the Ministry of Defense and the Kosovo Security Force in emergency management, including risk assessment, planning, response, evacuation, sheltering, training, and capacity building. The establishment of a Local Emergency Operations Center was also addressed. Deputy Minister Sylja reiterated the MoD and KSF's commitment to strengthening civil-military cooperation and building a sustainable emergency management system. Mayor Thaçi welcomed the institutional support and expressed the municipality's readiness to protect citizens.

KSF and Japan Reaffirm Commitment to Defense Cooperation



The Commander of the Kosovo Security Force, Lieutenant General Bashkim Jashari, hosted the Chargé d'Affaires of the Embassy of Japan in Kosovo, Mr. Hiroyasu Tanigaki, and the Defense Attaché, Colonel Tomofumi Iwasaki, in an official meeting. General Jashari briefed the Japanese officials on the security situation in the region and on the development of the KSF. The meeting reviewed the excellent cooperation between the KSF and Japan, and General Jashari expressed appreciation for Japan's continuous support in building KSF capacities, particularly through training and education programs. Both parties expressed readiness to further deepen bilateral cooperation and reaffirmed their commitment to strengthening the partnership and security.

Germany's Continued Support for KSF Development Highlighted in Official Meeting



The Commander of the Kosovo Security Force, Lieutenant General Bashkim Jashari, met with the Chargé d'Affaires of the Embassy of Germany in Kosovo, Christian Böttcher. General Jashari expressed appreciation for Germany's continuous support to Kosovo, particularly in the development of the Kosovo Security Force since its establishment. The meeting covered the KSF's current developments, priorities, and future planning, as well as the security situation and the need for cooperation to address common challenges. Both parties reaffirmed the importance of deepening bilateral military cooperation between Germany and Kosovo and strengthening the partnership with the Kosovo Security Force.

Winter Survival Training Conducted at the National Guard ISRTC

Winter Survival Training was conducted at the International Search and Rescue Training Center of the National Guard for cadets of the Center for University Studies. Participants were trained in rope operations, rappelling, technical climbing, first aid, and emergency situation management. They also carried out practical outdoor survival exercises, including shelter construction, land navigation, fire starting, and securing essential resources. Despite harsh winter conditions, participants demonstrated discipline, dedication, and high physical and mental resilience, thereby strengthening their readiness for effective intervention in real-world operations.



KSF Delegation Paid Homage at the Reçak Memorial Complex



On the 27th anniversary of the Reçak Massacre, a delegation of the Kosovo Security Force laid wreaths and paid homage at the Memorial Complex in Reçak in honor of the martyrs. The KSF reaffirmed its enduring respect for the sacrifice of those who fell for freedom, stood alongside the families of the martyrs, and commemorated the historical truth of Reçak.

