



REPUBLIC OF KOSOVA
MINISTRY OF DEFENSE



NEWSLETTER

April 2026

NATO Advisory and Liaison Team Welcomes New Director



The Ministry of Defense hosted the handover ceremony for the Director of the NATO Advisory and Liaison Team (NALT). Brigadier General Dr. Sven Lange, who served since March last year, passed his responsibilities to Brigadier General Thomas Schulte-Borghoff. The ceremony was attended by the Prime Minister of the Republic of Kosovo, Albin Kurti, the Minister of Defense, Ejup Maqedonci, the Deputy Minister Gegë Lleshi and Enis Kervan, the Commander of the KSF, Lieutenant General Bashkim Jashari, the Deputy Commander of the KSF, Major General Enver Cikaqi, the Director of Operations at NATO Headquarters, Charlotte Hallengren, as well as military personnel and institutional representatives from the Ministry of Defense, the KSF and NALT.



Minister Maqedonci commended Lange's contributions to Kosovo's defense sector transformation and awarded him the Medal for Distinguished Service. The KSF also honored him with the Medal for Selfless Service, and NATO awarded him the Medal for Non-Article 5 Operations. Since its establishment in 2016, NALT has consistently supported Kosovo in strengthening defense capacities and professional development of its security organizations, including the Kosovo Security Force.

KSF Conducts Peacekeeping Reconnaissance in Gaza



A team from the Kosovo Security Force has been deployed to Gaza to conduct reconnaissance of the area where its troops will operate. The delegation is carrying out a preliminary assessment and coordinating preparatory activities for the KSF contingent, which will participate in the International Stabilization Forces (ISF) peacekeeping mission in Gaza. During the visit, meetings were held with local authorities and the Civil-Military Coordination Center to discuss the integration of the KSF contingent, joint operations, and logistical support. The KSF remains committed to global peace and stability, working closely with international partners to strengthen collective security and uphold international standards.



Kosovo Advances Security and Euro-Atlantic Priorities with NATO Military Committee

Minister of Defense Ejup Maqedonci, accompanied by a senior delegation, met with members of the NATO Military Committee, led by Admiral Giuseppe Cavo Dragone, and the Chair of the EU Military Committee, General Sean Clancy. The meeting focused on current security developments, the advancement of the Kosovo Security Force, and Kosovo's contributions to regional and global security. Minister Maqedonci emphasized Kosovo's strategic objectives



for EU and NATO membership, underlining their importance for national development and regional stability. He also presented the Ministry of Defense's priorities for the next four years, including further development of KSF capabilities, implementation of a comprehensive defense strategy, growth of the defense industry, international cooperation, and self-sustainability. "Kosovo's membership in Euro-Atlantic structures is a natural and necessary step that strengthens peace, international cooperation, and Europe's security architecture," he stated, reaffirming Kosovo's commitment to being a reliable partner in collective security.



Minister of Defense Meets NATO International Staff Operations Director

In April, Minister of Defense Ejup Maqedonci met with Charlotte Hallengren, Director of Operations at the NATO International Staff Operations Division. During the meeting, they discussed current security challenges, the importance of coordination among partners, and the key role NATO continues to play in ensuring peace and stability in the region and beyond. Both interlocutors highly valued NATO's ongoing support for Kosovo and its contribution to strengthening the country's security and defense capacities. The Republic of Kosovo remains committed to its Euro-Atlantic path and to further advancing its partnership with NATO.



Minister Maqedonci and KSF Commander Meet Acting President Haxhiu on Defense Development and Security Priorities

The Minister of Defense, Ejup Maqedonci, together with the Commander of the Kosovo Security Force, Lieutenant General Bashkim Jashari, today held a meeting with the Acting President of the Republic of Kosovo, Albulena Haxhiu. During the meeting, they discussed the progress achieved in the development of defense capacities, the current security challenges, as well as the further steps towards the strengthening and strategic advancement of the Kosovo Security Force. The further development of defense capacities remains a joint institutional priority and an essential element for guaranteeing the security and stability of the Republic of Kosovo.



Kosovo and Albania United for Stronger Defense



The Minister of Defense, Ejup Maqedonci, welcomed the Minister of Defense of Albania, Erman Nufi, for the first time after his appointment, in a formal military ceremony, accompanied by his delegation. The hosting delegation included the Commander of the Kosovo Security Force, Lieutenant General Bashkim Jashari, along with senior officials from the Ministry of Defense. The meet-

ing between the two ministers was held in a cordial atmosphere and was followed by a press conference and a bilateral meeting between the delegations. Minister Maqedonci expressed appreciation for Albania's ongoing support in building Kosovo's military capacities, highlighting collaboration in training, education, and contributions to the KFOR mission. He also emphasized discussions on expanding cooperation in the defense industry, enhancing regional collaboration with Albania and Croatia, and supporting Kosovo's path toward NATO integration. Minister Nufi thanked his counterpart for the warm reception and reaffirmed Albania's steadfast support for Kosovo. He highlighted that cooperation in the defense industry is essential for the security and capacity-building of both countries. Both ministers agreed to further strengthen collaboration in defense and security, viewing it as a key step toward a shared and secure future. On the same day as the meeting between the Defense Ministers of Kosovo and Albania, Lieutenant General Bashkim Jashari, Commander of the KSF, hosted Lieutenant General Arben Kingji, Chief of the General Staff of the Albanian Armed Forces. The two generals discussed regional security developments, the role of the KSF in ensuring Kosovo's stability, and ways to further strengthen cooperation between the two armed forces. Both generals reaffirmed their shared commitment to enhancing collaboration and promoting security at both regional and broader levels.





Minister Maqedonci Presents Kosovo's Vision for Security and Resilience in Europe

In April, the Minister of Defense, Ejup Maqedonci, undertook an official visit to the Federal Republic of Germany, during which he engaged in a series of high-level meetings and participated in the "Defense Cycle 2026" forum in Berlin, including the panel "Shaping European Resilience", where he served as a keynote speaker. In his address, he presented Kosovo's perspective on security and resilience, emphasizing the importance of modernizing defense capabilities in line with European and NATO standards, as well as the strategic value of strong international partnerships. During the visit, Minister Maqedonci held a meeting with Thomas Röwekamp, Chair of the Defense Committee of the German Bundestag, where discussions focused on bilateral defense cooperation, the role of KFOR, Kosovo's contribution to international missions, and the country's strategic objective of NATO membership.



He also met with Nils Schmid, Parliamentary State Secretary at the German Federal Ministry of Defense, where the two sides discussed further strengthening defense cooperation, enhancing interoperability, and expanding joint training programs, reaffirming Germany's continued support for the Kosovo Security Force.

In addition, the Minister met with Roland Haag, Managing Director of the Federal Association of the German Security and Defense Industry, focusing on cooperation in defense technology, industry development, and capacity building of the Kosovo Security Force. Further meetings were held with Maximilian Hoffmann and representatives of the Foreign Council on Economic Relations, as well as international companies, where discussions centered on strengthening economic cooperation between Kosovo and Germany, particularly in the defense industry. The importance of new partnerships, investment opportunities in Kosovo, and the country's favorable conditions for industrial and technological development were emphasized. Minister Maqedonci's visit strengthened Kosovo's defense capabilities, international partnerships, and alignment with NATO standards.



36 New Soldiers from Non-Majority Communities Join the KSF

At the “Skënderbeu” KSF Barracks in Ferizaj, the oath-taking ceremony for 36 new soldiers from non-majority communities was held. The recruits, trained at the Basic Training Center within the Doctrine and Training Command (TRADOC) in Ferizaj, received foundational military training to prepare them for service in the Kosovo Security Force. The ceremony was attended by Deputy Minister of Defense Gegë Lleshi, Commander of TRADOC Brigadier General Jeton Dreshaj, senior officials and military personnel from the Ministry of Defense and the KSF, as well as the families and friends of the recruits. Deputy Minister Lleshi congratulated the new soldiers, highlighting their dedication and willingness to serve, and underlined Kosovo's



commitment to integrating non-majority communities into national security institutions. Brigadier General Dreshaj praised the recruits' determination to serve the country, contributing to peace, security, and territorial integrity. This ceremony reflects the KSF's ongoing commitment to building a modern, professional, and multi-ethnic force founded on inclusiveness, cooperation, and service to the homeland.

General Osborn's Visit to Kosovo Strengthens Strategic Partnership with the Iowa National Guard



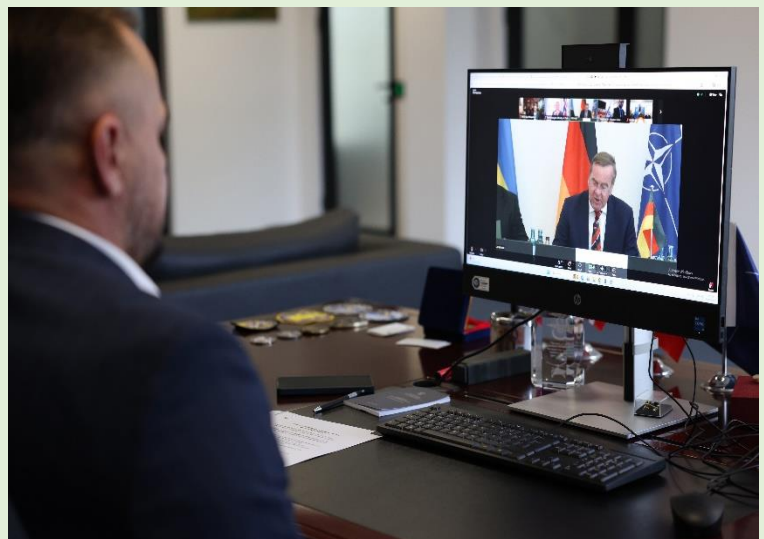
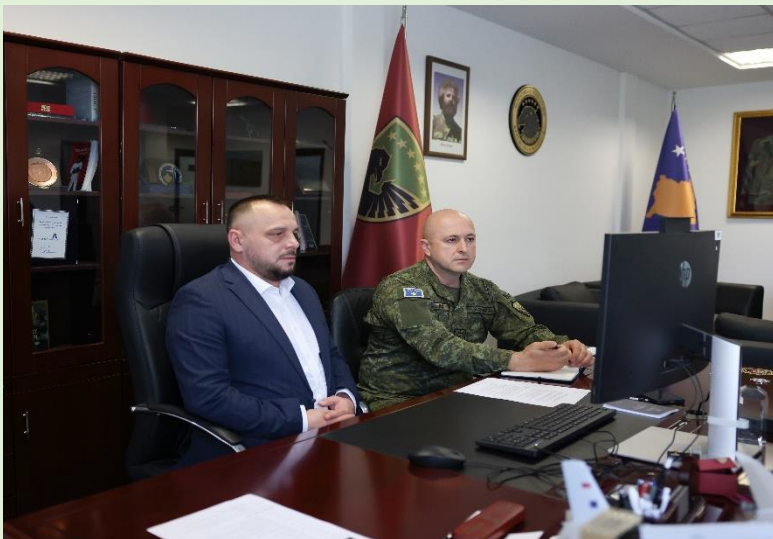
The Adjutant General of the Iowa National Guard, Major General Stephen Osborn, conducted a multi-day visit to the Republic of Kosovo, reaffirming the enduring partnership and deepening cooperation between security institutions under the State Partnership Program. During the visit, General Osborn met with the Minister of Defense, Ejup Maqedonci, to discuss the importance of the existing partnership and opportunities to expand cooperation. Key topics included advancing training, conducting joint exercises, and developing the professional skills of the Kosovo Security Force (KSF) personnel. Minister Maqedonci expressed gratitude for the continued support of the United States, highlighting this partnership as a cornerstone for strengthening KSF operational capabilities and interoperability with strategic partners.

General Osborn also met with KSF Commander Lieutenant General Bashkim Jashari to discuss bilateral cooperation, focusing on strategic priorities such as planning joint activities, developing operational capabilities, and expanding training and professional exchange programs. During his visit, General Osborn toured the KSF General Staff and various units to review progress in transformation and capability development, learn about specialist capacities, understand current challenges, and explore medium- and long-term development objectives. The visit provided an important platform for enhancing institutional and operational cooperation, reflecting a shared commitment to improving KSF readiness and capabilities. The Iowa National Guard's ongoing support for the professional and operational development of the KSF, as well as the commitment to expanding cooperation in areas of mutual interest, was once again reaffirmed.



Kosovo stands alongside its partners in support of Ukraine

The Minister of Defense, Ejup Maqedonci, together with the Director of the Department for International Cooperation, Colonel Ahmet Ajeti, participated virtually in the 27th meeting of the Ukraine Defense Contact Group. During the meeting, discussions were held on the latest developments and the further coordination of support for Ukraine, reaffirming the importance of continued international support for Ukraine.



Minister Ejup Maqedonci Hosts Meetings with Foreign Diplomats on Strengthening Defense and Security Cooperation

The Minister of Defense of Kosovo, Ejup Maqedonci, held meetings with foreign diplomats to advance bilateral cooperation in defense and security. Minister Maqedonci met with the Chargé d’Affaires of Japan, Hiroyasu Tanigaki, discussing joint training programs, high-level visits, and continued support for concrete projects. He also received the Ambassador of Germany, Rainer Rudolph, formalizing a 3 million euro donation to support military transport and medical capacities, while strengthening Kosovo-Germany defense cooperation through the “Enable and Enhance” program. In addition, the Minister met with the Ambassador of Croatia, Danijela Barišić, reviewing strategic objectives, defense industry development, and potential co-production, while affirming Kosovo’s Euro-Atlantic integration and regional stability role. Through these engagements, Minister Maqedonci reaffirmed Kosovo’s commitment to deepening international partnerships and enhancing its defense capabilities.



Kosovo and North Macedonia Sign Annual Bilateral Defense Plan

A delegation from the Kosovo Ministry of Defense, led by Colonel Ahmet Ajeti, Director of the Department for International Cooperation, visited the Ministry of Defense of North Macedonia, where they signed the Annual Bilateral Defense Plan with Ana Ežova Kržaloska, Head of the Department for Bilateral and Multilateral Cooperation. The plan outlines joint activities to strengthen cooperation between the two ministries and armed forces, address shared security challenges, and support the development of the Kosovo Security Force through both bilateral initiatives and multilateral partnerships.



The Kosovo Security Force announces the winners of the international competition “Best Soldier 2026”



The Kosovo Security Force has successfully concluded the international competition “Best Soldier 2026”, with the participation of 44 military personnel from the country and international partners. The title “Best Soldier 2026” from the ranks of the KSF was awarded to OR2 Elvis Qitaku, while the subsequent places were ranked to OR3 Ismail Ahmeti and OR3 Sead Vesli. In the international competition, the first three places were won by members of the Albanian Armed Forces. This competition demonstrates the high level of professionalism, readiness, and interoperability of the KSF with our partners, as well as the joint commitment to Euro-Atlantic values.

EOD Level 3 Training Successfully Concludes with Ukrainian Personnel



The Kosovo Security Force, in cooperation with EU-COM, successfully concluded a six-week EOD Level 3 training for Ukrainian personnel at the “Lidhja e Prizrenit” barracks in Prizren. The training focused on team leader tactics and explosive hazard elimination, led by KSF and American instructors. This marks the 7th group trained, with 146 Ukrainian personnel from the National Guard, Police, and Emergency Service completing the program. Colonel Ahmet Ajeti, Head of the Department for Bilateral Cooperation, and Colonel Astrit Haliti, Acting Chief of the General Staff of the KSF, congratulated the trainees and reaffirmed KSF’s commitment to supporting partners and strengthening cooperation with

Western allies. EUCOM representatives praised the collaboration and the KSF’s contribution to international security efforts.

International Cadets Week 2026



The Center for University Studies successfully organized the third edition of “International Cadets Week,” bringing together cadets and leadership staff from the USA, Canada, Turkey, Italy, and Albania. The activity enabled the exchange of experiences and cultures, strengthening professional ties, trust, and international cooperation among participating academies. In line with the objectives of the Commander of the Kosovo Security Force, Lieutenant General Bashkim Jashari, CUS has significantly expanded its international engagement, increasing both the number and quality of exchange programs and academic activities. These initiatives further promote CUS and the Kosovo Security Force as a reliable partner committed to peace, stability, and international cooperation.