



REPUBLIC OF KOSOVA
MINISTRY OF DEFENSE



NEWSLETTER

April 2025

Kosovo's Defense Minister Joined Global Leaders in Antalya

Minister of Defense Ejup Maqedonci participated in the fourth edition of the Diplomacy Forum in Antalya, Türkiye, an influential international gathering that convened leaders, decision-makers, and experts to address global challenges and the role of diplomacy in an increasingly fragmented world. This year's forum emphasized the importance of dialogue and cooperation among nations, offering Minister Maqedonci a platform to reinforce diplomatic ties and exchange insights on global security and stability. During the forum, Minister Maqedonci engaged in high-level discussions with key defense representatives, including Turkish Minister



of Defense Yaşar Güler. In their meeting, they explored avenues for expanding bilateral cooperation in defense, focusing on strategic projects to enhance Kosovo's military capabilities and further solidify the partnership with Türkiye. Both ministers reaffirmed that the alliance, rooted in mutual trust and collaboration, plays a vital role in ensuring peace and security in the region. Their discussions included initiatives in military procurement, defense industry development, joint training, and multinational military missions, marking a new phase of cooperation. Additionally, Minister Maqedonci met with Professor Dr. Haluk Görgün, President of the Turkish Defense Industry, to discuss opportunities for

strengthening industrial collaboration between Kosovo and Türkiye. Both parties emphasized the importance of establishing a strategic partnership to bolster regional security and advance Kosovo's defense industry. Minister Maqedonci highlighted the sector's significance in ensuring self-sufficiency in ammunition and military equipment production, reaffirming its priority within the Ministry of Defense. The meeting underscored how defense industry development positively influences bilateral relations between Kosovo and Türkiye, paving the way for future collaborations in military technology and strategic initiatives.



KSF Commander Enhances Defense Cooperation During Official Visit to Türkiye



Lieutenant General Bashkim Jashari, Commander of the Kosovo Security Force, conducted an official visit to the Republic of Türkiye at the invitation of General Metin Gürak, Chief of the General Staff of the Turkish Armed Forces. The visit aimed to enhance bilateral military cooperation, focusing on strategic partnerships and defense collaboration. During his meeting with General Gürak, discussions centered on strengthening military cooperation between the two nations, with a focus on training, joint exercises, and experience-sharing to further develop the KSF's operational capacities. As part of the visit, Lieutenant General Jashari also met with Türkiye's Minister of National Defense, Yaşar Güler, where both sides reaffirmed their commitment to the strategic partnership

and Türkiye's strong support for the professionalization of the KSF. The meeting addressed key issues, including military procurement, defense industry development, and advanced training programs. Additionally, Lieutenant General Jashari visited Türkiye's special forces, engaged with representatives from defense institutions and the defense industry, and met with KSF cadets studying at military academies in Türkiye. Cooperation with the Republic of Türkiye remained essential in strengthening Kosovo's defense capabilities and ensuring continued contributions to regional and global security.



Kosovo and the United States Deepen Defense and Security Cooperation



The Minister of Defense, Ejup Maqedonci, and the Commander of the Kosovo Security Force, Lieutenant General Bashkim Jashari, held meetings with the Adjutant General of the Iowa National Guard, Major General Stephen Osborn, during his visit to Kosovo. Throughout the discussions, both sides reaffirmed the strong partnership between Kosovo and the Iowa National Guard under the State Partnership Program. They emphasized the importance of this collaboration and expressed their commitment to expanding it through training, education, joint exercises, and other military initiatives. In this context, preparations are ongoing for the deployment of units from the KSF and the Iowa National Guard to the United States. Also, during this visit, General Osborn visited the Logistics Command, where he was briefed on logistical capabilities, challenges, and future objectives. He also met with cadets at the Defense Academy, delivering an inspiring speech to young officers and discussing the challenges they will face in their military careers.



General Osborn expressed his gratitude to General Jashari and the KSF personnel for their hospitality, commending the KSF's development and progress across all operational areas. He confirmed continued support in advancing Kosovo's strategic defense goals and strengthening the operational capabilities of the KSF in fulfilling its constitutional and legal mission. The visit concluded with the presentation of a synchronized three-year activity plan between the KSF and the Iowa National Guard, outlining the objectives for future cooperation and engagement.

As part of his visit, General Osborn inspected the 1st Infantry Regiment, observing its preparations in line with the annual training plan. He visited Gjakova Airport and Babaj i Bokës to assess progress on the HMMWV Maintenance Center Project, a joint initiative with the United States. Additionally, he toured the facilities designated for the 28th Division of the U.S. Army, which will participate in the upcoming field exercise "Defender Europe 25/Immediate Response 25 (DE25/IR25)", and reviewed the training range where exercises will be conducted alongside U.S. armed forces.



KSF Commander Met with the Commander of the 1-133 Battalion of the Iowa National Guard



The Commander of the Kosovo Security Force (KSF), Lieutenant General Bashkim Jashari, met with Lieutenant Colonel Matthew Parrino, Commander of the 1-133 Battalion of the Iowa National Guard (ING), as part of an ongoing bilateral engagement in Kosovo. During the meeting, General Jashari welcomed Lieutenant Colonel Parrino and his team, who will closely observe the preparations of Company A, 1st Infantry Regiment, ahead of its deployment to the Joint Readiness Training Center (JRTC) in the United States. Teams from the Iowa National Guard and KSF will oversee the platoon validation process, ensuring readiness following the completion of military training exercises. Discussions also focused on strengthening tactical and operational cooperation between the KSF and

ING, with General Jashari emphasizing the importance of ensuring validation standards align with those of U.S. Army units. At the conclusion of the meeting, General Jashari reaffirmed the significance of this strategic partnership, highlighting the KSF's commitment to working and serving alongside U.S. forces, further deepening military collaboration between the two countries.

Deputy Minister Sylja Attended Contact Group Meeting on Ukraine's Defense at NATO Headquarters



The Deputy Minister of Defense Shemsi Sylja, participated in the next meeting of the Contact Group for the Defense of Ukraine, which was held at NATO Headquarters in Brussels. The meeting was held by the Secretary of State for Defense of the United Kingdom, John Healey and the Federal Minister of Defense of Germany, Boris Pistorius. This forum gathered high-level defense representatives from multiple partner countries to coordinate and strengthen international support for Ukraine facing Russian aggression. Deputy Minister Sylja's participation in this meeting reaffirmed the Republic of Kosovo's commitment to peace, security, and close cooperation with international allies, in support of Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity, as well as common democratic values.



The Deputy Minister of Defense, Shemsi Sylja, Hosted Senior Course Participants from Albania's Defense and Security College



As part of inter-institutional cooperation in the field of defense and security, Deputy Minister of Defense Shemsi Sylja welcomed the participants of the Senior Course on Security and Defense from the Defense and Security College of the Albanian Armed Forces. The meeting was attended by the Deputy Commander of the Kosovo Security Force, Major General Enver Cikaqi, and the Director of the Department for Intelligence and Security, Major General Gëzim Hazrolli. Deputy Minister Sylja emphasized the significance of this course in advancing the professional development of both military and civilian personnel in Kosovo, underscoring it as evidence of the strong ties between Kosovo, Albania, and international partners. He stressed the necessity of bolstering defense capabilities amid ongoing regional and global challenges. Brigadier General Ylli Pulaj, Commander of the Defense and Security College, expressed his gratitude for the warm reception and noted that this year's Senior Course on Security and Defense (KLSM-15) includes 18 participants from various defense and security institutions, including representatives from Croatia, Georgia, Hungary, Italy, Türkiye, and Kosovo. The course provides in-depth knowledge of contemporary security challenges and management approaches, developed in collaboration with experts from the Marshall Center in Germany, NATO's Defense College, the University of Washington, and other international institutions, as well as high-ranking officials from Kosovo and its allied nations.

Minister of Defense Ejup Maqedonci Hosted Farewell Meeting with German Armed Forces Advisor

Minister of Defense Ejup Maqedonci held a farewell meeting with Colonel Goran Pijetlović, the bilateral advisor from the German Armed Forces. On this occasion, Minister Maqedonci presented Colonel Pijetlović with a certificate of appreciation in recognition of his dedicated service and valuable contributions to the NATO Advisory and Liaison Team, as well as the Ministry of Defense. Expressing his gratitude for Colonel Pijetlović's commitment, Minister Maqedonci wished him success in his next assignment. He also reaffirmed his readiness to continue the fruitful cooperation with Colonel Pijetlović's successor, further strengthening the ongoing partnership.



Kosovo Strengthens International Representation in the Field of Defense



Kosovo continues to enhance its international presence in the defense sector with the accreditation of new defense attachés in Germany and Japan. At the Embassy of the Republic of Kosovo in Berlin, Colonel Bekim Zejnullahu officially assumed the role of Defense Attaché, succeeding Lieutenant Colonel Besim Gashi. During his tenure, Colonel Zejnullahu held meetings at the German Ministry of Defense and Bundeswehr, reaffirming the strategic cooperation between the two countries.

Meanwhile, Colonel Beton Retkoceri was accredited as the Defense Attaché in Japan, where he conducted his first official visits to the Japanese Ministry of Defense. This development marks a significant step in strengthening security and defense collaboration between Kosovo and Japan, further deepening the country's international partnerships. The Ministry of Defense remains committed to advancing diplomatic relations and ensuring Kosovo's effective representation on the global stage.

Minister Maqedonci Met with the Mayor of Kavaja, Fisnik Qosja



Minister of Defense, Ejup Maqedonci, met with Mayor of Kavaja, Fisnik Qosja, to congratulate him on the inauguration of the statue honoring Indrit Cara – Soldier Kavaja, a hero of the Kosovo Liberation Army. Minister Maqedonci praised the statue as a profound act of respect and gratitude for the KLA and its righteous fight for freedom. He emphasized the importance of preserving historical memory and honoring the sacrifice of the martyrs. The meeting also reaffirmed the commitment to mutual institutional cooperation in areas of shared interest.

KSF Hosted Successful “Best Warrior 2025” Competition



The international competition “Best Warrior 2025” concluded at “Skënderbeu” Barracks in Ferizaj, held from April 21 to 25, with 44 competitors, including 23 international participants and 21 members of the Kosovo Security Force. OR2 Endrit Shatrolli from the 1st Infantry Regiment won first place in the KSF category, earning the title “Best Warrior 2025.” In the international category, E4 Jan Vajncer from Croatia was named “Best International Warrior 2025.” The closing ceremony was attended by senior officials, including Acting Deputy Minister of Defense Shemsi Sylja, who emphasized the importance of cooperation and strategic partnerships. Deputy Commander Major General Enver Cikaqi highlighted the competition’s tradition since 2014, reinforcing interoperability with international forces. Organized under the leadership of Master Sergeant Bedri Zuka, the competition featured participants from Kosovo, the USA, Albania, Croatia, Türkiye, North Macedonia, and Montenegro, competing in physical tests, shooting exercises, land navigation, confidence courses, and tactical drills. The “Best Warrior 2025” competition continues to strengthen military cooperation, enhance joint training efforts, and showcase the KSF’s professionalism, discipline, and dedication on the international stage.



Kosovo Troops Conduct Live-Fire Training Ahead of Defender Europe 2025



Minister of Defense Ejup Maqedonci and Lieutenant General Bashkim Jashari, Commander of the Kosovo Security Force, visited KSF troops during a 120mm mortar firing exercise in the Republic of Albania. As part of the annual training plan, the Mortar Platoon of the Third Regiment of the KSF Land Forces Command conducted live-fire exercises to enhance infantry capabilities for 2025. These preparations also included participation in Exercise “Defender Europe 2025”, organized by the U.S. Army for Europe and Africa. Minister Maqedonci praised the troops for their dedication and professionalism, emphasizing the importance of strengthening Kosovo’s defense capabilities. The exercise, conducted in cooperation with the Armed Forces of Albania, reinforced military collaboration and interoperability between the two countries.

Cadets of the Center for University Studies Won Gold at International Competition in San Remo, Italy



Cadets from the Center for University Studies achieved outstanding success in the International Law of Armed Conflict (LOAC) competition, securing a gold medal awarded by the International Institute of Humanitarian Law in San Remo, Italy. The IIHL is an independent organization that promotes international humanitarian law, human rights, and refugee law, providing specialized courses and conferences for military professionals, diplomats, and legal experts. Each year, the IIHL hosts the LOAC competition, bringing together military academies from around the world. The event included a practical phase, where multinational teams analyzed legal issues in simulated military scenarios. This competition served as both a training opportunity and a collaborative exercise, preparing future military leaders for complex operations while fostering international cooperation and awareness of humanitarian challenges. Teams were comprised of three cadets and a team leader (instructor). Given that the competition was conducted in English, it required high proficiency in language skills. This year marked USC's first participation, returning with a gold medal, proving the remarkable progress in cadet preparation. The event also showcased teamwork, as USC cadets collaborated with international counterparts in applying the Law of Armed Conflict. This achievement reflected USC's growing reputation as a military academic institution, demonstrating cadet discipline, dedication, and academic excellence on

the international military stage.

International Cadet Week Enhanced USC's Role in Military Education



The Center for University Studies successfully hosted International Cadet Week, bringing together cadets from elite military academies, including the United States Military Academy West Point, Norwich University in the United States, Royal Military College Saint-Jean in Canada, Armed Forces Academy in Albania, and the Military Academy in North Macedonia. This week-long event featured lectures, practical exercises, and interactive activities, allowing participants to gain firsthand experience with the USC military education system while exchanging insights with international colleagues. The theme for International Week 2025, as envisioned by Major Mimoza Budeci, was "Inspire, Lead, Serve."

KSF Officer Graduated from the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst

Officer Cadet Albin Islami of the Kosovo Security Force successfully graduated from the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst, one of the world's most prestigious military academies. The one-year training program at Sandhurst provided officers with essential leadership training, tactical skills, and knowledge of military operations, preparing them for command roles in armed forces worldwide. The graduation ceremony, held on behalf of His Majesty King Charles III, was presided over by Her Royal Highness, Sophie, Duchess of Edinburgh. Kosovo Ambassador to the United Kingdom, Ilir Kapiti, Major General Gëzim Hazrolli, Defense Attaché Colonel Agron Bajrami, and UK Defense Attaché in Kosovo, Lieutenant Colonel Edward Green, were also in attendance.

