



REPUBLIC OF KOSOVA MINISTRY OF DEFENSE



NEWSLETTER

May 2022

THE REPUBLIC OF KOSOVO AND THE STATE OF IOWA WITH OVER A DECADE OF CLOSE INTERNATIONAL PARTNERSHIP



In May, the Minister of Defense, Armend Mehaj, together with the Prime Minister Albin Kurti, paid a two-day official visit to the USA. On this occasion, Minister Mehaj, together with the Prime Minister of the Republic of Kosovo, Albin Kurti, were received by the highest state political and military authorities of the State of Iowa. Within these, they met with the Major General of the Iowa National Guard, Benjamin Corell, as well as members of the KSF that are being trained in Iowa.

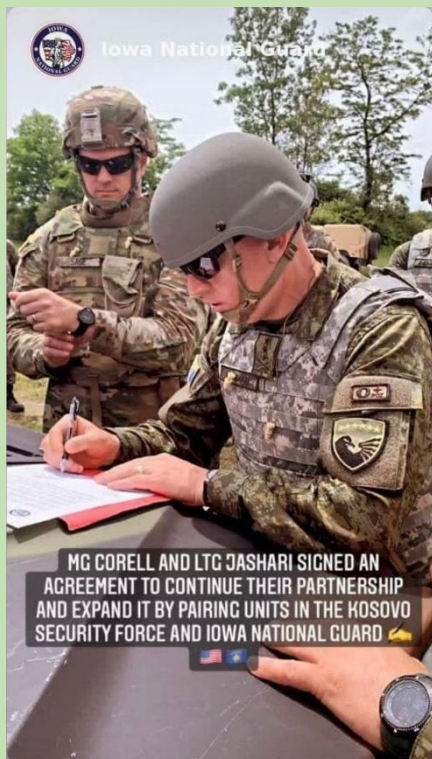


On this occasion, General Corell praised the contribution of our soldiers to peacekeeping missions in the Middle East. On the other hand, Minister Mehaj and Prime Minister Kurti thanked him for the continuous cooperation, the fact that the Republic of Kosovo is already seen as a reliable partner and ready to cooperate with the Iowa National Guard in any mission.

KSF COMMANDER WITH THE FIRST OFFICIAL VISIT TO IOWA NATIONAL GUARD

KSF Commander Lieutenant General Bashkim Jashari together with his team, at the invitation of the Commander of the Iowa National Guard, Major General Benjamin Corell, paid an official visit to Iowa, USA. During this visit General Jashari was received by General Corell and his staff where they discussed about the current cooperation and possible areas of cooperation for the future. General Jashari then visited the exercises and trainings in Camp Dodge, where KSF teams also participated. During the visit to the Iowa Regional Training Institute and the 209th Medical Company, General Jashari observed KSF members trained in battlefield medicine skills and battlefield drills. Also, General Jashari visited the sustainability and maintenance training capacities in the Iowa National Guard as well as other ING units, where other military capacities were presented.





KSF COMMANDER SIGNED A COOPERATION AGREEMENT WITH IOWA NATIONAL GUARD COMMANDER

In order to increase and advance the partnership between the two forces, the Commander of the KSF, Lieutenant General Bashkim Jashari has signed a cooperation agreement with the Commander of the Iowa National Guard, Major General Benjamin Corell. This agreement is built on 6 pillars and aims to advance the military partnership program including maneuver, NCO's corps development, and maintenance of military systems, military medicine and cybernetics.



As part of his visit to the United States of America, KSF Commander Lieutenant General Bashkim Jashari closely visited the KSF troops in the joint exercise with the US military from Iowa National Guard which took place in Indiana. KOMFSK General Jashari together with the commander of the Iowa National Guard General Corell have seen closely the KSF military, together with the American military during the realization of the concept of joint exercise. KOMFSK closely observed the tactical planning at the level of the company and the battalion as well as dealing with direct enemy fire, these exercises aim to increase combat preparations for the battlefield as well as the interoperability between the two forces. The staff of the KSF and that of our partners from the US are showing a high level of professionalism and maximum commitment in meeting the objectives of the exercise.



THE MINISTER OF DEFENSE OF GERMANY, CHRISTINE LAMBRECHT, VISITED THE MINISTRY OF DEFENSE



The first visit of a German Minister of Defense to the Ministry of Defense of the Republic of Kosovo took place in May. On this occasion, the Minister of Defense, Armend Mehaj, hosted the Minister of Defense of Germany, Christine Lambrecht. In this meeting between the two delegations of the two countries was discussed about the security situation in the Republic of Kosovo and current security developments in the region and beyond, reflected by Russia's military aggression on Ukraine. Furthermore, in this meeting was discussed about the good relations between Kosovo and Germany, where a great contribution to the approximation of the two countries has given the Kosovar diaspora in Germany, well integrated, where their number is around 400 thousand.



Minister Mehaj asked for the support of the German state for the fastest possible membership of the Republic of Kosovo in NATO. Whereas, Minister Lambrecht emphasized that as so far, the German state will continue to provide support to the Republic of Kosovo. She stressed that Kosovo and Germany are reliable and sincere partners with each other.



MINISTER MEHAJ HOSTED FOR A MEETING THE BRITISH AMBASSADOR, NICHOLAS ABBOT

Minister Mehaj thanked Ambassador Abbot for the support provided so far to the Republic of Kosovo and in particular to the Ministry of Defense and the KSF. In this meeting was discussed about the joint projects that the two countries have, in the framework of the bilateral cooperation plan in the field of defense and security.

MINISTER MEHAJ WAS HOSTED IN A MEETING BY THE MINISTER OF NATIONAL DEFENSE OF TURKEY, HULUSI AKAR



In this meeting held in May, they discussed about the good cooperation so far between the two ministries and stressed the need for further intensification of cooperation between the two ministries of defense and the two forces, which is in function of peace and stability in the region. The two ministers also discussed geopolitical developments, following Russia's military aggression in Ukraine and its impact on security and stability in the region and beyond. Minister Mehaj thanked his counterpart for the role and contribution of the Ministry of National Defense of Turkey, in the construction and development of the Ministry of Defense and the KSF, and on the other hand, the Turkish Minister of Defense, Akar reiterated the continued support of the Republic of Turkey for the Ministry of Defense and the KSF. Further, Minister Akar assured Minister Mehaj that he would support Kosovo's membership in the Partnership for Peace, NATO, the Council of Europe, to which Kosovo applied six days ago, as well as other regional organizations and beyond.





The Minister of Defense, Armend Mehaj, paid a two-day visit to Bulgaria, at the official invitation of his counterpart, the Minister of Defense of Bulgaria, Dragomir Zakov. During this visit, Minister Mehaj, in addition to the official meeting with Minister Zakov, also took part in two important events as well as visits and meetings with important Bulgarian diplomatic, academic and military authorities. In the main meeting, the two ministers, in addition to discussing developments in the security environment in the new geopolitical context, considered very important the deepening of bilateral cooperation between the two ministries and forces which is expected to be crowned with a memorandum of cooperation in the future. Minister Mehaj also participated in the international fair of the defense industry "Hemus 2022" as well as in the international conference "Where will the strategic compass take Europe to?". During the official visit, Minister Mehaj visited the National Military College "Georgi Rakovski", where he was received by the Commander, at the same time its Rector Major General Todor Dochev, as well as the Factory of High Military Technology and drones.

DELEGATION FROM THE KINGDOM OF NORWAY VISITS THE MINISTRY OF DEFENSE

The Minister of Defense, Armend Mehaj, accompanied by the Dep. Minister Shemsi Sylja, received a delegation from the Kingdom of Norway, headed by Kjersti C Klæboe, Director General of the Department of Personnel Policy, Competence, Integrity and Joint Legal Services of the Norwegian Ministry of Defense. Also part of the delegation was the Norwegian Ambassador to Kosovo, Jens Erik Grondahl, as well as senior officials of the Norwegian Ministry of Defense. The purpose of this meeting was to increase the cooperation of the Republic of Kosovo with Norway in the field of defense and security, in the field of education, as well as to sign a Memorandum of Understanding between the Ministries of Defense of the two countries.



GENERAL BRIGADE IRFETE SPAHIU IS PROMOTED TO THE RANK OF MAJOR GENERAL AND IS APPOINTED ON THE DUTY OF KSF GENERAL INSPECTOR



In the Presidency of the Republic of Kosovo, President Vjosa Osmani-Sadriu, based on her constitutional and legal competencies, has decreed General Irfete Spahiu with the rank of Major General and appointed as KSF Inspector General. President Osmani congratulated General Spahiu, wishing her further success in the professional development of the KSF. This is the first time in the history of the state of Kosovo and our army that in its hierarchy a Major General is a woman. The appointment of Ms. Spahiu to the position of KSF Inspector General, according to President Osmani is a guarantee for the continuation of good functioning and implementation of professional standards of the Force.

MINISTRY OF DEFENSE OPENS COMPETITION FOR RECRUITMENT OF CADETS FOR THE ACADEMIC YEAR 2022/2023

The Ministry of Defense in May issued a vacancy announcement for the recruitment of cadets for the academic year 2022/2023

The vacancy is announced based on the legislation in force as well as the preliminary recruitment plan for studies in these centers:

- KSF Defense Academy - University Study Center “Wesley Clark”;
- Military Academy of the Republic of Turkey;
- Military Academy/University of Zagreb of the Republic of Croatia; and
- Military Academy of the Republic of North Macedonia.



IN TRADOC TOOK PLACE THE OATH CEREMONY OF 257 NEW KSF SOLDIERS

The oath ceremony of 257 new KSF soldiers was held on May 20 in the barracks of the KSF Training and Doctrine Command in Ferizaj.

The oath ceremony was attended by: The President of the Republic of Kosovo, Vjosa Osmani-Sadriu, Dep. Prime Minister, Besnik Bislimi, Minister of Defense, Armend Mehaj, Dep. Minister of Defense, Shemsi Sylja, Dep. KSF Commander, Major General, Enver Cikaqi, TRADOC Commander, Brigadier General, Irfete Spahiu, NALT Director, General Joachim Hoppe, as well as senior officials of the Ministry of Defense, generals and senior KSF officers, municipal leaders, family members, etc.

In her speech to the young recruits, President Osmani-Sadriu stressed that she is proud that the country's army is adding its ranks with young girls and boys, who are transforming patriotism into professionalism. Further, the President of the country stressed that the task of young recruits will be of great and noble weight, that of defending the homeland. The Minister of Defense, Armend Mehaj, in his speech at this ceremony, said that the Army of the Republic of Kosovo is proving every day that it is ready to take on new responsibilities, for missions that await us in the future, together with the armies of partner countries which have continuously supported and assisted us.

Further, Minister Mehaj stressed that: "Investing in the army, purchasing military equipment and the well-being of our soldiers are our priorities, these enable us to have a force prepared, equipped and trained according to NATO standards".



"Investing in the army, purchasing military equipment and the well-being of our soldiers are our priorities, these enable us to have a well force prepared, equipped and trained according to NATO standards", Minister Mehaj.

UNIVERSITY OF PRISHTINA FINISHED IN FIRST PLACE IN THE FIRST INTERNATIONAL CYBER DEFENSE COMPETITION OF THE IOWA STATE UNIVERSITY

The International Cyber Defense Competition 2022 was held at the Technical Faculty of the University of Prishtina, where the KSF in cooperation with the Iowa Guard were the organizers. On this occasion, the students of the University of Prishtina won the competition. Through a video message, the Minister of Defense, Armend Mehaj, addressed students from the universities of Kosovo and Iowa, as well as the service members of the KSF and the Iowa National Guard. He said that this event is special, not only for the importance of the already fraternal cooperation between our two countries, but also because of the importance of the field of cyber defense.



MAJOR ILIR BEQIRI AND MAJOR DEDË HISENI GRADUATED WITH EXCELLENT RESULTS AT COMMAND AND GENERAL STAFF SCHOOL (CGSS) IN USA



KSF officers, Major Ilir Beqiri and Major Dedë Hiseni, after one year of intensive studies, graduated with high success and excellent results in the Command and Staff Officer Course at the School of Command and General Staff (CGSS) in the Army of United States of America. This course is dedicated to Major Officers, who serve in leadership positions and staff and command officers. The aim of the course is to prepare competent and flexible officers, ready to lead whenever required.



MINISTER MEHAJ AT THE MEETING OF MINISTERS OF DEFENSE WITHIN THE CONTACT GROUP FOR THE DEFENSE OF UKRAINE



At the end, he reiterated strongly that we are side by side with the US and against any threat and danger that threatens the sovereignty of democratic states. Minister Mehaj's participation in this meeting strongly demonstrates the full confidence of our main strategic ally, the United States, in the Republic of Kosovo, its institutions and leadership in defending the common values of freedom, peace and democracy.

The Minister of Defense, Armend Mehaj and KSF Commander Lieutenant General Bashkim Jashari in May participated in the virtual meeting between the ministers and chiefs of defence of 44 countries organized by the US Secretary of Defense, Lloyd J. Austin III, as part of the Contact Group for the Defense of Ukraine. Among other things, Minister Mehaj reiterated the full support of the allied countries' sanctions against Russia, and the readiness for support in coordination with NATO, the US and the EU, alluding to the sheltering of refugees and Ukrainian journalists who are endangered every day by the Russian aggressor.

DELEGATION FROM THE ROYAL COLLEGE OF DEFENSE STUDIES OF THE UNITED KINGDOM VISITED THE MINISTRY OF DEFENSE

The Royal College of UK Defense Studies (RCDS) visited the Ministry of Defense. Apart from the academic staff of this College, one of the most prestigious in the world, the delegation also included senior military and experts in the field of military and security from around the world. The respective delegation accompanied by the British Ambassador to Kosovo, Nicholas Abbott, received by the Dep. Minister of Defense, Shensi Sylja accompanied by the Dep. Commander of the KSF Major General Enver Cikaqi, the Director of the Directorate of Intelligence and Security, Major General Gëzim Hazrolli and the Chief of Cabinet of the Minister, Agime Gashaj. On this occasion, Dep. Minister Sylja, in addition to welcoming and appreciating the importance of this visit, addressed the guests the political aspect and the security environment in the new geopolitical context after the Russian military aggression in Ukraine.



In his speech, Deputy Minister Sylja addressed the direct and indirect reflection of Russia's aggression in Ukraine, in the political and security environment in the region and Kosovo, with special emphasis on the destabilizing approach of Serbia to Kosovo. Among other things, he mentioned the forms of threats and dangers that Serbia applies in order to keep the insecurity of Kosovo, Montenegro and Bosnia and Herzegovina in tension, for which he considered necessary, clear preventive actions by the policy-making and decision-making euro-atlantic block centers.

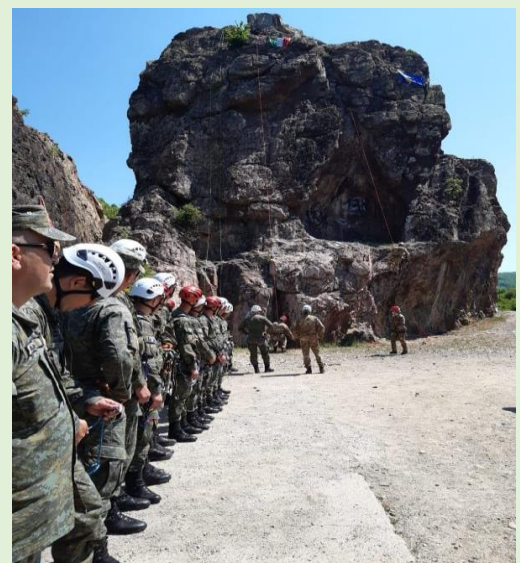
OUR FORCES SUCCESSFULLY COMPLETE THE TRAINING FOR MORTAR FIRING

Our specialized capabilities are increasing with indirect firearms for close fire support of various calibers and ammunition. In the framework of bilateral military cooperation between the Armed Forces of the Republic of Albania and the KSF, under the direction of instructors of the Albanian land forces, a joint training was successfully conducted with the implementation of combat firing with mortars and combat engineering, in Biza national shooting range.



A TEAM OF ITALIAN INSTRUCTORS TRAINS KSF RESEARCH MEMBERS FOR “MILITARY MOUNTAINEERING”

The Search and Rescue Company of the Civil Protection Regiment has attended the training “Military Mountaineering” led by the mobile team of instructors of the Italian summer school. The training is being conducted in the Barracks “Young Europeans” in Pomezotin and in various locations, which offer opportunities for members of the Kosovo Security Force to learn techniques for crossing mountainous areas with rocks, climbing on rocky surfaces and launching with ropes from different heights. In order to see closely the implementation of this training participated the following: Dep. Minister of Defense, Shemsi Sylja, the Dep. Commander of the Kosovo Security Force, Major General Enver Cikaqi, the Ambassador of Italy in Kosovo, Antonello De Riu, the Deputy Commander of KFOR, Brigadier General Luca Piperni, Dep. Commander of the National Guard, Colonel Shaip Haziri as well as senior KSF officers and representatives of the Italian Embassy and KFOR. The purpose of the training is for the members of the Kosovo Security Force to increase their professional capacities, taking advantage of the experience of Italian experts in this field, in order to be as prepared as possible in the face of mountain disasters, adapting to the place, time and atmospheric conditions.



KSF MEMBERS IN BABAJ BOKES, HELD THE FIELD EXERCISE “IRON SUPPORT”

The Minister of Defense, Armend Mehaj, in May visited the KSF camp in Babaj Bokes, Gjakova municipality, where the field exercise “Iron Support” was being held. On this occasion, the capacities of the support company of the first Infantry Regiment for “Defender-Europe 2023” were tested. Minister Mehaj has seen closely the course of this field exercise, supplies, difficulties and general conditions of stay in nature. He praised the commitment, will and professionalism of the service members in carrying out tasks in this field exercise, which is attended by 122 members with 35 vehicles. The field exercise “Iron Support” started in Gjilan, on April 26, while the execution phase was from 4th to 10th of May. On this occasion, the skills of logistical support such as: supply, transport, as well as maintenance skills were demonstrated.

