



REPUBLIC OF KOSOVA
MINISTRY OF DEFENSE



NEWSLETTER

February 2026

Kosovo Marks 18 Years of Independence and Commitment to Freedom



The 18th Anniversary of the Proclamation of Independence of the Republic of Kosovo was marked with a series of official state activities. Minister of Defense Ejup Maqedonci, together with the senior state leadership, participated in the solemn raising of the flag in front of the Government building of the Republic of Kosovo. This ceremony served as a symbol of the freedom achieved through great sacrifice. Minister Maqedonci emphasized that the Independence of Kosovo is the heritage of generations who gave their lives, and today this heritage is upheld by the Kosovo Security Force, which, with high professionalism and dedication, protects the peace, security, and dignity of the Republic of Kosovo. The ceremony honored the martyrs, acknowledged the sacrifices of the people, and expressed steadfast confidence in the future.





As part of the state activities, the Minister of Defense also participated in the parade of the Kosovo Security Force, alongside the Kosovo Police. This event reflected the journey of the state and its unwavering commitment to freedom and security. Minister Maqedonci highlighted that the Kosovo Security Force embodies professionalism, dedication, and readiness to serve in the interest of peace and regional stability, reinforcing Kosovo's aspiration to stand alongside its allies in NATO as a free, strong, and peace-loving state.





On the occasion of the Anniversary of the Independence of the Republic of Kosovo, a delegation from the Ministry of Defense and the Kosovo Security Force paid homage at the “Adem Jashari” Memorial Complex in Prekaz. The delegation was led by the Secretary General of the Ministry of Defense, Gafurr Dugolli, and the Deputy Commander of the Kosovo Security Force, Major General Enver Cikaqi. The ceremony was a sign of respect and deep gratitude for the extraordinary sacrifice of Commander Adem Jashari, the Jashari family, and all martyrs of the nation who contributed to the path toward Kosovo’s freedom and independence. Through this act of remembrance, the Kosovo Security Force reaffirmed its commitment to preserving the values of freedom, honoring the historical heritage, and serving the homeland and the citizens of the Republic of Kosovo.



KSF and Iowa National Guard Reaffirm Strategic Partnership

The Commander of the Kosovo Security Force, Lieutenant General Bashkim Jashari, hosted Brigadier General William McClintock, Deputy Adjutant General of the Iowa National Guard, and his delegation. During the meeting, LTG Jashari

thanked the Iowa National Guard for its continued support in developing KSF capacities and briefed the delegation on recent developments within the force. BG McClintock congratulated LTG Jashari on the achievements of the KSF and extended his congratulations to the people of Kosovo on the Independence anniversary. Both sides highlighted the strong cooperation and high level of interoperability achieved through joint activities, including training at the Joint Readiness Training



Center in the United States. On this occasion, LTG Jashari awarded BG McClintock the Medal for Selfless Service in recognition of his contribution to the partnership between the KSF and the Iowa National Guard.



January 31, 2026

Lieutenant General Bashkim Jashari
Chief of Defense of Kosovo
Pristina, Kosovo

Dear General Jashari,

On this 18th anniversary of Kosovo's independence, I extend my sincerest congratulations to you and the people of Kosovo. This day stands as a testament to the resilience, determination, and significant progress of your nation.

It is with great pride that we celebrate our strong and deepening partnership. Kosovo's progress in the modernization of the Kosovo Security Force into a professional, multi-ethnic territorial defense force is a remarkable achievement. The continued strengthening of interoperability with the United States, underscored by your substantial progress along the ten-year transition plan, creates a prosperous future for Kosovo and southeast Europe.

On this special occasion, I want to reaffirm our steadfast support for Kosovo's continued growth and success. Happy Independence Day!

Sincerely,

Stephen E. Osborn
Major General, Iowa National Guard
The Adjutant General

"ALWAYS READY"



On the Independence Day, the Commander of the Kosovo Security Force, Lieutenant General Bashkim Jashari, received a congratulatory letter on the occasion of the 18th Anniversary of the Independence of the Republic of Kosovo from the Adjutant General of the Iowa National Guard, Major General Stephen E. Osborn.

Defense Minister Ejup Maqedonci Participates in the Munich Security Forum with Kosovo Leadership



At the Munich Security Forum, which was held in February, Kosovo was represented by Prime Minister Albin Kurti, Defense Minister Ejup Maqedonci, and First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs and Diaspora Glauk Konjufca. During the forum, Minister Maqedonci and the Kosovo delegation met with U.S. Senators Jeanne Shaheen, Chris Murphy, Thom Tillis, and Ruben Gallego. The discussions reaffirmed Kosovo's strategic partnership with the United States and highlighted the country's ongoing commitment to advancing NATO and European Union membership processes.



Within the framework of the forum, Minister Maqedonci also met with the leadership of Mercedes-Benz Special Truck, including General Director Dennis Kinzelmann and Defense Sector Sales Director Daniel Zittel. This meeting resulted in the signing of a three-year contract for the supply of tactical trucks, a key step toward strengthening operational capacities and modernizing Kosovo's military fleet. The agreement reflects the Ministry of Defense's commitment to sustainable international partnerships in the defense sector, enhancing interoperability, operational readiness, and security standards.

Kosovo, Albania and Croatia Strengthen Trilateral Defense Cooperation



During the Munich Security Forum, Defense Minister Ejup Maqedonci held a trilateral meeting with the Ministers of Defense of Republic of Croatia and Republic of Albania. The meeting focused on strengthening regional security, deepening defense cooperation, advancing the defense industry, and developing production capacities according to NATO standards. Strategic investments were discussed to enhance self-sustainability, interoperability, and regional stability.

Trilateral Meeting *Defence Policy Directors*



Following the Joint Trilateral Declaration, additional trilateral activities have been carried out to further cooperation in defense and security. This included a meeting at the level of Directors of Defense Policy and Armaments, held at the Ministry of Defense of Croatia, where the Kosovo delegation was led by Director of Defense Policy Faruk Geci.

Discussions focused on joint defense cooperation, collaboration between defense industries, and the implementation of the Declaration's objectives.

As part of initiative, the Commander of the Kosovo Security Force, Lieutenant General Bashkim Jashari, also participated in a meeting with the Chiefs of Defense of Albania and Croatia in Albania, discussing security challenges, military cooperation, interoperability, and the advancement of defense capacities in line with Euro-Atlantic standards. The Joint Trilateral Declaration defines four main areas of cooperation: **promoting defense capabilities and the defense industry, increasing interoperability through education, training, and joint exercises, addressing hybrid threats and strengthening resilience, and providing continuous support for Euro-Atlantic integration.** These initiatives reaffirm the commitment of Kosovo, Albania, and Croatia to maintain peace, security, and stability in Southeast Europe.



Minister Maqedonci participated in the change of command ceremony at Camp Bondsteel



The Minister of Defense, Ejup Maqedonci together with the President of the Republic of Kosovo, Vjosa Osmani-Sadriu, and the Prime Minister of the Republic of Kosovo, Albin Kurti, participated in the change of command ceremony at the Multinational Battle Group-East, at the camp of the American forces in Bondsteel. On this occasion, Minister Maqedonci expressed gratitude to Colonel Jonathan Lloyd for the contribution and dedication demonstrated during his mandate and wished success to Colonel Samuel Sargeant in assuming the new duty. The partnership of the Republic of Kosovo with NATO and with KFOR remains essential for its security and its Euro-Atlantic path.

Strengthening Strategic Cooperation with the United States, the United Kingdom, Türkiye and Slovenia

Throughout February, the Minister of Defense held several meetings with ambassadors of partner countries aimed at further strengthening strategic and political cooperation in the field of defense.

In this context, the Minister received **the Chargé d’Affaires of the Embassy of the United States of America in Kosovo, Anu Prattipati**, who congratulated him on his reappointment and reaffirmed the continued support of the United States for Kosovo’s defense and security. The meeting highlighted the importance of the strategic partnership between Kosovo and the United States, with particular focus on strengthening bilateral defense cooperation and continued American support in building the professional and operational capacities of the Kosovo Security Force.



During the same period, the Minister also met with the **Ambassador of the United Kingdom to Kosovo, Jonathan Hargreaves**, the **Ambassador of the Republic of Türkiye to Kosovo, Sabri Tunç Angılı**, and the **Ambassador of the Republic of Slovenia to Kosovo, Borut Blaj**.

The meetings focused on advancing bilateral defense cooperation, including capacity development, procurement processes, participation in international missions and initiatives, as well as opportunities for enhanced cooperation through regional defense frameworks and defense industry collaboration.



Minister Maqedonci Meets Minister Kusari to Discuss the Draft Law on the Defense Industry



During February, the Minister of Defense, Ejup Maqedonci, met with the Minister of Industry, Entrepreneurship, Trade and Innovation, Mimoza Kusari, to discuss the initial concept, structure, and institutional bodies involved in the transformation of Kosovo's defense industry. The Draft Law on the Defense Industry is expected to enable sustainable, cross-sectoral development, positioning the defense industry as a driver of innovation, economic growth, and national security. In the coming weeks, the working group will finalize the concept document and prepare the draft law, marking the

next step toward the comprehensive development of the country's defense industry.

The Ministry of Defense of Kosovo and the Ministry of Defense of Austria signed the Annual-Bilateral Cooperation Plan

At the Ministry of Defense, a bilateral meeting was held with the delegation of the Ministry of Defense of the Federal Republic of Austria, during which the parties signed the Annual Bilateral Cooperation Plan for 2026, a document that defines concrete activities and areas of joint engagement in the field of defense. The Director of the Department of International Cooperation, Colonel Ahmet Ajeti, together with officials of this Department, hosted the Austrian delegation led by Brigadier General Nikolus Rottenberger, Head of the Military Diplomacy Division. During their visit to the Ministry of Defense, the Austrian delegation also met with the Director of Defense Policy, Faruk Geci, where the progress of existing cooperation, as well as joint objectives and priorities for the future, were discussed. The Federal Republic of Austria remains an important partner and contributor to the development and stability of the Republic of Kosovo and the region, while cooperation in the field of defense between the two countries continues to record ongoing development.



Kosovo Security Force Members Honored for the Albania Search and Rescue Operation



The Commander of the Kosovo Security Force, Lieutenant General Bashkim Jashari, awarded the medal “Selfless Service” to the members of the Search and Rescue unit of the Civil Protection Regiment of the National Guard, who were engaged in the humanitarian operation in the Republic of Albania. After a ten-day operation in the Klos area, in cooperation with the Armed Forces of the Republic of Albania, the teams managed to locate and find the lifeless body of the missing person in the Mat River. On this occasion, the unit was also honored with a “Certificate of Appreciation” for the professionalism and dedication demonstrated during the mission. The KSF remains committed to humanitarian missions and to strengthening regional cooperation.

The Kosovo Security Force participates in the International exercise “Dynamic Front 26”



The Kosovo Security Force, with a contingent from the Third Infantry Regiment including a mortar platoon, is participating in the international exercise “Dynamic Front 26,” organized by the United States Army for Europe and Africa (USAREUR-AF). The Dynamic Front field exercise is a multinational exercise that tests the interoperability of NATO and partner armies in the field of artillery and indirect fire. This year, the exercise is being conducted in parallel across five countries: Germany, Romania, Poland, Spain, and Türkiye. The KSF deployed to Germany, at the Grafenwöhr Training Area, with its logistical capacities, including vehicles, weapons, and ammunition. The KSF contingent operated jointly with the 4-319 Field Artillery Regiment of the United States Army. The mortar platoon, with its components—the Fire Line, Fire Direction Center, and Forward Observers—as well as 120 mm mortars, conducted firing on targets in coordination with the U.S. Army and Italian Army troops. During the Dynamic Front 26 field exercise, the KSF demonstrated its experience in mortar firing both day and night, and exchanged lessons learned and best practices with partner forces. Every day, the KSF continues to demonstrate professionalism and discipline while interoperating with partners for the benefit of peace and security.