

## MINISTRY FOR THE KOSOVO SECURITY FORCE

### From the Minister's Desk



Dear friends, welcome to the 12<sup>th</sup> edition of the KSF's newsletter.

Dear readers, last month was rather important one for my career because of a political decision that I have made. I put lots of thoughts on how can I be more productive and more effective in my political endeavors. At the same time, I had to make a decision that would utmost serve my country and its goal to become a full member of NATO and EU.

In order for me to help my country to achieve the above-mentioned goal I decided to become a member of the Democratic Party of Kosova. Nevertheless, I am also thankful for the time that I spend as a President of the Social-democratic Party of Kosova where I've made lots of friends.

Have a pleasant reading.

Sincerely Yours

AGIM ÇEKU

## MINISTER ÇEKU VISITS THE USA

From January 28 to 31, the Minister for the Kosovo Security Force (KSF) Agim Çeku and Major General Rrahman Rama, Deputy Commander of the KSF, Land Force Commander, visited the USA to meet with high level officials and discuss security issues and bilateral cooperation. In Washington, Minister Çeku visited the following: US Department of Defense, US Department of State and the National Security Council. The visit continued in the state of Iowa where Minister Çeku addressed the state's Senate and the House of Representatives. In his speech, Minister Çeku stressed that the State Partnership Program with the Iowa National Guard has been very beneficial. The partnership helps to develop the KSF's core competencies while simultaneously increases KSF's professionalism, capabilities, and deployability. Minister Çeku also met the House and Senate Veterans Affairs Committees and had meetings with Governor Terry Branstad, Lieutenant Governor Kim Reynolds, Senator Daryl Beall and Major General Tim Orr, the Adjutant General of the Iowa National Guard. In March 2011, the State Partnership Program with the National Guard of Iowa was established. The program foresees the strengthening of cooperation in areas of non-commissioned officer corps development, leadership and development, crisis response, management of emergencies, search and rescue, and others. Within the Program, the state of Iowa and Kosovo also cooperates in the civilian sectors of health, justice, education and agriculture.



## HEAD OF EUROPEAN UNION OFFICE PAYS VISIT TO THE MKSF

On January 15, Minister Agim Çeku had a meeting with Samuel Zhbogar, the head of European Union Office in Kosovo. During the meeting, Minister Çeku updated Mr Zhbogar on the progress, achievements, and challenges of the KSF and initiatives underway to improve the gender and community balance in the KSF. He emphasized KSF's willingness to take part in peace support operations by offering their special capabilities and expressed interest to contribute to EU missions. The KSF has already worked under EULEX direction during excavation of suspected mass grave in Zhilivodë/Žilivoda and in other smaller projects and is ready to continue to help the EU.



## COMMANDER KASTRATI MEETS WITH LIEUTENANT GENERAL DONALD M. CAMPBELL JR.

On January 23, COMKSF Lieutenant General Kadri Kastrati had a meeting with EUCOM Lieutenant General Donald M. Campbell, the Commanding General of U.S. Army Europe and Seventh U.S. Army. COMKSF Kastrati thanked the U.S. Army for providing support and briefed Lieutenant General Campbell on the objectives and developments the KSF has planned for 2013. He praised the professionalism and work ethics of the U.S. Defense Attaché James Kott. In addition, Lieutenant General Kastrati mentioned the importance of the partnership with the Iowa National Guard as one of the priorities of the KSF. Lieutenant General Campbell promised continuing support for the KSF in the future.



## COMKFOR VISITS OPERATIONAL SUPPORT BRIGADE

On January 14, COMKFOR Major General Volker Halbauer visited the barracks of the Operational Support Brigade (OSB). During the visit, COMKFOR also attended a search and rescue exercise, which familiarized him with procedures used by the OSB to train its units in the handling of hazardous materials, explosive ordnance devices, and fire fighting. The OSB generates, trains, equips, support and commands its subordinate units, providing certain civil protection, logistics, engineering and other service support to all KSF units. The OSB is responsible to respond to all forms of civil crisis, especially natural disasters and the provisions of humanitarian assistance. Furthermore, the OSB offers support to civilian authorities in Kosovo as required.

## KOSOVO HOSTS REGIONAL NON-COMMISSIONED OFFICERS CONFERENCE

From January 14 to 15, the KSF hosted a regional senior Non-Commissioned Officer (NCO) conference called "NCO Development and Inter-Regional Cooperation". This was the first conference of its kind held in Kosovo and hosted senior enlisted leaders from the Balkans, U.S. Army Europe and U.S. European Command. The two-day conference was a great venue to discuss how to further improve and train professional NCOs. U.S. Europe Command's Senior Enlisted Leader Fleet Master Chief Roy Maddocks said that by working together in professional forums, key enlisted leaders are prepared for multinational environments that are increasingly complex and challenging. The conferences help to continue the development of a professional NCO corps. They also allow for relationship building, so that the different countries get a chance to know each other. Commander of the KSF, Lieutenant General Kadri Kastrati pointed out that assembling a highly trained and well-prepared NCO corps is an essential task of the KSF and thanked partners for their support in standing-up the KSF, including NCO corps.



## PROCUREMENT AND CONTRACTING COURSE BRINGS TOGETHER KOSOVO'S MINISTRIES AND MUNICIPALITIES

From January 14 to 18 a Procurement and Contracting Course took place in Pristina. There were 43 participants attending the course from across ministries and municipalities of Kosovo, including the MKSF and the KSF. The course provided the participants with an understanding of fundamental contracting principles and their application in complex and non-complex procurements. The course examined procurement policy development, implementation and monitoring, procurement planning, development of capability based requirements documents/technical specifications, conditions for single and competitive sourcing and contract monitoring. The directing staff was faculty members from U.S. Naval Postgraduate School who possess a vast depth of knowledge and experience.



## GENDER ADVISOR OF KFOR BRIEFS ON INTEGRATION OF GENDER PERSPECTIVE INTO OPERATIONS

In January Major Claire Wohlschak, gender advisor to COM KFOR, provided two briefings for senior leaders and personnel of the Operational Support Brigade and its units. As part of the enhanced cooperation project between KFOR and the KSF, this briefing informs senior leaders on the intricacies of integrating a gender perspective into operations. The program was introduced in the beginning of 2012 and to date more than 300 KSF members have attended it. During the lectures the operational impact of gender related issues are highlighted and explanations of how the integration of gender concepts can be implemented. The implementation of a gender perspective improves situational awareness, which leads to more effective decisions, increases effectiveness, and is a force multiplier.

## THE MKSF PRESENTS A STUDY “IMPROVE GENDER AND COMMUNITY BALANCE”

On January 16, MKSF Office for Community Affairs introduced its best practices and suggestions for the integration of women and ethnic communities in the Ministry and the KSF. Minister Çeku in his opening remarks pointed out that the KSF has to be a professional organization that serves all citizens and contributes to peace and security. “This is one of our main goals – to be a role model for other state institutions in Kosovo,” he said. In 2012 a Gender Working Group was established in order to discuss and find the most efficient ways of implementation of Policy for Human Rights and Gender Issues inside the Ministry and the KSF. The working group finalized its work by preparing a list of suggestions on improving representation of women and ethnic communities both in the KSF.



## THE KSF HOLDS MINE AWARENESS LECTURES FOR SCHOOLCHILDREN

On January 21, the KSF started mine awareness lectures in elementary schools of Kosovo; this series will continue until February 21. KSF instructors who are trained and licensed to lecture on unexploded ordnances run the lectures. KSF instructors, using practical examples, warning signs and pictures of unexploded ordnances, are explaining to children the risk that threatens them every day. The awareness campaign is carried out based on the cooperation between the MKSF and the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology and municipal directorates of education. Since the last war in Kosovo, 115 people have died and unexploded ordnances have injured 452. The KSF has cleared 160.000 m<sup>2</sup> but 54 fields are still dangerous 41 of which contain cluster bombs while 13 are minefields.

