



Multinational Battalion troop rotation at EUFOR

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Greetings EU FORUM reader!

The Public Affairs Office (PAO) is continually looking to improve the contents of this magazine but it is your input that will make the difference. Whether you want to write an article about a particular subject, write about some special training you are attending or if you simply want to send in a good picture; we need your help.



Lt Col Lindner, Chief PAO

We can assist you throughout the process and look forward to hearing from you; we spend a lot of time trying to make the product you're holding in your hands as interesting and useful as we can and we certainly don't want this to go to waste. The stories should reflect your experiences while serving here with EUFOR and each of them should be relevant to YOU.

We also need your feedback, good or bad – please let us know. We want to create a product worthy of your time and attention, and in order to do this we need you to tell us what you like and dislike. Ultimately, Forum exists for you – to serve you, to inform you, and to offer you the best, most relevant information available.

To assist us in all this we have started to establish a Social Media presence, which we can all use to share feedback and ideas. Social media is exceptionally important in today's public affairs world as it gives our audiences the ability to communicate with us easily and more quickly. To facilitate this EUFOR PAO has created a variety of social media platforms designed to support a range of media from text and pictures to audio and video; all of which are generated and maintained by the Public Affairs Office (details are OPPOSITE/BELOW??!!). Please help us spread the word; share and like our content, get involved, and stay connected.

Soldiers have always been the best and most effective tellers of their stories and we want to encourage you to get involved, spread the word and assist us in spreading our key themes and messages. We want every Soldier to be a part of the EUFOR story.

Srebrenica 18th Commemoration



On 11 July 2013 Commander of EUFOR, Major General (MG) Dieter HEIDECKER, visited the Memorial Centre Srebrenica- Potocari – where 18 years ago forces attacked the UN-protected ‘safe area’ of Srebrenica, and subsequently committed genocide by killing around 8,000 people and forcibly expelling around 30,000 women, children and elderly people.

All senior representatives from the International Community in Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH) were in attendance including the High Representative to BiH, Valentin Inzko, Presidency Member for BiH Bakir Izetbegović, EU Special Representative Peter SØRENSEN, and Commander NATO HQ Sarajevo, Brigadier General Merle D. Hart.

Also paying their respects were thousands of people who had travelled to the memorial on foot, on bicycles, motorbikes and bus for the burial of 409 victims of the genocide. The organizers’ goal was to keep alive the memory of the Srebrenica genocide.



EUSR Peter SØRENSEN and COM EUFOR Major General Dieter HEIDECKER

Thousands of participants who headed to the memorial on foot were taking part in an 80-kilometre Peace March along a route from Nezuk to Potocari, one of the routes by which dozens of men managed to escape the massacre in 1995. Every participant’s aim was to show solidarity and pay a humble tribute to the victims of armed conflict in this country irrespective of their ethnicity, religion or gender and also not to forget the crimes committed.

Planning for Quick Response 2



Members of EUFOR and AFBiH attending the IPC

On 9 July 2013, the Initial Planning Conference for the next EUFOR Operational Rehearsal Exercise “Quick Response 2” took place in EUFOR HQ, Camp Butmir.

The Initial Planning Conference (IPC), which covered the planning and preparation of the second EUFOR Operational Rehearsal in 2013 was officially opened by the COS EUFOR, Brigadier General József SZPISJÁK.

The IPC was conducted in two parts, in accordance with the split of the main elements of the exercise which are to involve integration and combined training. In the first part of the day the working group which consisted of representatives from the HQ EUFOR, the Multinational Battalion (MNBN) and members from the Troop Contributing Nations (TCNs) Austria and Slovakia. This session focused on the EUFOR Operational Rehearsal of the Intermediate Reserve

(IR), it’s deployment followed by its integration into the MNBN.

In the second session, the group was augmented by representatives from the Armed Forces of Bosnia and Herzegovina (AF BiH), and concentrated on EUFOR - AF BiH combined training exercises in basic Peace Support Operations.

The conference provided a good opportunity to remind participants of the success of the first EUFOR Exercise Quick Response 2013 (the largest EUFOR exercise of its kind in 5 years). Representatives from HQ EUFOR and AF BiH combined their thoughts and developed ideas for the combined training participation and agreed on the next steps to ensure this

excellent opportunity is used effectively.

The IPC is one of the many ways that EUFOR continues to demonstrate its commitment to assisting the AF BIH through Capacity Building and Training.





Marching in the colour of the MNBNA

Multinational Battalion Medal Parade

On 05 July 2013 the departing soldiers of the Multinational Battalion (MNBNA) were awarded with the “European Union Common Security and Defence Policy Medal”.

This memorable ceremony was attended by the Commander of EUFOR, Major General Dieter HEIDECKER, as well as other high-ranking staff officers from the Headquarters of EUFOR, including the Chief of Staff, Brigadier General József SZPISJÁK.

In his address to the troops, General Heidecker expressed his sincere appreciation for the excellent work and conduct displayed by each and every soldier in the course of the last 6 months and urged them to maintain their high spirits on their return to normal duties back home.

In his speech, the Commander of the MNBNA, Lieutenant Colonel Alfred STEINGRESS, stressed the fact that the last few months had been very demanding. The many challenges they faced included the planning and execution of some combined training with the Armed Forces of

BiH, the rotation of the Turkish Company, the securing of Camp BUTMIR and various trainings and live fire exercises.

Lt Col Steingress further emphasized that the highlight of this tour of duty undoubtedly was the participation in Exercise “Quick Response” in April, when his battalion was reinforced by two Intermediate Reserve Force companies. During these two weeks, the MNBNA proved that they were prepared at any time to receive and integrate additional companies and to fulfill all given tasks according to the intent of the Commander of EUFOR.

Lt Col Steingress thanked his staff and soldiers for their loyalty, motivation and companionship. He pointed out that working together with soldiers from different nations is particularly challenging, as it is fundamentally important for a group of soldiers to become a cohesive team as quickly as possible. His special thanks went not only to his Deputy and Chief of Staff, Major Csaba HALASZ from the Hungarian Armed Forces, and the Commander of the Austrian Infantry Company, Captain RESCH, but to all soldiers of the MNBNA.



H-COY – Hungry for the Mission



EUFOR COS Brigadier General József SZPISJÁK inspecting the new Hungarian Company

July 13 saw a new Hungarian Company join the Multinational Battalion, EUFOR's military maneuver unit inside Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Maintaining stability in Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH) is considered very important to the Hungarian Government and this has been demonstrated through their continued support of the EUFOR mission. Hungarian Defence Forces (HDF) have been participating in Operation ALTHEA since 2004 as one of the main troop contributing nations.

In July 2013 the 13th rotation of the Hungarian Defense Forces Contingent took place inside Camp BUTMIR in SARAJEVO. The majority of these personnel

will make up the Hungarian Company (H-COY) - part of the Multinational Battalion (MNBN); while others will fulfill their role within the MNBN HQ, the Hungarian EOD team, or the Hungarian National Support Element (NSE).

Last year saw several of the new members of H-COY deploy to BiH for a 2 month period before redeploying to Hungary at the beginning of September 2012. Since then the company was held in a state of readiness as part of the Intermediate Reserve (IR) Force. The IR are EUFORs over the horizon forces that are able to be quickly deployed to the Area of Operation (AOO) should they be required to support the Safe and Secure Environment in BiH.

These new soldiers who have deployed with the Hungarian Infantry Coy will stay in theatre and serve a full six month tour. The total strength of H-COY is 99 soldiers plus a Company Command and includes two Platoons drawn from the HDF 37th "II Rákóczi Ferenc" Engineer Regiment and one Platoon from the HDF 12th "Arabaya" Air Defence Regiment.

Prior to their deployment, the unit underwent two months of training in order to be fully prepared for their role in BiH. They will now consolidate this training in theatre, including elements of Force Protection, to reach Full Operational Capability (FOC). Once all their training is complete, the troops will participate in joint

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training with the Armed Forces BiH and prepare for the next Operational Rehearsal (Exercise Quick Response 2) which will run from 2-13 September 2013.

Quick Response is where EUFOR practices its ability to rapidly integrate and deploy IR companies in BiH and ensure that the Safe and Secure Environment is maintained.

The main effort for EUFOR remains unchanged; to conduct EU-led operations in BiH under the political control and strategic direction of the Political and Security Committee (PSC) under the authority of the Council of the European Union, and in line with its mandate, in order to support BiH efforts to maintain the SASE, whilst in parallel conduct capacity-building of the Armed Forces of BiH in order to contribute to the stability of the state.

Welcome to EUFOR!



Multinational Battalion troop rotation at EUFOR

On 16 Jul 13, the current Austrian troops held at readiness inside EUFOR's Camp Butmir, SARAJEVO were replaced by a new contingent of Hungarian soldiers.

In accordance with Annex 1A of the Dayton Peace Accord and reviewed on an annual basis (currently UN Security Council Resolution 2074), EUFOR holds a mandate to ensure that the Safe and Secure Environment (SASE) is maintained in Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH). The military presence includes a Multinational Battalion (MNBNA) which consists of one Motorized Company from either Austria or Hungary (on a rotational basis) and one Motorized Company from Turkey. The Austrian and Hungarian troops are deployed on a rotational system which replaces each other every 12 months.

The handover between Companies was conducted during a ceremony presided over by the EUFOR Chief of Staff (COS), Brigadier General József Szpisják. The event marked the official transition of responsibility from the departing Austrian infantry Company to the newly arrived Hungarian infantry Company.

The MNBNA is EUFOR's military maneuver unit inside BiH and a total of 154 Austrian soldiers have completed their mission and have been replaced by the incoming troops. At the same time nine officers and non-commissioned officers of the Hungarian Armed Forces that have served in the Headquarters of the MNBNA were also changed.

Brigadier General Szpisják commended the troops for their professionalism and dedication and took the opportunity to award to those soldiers who could not make it to the last medal parade with the European Union Defence and Security Policy Medal.

The Commanding Officer of the MNBNA, Lt Col Alfred Steingresz, expressed his sincere thanks to all the soldiers that have served under his command during the past six months. He applauded them for carrying out their duties in very dedicated and professional manner.

Lt Col Steingresz welcomed his new Company personnel, and expressed his pride at the high morale and standards demonstrated by the MNBNA throughout his time in BiH.

The new EUFOR force structure, which is augmented by Intermediate Reserve (IR) Forces, provides the MNBNA



EUFOR COS, Brigadier General József SZPISJÁK with Commanding Officer of the MNB, Lt Col Alfred STEINGRESZ inspecting the MNB

with ample opportunities to train alongside EUFOR reinforcements. In April, a 117-strong IR company from the Hungarian Defense Force and a Company from the United Kingdom arrived in Sarajevo to participate in the two-week international exercise “Quick Response”.

Between 2 and 13 September a similar exercise will take place when two Companies from Austria and Slovakia will reinforce EU-

FOR. Companies held at readiness within EUFOR’s Intermediate Reserve are normally stationed outside of BiH.

Quick Response practices the ability of EUFOR to rapidly integrate and deploy IR companies. During a separate phase of the exercise, soldiers from the Armed Forces BiH will also train with the international forces in order to improve their interoperability. One of EUFOR’s main efforts is in ca-

capacity-building and training of the AF BiH and this exercise provides the perfect platform to enable this activity and assure that the AF BiH are meeting international standards.

General Szpisják closed the ceremony by praising the soldier’s high professional standards and stated that they “have passed their test with flying colours”. He wished the members of the Austrian Company well and a safe trip home.







Making a difference – EUFOR LOT Brcko donates ‘Zimmer’ frames

On 16 July 2013 members of the EUFOR LOT house in BRCKO organized the donation of 5 Zimmer frames to the local Red Cross office to help people with temporary and permanent mobility issues.

In a small ceremony, and in the presence of local media, in front of the Red Cross office in the BRCKO District, members of the EUFOR LOT House handed over 5 walking frames or “Zimmer” frames to the Red Cross Office Manager Denis ŠEHANOVIĆ. For people with mobility problems, a Zimmer frame can mean the difference between being stuck at home and enjoying an independent life. The donation was made possible thanks to the initiative of Lieutenant Sebastian ECKLER, who managed to organize the frames and transport them from Austria to Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH).



Lieutenant Sebastian ECKLER being interviewed

Lt ECKLER was able to acquire these walking aids from CARITAS Austria and, having served in EUFOR LOT House in BRCKO since August 2012, knew that they would be much needed in the local community.

Lt ECKLER’s father, who has also previously worked with EUFOR in LOT BRCKO, helped him

to obtain the Zimmer frames and brought them to BRCKO from Austria. Lt ECKLER decided that handing the frames over to the Red Cross would ensure the best use of them due to their excellent history of supporting vulnerable people.

The system the Red Cross uses is to hand out the equipment on long-term loan for as long as they are needed and then pass them on to somebody else when they become available again. By providing long-term loans of essential equipment the Red Cross are able to help dozens of vulnerable people every year.

This important initiative will prove vital for those it helps, whether they have a temporary or a permanent disability or illness, and will help provide a dignified standard of living. The entire team at the EUFOR LOT BRCKO assisted with the project and are very pleased to have brought it to this happy and successful conclusion.



Austrian MOD provide ammunition stability testing equipment to AF BiH



Members of the Af BiH inspecting donated equipment

On 4 July 2013 in the Kasarna Radomir “Vojvoda Putnik” Barracks near Doboj the Austrian MOD supplied the Armed Forces of Bosnia and Herzegovina (AF BiH) with 6 ammunition stability detection packs.

Brigadier General Andreas Rotter, the Austrian Military Attaché signed an extended loan agreement allowing the AF BiH to make use of 6 Quick Propellant Analysis Kits (QPAKs). The kits allow military personnel to determine the stability of the chemicals and stabilizers within live ammunition and will enable users to decide how long they can be safely stored for.

General Rotter said: “It is a great pleasure and honour to hand over this equipment to the Armed Forces of Bosnia and Herzegovina; especially for me as this is the end of my time as the Austrian Military Attaché. I am sure that my successor will continue to support initiatives such as this as it is very important for the safety and security of weapons in BiH.”

The General was met in Doboj by Colonel Agić Fahrudin (AF BiH) and taken into the ceremony room where both he and General Rotter stated their mutual appreciation and the importance of cooperation be-

tween their Armed Forces.

The Austrian Technical Project Officer, Mr Werner Kernmaier, who was also present at the ceremony described this as the final stage in a three part process to ensure that this element of the AF BiH have a self-sustaining safe ammunition handling process. The first two stages involved the training and mentoring of AF BiH logistics staff by Mobile Training Teams (MTTs) from EUFOR as part of its mission to provide Capacity Building and Training.

This Swiss lead MTT consists of personnel from 3 nations: Switzerland, Austria and Sweden. This team has trained 12 of the AF BiH in ‘basic ammunition’, ‘ammunition storage’ and ‘advanced training’ modules developed by the Austrian Armed Forces Logistics school and enable students to use the QPAK equipment.

Colonel Fahrudin said that he was honoured to welcome the Austrian delegation. “I am thankful for your cooperation and the help of the Austrian Army in developing the BiH Armed Forces. I hope this cooperation will continue into the future.”

Good cooperation between EUFOR and PSOTC continues



COS EUFOR, Brigadier General József SZPISJÁK and Colonel Jasmin ČAJIĆ

On 03 July 2013 Brigadier General József Szpisják, Chief of Staff Headquarters EUFOR, paid a visit to the Peace Support Operations Training Centre (PSOTC) of Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH).

The centre was established in May 2003 based on a proposal from the UK Ministry of Defence and transitioned to BiH ownership at the end of 2012. General Szpisják was received by the Commander of the training center, Colonel Jasmin Čajić and the visit commenced with a short briefing regarding the mission and goals of the PSOTC, where Brigadier General Szpisják was informed about the present activities, past achievements and future developments.

The PSOTC is located inside NATO/EUFOR Camp BUTMIR

in SARAJEVO and is a modern and well equipped training centre with spacious syndicate rooms, a lecture hall, a modern library and a conference room. The mission of the PSOTC is to deliver training and education which would be recognized within the NATO/ Partnership for Peace (PfP) community, thereby fostering BiH transatlantic integration processes.

The PSOTC already has produced a multitude of graduates who have shown the capability to undertake a wide range of staff disciplines and responsibilities in multinational PSO and humanitarian operations in NATO led missions.

Common goals

General József Szpisják briefed his host about EUFOR's mission,

which is to conduct EU-led operations in BiH under the political control and strategic direction of the Political and Security Committee (PSC) and the authority of the Council of the European Union, and in line with its mandate in order to monitor and ensure continued compliance with GFAP and to contribute to the Safe and Secure Environment (SASE).

In addition, EUFOR, through its Capacity Building and Training Division (CBTD), is assisting the Armed Forces of Bosnia and Herzegovina (AF BiH) in achieving a robust and self-sustainable training structure, with appropriate staffing mechanism, to allow the AF BiH to provide capability-orientated and trained personnel in line with international standards, able to

participate in Peace Support Operations (PSO).

Due to these quite similar goals, the cooperation between EUFOR and the PSOTC always has been excellent and recently EUFOR trainers were invited to lecture students who are currently undergoing International PSO Staff Officers Course about their experiences.

During the course participants prepared assignments on Multinational Battle Group/ Brigade Headquarters and Peace Support Operations (PSO) in accordance with UN and NATO standards. At the end of his visit, Brigadier General József Szpisják attended a Mission Analysis Briefing as a part of the course curriculum.

Train the trainers

PSOTC Commander Čajić expressed his gratitude to EUFOR for their support to the center and expressed his desire for maintaining the good cooperation. General Szpisják congratulated Colonel Jasmin Čajić on the fact that the PSOTC has grown into an internationally recognized Training Center which enables the BiH MoD and AF BiH personnel to reach the NATO/UN standard and thus make a great contribution to international peace and security. EUFOR remains committed to assist BiH and its Armed Forces on their path to Euro-Atlantic integration and will continue providing Capability Building Measures and Expert Training to the AF BiH.

Project Explode!

The explosive ordnance and remnants destruction project was launched on 27 June in Doboj. The project will be implemented over the next two years and cost the EU approximately 4 million Euros.

In partnership with the Ministry of Defense of Bosnia and Herzegovina, and the United Nations Development Programme, as well as the OSCE Mission to BiH, the European Union will help to destroy some of the enormous quantity of military ammunition surplus in BiH – 17,000 tonnes. The Chief Operations of the EU Delegation in BiH, Mr. Holger Schroeder said that the EU has contributed with more than 8 million Euros to the improved safety and security of BiH citizens so far. “We expect that the Explode Project will result in a reduction of unstable and surplus ammunition by an estimated 6,000 tonnes. The ammunition will be destroyed in a controlled manner, with full respect for the environment and safety standards.”

The Minister for Defense of BiH, Mr. Zekerijah Osmić, expressed his gratitude to the International Community who have already supported BiH in similar projects, especially to the EU, OSCE, UNDP, and EUFOR in creating a safe environment for all the citizens of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Acting Head of the OSCE Mission to BiH, Ms. Nina Suomalainen



Mr. Holger Schroeder and Brigadier General Merle Hart receive a brief on the ‘Explode’ project.

emphasized that the OSCE will continue to work in partnership with the UNDP on improving the safety at ammunition storage sites, which will help to protect the BiH Armed Forces personnel working there, the local population in the vicinity, and the environment from the destructive effects of an accidental explosion.

The UNDP Representative, Mrs Zahira Virani stated that human security is one of the key areas of UNDP’s work and with this new Project the UNDP will help to prevent loss of lives or infrastructure damage that uncontrolled explosions of ammunition could cause.

Among the numerous guests who attended the Ceremony marking the launch of the Project, was the newly appointed Commander of NATO HQ Sa, Brigadier General Merle Hart. Also attending was the Commander of EUFOR, Major General Dieter Heidecker, BiH Deputy Minister of Defense, Mirko Okolić, Deputy Chief JS AF BiH, Brigadier General Senad Mašović, and Commander of the AF BiH Support Command, Brigadier General Hussein Tursunović.

Austrian Peace Academy students visit Camp Butmir

A group of students from the Austrian Academy for Peace and Security in Europe paid a visit to EUFOR Headquarters at Camp BUTMIR on 04th July 2013. They received a briefing on current political and military issues in Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH) from Staff Officers.



COM EUFOR, Major General Dieter Heidecker addressed the group, and praised their efforts in gaining a better understanding of the problems existing in this part of Europe.

The group of students were visiting Croatia, Serbia, the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Kosovo, Albania, Montenegro and Bosnia and Herzegovina during their trip. They aim to get a familiarity with the root causes and circumstances of regional and local conflicts in the Balkan area.

They subsequently intend to raise these issues to the public of the extended area, especially in Austria, in order to promote better integration of migrants from the countries of the former Yugoslavia.

This journey is the 4th such study tour to the Balkans organized by COL (GS) Günther J. Rozenits, a former Chief Joint Military Affairs of HQ EUFOR ALTHEA. The tour was conducted under the slogan “99 years after the beginning of World War I and the battle on the blackbird field”.

Members of the Academy for Peace and Security in Europe include many career officers, who have a profound knowledge of the security aspect, not only in Austria but also in the wider Balkan region within Europe. The focus of this journey was predominantly on peace and conflict studies.

After having visited Novi Sad and Belgrade in Serbia, the group had traveled via Skopje to Pristina and from there to Kosovo Polje, the location of the famous ‘blackbird field’, where in 1389 the Battle of Kosovo was fought. Many consider that battle to be a defining moment in Serbian medieval history and identity.

From Kosovo, the delegation travelled to Albania, followed by Montenegro and finally Bosnia and Herzegovina. In Sarajevo the group first paid a visit to the area where 99 years ago, on 28 June 1914, Archduke Franz Ferdinand of Austria,

their presumptive to the Austro-Hungarian throne, and his wife, Sophie, Duchess of Hohenberg, were shot dead by Gavrilo Princip. Austria-Hungary subsequently issued an ultimatum against Serbia, which was partially rejected and Austria declared war. This marked the outbreak of World War I.

Apart from visiting historical places, the participants were also able to experience first-hand the challenges facing a society attempting to heal the wounds left by recent wars.

In a final statement before returning to Austria, Colonel Rosenits explained that one additional goal of the visit to the region was to enhance public understanding of why military and other assets are deployed to the Balkan region. All participants agreed that managing diversity in the post-conflict Western Balkans with multiculturalism, multi-ethnicity and post-socialist transformation isn’t an easy task.

The students expressed their gratitude for having been given the chance to learn more about the historical context and background to the breakup of Yugoslavia, the reasons for the breakup and other valuable information that enables them to better understand the conflicts of the 1990s, the rise of ethno-nationalism, and the transition from socialism that all eventually led to war and conflict.

Chilean Army General visits EUFOR

The visiting Head of the Chilean Joint General Staff, Lieutenant General Hernán Mardones Ríos, inspected the Chilean Army contingent deployed in Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH) under the command of the European Union's EUFOR Althea peace support operation.

During his visit on 25 June 2013 General Ríos also met with the Force Commander (COM EUFOR), Major General Dieter Heidecker, who gave a very positive evaluation of both the work done by the Chilean soldiers serving in Headquarters EUFOR and in the Liaison and Observation Team (LOT) house in BANJA LUKA. EUFOR maintains a good situational awareness through the network of LOT houses that are spread across the country and actively interact with local communities.

General Heidecker affirmed that the security situation in BiH is considered calm and stable and that EUFOR has never been asked to support the Law Enforcements Agencies (LEAs) of BiH.

Chile is the only Latin American country contributing forces to this mission, with more than 400 Army men and women serving since 2003. The Chilean Armed Forces have also participated in several other peace support operations around the globe including Haiti, Cyprus, Kosovo and the



Lieutenant General Hernán MARDONES RÍOS

Middle East. The Chilean Army's presence and participation in the EUFOR has varied in accordance with the evolving situation in the country and in EUFOR's developing role.

Chilean personnel have increased their presence in recent months and are currently involved with training doctrine, standardising documentation, maintenance, and operations. In each of these roles they continue to demonstrate the highest levels of professionalism.

The Force Commander thanked Lieutenant General Hernán Mardones Ríos for his country's continuing support and contribution to the Operation Althea Mission and applauded the high professional standard of the Chilean members currently serving with EUFOR.

COM EUFOR also briefed the General on the security situation within BiH and the main effort of the mission; supporting BiH's efforts to maintain the Safe and Secure Environment in order to help all of the peoples of BiH to live

together in a stable, viable, peaceful, democratic and multi-ethnic nation.

COM EUFOR explained that despite recent reductions in troop strength, EUFOR still maintains the ability to support BiH authorities with both in-country and reserve forces should they be needed. In addition to the in-theatre forces already present, EUFOR is able to draw on reserve forces, if required, to augment its capacity and to deal with any military contingencies that arise.

From 2–12 September 2013 EUFOR will again demonstrate its ability to exercise the reserve forces during "Exercise Quick Response II". This will also provide an opportunity for the Armed Forces of Bosnia and Herzegovina (AF BiH) to train together with international troops and increase their skills in peace support operations.

EUFOR is also very active in the field of Capacity Building & Training and provides specialist

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training teams which work closely with the AF BiH. In addition, EUFOR is also working with other EU and international actors in BiH to ensure a coherent and comprehensive approach across all aspects of EUFOR's mission.

COM EUFOR also raised the issue of land mines which is a terrible legacy in any conflict, and is still a very serious concern in BiH. EUFOR works hard in conjunction with BiH MAC to raise the awareness of mines and the danger they represent.



EUFOR has concentrated on educating the youth of BiH and have reached thousands of young people throughout the country. EUFOR is also providing training to AF BiH in mine clearance techniques.

With regards to the problem of surplus arms and ammunition in the country, General Heidecker explained that the AF BiH and BiH authorities are responsible for the collection and disposal of legacy weapons and munitions and EUFOR is assisting by monitoring and advising in the disposal of stockpiled weapons & munitions by AF BiH.

The presence of surplus ammunition in Bosnia and Herzegovina could become a direct risk to human security, and also constitutes a financial and administrative burden for the Armed Forces of Bosnia and Herzegovina and limits their availability for essential training. The desired outcome is for the BiH MOD to ensure that there is a transparent programme to dispose of the surplus ammunition and weapons and they introduce a sustainable ammunition and weapons life-cycle management system.

Slovenian Defence Minister visits EUFOR

On 03 July 2013 Major General Dieter Heidecker welcomed Slovenian Defence Minister, Roman Jakič, to an official meeting in Camp BUTMIR in SARAJEVO. The Commander of the European Force in Bosnia and Herzegovina (EUFOR) and the Minister discussed Slovenia's contribution to EUFOR's military tasks, regional co-operation in the Western Balkans and engagement in relation to the region.

Minister Roman Jakič had arrived on 02 July 2013 in Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH), following an official visit to Montenegro, where he started with a visit to his Bosnian counterpart, Minister of Defence Zekerijah Osmić.

The aim of his planned visits in BiH was to strengthen bilateral and regional cooperation. According to the Minister, the securing of a safe and stable Western Balkans is a key topic, as he wants to get acquainted with the defence and military system situation in both countries and with progress regarding their Euro-Atlantic integration process.

Minister Jakič informed General Heidecker about the Comprehensive Regional Meeting of Ministers scheduled in Brdo pri Kranju in Slovenia from 1 to 3 October. He explained that the meeting will focus on rationalising joint efforts in the Western Balkans and harmonising regional projects and initiatives in defence and security and participation of 20 ministers and high representatives of regional and international organisations, including NATO, OSCE and the EU is expected.

Major General Dieter Heidecker thanked the Minister for the long-lasting support to the EUFOR mission by Slovenia and the outstanding contribution of the members of the Slovenian Contingent serving in operation EUFOR/ALTHEA.

General Heidecker furthermore briefed his guest regarding the tasks and challenges of the



Slovenian Defence Minister, Roman JAKIČ with COM EUFOR Major General Dieter HEIDECKER

mission, highlighting the fact that EUFOR is committed to continue providing Capability Building and Training to the Armed Forces of BiH. EUFOR considers progress on the reduction of surplus ammunition and weapons stocks within BiH to be a key and immediate priority. A failure to do so is wasting resources and hampering the development of the AFBiH and could also be a direct threat to the Safe And Secure Environment.

EUFOR Althea continues to provide expert advice in the framework of our Capacity Building and Training Programme. EUFOR Althea works in partnership with the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) and other members of the International Community (i.e. UNDP) in order to help Bosnia and Herzegovina authorities solve the problem of surplus ammunition and weapons.

The governance and overall control of arms depots and weapons inspections remains firmly

with the competent authorities of Bosnia and Herzegovina. EUFOR Althea remains available to assist, both the Ministry of Defence and Armed Forces of Bosnia and Herzegovina with technical advice, and subject matter expert support, within means and capabilities.

Another topic that was discussed was the issue of land mines, which remain a terrible legacy of the war. Under the Dayton Peace Accord, de-mining in Bosnia and Herzegovina is a BiH government responsibility. The situation in the country continues to be very serious and EUFOR works hard in conjunction with BH MAC (Mine Action Centre) to raise awareness of mines and their dangers. EUFOR is concentrating on educating the youth of BiH and has reached thousands of young people throughout the country through mine awareness information campaigns.

Regarding military training activities, General Heidecker pointed out that EUFOR is conducting reg-

ular joint training activities together with the Armed Forces BiH (AF BiH) and is also able to draw on reserve forces if required to augment in-theatre forces and to deal with any military contingency that arises.

EUFOR regularly rehearses this kind of reinforcement by the so-called Over The Horizon Forces (OTHF) that consist of multinational, professional forces with a wide range of military capabilities. The next such operational rehearsal will be from 02 to 13 September, when EUFOR will be reinforced by troops from Austria and Slovakia. This “Exercise Quick Response 2” will be similar to the exercise EUFOR was conducting in May 2013 and will also provide the chance for the AF BiH and Law Enforcement Agencies to participate in a separate combined training activity, specially arranged to further enhance the ability to work in a multinational peace support operations environment.

During his visit to Camp BUTMIR, the Minister took the opportunity to meet members of the Slovenian Armed Forces participating in the EUFOR mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina and also held talks with the Commander of the NATO Headquarters in Sarajevo, Brigadier General Merle D. Hart. The Minister also met with the International Community’s High Representative for Bosnia and Herzegovina Valentin Inzko, the Bosnian Security Minister Fahrudin Radnčić and members of the Tactical Support Brigade of the Bosnian Armed Forces at RAJLOVAC army barracks.



EUFOR
QUICK RESPONSE **2**



in and outside BiH