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#129





Operational Commander Visits LOT Houses in BiH

Lieutenant General Brice Houdet, visited BiH in order to obtain a realistic overview about the security situation on the ground.



2021 Review in photos



COS EUFOR visits 5th Brigade of the AFBiH

Brigadier General Szilárd Gerőfi, continued his planned visits to the Armed Forces BiH by visiting Camp Dubrave in the vicinity of Tuzla International Airport.



Italian fitness test

In this edition we want to introduce you to the Italian fitness

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We also thank **EUFOR Multinational Battalion EUFOR LOT Houses**

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Hello and welcome to the latest edition of the EUFOR forum, edition number 129. This is my third and final edition as editor in chief and I hope that you have enjoyed the magazine during my time here.

This edition focuses on the arrival of the new Platoon and armoured vehicles to the MNBN from Romania. We continue our look at the methods of testing soldier's fitness from around EUFOR with this edition looking

at our Italian colleagues. We (against my will!) have a piece about me in our 'behind the mask' series as I prepare to depart the mission here after a little over 6 months.

Apart from that, a few of the articles in this edition include an insight into the Change of Command ceremony with an introductory piece on the new COMEUFOR, Major General Anton Wessely. We have a pictorial review of 2021, an article on the new Turkish Company in the MNBN and projects from Joint Military Affairs (JMA).

The AFBiH feature a number of times with articles looking at the EUFOR COS visit to them, their Armed Forces day on 01st December and a joint exercise with EUFOR's MNBN.

A reminder to our colleagues across EUFOR, please remember the PAO when you are conducting any activity or doing any sort of project. If the work of EUFOR is worth doing then it is worthy of a story! Feel free to send us stories, pictures, relevant articles, whatever you think is interesting and worth publishing. We are always available to give advice and guidance on how to make a story so feel free to talk to us! We don't expect you to write a full article in perfect English. Simply giving us pictures and the basics of; Who, What, Where, When and Why and we can do the rest.

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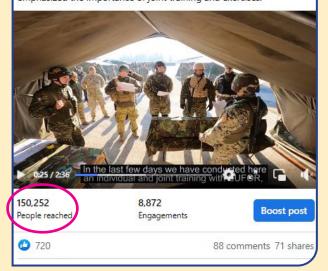




euforbih

Kombinovana vježba OS BiH i EUFOR-a održana je u Kiseljaku 8. i decembra. 2. bataljon 5. pješadijske brigade uvježbavao je odbra zaštite vitalnih objekata i privođenje osumnjičenih zajedno sa dijelom EUFOR-ovog Multinacionalnog bataljona. Komandant EUFOR-a, generalmajor Alexander Platzer i načelnik štaba 5.pbr OS BiH brigadir Sreten Milošević imali su priliku da steknu dobru sliku o profesionalnosti vojnika i istakli značaj zajedničkih vježbi.

A combined AFBiH and EUFOR exercise took place in Kiseljak on 8 and 9 December. The 2nd Battalion of the 5th Infantry Brigade practiced the defense of protection of vital installations and the apprehension of suspects together with elements of the EUFOR MNBN. EUFOR Commander, General Major Alexander Platzer and Chief of Staff/5th Brigade, Brigadier Sreten Milošević were once again able to get a good picture of the professionalism of the soldiers and emphasized the importance of joint training and exercises.





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Santa and his helpers visited the "Božan Šimović" Barracks of the AFBiH's 4th Infantry Brigade in Capljina recently. The kids excit waited for Santa's arrival in the Barracks' gym and, of course, wh ad in his Christmas Sack. The excitement was heightened by a presentation by the local rleading group. The wait was not in vain, as Santa came to them from far away again this year to hand over his gifts to them. The children made his arrival homelier by singing Christmas carols. Full

Santa and his helpers visited the "Božan Šimović" Barracks of the AFBiH's 4th Infantry Brigade in Čapljina recently. The kids excitedly waited for Santa's arrival in the Barracks' gym and, of course, what he had in his Christmas Sack.

The excitement was heightened by a presentation by the local cheerleading group. The wait was not in vain, as Santa came to them from far away again this year to hand over his gifts to them. The children made his arrival homelier by singing Christmas carols

The event was organised by Chief military personnel officer of the 4th Infantry Brigade AFBiH, Lieutenant Colonel Mijo Šteko. The children's gifts were collected by EUFOR's Austrian and Hungarian soldiers.

COMEUFOR Change of Command ceremony



Thursday 20th January marked the occasion of the Change of Command for COMEUFOR with Major General Alexander Platzer handing over Command of EUFOR to Major General Anton Wessely. The ceremony was attended by the

Operational Commander for the EU's Operation Althea, Lieutenant General Brice Houdet, and the EU Special Representative to BiH, H.E. Dr. Johann Sattler.

Major General Platzer has led the EUFOR mission since January

2021 and ensured the operation's continued support to a safe and secure environment in BiH. He oversaw EUFOR's tasks of progressing the Ammunition **Explosives** Masterplan; secured €10 million in support to the AFBiH Demining Battalion and conducting combined and collective training with the Armed Forces of BiH.

The outgoing EUFOR Commander Major General Platzer said:

"Coming to Bosnia and Herzegovina I was overwhelmed by the warm and friendly reception I received from the hardworking and honest people who deserve a positive future. EUFOR is present all over the country and well prepared to bring in and to integrate its Reserve Forces from outside the country if necessary. Soldiers of EUFOR, it has been a privlege and an honour to serve with you."



Major General Anton Wessely was born in Vienna, Austria, in 1965. Following completion of training in the Theresian Military Academy between 1984-1987 he was commissioned in 1987 as a Battery Commander in the Anti-Aircraft Artillery/Combat Service Support Battalion 3 of the 3rd Mechanised Infantry Brigade.

He also completed the 14th General Staff Course at the National Defence Academy in Vienna 1993-1997. Subsequent postings have seen Major General Anton Wessely serve in various operational and strategic positions within the Austrian Armed Forces. These include G5 at HO 3rd Mechanised Infantry Brigade, Commander of the 3rd Artillery Battalion and a teacher for Staff Work and Tactics in the

National Defence Academy. Additional appointments include Deputy Director in the Training Division of the Austrian Ministry of Defence, Commander of the 3rd



Mechanised Infantry Brigade, Director of Training Division 'A' and Chief of Staff for the Defence Minister.

Furthermore, Major General Anton Wessely served as Deputy Commander of KFOR where, in 2016, he earned the United States Award 'The Legion of Merit'. In addition to his qualifications from the Theresian Military Academy, Major General Wessely's military qualifications include the Canadian General Staff (operational level) Course which was conducted in Toronto in 2003.

Major General Wessely is married, has two children and lives in Vienna.

On 20 January 2022, Major General Anton Wessely took over as the COMEUFOR in Operation ALTHEA in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

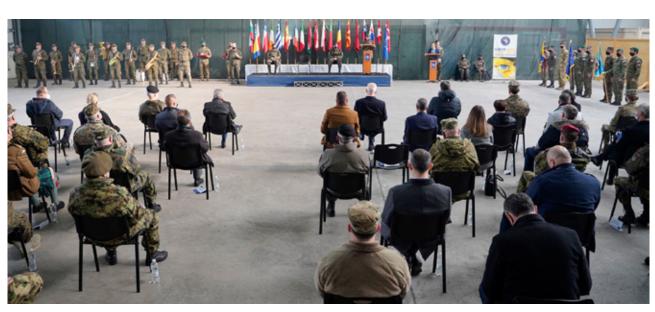
Major General Wessely has previously served as Director of Training within the Austrian Ministry of Defence and as the Chief of Staff to the Minister of Defence.

During the military ceremony the Operational Commander Lieutenant General Brice Houdet, symbolically handed over the EUFOR flag from Major General Platzer to Major General Wessely. Major General Platzer was then presented with the European Union Common Security and Defence Policy Medal for Operation Althea.

The Operational Commander stressed that he recently presented the security situation in BiH to the Ambassadors of European countries and clarified that the current crisis in BiH is of political rather than security nature.

"I said that the current difficulties are political in nature rather than security. 26 years ago, I was here and I know what difficulties of a security nature mean,

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and this is not the case today. There is still room for political dialogue and economic activities to improve the situation"

He sent the message that the international community will definitely not make mistakes like those made in the nineties.

"The international community remembers well everything that was done wrong in the nineties and we know where we were making mistakes and why things developed the way they did. We are determined not to repeat those mistakes and I am absolutely determined not to have the situation ever deteriorate to the extent of 26 years ago", Houdet concluded

of freedom, peace, solidarity and unity of peoples, there is no better goal than to work together to progress these ideals in BiH. My gratitude to Major General Platzer and I look forward to close cooperation with Law Enforcement Agencies and the AFBiH. In one year, I want to stand here and say that my journey has yielded measurable progress for all people of BiH.

Major General Anton Wessely



Operational Commander of EUFOR visits LOT Houses in BiH



Operational Commander (OPCOM) for Operation Althea, the EU mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Lieutenant General Brice Houdet, visited BiH in order to meet some local representatives and some of the LOT houses.

LOT Brčko and LOT Novo Sarajevo were heavily involved in the OPCOM's meetings with various kinds of local representatives such as the Mayors of Sarajevo, Brčko, Tuzla, Bijeljina, Istočno Sarajevo, the assembly speaker of the Brčko District (BD), head of Imam in Brčko and Chief and Deputy Chief of BD police.

OPCOM was also very interested in speaking with the members of the LOT house as the LOT houses are very important and visible components of EUFOR.

All the visits proved the importance of talks and negotiations in order to avoid any kind of escalation in the district and reinforced the thoughts of all involved that the focus should always be to preserve peace and stability.

EUFOR LOT members in BiH greatly contribute to the Safe and Secure Environment.





New troops for EUFOR's **Multinational Battalion**



The main operational unit of EUFOR is the Multinational Battalion (MNBN), an infantry unit comprised of Companies from Austria, Hungary and Turkey. This unit is dedicated to the framework operations of EUFOR that are patrolling, combined training with

the AFBiH and Force Protection of EUFOR.

While the most recent strategic review of EUFOR by the EU concluded that the size and composition of the force is adequate, on the basis that EUFOR has Reserve Forces which it can

call on if needed, it has also been acknowledged that having an armoured element as part of the force is beneficial and in line with international norms.

Due to the desire to have armour in the MNBN, Romania has recently sent a motorised Platoon





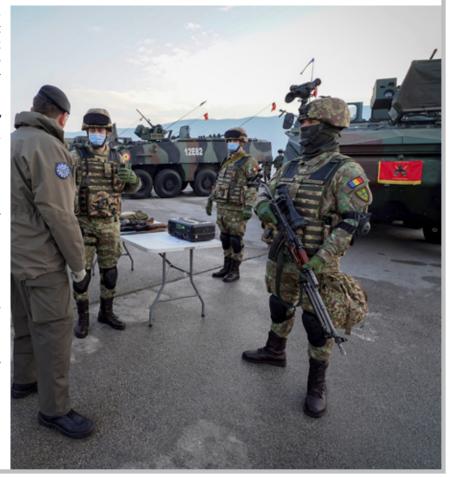


comprising Armoured Personnel Carriers (APCs) as well as logistical and support vehicles to EUFOR which provides EUFOR with an armoured capability within the MNBN and is a welcomed force multiplier to the operational arm of EUFOR.

The APCs will join other 'soft-skin' MNBN vehicles in conducting EUFOR's framework operations. An armoured manoeuvre element in the MNBN would provide EUFOR with the ability to respond to threats to peace and the Safe and Secure Environment (SASE) with better protection for the MNBN troops.

The MOWAG Piranha III APCs have a Remote Weapon Station (RWS) with a 12.7mm (0.5inch) HMG and the camera system associated with the RWS increase the surveillance capacity of the MNBN

EUFOR can expect another motorised/ mechanised/armoured PI to arrive from North Macedonia in the coming weeks.



2021 Review in photos



Camp Butmir was proud to hold an International Medal Parade for 107 Service personnel from 7 different Nations. They received their "Common Security and Defence Policy Medal Operation Althea", bearing the name of the EU Operation Althea.





Top: EUFOR personnel looking to the sky for the all important aerial picture!

Left: Romanian soldiers check navigtion during Ex EUFOR QR 21.

Bottom: Group photo of the employes working 20 or 21 years for NATO/EUFOR with COMEUFOR and DCOS NATO. A small and very worthy ceremony was held in recognition of this amazing milestone.





EUFOR marked the handover of LOT Banja Luka from Chile to Slovenia.



Never has decommissioned ammunition looked so good!



Helicopter maintenance is an essential aspect of keeping EUFOR's aerial assets ready to fulfil their SAR and MEDEVAC capabilities.



The AFBiH military band played at the EUFOR COS Transfer of Authority ceremony. Their renditions of BiH & EU anthems were excellent.



Three Alouettes departed EUFOR for Austria. They recently returned and one of the helicopters successfully evacuated an injured climber from the mountains to hospital in late January.



EUFOR aviation practice their MEDEVAC winching, an essential skill.

The Multinational Battalion put their new arrivals to the test

On Tuesday, Camp Butmir 2 provided the backdrop for an exercise by the Multinational Battalion (MNBN). Each Company that arrives new into the Area of Operations (AO) must undergo standardisation training IOT ensure that they are capable of operating in commonality with the other units of the MNBN. After this, the Company must undergo certification to prove their capability and interoperability to the members of the Battalion HQ staff. So this time it was up to the newly arrived Turkish Company to prove their knowledge and skills that they had acquired in their home country.

Controlling a crowd

The certification task for the new soldiers chosen was a Crowd Riot Control (CRC) one: they had to evacuate the residents of a EUFOR "Liaison and Observation Team" (LOT) house. They were threatened by an angry crowd and the CRC forces had to bring the situation under control while carrying out the evacuation. As part of the scenario, medical care had to be provided to a wounded person. Also involved in the exercise was an explosive ordnance disposal team and a EUFOR helicopter which was used to fly out the casualty.

"A job well done"

Lieutenant Colonel Alfred Sanz, the Commander of the MNBN, remarked with satisfaction: "The tasks assigned to the Turkish company were carried out very well."

The Turkish Company is now fully operational within the MNBN and are ready to carry out their framework operations helping to maintain a Safe and Secure Environment in BiH.







Dangers from Pyrotechnic Devices, **Unexploded Munitions and Mines**



"Dangers from pyrotechnic devices, unexploded munitions and mines" is the first common activity of two schools under the sponsorship of EUFOR as a part of the common project "Together for a safe future".

project is between two

elementary schools, "Mehmedalija Mak Dizdar" from FBiH and "Pale" from RS. The principals of both elementary schools addressed the audience and thanked them for coming. They especially thanked the EUFOR members for their support.

The children performed a sketch on the topic of pyrotechnics and their dangerous effects.

Students both schools together conducted workshops about knowledge of mines and unexploded ordnance, where everyone present could receive additional education.

The aim of this activity was for the students to get to know each other, become friends, to see how many similarities and things they have in common despite their diversity.

Director Samira Nukić and Director Aleksandar Rajić pointed out that they would continue with this project of uniting schools and students, and invited EUFOR to join them in future activities to spread peace and friendship.

EUFOR continues to support projects like these through the Joint Military Affairs (JMA) office.



COS EUFOR visits 5th Brigade of the AFBiH



On Wednesday 8th of December 2021 Chief Of Staff (COS EUFOR), Brigadier General Szilárd Gerőfi, continued his planned visits to the Armed Forces BiH by visiting Camp Dubrave in the vicinity of Tuzla international airport.

First he chaired a productive discussion at the HQ with the 5th Infantry Brigade's Commander, Colonel Emir Kliko who has been the Commander since 2019.

Colonel Kliko explained that the main task of the Brigade is to conduct operations in defending of BiH sovereignty, territorial integrity and its citizens within the allocated Area of Operation. In addition to this they participate in Peace Support Operations and provide assistance to civil authorities in case of natural and other disasters.

It was also mentioned that the Combined Training with EUFOR is well appreciated and supported but disaster relief training would be very useful to meet the prescribed tasks of the Brigade and in increasing AFBiH visibility and appreciation within the society.

Following this there was the customary gift giving ceremony and they inspected the base where a Reconnaissance Company and a

Signal and a Military Police platoon are located. Unfortunately, there was bad news that the predicted budget for the 5th Brigade for 2022 is only about half of the amount of the 2021 and this will admittedly affect the year's planned activities. This meeting again enhanced the already strong links between EUFOR and the AFBiH.



Combined exercise between the MNBN and the AFBiH



As part of the framework operations of EUFOR's operational arm, the Multinational Battalion, combined training is conducted between the MNBN and the AFBiH. One such exercise between both of these security providers for BiH took place in Kiseljak on the 8th and 9th December. The 2nd Battalion of the 5th Infantry Brigade linked up with members of the MNBN and practiced a number of operational tasks.

Some of these tasks included the defence of vital installations and the apprehension of suspects. The aim of these were to raise the standards of the AFBiH units and to ensure commonality and interoperability of both forces as well as to understand each other's Tactics, Techniques and Procedures (TTPs).

Then EUFOR Commander, Major General Alexander Platzer and Chief of Staff/5th Brigade, Brigadier General Sreten Milošević were once again able to get a good picture of the professionalism of the soldiers and emphasised the importance of joint training and exercises.

The exercise was the last combined exercise of 2021 and the new COMEUFOR, Major General Anton Wessely, has already expressed his desire for combined training with the AFBiH to increase for his tenure in 2022.





EUFOR "loses" its voice



In our Behind the Mask series we would like to say goodbye to the Spokesperson.

My name is Capt Eoin Murphy. Eoin, which is John in my native language Gaelic, is pronounced like the word 'own' and listening to people here in EUFOR trying to say or understand my first name has never stopped being funny. I am from a town called Naas in the County of Kildare. It is in the East of Ireland. I am an artillery officer at home and have been serving with the Irish Defence Forces, or 'Oglaigh Na h-Eireann' in Gaelic which translates literally as 'The Defenders of Ireland' for 15 years. I have previously served abroad on two occasions, both with the UN. My first deployment was to South Lebanon with the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) in 2014/15 as a Platoon Commander and then I served with MONUSCO (Mission de l'Organisation des Nations Unies pour la stabilisation en République démocratique du Congo) in 2017/18 as a UAV staff officer in the Force HQ.

My deployment here was unique in many ways. It was my first non-UN mission, it was my first time to serve in the Balkans and it was my first time to hold a position that I had very little experience in. My lack of experience was compounded by the fact that my position here was very visible. Dealing with public enquiries and fronting the office for many internal matters, such as ceremonies, meant any mistake that I potentially made would definitely have been noticed! On the plus side my roles here allowed me to get to know so many fellow EUFOR members. I'm not sure if my weekly barman job in the Irish bar on a Friday night or my role as spokesperson were the main reason for that! Either way, whenever I am asked about the best part of being deployed abroad with Oglaigh



Na h-Eireann I always answer that it is the people that you meet which make the deployment so I have enjoyed this deployment very much.

My job as spokesperson created some bizarre experiences, ones I never thought I would have. I appeared on BiHTV, had interactions from journalists all over the world, I was the centre piece of a social media mini-series, Master of Ceremonies for every event and the 'native speaker' go-to for people from every branch in building 200! Whenever I had to draft and release press statements, releases or advisories I had to be very sure that they were factual, politically correct and relevant. I worked closely with LEGAD, POLAD, COS and COM offices with this and getting a chance to discuss strategic issues with the heads of these offices and / or COMEUFOR himself was a great experience and one I earned a lot from.

Being in an office with local civilian staff and military personnel from Austria I had a great insight into the history of BiH, its perception in Europe and different persepctives on topical issues.

Importantly, I also learnt how well a joint team of military and civilian staff, foreign and local, can work effectively together. I owe a lot to my colleagues and thank them for their support in fulfilling my roles in the PAO branch.

It has been an honour to work here and I am privileged to have worked with many amazing people. I wish my EUFOR colleagues all the best for the future, I wish BiH a future of peace and I wish that I cross paths with some of you in missions in the future or if you ever visit Ireland.

Slan agus Beannacht Libh go leir (Literal translation - Goodbye and blessings to you all)

16th Anniversary of the AFBiH



On the occasion of the 16th Anniversary of the Day of the Armed Forces of Bosnia and Herzegovina the Chief of the Joint Staff of the AFBiH, Lieutenant General Mašović invited EUFOR Chief of Staff Brigadier General Szilard Gerőfi to a demonstration of the AFBiH capabilities.

Brigadier General Gerőfi, observed for himself the high level of operational readiness of the AFBiH and how it has developed into a professional army over the last 16 years.

In addition, the then COMEUFOR, Major General Alexander Platzer offered his regards in a recorded address to the AFBiH



Major General Alexander Platzer offers his warmest congratulations on the 16th Anniversary of the Armed Forces BiH (AFBiH) and salutes the professionalism and dedication of its soldiers.





Keeping fit, Italian style



In previous editions of the EUFOR FORUM we presented you with our fitness test series covering the military fitness tests of Austria, Poland, Switzerland, Ireland, Hungary, Turkey, Slovakia and France. In this edition we want to introduce you the Italian one.

The Italian Armed Forces have developed a programme for physical training of military personnel in accordance with the approach that sees the single fighters as crucial elements for succeeding in Operations.





dedicated slots every week to train in several sport disciplines: running, bodyweight exercise, going to the gym and swimming amongst others.

Levels of fitness, strength and physical resistance are paramount conditions for all other training activities such as shooting and close combat training, therefore physical preparation represents the indispensable tool for preparing the military to respond to actual operational needs and for the use of modern weapons and equipment.

In this context, in early 2000 the

Italiano - Army, Marina Militare-Navy and Aeronautica Miltiare-Air Force) introduced physical training and tests named "Prove di Efficienza Operativa" (PEFO - Proof of Operational Efficiency). This training aimed to educate the individuals about self-caring for his/her own health and fitness.

Different units have dedicated slots every week to train in several sport disciplines: running, bodyweight exercise, going to the gym and swimming amongst Then yearly, each soldier must demonstrate his/her fitness facing some trials balanced with their age.

Generally speaking the trials consist of a run of 2 Km/3 Km, push-ups, abs exercises and, only for the Army, a forced march with a 10 kg backpack



Suggestions on how to organise yourself in camp to keep fit and healthy

Bodyweight Training

Many wrongly believe that you can only train effectively with weights. A well-designed and holistic bodyweight workout can not only replace dumbbells, but also reflects natural body movements and is therefore very promising and recommended.

Running & walking

When it comes to cardio, opinions Nevertheless endurance training is not only essential for your vascular, but also for your mental health.

Try running when your mind is occupied and I assure you the endorphins which are released during or after a cardio session will help clear things up. If you don't feel like running, try walking; you would be surprised how much walking can do for you.

Both of them boost your immune system, improve your mood, strengthen the heart and elevate energy levels.

Making healthy choices is essential

Try to quarter your plate when you have lunch in the DFAC. One quarter is protein (lean meat, fish, eggs, legumes), One quarter of healthy carbs (such as rice or potato), one quarter vegetables (pick the less greasy ones) and one quarter salad.

If you want to lose weight, you could skip carbs in one or two of your meals, try not to eat in between meals or try intermittent fasting.

Otherwise listen to your body, don't distract yourself while eating and ask yourself, "When you are really full?"

