

EUFOR **Forum** EDITION 41



Inside Article



**Visit of the
HR/EUSR in BIH
Valentin Inzko**

School Competition 2008/2009

Spokesperson Media Summary - March 2009



Welcome to this month's edition of Forum, and a busy one for the Press Office, with several high profile visits, a PIFWC Operation, the EUFOR School Competition and to finish off the month, the visit of the High Representative, European Union Special Representative in BiH Valentin Inzko.

The highlight of the month must surely have been the School Competition which culminated at the Army Hall in Sarajevo 27 March. Who could have expected over 3,000 entrants from children throughout BiH? If you haven't seen already, the winning entries can be found on the euforbih.org website. These entries will then be on display at the Turkish Cultural Centre and then possibly taken to Brussels for the European Open Day on 9th May.

The visit of the HR/EUSR was again, a highly successful visit with a large media presence. I will be handing the mantle of Spokesperson over to Lt Cdr Mandy McBain in early April and I hope you can continue to give her just as much support as I have received from staff not only within the Headquarters, but throughout BiH.

To leave a message, just remember that Forum is your magazine and will only to be a worthy informative read, as long as we continue to receive the stories, articles and photographs from you.

By Lt Cdr Patrick O'Callaghan

Commander of the Multinational Maneuver Battalion LTC José Lu s Carballo  lvarez



Born in Madrid, Lieutenant Colonel Carballo was graduated in the Spanish Naval Academy in 1986. He served as a Lieutenant and Platoon Commander in the Royal Guard Regiment and in the Tercio de Armada (TEAR) until his promotion to Captain in 1989. As a Captain he served in a wide range of posts in the Spanish Marine Brigade- Tercio de Armada. He was Company Commander of Anti-tank Coy. He was also Company Commander in "Tercio de Levante" Regiment (Cartagena) and in ESFORTIM / CEIM (Former Training and Instruction Unit of the Marine Corps) until his promotion to Major in 1999.

As a Major he performed his duties in the Spanish Marine Corp HQ as Communications Chief, in the Marine Corps General Staff (COMGEIM) and in the recently created Marine Corps Academy "General Albacete y Fuster" as Director of Amphibious Operations Department. He was promoted to Lieutenant Colonel in July 2006.

As Lieutenant Colonel he was appointed to the Marine Corps General Staff

(COMGEIM) and in September 2008, Lieutenant Colonel Carballo was appointed as Commander of the Mechanized Landing Battalion III in the Spanish Marine Brigade – TEAR, where he is currently conducting his duties.

His military awards include the Commendation and Cross of the Royal and Military Order of San Hermenegildo, two Naval Merit Crosses, the "UNPROFOR medal", "no-article 5 Balkans NATO medal" and the "French Commemorative Medal former Yugoslavia"

His military education includes a specialization in CIS, Diving Course, Spanish Amphibious Warfare Course and Command and Staff College in the Army War College. His foreign studies include a C2 course in NATO School of Oberammergau (GE). His military awards include the Commendation and Cross of the Royal and Military Order of San Hermenegildo, two Naval Merit Crosses, the "UNPROFOR medal", "no-article 5 Balkans NATO medal" and the "French Commemorative Medal former Yugoslavia".

Lieutenant Colonel Carballo is married and has two daughters.

By Press Office

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The HR/EUSR in BiH Valentin Inzko Visits COM EUFOR

The High Representative and EU Special Representative (HR/EUSR) in BiH Valentin Inzko visited EUFOR HQ on 30th March where he paid an official call upon COM EUFOR Major General Stefano Castagnotto.

COM EUFOR briefed the HR/EUSR on EUFOR activities, the current security situation within BiH and the recent successful EUFOR School Competition.

The HR/EUSR visited the Multinational Battalion (MNBN) and Integrated Police Unit (IPU), elements of EUFOR HQ and observed a EUFOR live demonstration.

COM EUFOR stated, "This has been an ideal opportunity to introduce the HR/EUSR to witness all elements and activities of EUFOR mission within BiH."

The HR/EUSR stated, "The EU is resolute in its commitment to a prosperous and stable BiH inside the EU. 27 EU Foreign Ministers again this weekend



COM EUFOR MG Castagnotto and HR/EUSR Valentin Inzko during parade

promised BiH that the doors to membership are open: BiH is in a fortuitous position, one that many are envious of. EU political, economic, civilian and military forces are all deployed in BiH offering far greater assistance than that offered to any

other potential candidate country, previous or current. The EU is working now on new mechanisms that will strengthen our capacity to help this country even further."

By Press Office

EUFOR School Competition 2008/2009



COM EUFOR handed over the prizes



COM and DCOM EUFOR during reception

On Friday 27th March, the EUFOR School Competition 2008/09 culminated at Dom Armije Sarajevo, with the prize and award ceremony presented by COM EUFOR, Major General Stefano Castagnotto.

The emphasis of the competition was on young people and the importance of education, with a clear message that individual engagement is required by all and the future of the country lies in the hands of BiH youth.

Now firmly established into its second year, this year's competition ran two themes: 'EU and BiH – Growing Together' for 6-14 year olds and 'EU – Beauty of Diversity' for 15-18 year olds. In excess of 3,200 works were received from school children the length and breadth of BiH. Individual prizes were awarded as well as group prizes, which included trips for 100

"It has been an absolute pleasure for me to present awards today to the lucky winners. It is clearly evident that a lot of time and dedication has gone into all the works on display..."

children to the following countries: France, Germany, Hungary, Italy and Slovenia as well as laptop computer and beamers to 15 winning schools.

COM EUFOR stated: "It has been an absolute pleasure for me to present awards today to the lucky winners. It is clearly evident that a lot of time and dedication has gone into all the works on display, and I congratulate each and every one of them, as well as those whose contribution made this event possible."

By Press Office

MNBN Carry Out Exercise “ALLIED SWORD”

From 9th to 13th March, the Multinational Battalion (MNBN) carried out exercise “ALLIED SWORD” to practise in operational procedures and maintain its capabilities. The exercise was performed throughout Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Alpha Coy (Hungarian) deployed in Kozara Barracks (Banja Luka), and it had the mission of controlling the area and evacuating the personnel of the LOT houses situated in Bosanska Gradiska and Banja Luka.

Bravo Coy (Spanish) deployed in Airfield Mahovljani and Manjaca Barracks and had the mission of securing the weapon and ammunition storing sites and controlling the area to support AFBIH.

The Recce platoon (Spanish) was deployed in different observation posts to get accurate information about different targets and to support extraction of LOT houses.

Charlie Coy (Polish) deployed in Tuzla, secured the Eagle Base and carried out extractions of LOT houses in Kladanj, Modrica and Brcko.

Delta Coy (Turkish) deployed in Capljina and conducted evacuation of LOT personnel in Jablanica, Livno, Bileca and Mostar.



Participants:

- Alpha Coy (Hungarian) deployed in Kozara Barracks (Banja Luka),
- Bravo Coy (Spanish) deployed in Airfield Mahovljani and Manjaca Barracks
- The Recce platoon (Spanish) was deployed in different observation posts
- Charlie Coy (Polish) deployed in Tuzla
- Delta Coy (Turkish) deployed in Capljina



The whole exercise was monitored from the tactical command post deployed in Kozara Barracks.

*By Captain Pablo Bellido Laprada,
MNBN Press Officer*

On Thursday 12th, COM EUFOR, Major General Castagnotto, paid a visit to MNBN Command Post to supervise the exercise and he attended the extraction of the LOT personnel in Doboj that was carried out by B Coy. COM EUFOR also met Brigadier General Stamenko Novakovic, Commander of the AFBIH 6th Infantry Brigade deployed in Kozara Barracks, in order to thank AFBIH for supporting EUFOR.



LOT members have been extracted by MNBN during the exercise

Combined Exercises Between EUFOR and AFBIH Forces



During this week, the combined company performed the following exercises:

- Military Operation in Urbain Terrain (MOUT) at platoon level, breaching into and searching a house.
- Check point drills
- Rifle shooting exercise in Pasa Bunar fire range carried out using both AFBIH M-16 and Spanish HK G-36 rifles.
- Mine Training
- Ambush Reaction

Multinational Battalion (MNBN) conducted two combined exercises with AFBIH in February and March. These exercises are part of a training regime scheduled by MNBN in which all companies of the Battalion cooperate with AFBIH units.

First, B Coy of the MNBN conducted exercises from 17th to 20 th of February in the Training area of Comanche Base/ Eagle base (Tuzla) and Pasa Bunar fire range. Spanish Company carried out the training with an AFBIH Platoon from the Battalion from Livno, 4th Brigade of AFBIH

Brigadier General Sakib paid a visit to the

training area where informed about the activities and check the capabilities of the combined unit.

A second exercise was conducted by D Coy of MNBN from 16 th to 20 th of March, also in the training area of Comanche

Base/Eagle Base (Tuzla). Turkish Company carried out the training together with a

AFBIH Platoon from the 5th Brigade 1st Battalion.

The units also performed, during this time; CRC, MOUT, Weaponry Training and Mine Awareness Training which was attended by MNBN Commander Lt Jose Luis Carballo Alvarez and his staff.

By Captain Pablo Bellido Laprada,
MNBN Press Officer

EUFOR Operation Against Mladic Target

Early on 12th March EUFOR ALTHEA commenced a search operation at the residence of Dušan Todic in Milosa Obilica Street 9 Banja Luka. Todic is a former military associate of Ratko Mladic the Bosnian-Serb military leader indicted for war crimes by the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia (ICTY).

The mission was conducted at the request of the ICTY to look for information which could assist the ongoing search for the former General. It was conducted as part of a wider regional strategy which has seen several similar

actions taken against potential support network members in Serbia.

As with previous operations against Persons Indicted For War Crimes (PIFWCs) EUFOR forces worked in co-operation with NATO and the RS MuP.

These operations are legally based upon the mandate of the ICTY, EUFOR and NATO under the relevant UN Security Council Resolutions and the General Framework Agreement of Peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina.



Members of Republica Srpska Police securing the house

By Press Office

DCOM EUFOR visits LOT Bratunac

On 11th March the DCOM EUFOR Brigadier General Carlos Diaz del Rio visited the Austrian LOT house in Bratunac. BG Diaz del Rio was welcomed at the Heli Landing Site in Bratunac by the Chief RCC 4 Lt Col Stefan Kirchebner and the Cdr of the LOT house Major Franz Trausnitz. After a walk through the center DCOM EUFOR arrived at the LOT house and greeted the soldiers of the house. BG Diaz del Rio emphasized the unique position of the LOT house just in the vicinity of the Bratunac centre.



Bratunac is a town and municipality located in eastern Bosnia and Herzegovina. The easternmost point of Bosnia and Herzegovina is located in the municipality of Bratunac which lies in the Republika Srpska entity of BiH. In 1381, the name Bratunac is mentioned for the first time because of the direct road through Bratunac from Bosnia to Serbia. At the time, Bratunac was composed of five houses and a population of roughly 30 people. In 1927, Bratunac became an independent municipality for the first time.

In the LOT house Lt Col Kirchebner gave a briefing about the AOR of RCC4, the LOT structure in the area and the areas of interest of RCC4. Afterwards Major Trausnitz gave DCOM EUFOR a presentation about the activities of LOT Bratunac, the current situation and the hot spots in the AOR. LOT Bratunac covers the municipalities of Bratunac and Srebrenica. Especially the area of Srebrenica with its historical background is a matter of special importance.

DCOM EUFOR at Potocari Memorial Center

the DCOM EUFOR and his adjutant visited the memorial centre in Potocari accompanied by Lt Col Kirchebner and officers from LOT Bratunac.

Afterwards BG Diaz del Rio made a short tour through Srebrenica town by car with explanations from Lt Col Kirchebner. DCOM EUFOR thanked LOT Bratunac for the hospitality, preparation and execution of the visit.

After the briefing and some refreshments

By Captain Andreas Ailitzer

COS EUFOR Visits Livno

On Saturday, 14th March, then COS EUFOR, BG Wundrak, travelled into the South-West of BiH and paid a visit to the RCC1 (NLD) LOT House Livno.

After the helicopter landed near the Monastery, the General was given a hearty welcome by the CDR, OF-2 Bert Van Duren and his staff. After the General was briefed about current issues and developments, to be followed by a short tour through the building, he met with the staff, military and local employees as well.

A lot of issues were discussed while enjoying a piece of 'Schwarzwaelder Kirschtorte'.

According to the personnel the General showed to have a clear view about the future of this country and provided them with good and stimulating ideas to complete their mission successfully. It was also highly appreciated that he showed to be interested in the personnel as well.



COS EUFOR engaged in discussion with LOT Livno

“LOT Livno staff agreed that it was a very welcome and friendly meeting. We wish the General all the best for the future and success with the training of the ‘Belgian Schäfer’.

According to the current SOP a walk-in report was sent to the RCC.

By Major Georg Kaufmann, Coordinator RCC1

COM EUFOR Visits Doboj and Zavidovici LOTs



COM EUFOR with members of Fire Brigade



COM EUFOR was warmly welcomed by LOT Zavidovici

On Tuesday 3rd March COM EUFOR, Major General Stefano Castagnotto, visited LOT houses in Doboj and Zavidovici. First destination was Doboj.

Upon arrival in Doboj, COM EUFOR was welcomed by Major Mariusz Falczynski, LOT Doboj Commander. After they arrived to the LOT house, delegation was welcomed by the LOT personnel with some refreshments. COM EUFOR was briefed about current situation, activities and important issues in AOR of LOT Doboj. He was particularly interested in Displaced Persons, Refugees, Evacuees (DPRE) situation in the region.

Next he took a tour in and around the LOT house. Then General Stefano Castagnotto left for a tour through the city of Doboj.

“COM EUFOR was particularly interested in Displaced Persons, Refugees, Evacuees (DPRE) situation in the Doboj region.

Delegation stopped for a moment next to DPRE’s block of flats and went to XIII century Doboj Fortress. The visit ended on Helicopter Landing Site in Doboj from which COM EUFOR departed for Zavidovici.

LOT Zavidovici Commander, Major Gazibey, welcomed COM EUFOR upon landing in Zavidovici. RCC5 Chief was also present. Following this, General and his delegation were picked up and transferred to LOT House. Major Gazibey briefed COM

EUFOR and his delegation about the current situation in LOT Zavidovici AOR. The briefing covered topics such as population, economics, education, social issues, etc. COM EUFOR’s ideas and contributions on the briefing agenda gave valuable insights to the LOT personnel.

COM EUFOR was hosted to a short trip in city centre. During the tour, LOT Commander mentioned COM EUFOR some facts about the city. After the city tour, COM EUFOR and RCC5 Chief exchanged gifts as a memory of his visit and then it was time for COM EUFOR to end his visit.

By Mariusz Falczynski, LOT Doboj CDR and Major Gazibey LOT Zavidovici

EUFOR Recce to Kosovo

From 18th to 21th March, HQ EUFOR, MNBN, NSE and IPU personnel carried out recce to Kosovo in order to identify most likely areas for the EUFOR BiH to be deployed and the different command and control and support procedures that would be establish and also update all the information about the Serbian route to Kosovo and the KFOR AOO.

During the recce EUFOR personnel visited KFOR HQ and two Task Forces, North and Centre, where they were reported about the current situation in the AOR and liaised with the appropriate personnel of KFOR to obtain information useful for an eventual deployment of EUFOR MNBN and IPU.

By Captain Pablo Bellido Laprada, MNBN Press Officer



EUFOR members in front of the KFOR HQ

Growing together

A long time contact of LOT Bijeljina, Mr. Letic, age 41, invited LOT Bijeljina to see his team's games. What is exceptional in his work is he coaches two multiethnic teams. The teams are formed of children from Janja area, 10km South of Bijeljina. Janja is the biggest multiethnic village in Municipality of Bijeljina. About 30% of players are Bosniaks and rest are B-Serbs. Mr. Letic is former professional volleyball player and is B-Serb of his ethnic background but would consider himself more as Yugoslavian. Mr. Letic started to play volleyball when he was in High School. His first coach was Bosniak.

On Thursday 6th February the boys' team had a match with Volleyball Club Radnink from Bijeljina. The game was in a sport hall of Bijeljina Public Security Center. On Friday 7th February the girls' team had a match with a team from Glavicice in Janja.

Vojil, age 14, is the captain of boys' team. He is B-Serb from Bugojno and lived some time in Banja Luka.

Bosniak Amila, age 14, was born in Germany. Her family is from Janja.

She heard about the volleyball club from her teacher like others. Amila wants to be a police officer. She used to shoot with air guns, but the shooting club does not exist anymore.

Teams of Mr. Letic hold their practices in the "Mesa Selimovic" Elementary School of Janja. The teams were formed together with the school. LOT Bijeljina went to see the practices on 11th February and donated volleyballs from the Finnish contingent to the teams. LOT Bijeljina interviewed four players from the teams.



Members of LOT Bijeljina with volleyball players

Armin is 14 year old Bosniak. He was also born in Germany and lived in Lukavac before. He wants to study traffic in college.

Zeljka is 13 years old B-Serb. Her family is from Potpic, near Tuzla. She plays also basketball and football. She wants to play volleyball and study economics.

All of them told LOT Bijeljina that there have been no ethical problems in the team. Their parents don't talk about wartime and in school they are not taught much about the war. They don't talk about the war with their friends. They see EUFOR presence necessary and think LOT guys are cool.

By LOT Bijeljina

LOT Bratunac - Wreath Laying Ceremony at Potocari Memorial

On 5th March 2009, LOT Bratunac was prepared to host the EUFOR Key Leader Training (KLT). In addition to a LOT house briefing, a visit to the memorial site in Potocari for the Bosniak war victims in the area of Srebrenica was scheduled. Unfortunately weather conditions did not support the planned helicopter transport of the KLT members and therefore these two certainly very interesting items of the schedule had to be cancelled and the participants spent the day in the area of Sarajevo with an alternate programme.

LOT Bratunac nevertheless conducted the

prepared wreath laying ceremony in Potocari. A delegation was formed consisting of Austrian LOT members and a Greek, as well as an Austrian MP patrol. The MP was in the area with the original task to escort the visiting KLT. After the short ceremony of remembrance the officials of the memorial centre thanked LOT Bratunac and appreciated the appropriate and suitable character of this proof of sympathy for the fate of the victims.

By RCC4

Officials of the memorial centre thanked LOT Bratunac



Short ceremony was held to lay the wreath

8th March in Camp Butmir

International Women's Day (IWD) is marked on March 8 every year. It is a major day of global celebration for the economic, political and social achievements of women. Started as a political event, the holiday blended in the culture of many countries (primarily Russia and the countries of former Soviet bloc). In some celebrations, the day lost its political flavour, and became simply an occasion for men to express their love to the women around them in a way somewhat similar to Mother's Day and St Valentine's Day mixed together. In others, however, the political and human rights theme as designated by the United Nations runs strong, and political and social awareness of the struggles of women worldwide are brought out and examined in a hopeful manner.

In EUFOR the International Women's Day was celebrated and has covered all the aspects related to the event. In particular it was a way to express to all the women in EUFOR/NATO Base the appreciation for their dedication and professionalism that they daily show carrying on their activity. Flowers scent was spreading all over the Base.

By Press Office



Teresa Barreno Freire

I spent the day very well. My friends remembered that it was our day, a very special detail... They gave me a rose.



Lorena Gissella Borbor Jimenez

On this special day for women, I went to my room waiting for the call from my husband who is also in maneuver unit in Italy and from my family.



Maria Rosario Moreno Rivas

The truth is that the only thing that has had this special 8th March is that it was Sunday and in fact it has been one more day here in Bosnia.



Veronica Marqueta

The 8th March was Sunday, so I went to Jahorina slopes to enjoy skiing with some friends.



Anna Szalah

The Contingent Commander saluted all the ladies of the Hungarian Contingent on behalf of the lads during the Coy line-up. Each and every one of us was presented with a flower.



Aniko Lengyel Tothne

It was a pleasant surprise for me that we got a free day from the Contingent Commander. I spent my free time with sightseeing of Sarajevo and with shopping and resting.



Diana Espinosa Alejada

In the morning, I went out with a friend for a lunch and a walk. In the afternoon I spoke with my mother and my sister over the Internet and I wished them a happy 8th March.



Eliana Salazar Rios

On that day, I was with my partners in the mountain. Besides skiing, I could enjoy some beautiful and unforgettable landscapes.



Ingrid Vanesa Caceres Acevedo

That day I enjoyed a lunch at Echos restaurant in order to celebrate the 8th March with my roommate. In addition, they gave us a rose in the restaurant.



Cristina Paoletti

Normally I do not celebrate the International Women's Day, but I was pleased to receive a flower from my colleagues. My boyfriend surprised me by taking me out for a romantic dinner.



Susana Martinez Ordonez

On the 8th March, I woke up and went out to take a walk in Sarajevo. Something caught my attention... because it wasn't a normal day! I finally inferred that the 8th March was the international women's day!



Cristina Gomez Ramos

I spent the 8th March similar to how I spend other days because we in Spain do not normally celebrate it.



Vesna Petkovic

8th March went by in a nice mood with beautiful surprises from my colleagues and H.E. Ambassador. Their presents were a breath of fresh air in my life.



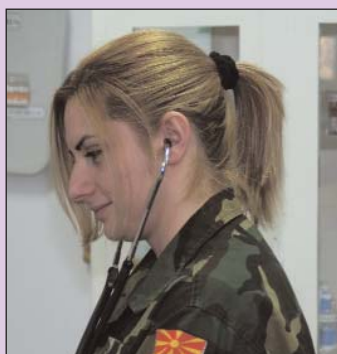
Violeta Koleva

That day was special to me and I felt beautiful. Flowers I received still remind me of that day.



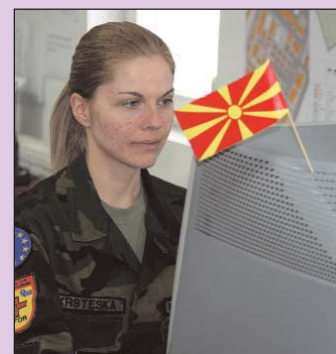
Jessica Cusimano

It has been thoughtful from one of my colleague to give me a rose. I do not particularly care for this holiday, but it was nice to receive a message from my boyfriend.



Sanja Trajkovska

Some moments last forever in our thoughts, and for me, one such is that day. I was overjoyed with the flowers I received,



Radica Krsteska

Thanks to me colleagues and Ambassador, I felt very special on that day - I thank them a lot!



Dragana Jordanovska

We spent the 8th March working but we received a lot of attention from our colleagues.



Antonella Schillaci

Receiving a rose from our Italian colleagues has been well accepted notion that has underlined the importance of the women in the Italian Army.





Visit of Albanian Prime Minister

Medal Parade in EUFOR is a significant event for all military personnel joining the experience of the ALTHEA Mission. It is not just a gathering of people and a tinkling of medals, but actually a time when people become aware that they have participated to a unique international experience.

One such Medal Parade was held in in Camp Butmir on 24th March and it was of a particular significance for the Albanian contingent of EUFOR. Albanian Prime Minister Sali Berisha, after visiting various BIH institutions, joined the medal parade and awarded the Albanian contingent.

Mr Berisha also added: “I would like to thank COM EUFOR for his strong support of Albanian troops in the ALTHEA Mission. The Albanian government will continue to contribute troops under the EU flag in BIH which shows our commitment to the security and stability of the region.”

This ceremony usually involves those who are close to their end of tour. Everyone involved can proudly state that they have contributed to ALTHEA to provide a safe and secure environment to Bosnia and Herzegovina.

By Press Office



Visit of Italian Defence Secretary of State

On the 26th and 27th February 2009 Mr. Guido Crosetto, Italian Defence Secretary of State together with members of his delegation, visited the soldiers of the Italian Contingent in Camp Butmir, Commander of EUFOR Major General Stefano Castagnotto, and NATO HQ Commander Brigadier General Sabato Errico.

Italian Defence Secretary of State was given a warm welcome from the Italian Contingent and inspected a Guard of Honor in front of the EUFOR HQ before paying a courtesy call to COM EUFOR and NHQ Commander.

Both Commanders presented briefings showing the organization of EUFOR and NATO and their tasks in the Balkan area.

Mr. Crosetto while speaking to the Italian contingent said: “ I am bringing to you the esteem and appreciation of the Italian Government for your work and for the professional way you are representing the nation”. Mr. Crosetto added: “ I am sharing with you the feeling of being far from home and families. I am currently on a 40 days tour among the Italian Contingents and I would personally like to congratulate you all for your dedication and professionalism”.

Mr. Crosetto also visited Mr. Igor Crnadak, Deputy Minister of Defence of Bosnia and Herzegovina on 27th February. After that he was received by Mr. Nebojsa Radmanovic, one of three members of Presidency of BIH.

By Press Office



MG Haga Lundle, Chief Operation Staff, Norway



H.E. Dr. Clements Von Goetze, Ambassador of Germany in P.S.C.



General Meireles De Carvalho, Operational Commander PRT GNR



Visit of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia Minister of Defence to EUFOR HQ, NATO HQ Sa

On Monday 9 March, the Defence Minister of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (1) Zoran Konjanovski met in Camp Butmir Commander EUFOR, Major General Stefano Castagnotto, Commander NATO HQ Sa Brigadier General Sabato Errico and members of the Macedonian contingent.

The aim of the visit was part of a wider one-day official visit to Sarajevo at the request of the BIH Minister of Defence. The visit enabled Minister Konjanovski time to meet the Macedonian soldiers who work within the Medical Centre, and also to lay a wreath at the monument for the fallen Macedonian soldiers from the helicopter crash in January 2008. Prior to his departure, the Minister paid office calls on COM EUFOR and NHQ Sa.

Before departing, Minister Konjanovski said, "It has been a fitting opportunity to meet both EUFOR and NATO Commanders and to have seen at first hand the Macedonian soldiers working within EUFOR whose professionalism is second to none. Equally it was a sombre experience in paying my respects to our fallen soldiers, whose loss shall never be forgotten."

By Press Office

(1) – Turkey recognizes the Republic of Macedonia with its consitutional name.

Slovak State Secretary Ministry of Defence Meets COM EUFOR

On Monday 23rd March 2009, a Slovak delegation visit led by the State Secretary Slovak Ministry of Defence Daniel Duchon took place.

The aim of the visit was to meet with the EUFOR Commander, Major General Steffano Castagnotto, in Camp Butmir. The honorable



guests were welcomed by COM EUFOR and his staff. Major General Castagnotto first highlighted the substantial contribution of the Slovak troops to EUFOR mission and a briefing on EUFOR mission and activities and an overview of the present challenges was present-

ed. Visitors, then, had an opportunity to exchange the views concerning prospects of use of Slovak troops within the scope of the EUFOR mission. At the end of the office call, the Slovak Secretary of State expressed his thanks and signed EUFOR's Guest Book.

The guests eventually met the Slovak Contingent personnel and flew in a Slovak helicopter to get acquainted with the area of responsibility of EUFOR.

By Press Office

Operational Commander of Operation ALTHEA Visits EUFOR HQ

Deputy Supreme Allied Command Europe (DSACEUR) and Operational Commander of Operation ALTHEA, General Sir John McColl visited EUFOR HQ where he paid an official call upon COM EUFOR Major General Stefano Castagnotto.

This is the first visit for the Operational Commander to BIH since the COM EUFOR took up his position in December of last year. The visit also saw the Operational Commander visit the Office of the High Representative, BIH Ministry of Defence and the EUPM HQ.

By Press Office



New Chief of Staff EUFOR



From left to right: BG Loewenstein, MG Castagnotto, BG Diaz del Rio, BG Wundrak

On Monday 23rd March 2009, a handover/takeover ceremony was held in front of the Building 200, Camp Butmir, where the former COS EUFOR, BG Wundrak, transferred his authority to the new COS EUFOR, BG Loewenstein. New COS EUFOR, BG Loewenstein, already served as COS EUFOR in 2008.

Ceremony was led by COM EUFOR, MG Castagnotto. As COM EUFOR noted in his speech, this was actually a repeat of the same ceremony held six months ago when BG Loewenstein transferred his authority to BG Wundrak.

Former COS EUFOR, BG Wundrak, gave a speech in which he thanked the entire staff of EUFOR for their support and wished all the best for his successor.

By Press Office

RCC1 Medal Parade

“Today, I can proudly testify that you have earned the “European Security Defense Policy Service Medal”, which you have received for the great job you have done. You are sending a message out to the people of Bosnia and Herzegovina. This message is: In unity we are strong and diversity can bring us together. We all come from different countries and we have varied cultural backgrounds, but here in this theater we are working together as one team in one mission. This is our key message to the people in this country.

The RCC1 Medal Parade was held on 26th February 2009 at Kozara barracks in Banja Luka for most of the EUFOR LOT 9 personnel of RCC 1. Then COS EUFOR, Brigadier General Wundrak, participated at this event and decorated the qualified members with the Operational ALTHEA Medal.

Eighty-six (86) military members from different countries (Netherlands, Bulgaria, Chile, Romania and Switzerland) received medals for their participation in the operation ALTHEA. All RCC1 troops took the award with pride.

The event was also attended by the Ambassador of Switzerland to BIH, the Commander of the Royal Netherlands Army, the Chief of Swiss Military Intelligence, the



86 members received medals for their participation in the operation ALTHEA

Commander of the 6th Brigade of the Armed Forces BIH (AFBIH), the deputy mayor of Banja Luka, various senior officials from troop contributing nations and other representatives of OHR, OSCE, EUPM and embassies.

After the Parade, a nice aperitif was enjoyed by everyone.

By Major Georg Kaufmann

St. Patrick Day

The Irish Contingent celebrated their National Day, St. Patrick’s Day, along with their Medal Parade on Friday the 20th March 2009. It is customary in Ireland, and indeed all over the world, that parades are held in honour of Ireland’s patron saint and Bosnia and Herzegovina



was no different. Each year the Irish Defence Forces holds a parade in each military post and distributes shamrock to the personnel on parade.

This year, in addition to each member receiving the traditional shamrock, personnel on their first tour of duty with EUFOR BIH were presented with their Althea Medal by Lt Col Billy Harrington, Irish SNR, and Lt Col Brian Monahan, Commanding Officer 9 Irish Contingent. There was a large

number of representatives from other Contingents who enjoyed the parade and even more so the Irish coffees at the conclusion!

That evening the Irish hosted a reception in the Millenium Bar where it seemed most of Camp Butmir and all the Irish Diaspora in Bosnia and Herzegovina attended. There was Irish stew and a sample of Irish music enjoyed; along with an Irish jig performed by a couple of leprechauns: their antics on

stage may be questionable, but they did manage to raise € 350 for a local charity. After much dancing and banter, craic agus ceol, the evening ended with the sense that all had truly enjoyed themselves.

By Irish NSE

The first St. Patrick's Day parade took place not in Ireland, but in the United States. Irish soldiers serving in the English military marched through New York City on March 17th, 1762.

St Patrick has been credited with converting pagan Ireland to Christianity in the 5th Century. A three-leaf green plant called the Shamrock was used by St. Patrick to explain Christian teaching. It has also come to symbolise the luck of the Irish.

Brcko District Celebrated Its 9th Anniversary

The northern Bosnia and Herzegovina town of Brcko, which lies on the country's border along the River Sava across Croatian town of Gunja, witnessed a special occasion on the 8th March 2009. The district celebrated its 9th anniversary at the House of Culture in the centre of Brcko and the following cocktail party was held in Hotel Jelena.

EUFOR was monitoring the event with LOT Brcko and RCC4, which is holding the responsibility in the area. The Commander of the RCC4, Lt Col Stefan Kirchebner, LOT Brcko Commander Maj Harry Herranen and his Liaison Officer Team were present.

All together, there were close to five hundred (500) VIPs and invited guests inside the stylish theatre hall. The Supervisor of BD, Mr. Raffi Gregorian (USA) was present. Also the main representatives from Brcko, both entities, the BIH Parliamentary Assembly, the highest representatives of the all Religious Communities were in the event. The media paid also attention to this festive occasion with many journalists and photographers.

The occasion started in the House of Culture with the new Anthem of BIH, which was respected by standing and with applause. The Vice President of the BD Assembly, Ivan Krendelj opened the function by his speech. He underlined, that BD, after nine years, has finally become a multiethnic

place of tolerance where international and local businesspersons can see good opportunities for their investments.

The President of the BD Assembly, Mirsad Djapo said in his speech, that BD has been developed during his previous four years mandate as functional as it right now is. He added that during nine years 200 million



From left to right: Chief RCC4 Stefan Kirchebner, mezzo-soprano Jadranka Jovanovic, the Supervisor of BD Mr. Raffi Gregorian, LOT Brcko CDR Major Harry Herranen, Lt Jarno Heinonen, Interpreter Mr. Djorde Lukic

Euros were invested into BD economy by foreign investors and 75 million Euros by local businessmen. During that time approximately six thousand citizens were employed.

The Mayor of the BD, Dragan Pajic said in his speech that he would not comment on the results of the work of previous BD Government but economy must continue its development in future too. He underlined,

that team work is the first requirement for success of new BD Government.

The Supervisor of BD, Mr. Raffi Gregorian, stated in his speech, that the BIH Parliamentary Assembly will finally adopt amendment on permanent status of BD. He added that an adoption of that

amendment will speed up the process of closure of the Office of the High Representative (OHR) and transform it to the European Union Special Representative (EUSR).

Mr. Gregorian underlined that adoption of this amendment enables full access of BD Government to the Constitutional Court of BIH in relevant issues that BD can face with

Brcko is the seat of Brcko District, an independent unit of local self-government created on the territory of Republika Srpska and the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina. The Brcko District (BD) was created by the Final Award in 1999 and the district was placed under international supervision. The Brcko District was formally inaugurated on 8th March, 2000.

entities and state in future.

The classical piano composition was performed by Dzenana Sehanovic from Brcko. Between the speeches the international opera singer, mezzo-soprano, Jadranka Jovanovic and other opera singer Oliver Njego from Belgrade performed magnificent international opera compositions.

The ninth Anniversary Day of BD was organized in a very professional way. The performers were incredible and the atmosphere both in the House of Culture and the Cocktail Party were festive but pleasant and cosy. Participating for this kind of occasions is very important for the collaborative relationships and to meet with counterparts in high level.

By RCC4 and LOT Brcko

Aniversary of Spanish Marine Corp



Spanish Members of EUFOR being inspected



Parade of Spanish troops in Camp Butmir

On the 27th February the Spanish Marine Corp, the oldest Marines Corps in the world, celebrated its 472nd anniversary of foundation in Cam Butmir. The Celebration consisted in a Military Parade that included “Homage to the marines who fell in action” and a medal parade. The ceremony was presided by LT Colonel Jose Luis Carballo Alvarez, MNBN and Spanish Force Commander. During the whole day the Spanish Marines developed different events like a cross, Holy Mass and a Spanish party.

The Spanish Marine Corp, established in 1537,

The Spanish Marine Corp, established in 1537, took part and is still participating in most of the peace support operations and stabilization missions in which the Spanish Armed Forces is involved worldwide.

took part and is still participating in most of the peace support operations and stabilization missions in which the Spanish Armed Forces is involved worldwide; Iraqui Freedom, ISAF Afganistan, Haiti, Lebanon, Guatemala, Kosovo, Salvador, Congo, Mozambique and Chad.

In Bosnia and Herzegovina the Spanish marines have been present since 1996 and they are still significantly represented within the EUFOR, being the main contingent in the ALTHEA Mission.

By Captain Pablo Bellido Laprada, MNBN Press Officer

Table Tennis Tournament

On 21st February MWA organized a tournament in table tennis in the Camp Butmir Gym. 28 participants came from almost all the contingents of EUFOR. Tournament was held in the fair and correct atmosphere with a lot of cooperation and comradeship from all participants.

Winner of the tournament was OR-1 Gjorgi Lalov from Bulgaria. Another Bulgarian, OR-5 Ivan Kostadinov, won the second place while a member of the Macedonian contingent, OR-5 Zvonko Nedeovski, won the third place. MWA provided T-shirts and the refreshments for all participants while the winners received appropriate trophies.

By Zvonko Nedeovski



Trophies raised high after the tournament ended

Doctor Olivier Aoun was born on the 25th of August 1980 in Sarba-Kesrouan, Lebanon. As a son of an artillery officer and grand-son of a NCO, he was immersed into military life from a young age. In addition, he was also attracted to medicine.

Thus, he joined the joint health service school of Bordeaux, south-west France in September 1998 and attended the civilian medical university of Victor Segalen. In October 2004, he moved to the military hos-



Dr. Olivier Aoun

pital of Bégin in Paris for his internship and attended the civilian medical university of Créteil as well as the military medical college of Val de Grâce. In addition to his medical training, he attended Czech and Hungarian classes. He also took private Japanese lessons.

He graduated on the 31st of October 2007 and was promoted to captain on the 1st of November of the same year. He arrived at Camp Butmir on the 24th of January 2009 where he serves as the medical officer of the French National Support Element and as the

French Senior National Representative medical advisor.

At the same, he is continuing his cooperation with the Infectious and tropical diseases unit of the military hospital of Bégin and with the veterinarian department of Marseille by working on scientific and medical papers. Having a love for learning and teaching languages, he decided to organize free English and French lessons for all the interested Butmir personnel both civilians and soldiers. Serving at Camp Butmir is his first mission abroad and he is enjoying every moment of it. He was nicknamed the “Mayor of Butmir”.

My name is Vincenzo De Lucia, I’m a cavalry 1st Corporal Major in Italian Army and I joined EUFOR as COM EUFOR Combat camera and Press Office photographer. My military career begin in 2001 as a volunteer at the 9th Infantry Regiment in Trani. I was then assigned to 47th Regiment in Capua where I had a three months training and I continued the training in the Transportation School for another three months. My first assignment was at 3rd Savoia Cavalry Regiment and it lasted for some 4 years. After that I partici-

pated in the Media Combat Team Course and then I was assigned to the Grouping Logistic Central in Rome.

This is my first experience abroad as photographer, I was



Vincenzo De Lucia

a bit worried at the beginning but I’ve found a great team in the Press Office and then this job gave me the chance to meet people and have lot of new friends from all over the world.

I am married to Michela and we have a son, Pietro. I enjoy doing all sorts of sports as a hobby.



Vesna Petkovic

My name is Vesna Petkovic and I was born 5th December 1959 in a town of Kumanovo in a small, but beautiful country of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (1). My country borders with Serbia, Bulgaria, Albania and Greece.

I am married and we have two children, Stefan and Sasa, and they are still minors.

I graduated from the High Medical School in Belgrade, and I have been working in the army as a nurse since 1983. I love my job and I take great pleasure in doing it.

I have started my mission within the Macedonian contingent of EUFOR on 17th November 2008. For me, this mission so far

has been a great experience. I am proud and happy to be a part of this elite medical team and a part of EUFOR. I am also very happy to spend my first mission abroad in Bosnia and Herzegovina, a beautiful country with some great people.

I spend my free time associating with my colleagues, touring the landmarks of Sarajevo and getting to know the traditions of Bosnians and all the various national contingents in Camp Butmir. I love going to various evenings organized for national days. I always enjoy a good book.

(1) – Turkey recognizes the Republic of Macedonia with its consitutional name.

Photo Corner



By Fabrizio Bellucci

Nicolo Bellucci

If you have an image of your child that you would like to have published in EUFOR Forum, please send them to us!



By Karol Piotrowski

Milena Piotrowska (9) feeding wild ducks at the bank of the river Slupia in the north part of Poland



By Marco Naletto

Francesca Naletto - Primary School "Giovanni Rodari", Class 2-E, Italy

**EUFOR School Competition
2008/2009**

*1. Ivana Ivković
rajevo*

