



COMMON SECURITY AND DEFENCE POLICY

EUFOR Operation Althea

Updated: September 2024

Mission Background

The European Union Force (EUFOR) Operation ALTHEA in Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH) is an EU-led military operation launched on 2 December 2004. EUFOR assumed responsibility for maintaining a Safe and Secure Environment (SASE) in BiH from the NATO-led Stabilization Force (SFOR).

Mandate and Objectives

On the basis of its executive mandate under Chapter VII of the UN Charter, EUFOR is responsible for the implementation of the military annexes of the General Framework Agreement for Peace (GFAP), also known as the Dayton Peace Agreement (DPA).

EUFOR's primary aims remain as follows:

- support the overall EU comprehensive strategy for BiH;
- support BiH authorities in maintaining a SASE in the country;
- combined and collective training and exercises with the Armed Forces of BiH (AFBiH).

Since the mission started the responsibility for the execution of many tasks has been handed over to the local authorities according to the principle of "local ownership" and in line with BiH's path towards EU membership. Nevertheless, EUFOR promotes an environment in which the peace process can continue but retains full responsibility and authority to re-assume control if required.

FACTS and FIGURES	
Mission Area: Bosnia and Herzegovina	
Headquarters: Camp Butmir, Sarajevo	
Mandate started: 2 December 2004 (UN Resolution 1575)	
Mandate renewed: 2 November 2023 (UN Resolution 2706)	
Force Commander: Major General László Sticz (Hungary)	
Troop Contributing Countries (TCCs): 23 Albania, Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Chile, Czech Republic, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Republic of North Macedonia, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Türkiye.	

Activities

Support local authorities in maintaining a SASE: EUFOR monitors developments in BiH and maintains close liaison to local security providers to have full and timely situational awareness on security related issues. At the local level EUFOR is present through small teams of soldiers living in communities across the country (Liaison Observation Teams – LOTs). The EUFOR Multinational Battalion (MNBN), based in Camp Butmir is deployable by land and air, equipped and trained to respond to different kinds of situations if required. EUFOR's in-theatre personnel can be augmented at short-notice by Over-the-Horizon Reserve Forces from the EU and in coordination with NATO under the "Berlin Plus" arrangements.

Combined and Collective Training with the AFBiH: EUFOR continues to plan, organize, coordinate and conduct collective trainings with the AFBiH to improve the interoperability in peace support operations and for future international cooperation.

Supporting counter-proliferation, demilitarisation and demining: BiH still has large stockpiles of weapons, ammunition and mines left over from the war (1992-1995), many of which become more dangerous over time.

- EUFOR provides essential expertise, support, monitoring and mentoring to the 'Ammunition, Weapons and Explosives (AWE) Masterplan' aiming at the safe disposal and storage of AWE.
- EUFOR is a key contributor to the BiH Mine Action Strategy. It provides Subject Matter Expertise, supports the Demining Battalion of the AFBiH and educates over 15,000 vulnerable adults and children per year on the risks posed by mines.
- EUFOR undertakes a role in arms control by conducting verifications and inspections.

Political Control and Strategic Direction

EUFOR is the military presence of the EU in BiH. Politically, the EU is represented by the EU Special Representative (EUSR) and Head of the EU Delegation to BiH (EUD) Ambassador Luigi Soreca. BiH aims to become a member of the EU. In October 2020 the EU Council reiterated its commitment to BiH's EU perspective, as a single, united and sovereign country. Following its decision in December 2022 to grant the status of candidate country to Bosnia and Herzegovina, the European Council decided to open accession negotiation with BiH in March 2024.

Military Direction

The Operation is conducted under the Berlin Plus arrangements with the NATO Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe (SHAPE) acting as the EU Operational HQ (OHQ). Vice Chief of Staff (VCOS) SHAPE, **Lieutenant General Hubert Cottureau** (FR), is the EU Operation Commander (OpCdr).

*The European Union's **Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP)** includes the gradual framing of a common defence policy that may in time lead to a common defence. The CSDP allows the EU to develop its civilian and military capacities for crisis management and conflict prevention at international level, thus helping to maintain peace and international security, in accordance with the United Nations Charter. The CSDP includes a strong conflict prevention component.*

More information and background documents available on:
www.euforbih.org www.eas.europa.eu