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EUFOR Exercise Quick Response 2024



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Quick Response Appreciation

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

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Dear readers of EUFOR Forum Magazine!

I am delighted to publish my first edition of EUFOR FORUM as editor in Chief.

The last few months were very busy ones for the EUFOR and for the Public Affairs Office. Many important events were held, none more so than EUFOR's annual exercise "Ouick Response 24". also had a number

of national weeks, Key Leader Engagements and national celebrations of various contingents in EUFOR.

In edition #141 you will find information about the exercise itself, a brief introduction to the new combat vehicle of the Hungarian Army - Gidrán, and information on the recent Macedonian, Swedish and Chilean national weeks.

I want to thank all branches who supported our efforts on media activities for EUFOR Althea.

EUFOR Forum is about the troops and personnel of EUFOR. It is a chronicle and memories of your time spent in BiH as part of Operation Althea. So as always, we invite you to share your experiences and have those experiences recorded in print and shared digitally. If you have anything that you would like covered, an article or photograph you would like to share please contact us at Euforpio@eufor.europa.eu.

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EUFOR places a high emphasis on sports and philanthropy. We combined both for a Hungarian Charity Run. Despite the grey sky and cold spell, the event had over 70 competitors who ran in 3, 5, 10, 21 km races as well as a relay race. Congratulations to all the competitors and organizers on a successful event.



COM EUFOR Major General László Sticz attended the closing ceremony of the Armed Forces of Bosnia and Herzegovina basic military training in Pazarić. The ceremony concluded 8 weeks of challenging training and enhancing military skills for the recruits of the AF BiH. The ceremony was conducted to a high standard and was reflective of the high level of training conducted during the period. Congratulations to the 349 soldiers!



COM EUFOR MG Sticz held a meeting with the new EUSR Ambassador Luigi Soreca. They discussed a general overview of EUFOR's mandate and role, the current security situation and our dedication to assisting in providing a SASE in BiH. We wish him well in his new role.



Deputy Commander of EUFOR Brigadier General Lorenzo Dal Maso attended a ceremony on Mt. Zec, near Fojnica commemorating the fatal crash of an aircraft of the talian Air Force on 03 September 1992. The tragic event happened when the G 222 aircraft, operating under UNHCR mandate, was flying from Split to Sarajevo transporting medical supplies and humanitarian aid to the local population under siege. Not long before landing, the aircraft was hit by two missiles which led to explosion and the crash on top of Mt. Zec, taking the lives of all four members of the crew. EUFOR pays tribute to the sacrifice of those who fell in the line of duty of supporting those in need.

EUFOR opens its twentieth LOT House in Drvar

Commander of EUFOR Major General László Sticz and Deputy Commander of EUFOR Brigadier General Lorenzo Dal Maso opened our new Liaison Observation Team (LOT) House at Drvar today, following months, if not years, of hard work, dedication, and unwavering determination.

During his speech at the opening ceremony, Commander of EUFOR Major General László Sticz stated, "The core of the concept of Liaison and Observation Teams is the idea and need to understand local necessities, difficulties and goals. Our aim is to build lasting relationship with the local population in all sectors and we are convinced that our efforts will meet these requirements". Commander of EUFOR also expressed his gratitude to Italy "for providing the required means and consistent support for making today's opening ceremony possible".

LOT Houses are a vital link between EUFOR and the hosting civilian society in an impartial, open and transparent manner. Through sustained liaison with local communities, international organizations, **NGOs** and



government agencies in their area of responsibility, LOT Houses provide continuing reassurance to local communities; demonstrate enduring commitment of EUFOR and the International Community to Bosnia and Herzegovina. The new LOT House is a manifestation of EUFOR's shared vision to promote progress in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

With the opening of the LOT House in Drvar, Italy joins Austria, Poland, Germany, Romania, Slovakia, Switzerland and Türkiye to operate LOT Houses engage with local leaders and communities throughout Bosnia and Herzegovina. Members of the Drvar LOT are Carabinieri, members of the national gendarmerie of Italy. In Italy, Carabinieri are known for their ability to be in close contact with citizens, developing strong bonds with local communities and strengthening the relationship between institutions population.

The ceremonial event was attended - among others - by Independent Inspector Džon Čurčić, Commander of Drvar Police and Senior Inspector Marko Žižić, Mr. Alexander White, Head of OSCE Field Office in Drvar, Brigadier General Gianluca Feroce, commander of the 2nd Carabinieri Mobile Brigade, representatives of the Town Hall in Drvar and members of the LOT community.

We are delighted to be able to open this new LOT House, our twentieth, in Drvar and look forward to engaging with the community and local authorities to create a longstanding contribution to a safe and secure environment in Bosnia and Herzegovina.





Arrival of Reserve Forces of EUFOR to BiH





Between 24 and 26 August 2024, EUFOR's Reserve forces from Austria, Romania and Hungary deployed into the mission area. Following successful crossings at the border, the convoys navigated the challenging journey. Finally, troops from the EUFOR Reserve arrived in Camp Butmir and immediately began integrating with EUFOR's in-theatre troops.

Integration in Camp

The EUFOR Reserve forces wasted no time in getting up to spend with the area of operations, the local customs and the exercise scenario. COM EUFOR took this opportunity to brief all Company and Platoon commanders and outline his own intent for the exercise, the expectations and standards expected of EUFOR troops. The Hungarian troops even took the chance to engage in some early morning battle PT.

Redeployment

Having received all the briefs and prepared themselves for a challenging number of exercise days ahead, all troops began to redeploy to a variety of field temporary staging areas. The exercise "Quick Response" was now ready to enter its next phase.





EUFOR Exercise QR 2024 Opening Ceremony



Dignitaries, military personnel and honored guests were invited to the EUFOR Operation Althea Opening Ceremony for exercise "Quick Response 24" on 30 August 2024. With troops from 23 nations involved, the opening ceremony was truly an international affair that displayed both the ceremonial aspects and military aspects of a variety of nations. The ceremony itself was under the watchful eye of EUFOR's own Command Sergeant Major Róbert Kovács. Under his command, the ceremony proceeded with a high level of professionalism and highlighted the high standards displayed on a constant basis by EUFOR's troops.

COM EUFOR ADDRESS

During Commander EUFOR Major General László Sticz speech, he remarked on the importance that the exercise demonstrates to both our national and international partners. COM EUFOR outlined the increased level of ambition that this year's exercise hoped to achieve. For the first time, the EUFOR Tactical Reserve were

activated for the exercise and COM EUFOR emphasized why such an activation is key to not only to EUFOR but to any military deployment, "Exercising capabilities of Reserve Forces is of the utmost importance and every commander should conduct such exercises continuously". COM EUFOR also expressed his gratitude and stressed the vital importance of the support offered by the Armed Forces of Bosnia and Herzegovina not least the provision of Temporary Staging Areas, and for their assistance to enable the conduct of QR24.

Forward, Onward, Together

COM EUFOR reiterated the importance of EUFOR's motto, "Forward, Onward, Together". The motto not only refers to EUFOR's own comradery and philosophy for our troops but also to our mission in striving to work with local supports to create a safe and secure Bosnia and Herzegovina for all. As noted by COM EUFOR, the troops must, "rely on one another and at the same time maintain a symbiotic relationship with the local population".



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"Exercise, exercise, exercise!"





Day 1-3

Before the exercise moved into its "LIVEX" phase on 08 September 2024, the troops already began to engage in a series of foot patrols across Bosnia and Herzegovina in order to familiarize, integrate and understand the community and authorities. These type of patrols took place both day and night, exercising EUFOR's capability to operate in different environments. Troops were given reconnaissance tasks on key infrastructure and Heli landing sites. Moreover, tactical commanders conducted numerous meetings with local leaders, namely mayors, police and armed forces representatives.

Day 3-5

Troops continued undertaking a number of patrols through urban areas in BiH while also preparing for enhanced operations across a variety of skillsets such as personnel evacuation, Crowd Riot Control training and rehearsed interoperability with diplomatic organizations in BiH.





COM EUFOR carried out extensive inspections during this time noting the high level of dedication, performance and attitude displayed by the troops during their deployment.

Day 6-8

During this period troops fully from transitioned training, familiarization and rehearsals into a more robust, active posture. The exercise witnessed an array of scenarios including the need to secure vital installations, secure high value personnel and secure weapon/ammunition storage sites. An increase in the tempo and expectations for the exercise was met head on by our troops who took the change of pace in the exercise in their stride.

Day 9-11

The most complex and demanding period of the exercise, EUFOR ever-increasing undertook challenges in various locations in BiH. This included the securing of Sarajevo International Airport, a strategic location for the mission and our local partners. Through and excellent cooperation command and control, our troops inserted into the Airport, securing the perimeter and exercising our ability to operate from the location. Throughout the final days of the exercise, a number of serials designed to test EUFOR's CRC capability and ability to secure weapon/ammunition storage sites were tested. EUFOR personnel dealt with hostile crowds and displayed both calm restraint when necessary and effective crowd disbursement when needed. An important element of all military capabilities, in the form of medical evacuation, was also tested. The ability to remove, treat and evacuate injured personnel is a staple of all military organizations and EUFOR once again demonstrated its high-level capability.



EUFOR patrols provide help to hurt in accidents



regularly EUFOR troops are patrolling across the area of operations in order to continuously maintain situational awareness and to support local authorities and the people in BiH.

On two separate occasions in the past two months, troops from EUFOR were able to intervene and provide help to those hurt in accidents.

Slivnic

In the first instance, troops from the Hungarian Contingent were able to assist directly and immediately, in real time, when their EUFOR patrol witnessed an accident on main road M17 near Slivnic. Fortunately our troops were the first to stop to help, they called the authorities and secured the area while they awaited the medical assistance arrival.

Olovo

During activities related to exercise Quick Response 2024, a Dutch EUFOR patrol witnessed a traffic accident south of Olovo. Our troops stopped to assist those involved in the accident and the patrol's Combat Live Saver member - a soldier trained to provide advanced first aid and life saving procedures - tended the injuries of one of them. The Dutch patrol stayed on the scene until the arrival of the ambulance and the local police.

Awards

COM EUFOR Major General László Sticz awarded the members of both patrols with the commanders coin. We not only congratulate the members of each patrol on their swift actions but also commend them on their courage and leadership to take control of a difficult situation.



Distinguished Visitors' Day



Background

A dynamic display took place as the stage opener to the "Quick Response 24" Closing Ceremony main event. Led by Multinational Battalion Commander Lt. Col. László Nagy, EUFOR troops were thoroughly tested in a snapshot of scenarios that were used during exercise "Quick Response 24". The display involved a variety of challenges ranging from extraction situations to a medical evacuation by helicopter. The professionalism

standards displayed all troops envolved was to the highest level, which reflected the dedication and planning of their commanders.

Scene One

The first test involved the extraction of friendly personnel by the Royal Dutch Marine Corps. The scenario involved close quarter drills and the highest level of discipline. Soldiers from the Austrian contingent provided a ground cordon around the area creating a safe zone for

their Dutch colleagues to carry out the extraction. While over watch was provided by snipers from the Hungarian contingent who were onboard heli's. The level of cooperation and interoperability required for such an operation between multiple nations further demonstrates the excellent level of training carried out by EUFOR.

Scene Two

Faced with an approaching angry crowd, the Multinational Battalion deployed its Crowd Riot Control







(CRC) elements to contain the situation. Troops made up the platoons for the CRC scenario while once again over watch was provided for by their Hungarian Colleagues in the air. The scenario tested the command and control of our leaders while also testing the troop's ability to deal with high intensity situations.

The culmination of the scenario saw the Greek ambulance extract injured personnel while the CRC platoons removed the threat posed by the crowd.

Scene Three

The final scene involved a temporary checkpoint that became under threat by a fast approaching civilian vehicle. With the threat halted, troops began to carry out a number of drills including securing the driver, searching the vehicle and treating injured personnel. With the injured personnel stabilized, they were extracted by helicopter.



Closing Ceremony of exercise Quick Response 2024



The Closing Ceremony for exercise "Quick Response 24" took place on the 13 September 2024. The ceremony was marked by a formal parade and included a vast array of awards from COM EUFOR to exercise participants. The parade truly represented EUFOR's multinational environment with troops from all 23 nations taking

part. EUFOR's Command Sergeant Major Róbert Kovács commanded the ceremony.

In front of a plethora of visiting ambassadors dignitaries, military personnel, the parade truly represented the high standards that EUFOR strives to achieve on a daily basis.

EUSR Speech

During the Closing Ceremony parade, EUSR Luigi Soreca gave an address highlighting the important work being done by EUFOR Operation Althea and its personnel.

noted the impressive performance by EUFOR troops during exercise Quick Response





and he thanked them for their ongoing dedication to the mission.

COM EUFOR Address

During COM EUFOR Major General László Sticz address to the parade, he noted that a key value that EUFOR aims to achieve is the ability to continuously progress the mission. He noted that with this exercise, "EUFOR aimed to push the boundaries of previous achievements with exercise Quick Response 24" and progress we did. COM EUFOR thanked the various military and civilian organizations who supported the exercise. He thanked the troops of EUFOR for their "commitment and positive attitude throughout the exercise" and remarked that nations should be proud of their soldiers and leaders, "What I saw in the field should give us all great confidence for the future of the militaries involved".

COM EUFOR Awards

COM EUFOR presented a number of the exercise participants with awards for their commitment, performance and dedication during "Quick Response 24". Notably he presented EUFOR Chief of Staff, Brigadier General Herbert



Sailer, with a Commendation for his "professional skills, determination, enthusiasm and diligent work". He also presented Lt Col László Nagy, Commander of the Multinational Battalion, with Letter Appreciation for his "exceptional performance in the organization of official events within Exercise Quick Response 24".



Gidrán Combat Vehicle



The Gidrán is part of the culture change and development program launched in the Hungarian Defense Forces. The aim is to provide a modern, innovative and hightech force to defend the country. The vehicles, originally named Ejder Yalçın, take their new name from one of the Hungarian horse breeds bred at the Mezőhegyes stud farm.

The development of the Gidrán platform was by a new Hungarian joint venture and announced on December 21, 2020 in Budapest. The joint venture between Hungary and Türkiye also sees the involvement of Germany's famed Rheinmetall AG.

The vehicles have a weight of 14 tons, a length of 5.8 meters, and a width and height (excluding the turret) of 2.5 meters. Inside is a six-cylinder, 8,900 cc, 375 horsepower Cummins turbo-diesel engine, allowing the vehicles to travel at up to 120 kilometers per hour on

public roads. The Hungarian Gidrán's are fitted with the ASELSAN SARP stabilized, remotely controlled turret, that can be fitted with a 7.62 mm medium or 12.7 mm heavy machine gun, or a 40 mm automatic grenade launcher. The turret is equipped with a day and night camera system for target detection and identification and a laser rangefinder.

Another feature that the Hungarian Defense Forces have purchased is the ASELSAN SEDA-V acoustic shot detector for the vehicles, which can determine from where the Gidrán was fired upon*. It can accommodate up to 11 personnel and can carry a payload of up to 4 tons.

The vehicle comes in a variation of uses, be it combat, combat support or combat service support, it can be employed in rear areas, as well as for reconnaissance and surveillance on the front line. The ability to deploy the Gidrán in a fire support team role to identify targets and call for fire from supporting units is of particular note in the modern conventional warfare setting. The speed, optics and defensive capabilities of the vehicle are vital to ensure forward observers can get time on a target and be able to accurately call in supporting fires from artillery etc.

Members of EUFOR were given the unique opportunity to investigate and experience the vehicle themselves during a demonstration on 12 September 2024 in Camp Butmir. Hungarian troops were on hand to provide very informative briefs on the vehicles and their capabilities.

*Hungary Today 2023. Gidrán Combat Vehicles Increase Operational Capabilities of Land Forces



Quick Response Appreciation



In recognition of their assistance and support during EUFOR's annual Quick Response exercise, Commander of EUFOR Major General László Sticz presented members of the Armed Forces of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Law Enforcement Agencies and Sarajevo Airport with awards to acknowledge the role and assistance they gave to EUFOR. Commander EUFOR was accompanied by Chief of the Joint Staff of BiH Armed Forces, Lieutenant General Goiko Knežević for the ceremony.

The ceremony was attended by Mayor of Brčko District Prim. Dr. Zijad Nišić, Mr. Sretoja Vujanović, Deputy Chief of Police Administration and Mr. Sanjin Šakić, Chief of Department for International Co-operation, Mr. Ramo Isak Minister of Internal Affairs of the Federation of BiH, Mr. Admir Katica Minister of Internal Affairs of Canton Sarajevo and Mr. Alan Bajić Director of the Sarajevo International Airport.

The ceremony began with a minute silence in remembrance of the victims of the flooding in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Our thoughts, prayers and deepest sympathies continue to go to all those affected during this terrible time. EUFOR will continue to stand with and support the people of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Commander EUFOR, Major General László Sticz, expressed his own sympathies with the people of Bosnia and Herzegovina during his speech



to the ceremony, "I would like to start my speech with expressing my deepest condolences and solidarity with those families who suffered a great loss in the devastating events of last week". He emphasized the importance of cooperation on different levels between EUFOR Althea and the authorities of Bosnia and Herzegovina in order to move forward together during these times.

Twelve awards were given out by Commander EUFOR, six to members of the Armed Forces of Bosnia and Herzegovina, five to members of the police and one to the director of security in Sarajevo Airport. Commander

EUFOR noted, "Today I would like to acknowledge and award this vital support without which the success of the exercise could not have come into being."

The support and assistance given by our local partners was invaluable to the success of the exercise and their involvement was further prove of the existing partnerships between our organizations.







The contingents of EUFOR celebrated their national week





With the tradition of celebrating national weeks now firmly established in EUFOR's calendar, we experienced another three nations' culture over the past two months. During this time the Swedish, Macedonian and Chilean weeks all took place giving Camp Butmir and its troops a chance to learn about their national cultures, experiences, history and traditions.

In September, the Swedish Contingent celebrated the Swedish national week. Sweden has a longstanding tradition as a participant in international military missions, since the Suez Crisis in 1956. Congratulations to our Swedish comrades on an excellent national week.

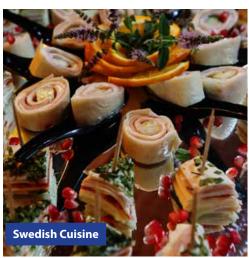
The week included a flag raising ceremony during opening and closing events. The Swedish contingent also treated EUFOR members to a night of immersion into Swedish culture and national norms.

The contingent of Republic of North Macedonia of EUFOR celebrated their national Independence Day on 08 Sep 24. It has been a national holiday since 1991, when, following a referendum for Independence, the country gained its independence from Yugoslavia. This was the culmination of their national week.

The week included a flag raising ceremony during opening and closing events. They also presented EUFOR troops with an array of national foods and in-depth information on their beautiful country.

The Chilean national week involved a number of different events, including a flag raising ceremony







during opening and closing events. They also treated members to a variety of Chilean foods during their national week reception. They gave all troops in Camp Butmir the opportunity to learn and view their breathtaking country through photos and videos displayed throughout the camp.

The week also saw the Chilean contingent celebrate their Independence Day on the 18 September 2024 and the Day of the Glories of the Army on 19 Sept. The annual celebration marks the date that Chile began fighting for independence from Spain.



National days in EUFOR



During the last two months, the Polish and Hungarian Contingents celebrated national days in EUFOR.

The Polish Armed Forces marked the 15 August with a ceremonial parade in the Camp. The 15 August is the annual celebration of Day of Assumption and Polish Armed Forces Day, it is both a religious and public holiday commemorating the Battle of Warsaw in 1920 against Soviet Russia. This battle, also known as the "Miracle on the Vistula," was a decisive moment in the Polish-Soviet War and held immense importance not only for Poland but also for all of Europe. Establishing this holiday was meant to honor the heroism of Polish soldiers and highlight the role of the Polish Army in defending the nation's independence. The day was also marked across Poland with parades and gatherings.

The Hungarian Defence Forces celebrated Stephen's Day on the 20 August. Every year on August 20, Hungary celebrates the establishment of the Hungarian State and the country's more than 1,000-year-old history. The day was marked in Camp Butmir – among others – with the blessing of the new bread and a concert in the evening.

The concert was performed by an ad-hoc rock band from Hungary, who chose the name "EUFOR Rock Warriors" in honor of the occasion. In Hungary, the day was celebrated with a series of events across the nation, culminating in an airshow over the Danube River and a spectacular fireworks display.



COM EUFOR's International Boxing Gala



The COM EUFOR International Boxing Event had been proposed by our Dutch comrades and the event was to see a number of fighters put to both a mental and physical test in Camp Butmir's arena.

Following weeks of meticulous planning by trainers and EUFOR staff the event was set, the fighters were ready and the bell was edging to launch the first match.

Fighters from various nations including Italy, Hungary, Netherlands and Bosnia Herzegovina had honed their skills and conditioned themselves for the grueling matches ahead. Referees, Judges, Ring Speaker, Timekeeper and Supervisors descended on Camp Butmir from across Europe to officiate the event. Final planning was completed and with the ties decided upon and with the stage set; members throughout the Camp eagerly awaited the coming of the big day.

Excitement Builds

On 27 September 2024, a blanket of excitement and thrill fell over Camp Butmir. The hotly awaited COM EUFOR's International Boxing Gala had finally come upon us. Throughout the day offices and coffee shops were gripped in anticipation as in but a few hours 18 brave souls would enter the arena and do battle to the cheers of adoring fans and with the goal of leaving the ring as champion. For the organizers and boxers the hours of the day were-filled with pre-match briefs, final moments of focus and mental preparation for the event ahead.

As fans poured into Hanger 2 and eagerly took their places, they were met with true boxing royalty, as former IBF Featherweight Champion of the World; István "KOKO" Kovács entered the VIP area. While the DJ filled the hanger with music and the audience was treated

to some boxer action from across the world and eras, the fighters backstage readied themselves for a performance of a lifetime. With the anticipation building in the crowd, COM EUFOR opened the event and during his speech remarked that the preparation process, the execution and the spirit of this boxing gala represents all guiding principles that have been set for EUFOR personnel, namely impartiality, unity, cooperation, integrity, credibility and progress. With his speech ended and the event official opened, the time had come for the competitors to take center stage.

Action

As the Ring Speaker, Péter M. Takács, introduced the first match, the audience took to their feet. Both fighters approached the ring buoyed by inspirational walk out music. Having exchanged the necessary pleasantries, they took



their places and awaited the bell to ring and battle to begin. The first four fights saw the gladiators undergo a test of strength, stamina and mental endurance. Back and forth spectacles brought cheers and gasps of admiration from the on looking crowd. Such a feast of physical challenge and endurance from each competitor was a remarkable feat. Each competitor was awarded by waves of applauds, and each match concluded with the announcement of the result and trophies delivered by Brigadier General Matthew A. Valas, Commander of NHQ Sa, Ljubiša Ćosić, Mayor of Istočno Sarajevo, Brigadier General Lorenzo Dal Maso, DCOM EUFOR and Enes Karić, Director of the Directorate for Coordination of Police Bodies of BiH. As the intermission began, fans were treated to the opportunity to listen and ask questions of István Kovács on his career and outlook of world boxing. This was followed by a walk down memory lane as fans had the chance to watch highlights from a number of boxing matches of the past, from Ali to Mayweather. Throughout the event and intermission spectators were fortunate to experience the drinks and food provided by Royale and the Armed Forces of BiH. With the ending of the intermission, the action was once again underway. Another five matches once more brought the arena of Hanger 2 to its feet while the cheers and roars of the fans rang around its inner walls. Not to be outdone by the first four matches, the final five were as competitive and fierce as their predecessors were. When the dust had finally settled on the canvas and winners declared, the trophies were handed over to the fighters by Major General Mirzet Lubenović, Commander of the Operational Command of the Armed Forces of BiH, János Wisinger, Director of the Hungarian show 'Star Box', Colonel Milorad Krajšumović, Commander of the 6th Infantry Brigade, Lieutenant Colonel Pim Fretz, Senior National Representative of the Netherlands and István "KOKO" Kovács. Finally, the event moved into its closing ceremony.

Closing Ceremony

During the closing ceremony, under the spotlight in the center of the ring, COM EUFOR Major General





Sticz thanked everyone for their contribution and participation in the event and for their fighting spirit. He also awarded those who contributed the most to the realization of this fantastic night.

The success of the event owes so much to so many, we wish to thank all the competitors, Referees, Judges, Ring Speaker, Timekeeper, Supervisors, organizers and fans for making the event a truly special occasion in Camp Butmir and for EUFOR.



