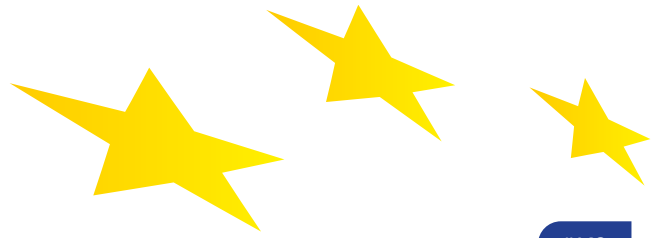


EUFOR FORUM

October - December 2024

European Union Force in BiH



#142



20 Years Commitment



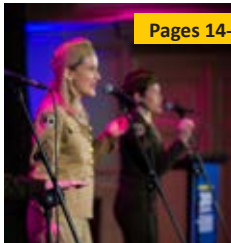
Page 6 **Arrival of Moldovan Company**

Moldovan troops joined MNBN following a flag raising ceremony to mark the occasion of them becoming the newest members of the EUFOR family.



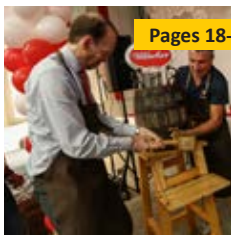
Page 9 **EUFOR Museum and General Assembly**

As part of the EUFOR 20-year anniversary events, there was a general assembly of all EUFOR personnel and opening of the EUFOR Museum.



Pages 14-15 **EUFOR 20 Year Gala**

The event held in the Army Hall in Sarajevo, brought together national and international colleagues with EUFOR to mark this significant anniversary.



Pages 18-19 **Celebrating National Weeks**

The continuing tradition of celebrating national weeks saw a further nine nations' culture highlighted over the past two months.

Commander EUFOR
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Editor in Chief



Captain Paul O' Donoghue

Dear readers of EUFOR Forum Magazine!

I am delighted to publish my second edition of EUFOR FORUM as Editor in chief.

The last few months were very busy ones for EUFOR and for the Public Affairs Office. Many important events were held, none more so than EUFOR's celebration of its 20 year anniversary in the

mission. We had a number of national weeks and Key Leader Engagements.

In edition #142 you will find information about the anniversary events themselves, a brief introduction to the new helicopter – H225M, and information on the various national weeks held in the camp.

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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The contents are not necessarily the official views of, or endorsed by, the coalition governments' defence departments.

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On the invitation of AFBiH, members of EUFOR Multinational Battalion (MNBN) participated in Children's Day in Mostar. Kids were really interested in our equipment, vehicles and our activities



EUFOR OpCdr LTG Cottreau, COM EUFOR MG Sticz, COS OHQ BG Pawluk, DCOM & COS EUFOR BG Dal Maso & BG Sailer attended the Armed Forces Day parade in Rajlovac. LTG Cottreau also met with CHOD AFBiH LTG Knežević & congratulated on an excellent event and AF BiH achievements.



EUFOR members had the chance to work and train with their counterparts in the AF BiH across physical and military events. Our troops joined their BH colleagues in a cross race over 3km & 9km distances at the location of the barracks Rajlovac, testing physical courage and friendly competition. In Pazarić, our troops took part in a shooting competition with over 50 competitors. Throughout the competition, spectators were treated to excellent levels of marksmanship. We congratulate all who took part in the two events. They were a great success and highlighted our co-operation with the AF BiH.



For 20 years, EUFOR has proudly contributed to the stability and peace of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Through strong partnership with the local communities and institutions, we have supported a safer and more secure environment for all. From the hills at the North to the rivers in South and from the cities at East to the villages in West, EUFOR mission has been clear: to help ensuring a future of prosperity and stability for this beautiful country.

EUFOR continues to stand with the people of BiH



COM EUFOR and EUSR Visit Affected Areas

At the beginning of October, central and southern Bosnia and Herzegovina were hit with severe flooding. Towns, villages, roads, bridges and railways were overcome by floodwaters and landslides. The flooding claimed the lives of twenty-seven victims. The worst hit locations were Konjic, Jablanica, Kiseljak and Fojnica. The

international community rallied to offer aid and assistance to the people of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

EUFOR joined the international community to offer support, assistance and help where possible. Through supplies, logistics and manpower, EUFOR joined the efforts to overcome the effects of the tragic flooding.

After receiving a request from the Ministry of Security of BiH, EUFOR dispatched its helicopter asset for the medical evacuation of an injured child, from a flood-affected area in Donja Jablanica.

The medical helicopter H145 extracted the injured patient from the landing zone at the railway station plateau and successfully evacuated to Mostar cantonal hospital "Safet Mujić".

Through close cooperation and the use of a liaison officer in situ, EUFOR established communications with the BiH Operation and Communication Centre, which was coordinating effort to combat the floods at the time.

EUFOR's Liaison Observation Teams (LOTs) joined with Troop Contributing Nations (TCNs) to provide valuable medical assistance and donations including food, water and relief materials. EUFOR members from the Turkish



Turkish Contingent Members Assit Locals



**COM EUFOR and DCHOD AFBiH
Meet Locals**



Aftermath of Flooding

contingent and Jablanica Liaison Observation Team (LOT) House were on hand in the towns of Zlate and Ravne providing vital help and assistance. EUFOR also provided logistical capabilities in order to aid authorities in their work to combat the effects of the flooding. TCNs such as Hungary, who deployed a military engineer's team, were joined by EUFOR troops to support and assist local authorities and the people of BiH.

President of the EU Commission, Ursula von der Leyen noted during her inspection of the Jablanica area, that the support provided by EUFOR in conjunction with the local authorities and AF BiH was of the utmost importance and thanked all involved.

EUFOR wishes to express its deepest condolences to all those affected by the floods. Our thoughts and prayers are with those who lost loved ones during this terrible time.



President of EU Commission Addresses Troops

Arrival of Moldovan Company



Raising of Moldovan Flag

On 06 October 2024, Moldova became the 24th troop-contributing nation to EUFOR Operation Althea. Moldovan troops joined their colleagues in the Multinational Battalion following a flag raising ceremony to mark the occasion of them becoming the newest members of the EUFOR family.

Emerging from the complex post-Soviet landscape, Moldova has consistently sought to build a future of peace and progress, while maintaining its integrity and navigating challenges with resolve. These values mirror the core principles of Operation Althea, where progress, cooperation, and impartiality are critical to our success.

Armed Forces of the Republic of Moldova were founded in 1992 and have deployed in many roles and in many countries worldwide in the mission of peace. Troops of the armed forces have deployed

in NATO led stabilization missions in both Bosnia and Herzegovina and Kosovo, they have been part of various United Nations missions such as Liberia, Sudan, South Sudan and Georgia to name but a few. They have been committed to peace since their foundation as noted by Commander of EUFOR, Major General László Sticz *"Your presence here, Moldovan soldiers,*

is a testament to your nation's commitment to peace beyond your borders."

All of us here in EUFOR Operation Althea are delighted to welcome our Moldovan comrades and look forward to working with them and learning about their rich history and culture.



Moldovan Troops Join EUFOR

COM EUFOR on the 20 years anniversary of EUFOR



The formation of EUFOR marked a new chapter in Bosnia and Herzegovina's post-conflict recovery, symbolizing the EU's enduring commitment to peace, stability, and the region's integration into European structures. EUFOR's mission began in 2004 when it assumed all the responsibilities of preceding multinational forces in Bosnia and Herzegovina. In the past 20 years EUFOR has evolved continuously as the situation in the area of operations developed.

By 2004 the terrible conflict was over and the volatile post-conflict phase had also passed. Therefore EUFOR took up a role that suited the circumstances on the ground. The early tasks involved reducing the level of organized crime and decommissioning the large amount of military weapons still circulating in society.

The European Union aimed to ensure the security of the country and the broader goals of reconciliation, the rule of law, and democratic development. As the country became more secure, EUFOR shifted focus to supporting the national institutions such as the Armed Forces of Bosnia and Herzegovina and law enforcement agencies in their respective roles.



The stability provided by EUFOR has facilitated the country in moving forward with the implementation of reforms aimed at strengthening democratic governance, improving the rule of law, and preparing for its future integration into the European Union.

EUFOR successes came as a result of the commitment, energy and sacrifice of those who served and continue to serve peace and stability in Bosnia and Herzegovina. This includes not only our international military forces, but also our international and local civilian personnel.

For those who have lost their lives in service; we are eternally grateful for the life force they expended creating

a better future for the next generation in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

As we look back on the 20 years of EUFOR's presence, the most important achievement is undoubtedly the fact that Bosnia and Herzegovina has remained at peace leaving the country firmly on the road to European Union integration.





EUFOR Show



Visitors on the Opening of the Exhibition

- Helping local communities
- Demining
- LOT Houses
- Cooperation with LEA

The exhibition displayed the historic and ongoing support provided by EUFOR to our partners in BiH. COM EUFOR noted during his speech to the opening ceremony of the exhibition that EUFOR will continue to support BiH as it continues its journey to European Union accession, *“EUFOR, together with all partners, will continue to support Bosnia and Herzegovina on this path, as the country moves closer to realizing its European dream.”*

EUFOR thanks all who took part in the creation of the exhibition, we especially thank the Europe House, Sarajevo for unwavering support throughout the exhibition and we finally thank all those who visited the exhibition.

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EUFOR launched its exhibition “EUFOR Show” in the Europe House, Sarajevo in November.

COM EUFOR Major General László Sticz welcomed guests including Chief of the Joint Staff of the Armed Forces of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Lieutenant General Gojko Knežević, Deputy Chief of Staff Resources Major General Mirsad Ahmić and Deputy Head of Mission of the Greek Embassy in Sarajevo Georgios Kollias to view the exhibition.

The EUFOR Show was an exhibition that showed Operation Althea’s most memorable moments of 2004-2024. The EUFOR Show was open between 26-29 of November in the Europe House, Sarajevo. The purpose of the exhibition was to inform the public of the different types of work EUFOR has and continues to conduct here in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The show included eight panels and a display video depicting activities EUFOR has engaged in over the past 20 years. The panels on show covered different topics

such as:

- Dayton to EUFOR, IFOR/SFOR
- Maintaining security
- Supporting AFBiH
- Exercises

EUFOR 20 Year Photobook

EUFOR released the 20 Year Photobook to mark the mission’s anniversary. The book is a collection of pictures outlining the different types of activities that EUFOR has engaged in over the past 20 years.

The photobook gives an excellent insight into the different types of tasks carried out by EUFOR, highlights the different nations who have served in the mission and highlights the cooperation and support between EUFOR and local communities and agencies.

The book is over 100 pages with a number of different chapters. The



chapters include the ceremonial transfer from SFOR to EUFOR on the 02 December 2024, an overview of exercises and joint activities carried out with AF BiH and local authorities, EUFOR assistance during differing types of natural disasters and EUFOR’s engagement with the local community to name but a few.



EUFOR Museum and General Assembly

As part of the EUFOR 20-year anniversary events, there was a general assembly of all EUFOR personnel and opening of the EUFOR Museum on 02 December 2024. The event marked the anniversary of 20 years since EUFOR took over the mission from its predecessor SFOR.

The assembly gathered troops from all 24 Troop Contributing Nations (TCN) as well as the civilian staff who work in EUFOR. With over 800 troops participating in the parade, it was one of the largest ceremonies conducted by EUFOR in 2024 and rightly so. The 20-year milestone is a significant achievement and EUFOR's existence for such a period highlighted the understanding of the importance of EUFOR and the impact it has had on Bosnia and Herzegovina.

During his address to the troops and civilians of the mission, Commander of EUFOR Major General László Sticz noted the many activities that EUFOR have conducted and been involved with over the past two decades. From clearing weapons and ammunition during the "Harvest" operations to working alongside law enforcement agencies to combating organized crime, EUFOR



EUFOR Troops on Parade



Ceremonial March Past

has been involved in a variety of roles during its time.

Major General László Sticz highlighted that the success

of EUFOR could not have been achieved without cooperation and partnership of countless individuals and institutions both nationally and internationally. The mission to ensure a safe and secure environment for all in Bosnia and Herzegovina can only be achieved through these partnerships and EUFOR will continue to work and cooperate with its partners to continuing providing stability and security.

The opening of the EUFOR Museum constitutes an opportunity for all visitors to experience and learn of EUFOR's history and different activities it has engaged in during its 20 year existence. The museum entails a number of panels outlining EUFOR's activities, which are supported by informative videos. The documents room gives visitors a chance to read and understand the key documents that underline EUFOR's existence, its mission and the type of activities it undergoes.

EUFOR's historian, Dženan Hadžović, created the museum. Through his hard work and dedication, the museum has not only come into fruition but gives an excellent insight into the mission and its history.



COM EUFOR Opens Museum



EUFOR Partners' Events: Diplomatic Spouses



Attendees Enjoy the Static Display

EUFOR invited spouses of members of the diplomatic bodies to Camp Butmir to share in commemorating EUFOR 20 year. The event was held to outline our appreciation to the spouses for their constant support and assistance and raise their awareness about EUFOR's capabilities and responsibilities.

The event included a brief to all on the means and capabilities that EUFOR has, the different types of work EUFOR engages in and carries out and a static and dynamic display. The event gave EUFOR an excellent opportunity to celebrate our anniversary with the International Community members and outline the values and ideals of EUFOR. As military camps are usual

inaccessible this was a great chance to remove the shroud of mystery and as noted by Commander of EUFOR, Major General László

Sticz, to "show you the EUFOR is an impartial and transparent force that is here to support local authorities maintaining a Safe and Secure Environment."

At the reception of the event, attendees had the chance to meet different members of EUFOR and its leadership contingent. Major General László Sticz, Commander of EUFOR, outlined his thanks and gratitude to all in attendance for the sacrifice they make to deploy as diplomatic spouses. During the reception he offered each attendee symbolic awards such as flowers. A great day of differing experiences, socializing and enhancing bonds of friendship ensured that the vent was a success.



COM EUFOR Greets Guests

EUFOR Stamp

In recognition of EUFOR's 20-year anniversary, we have released two stamps to mark the occasion. The stamps, while they hold no monetary value, represent a unique collectable with only 1150 being printed.

The stamps designs focus on highlighting the significant milestone of 20 years of EUFOR.

Both stamps' incorporate the twelve stars of the European Union, the outline of Bosnia and Herzegovina



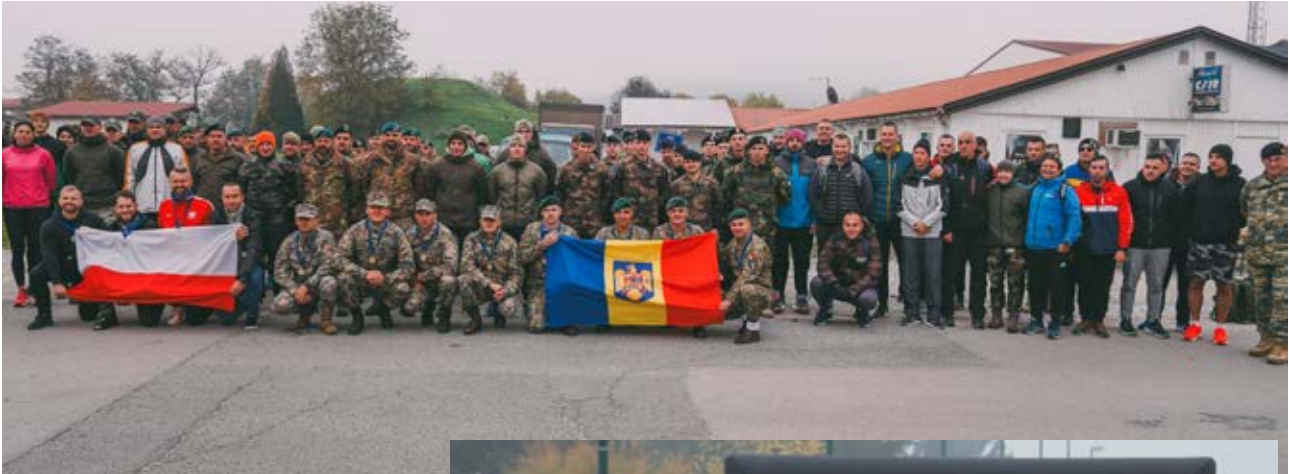
and the number 20.

Both are filled with the blue and yellow colors of the European Union and Bosnia and Herzegovina.

One stamp encapsulates our host country with their national flag incorporated within its borders. The release of these stamps was done to mark the occasion of EUFOR's 20 year anniversary under

the guidance of Major Enikő Földházi, Chief of Public Affairs Office.

EUFOR Run 20 to 20th



EUFOR held a 20km Relay Run on 08 November 2024 in Camp Butmir.

The EUFORUN 20 to 20th displayed comradery, team spirit and physical courage. The race encapsulated the essence of EUFOR's values and had competitors from across the world.

Competitors braced chilly weather to push themselves throughout the run.

Altogether 89 runners in 19 teams competed against the clock, and all crossed the finish line as winners. First place was achieved by the team of the Armed Forces of Bosnia



and Herzegovina, second place by the Polish team and the third place

by the Romanian team.

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EUFOR Children's Day



EUFOR Canines in Action

The EUFOR Children's Day event was held in Camp Butmir on 20 November, a day dedicated to World's Children Day. Participants of the event were pupils of an elementary school and cadets of a police secondary school.



Children Explore APC

The event enabled children to have a glimpse in the life in Camp Butmir, learn about EUFOR and experience the different types of activities EUFOR conducts. Highlights included a helicopter display, a ride around the camp in APC's and information on mine awareness.



EUFOR Park Opening



Commander of EUFOR Major General László Sticz opened the EUFOR Park and laid a wreath in the memorial garden as part of our 20 year activities.

The park was a project that marks not just a physical space but also a symbolic milestone celebrating the 20th anniversary of EUFOR Althea

mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina. During his address Commander of EUFOR Major General László Sticz also noted the importance of green spaces and the positive impact they can have on our personnel, *“In our fast-paced, modern world, where technology and urbanization often dominate our daily lives, it is crucial that we continue to prioritize green spaces in our cities. EUFOR Park serves as a sanctuary for our soldiers and civilian friends.”*

Commander of EUFOR also expressed his gratitude and thanks to all those who worked tirelessly to bring about the culmination of the park project. As he remarked *“I especially thank the Camp Commandant and his colleagues for their tireless*

efforts in creating this beautiful space.”

He laid a wreath in the memorial park for those who paid the highest sacrifice in the pursuit of peace during EUFOR’s 20 year existence. The event included a minute silence and a playing of “The Funeral” by Ennio Morricone on the bugle.



Paying Respects

EUFOR Blood Donation

EUFOR Medical section organized the “EUFOR Blood Donation” event in Camp Butmir in November. Lieutenant Colonel Dr. Milan Simeonov Tsekov PhD of the Bulgarian contingent, Medical Advisor of EUFOR organized the blood donation. The event was coordinated with the local health organization Institute for Transfusion Medicine of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina and graciously supported by the institute’s director Mrs Dr. Aida Đozo.

Blood donation is a necessity and in its essence is a humane manifestation, as it helps people in need and saves lives. Just one blood donation can save up to three lives. More than 38,000 blood donations are needed every day. Every two seconds, a patient needs blood. More than 1 million people are diagnosed with cancer every year for the first time. Many will need blood transfusions, especially during chemotherapy. Blood has no analogue, no substitute. The positives of voluntary blood donation are great because it is recognized worldwide as the safest way to donate blood.

Over 90 soldiers and civilians took part in the event. This selfless and important act will no doubt have a positive impact on the lives of those in need of transfusion. EUFOR thanks all who are involved especially the organizers, those who gave blood and the Institute for Transfusion Medicine of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina.



Pre-Donation Assessment



Hydrating while donating



EUFOR Partners' events: Armed Forces of BiH

EUFOR held the AF BiH partnership event as part of the activities of the EUFOR 20 years' anniversary. The event was an opportunity for EUFOR to demonstrate its different capabilities, outline its vision for the mission and build on already existing relationships. The cooperation and comradery between EUFOR and AF BiH is of the utmost importance to ensure the continued safety and stability in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The event had a briefing by Deputy Commander EUFOR Brigadier General Lorenzo Dal Maso. He addressed the attendees on the different aspects of EUFOR's involvement with AF BiH and other local authorities. He outlined the many different areas EUFOR has assisted our local partners in and the capabilities EUFOR has to continue in this manner.

The attendees viewed a dynamic and static display by the Multinational Battalion, including briefs on EUFOR's vehicles, EOD capabilities, tactical training and a helicopter demonstration.



Static Display



DCOM EUFOR Address Event

Deputy Minister of Defense in the Council of Minister Aleksandar Goganović, Chief of the Joint Staff of

BiH Armed Forces, Lieutenant General Gojko Knežević, Deputy Chief of Staff of Bosnia and Herzegovina Major General Mirsad Ahmić were among those who attended the event.

The event was graciously supported by Peace Support Operations Training Centre (PSOTC), a NATO accredited Partnership Training and Education Centre (PTEC). Through support and cooperation, the PSOTC and EUFOR have built an excellent relationship. Their support for this event is greatly appreciated and highly valued.

EUFOR Partners' events: Law Enforcement Agencies

EUFOR LEAs Partners event was held as part of the EUFOR 20 years activities. Members of the Law Enforcement Agencies in Bosnia and Herzegovina were invited into Camp Butmir and experienced static displays by the Multinational Battalion and the Aviation Detachment.

Deputy Commander EUFOR Brigadier General Lorenzo Dal Maso briefed the attendees on the various activities, capabilities and actions of EUFOR both at present and over the course of the mission.

Among those in attendance were members from the various Law Enforcement Agencies in BiH. The event was also attended by Minister of Interior FBiH Ramo Isak, Minister Una-Sana Canton Adnan Habibija,

Minister Bosnian Podrinje Canton Nusret Hubjer, Minister West-Herzegovina Canton Mladen Bebek, and Advisor to Minister Zvonimir Kraljević and by Jelena Orašanin and Dobrica Kucalović who deputized for Minister of Security BiH Nenad Nešić.



Aviation Detachment Brief

COM EUFOR also addressed the attendees. He noted *"As partners, we are committed to standing alongside you, learning from your example, and working together to create a better Bosnia and Herzegovina for future generations."*

The event highlighted the cooperation between EUFOR and the LEAs. EUFOR would like to thank PSOTC for hosting this event and for their ongoing support and cooperation.



EUFOR 20 Year Gala



On the night of 2 December 2024, EUFOR marked its 20-year anniversary with the EUFOR Gala. The event held in the Army Hall in Sarajevo, brought together national and international colleagues with EUFOR to mark this significant anniversary.

The gala opened with the EUFOR 20 year anniversary video and followed by Commander EUFOR Major General László Sticz speech to the guests. Major General Sticz outlined the history of EUFOR and the differing types of activities the mission has engaged in over the past two decades. He noted the success of the mission was built on the cornerstones of cooperation and support from both national and international partners. He highlighted that the gala and anniversary were not just an opportunity to reflect on the past but also to look to the future, *“tonight is not just about reflecting on the past; it is also about looking to the future. As Bosnia and Herzegovina advances on its path toward European integration, EUFOR’s mission serves as a reminder of the values that underpin the European Union, unity, democracy, and peace.”* He also reflected on those who had paid the ultimate sacrifice in the pursuit of peace and stability in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

He noted, *“Their dedication inspires us to continue striving for the ideals they so courageously upheld.”*

The European Union Special Representative, Ambassador Luigi Soreca was then introduced to deliver his address. His address was preceded by a short video outlining the work EU delegation does in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Ambassador Soreca thanked the leadership and troops in EUFOR for their outstanding commitment to peace. He also thanked NATO for its close support to EUFOR. He noted that over the years EUFOR has contributed to the stability and progress of Bosnia and Herzegovina through a number

of endeavors such as training with the Armed Forces of Bosnia and Herzegovina, assisting in the field of demining and disposing of surplus ammunition and weapons to name but a few.

Ambassador Soreca noted and thanked the Armed Forces of Bosnia and Herzegovina for their support and cooperation with EUFOR throughout its existence. He concluded by reaffirming the European Union’s commitment to Bosnia and Herzegovina, *“I conclude by ensuring you that the European Union’s commitment to supporting the country’s EU path remains unwavering. Together with its military mission, EUFOR Althea, we are resolute in our dedication to ensuring peace, stability, and progress for Bosnia and Herzegovina.”*

The EUSR’s speech was followed by the beautiful voice of an operatic singer, Ms Melisa Hajrulahić. With retentions of operatic classic she captivated the audience and sent emotions soaring as only the sound of music can. Her performance was outstanding and encapsulating the joy of the event.

The performance was followed by an address by the Hungarian Minister of Defence, Kristóf



Enchanting Ballet Performance by Albina Huskić

Szalay-Bobrovniczky. The minister highlighted the importance of the work carried out by EUFOR in Bosnia and Herzegovina and spoke of the pride Hungary had in being able to lead the EUFOR mission in 2024. He thanked Major General László Sticz for his outstanding leadership during 2024 and for all members of the Hungarian contingent, as well as all the Troop Contributing Nations, for their exceptional contributions.

The audience were next treated to a beautiful ballet performance by Ms. Albina Huskić. With poise, grace and elegance, she enchanted the audience with each movement. Her outstanding display was a welcomed contrast to the usual uniformed daily lives of soldiers.

In his speech Minister for Security in Bosnia and Herzegovina Nenad Nešić noted that the gala was an opportunity to reflect on the joint success of EUFOR and its local partners. He reiterated his and Bosnia and Herzegovina's commitment to EUFOR and to stability. He spoke of what makes EUFOR a success, being that EUFOR is an example of a success story precisely because its members respect the country in which they operate and the people they are among.

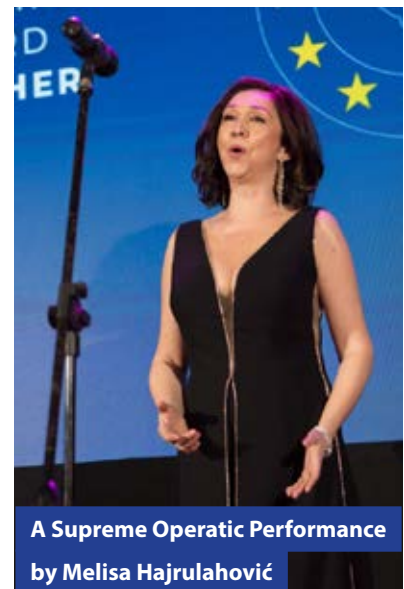
Minister of Defence Zukan Helez was next to deliver his speech. He thanked EUFOR for its presence and noted that it is the longest lasting, but also the most successful mission within the Common Foreign and Security Policy of the European Union. He spoke of the importance of the cooperation between EUFOR and the Armed Forces of Bosnia and Herzegovina, he highlighted the importance of their combined and collective training in cooperation with EUFOR and participate in EUFOR's annual exercise. He finished by outlining his hopes that that soon, due to the process of Euro-Atlantic integration of Bosnia and Herzegovina, EUFOR's Althea mission will be completed, and Bosnia and Herzegovina will become an active participant in



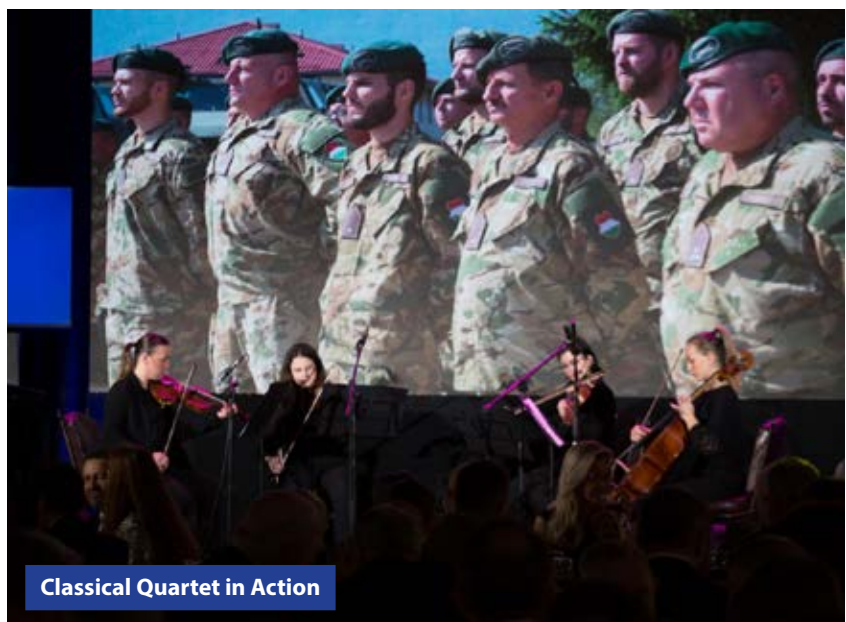
COM EUFOR Cutting the Cake

preserving peace and security in the world.

At the conclusion of the final speech of the night, attendees were once again treated to hours of music and food. The hall was once again filled by the alluring sounds of the quartet band and the upbeat, fun music of the Hungarian Swingband "Easybabies". During the music, the gala was introduced to an excellent and delicious 3-course meal. The meal culminated with the cutting of the EUFOR cake by Major General László Sticz. This ended an excellent evening that allowed EUFOR to share its anniversary with all those who have supported and helped the mission over the past 20 years.



**A Supreme Operatic Performance
by Melisa Hajrulahović**



Classical Quartet in Action



EUFOR Winter Festival

On 06th December 2024 EUFOR held its Winter Festival in Camp Butmir. The event was an opportunity to express our gratitude to the civilian employees and their families of EUFOR for all the work and dedication they have shown the mission.

The event was a collection of a number of national stands focused on bringing uniquely national products to the attendees. The nations involved included the Turks, Italians, Irish, French, Greeks, Hungarians, Germans, Austrians, Polish, Slovaks, Romanians and the United States. Each nation provided a variety of foods, drinks and treats from their home country.

The event also included a musical performance from Horváthné Nemcsok Ágnes and Muhamed Trnka. They performed to an excellent level and kept the audience captivated throughout. The event saw a visit from the famed "Krampus". Traditionally the 6 December marks the feast day of Saint Nicholas, a 4th-Century Greek bishop who became the patron saint of children and is the real-life origin of the Father Christmas legend. In the Central European Saint Nicholas Day is marked, like the Italian Epiphany, by the giving of gifts to well-behaved



Italian Pizza Making at Work

kids. The night before however, is when the Krampus visits. The Krampus, a demonic figure – half-man and half-goat, depicted with a huge wagging tongue, dark fur, horns and wild eyes – punishes naughty children. Naturally, our Krampus visit was a more fun and lighthearted event, played excellently by members of the Austrian contingent. It certainly was an eye opening attraction for those of EUFOR not familiar with the famed demon.

The stands themselves offered a wide variety of foods and drinks. From the Greek Souvlaki to the Austrian mulled wine, the large

crowds of civilians and soldiers fully embraced the spirit of the event and indulged in all the different cultures. Such was the demand and interest from attendees that the Irish Coffees were almost gone before the event officially launched and the Italian ovens were still churning out pizza's long after the event had closed.

The Winter Festival was also a time for reflection and acknowledgement of the hard work done by the civilian staff during the year. COM EUFOR Major General László Sticz gave out a number of awards and letters of appreciation to civilian employees of EUFOR. COM EUFOR thanked all who attended the event, all of those whose hard work made it possible and all the civilian workers for their dedication throughout the year.

Following on from the EUFOR Winter Festival, on the 07 December 2024, EUFOR had a stand present at the Diplomatic Winter Bazaar in Sarajevo. The stand included information on EUFOR activities and videos depicting EUFORs work over the past 20 years. The EUFOR Christmas mug was also offered to all who attended.

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Krampus Enters the Fray

LOT House Tour



Mostar



Čapljina

For the second time in 2024, over the past few weeks, COM EUFOR Major General László Sticz conducted a series of inspections of the different Liaison Observation Team House throughout Bosnia and Herzegovina.

He endeavored to impress upon each location the importance of the work that they are carrying out and thanked them for their ongoing efforts.

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.

LOT Houses are a manifestation of EUFOR's shared vision to promote progress in Bosnia and Herzegovina and EUFOR's direct link to the local communities.

The tour also included the opportunity for COM EUFOR to meet with a number of local authorities and agencies throughout the country.



Vlasenica

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Travnik



Tuzla



Jablanica

Celebrating National Weeks

The continuing tradition of celebrating national weeks saw a further nine nations' culture highlighted over the past three months. During this time the Spanish, Greek, Austrian, Turkish, Polish, Czech, Slovak, Romanian and German weeks all took place giving Camp Butmir and its troops a chance to learn about their national cultures, experiences, history and traditions.

In October, the Spanish contingent celebrated the Spanish national week. EUFOR members had the opportunity to learn about Spanish culture, history and traditions. During the week, they also celebrated National Day of Spain, which commemorates the discovery of the Americas by Christopher Columbus for Spain on 12 October 1492. The date is a key point for Spain's overseas influence and legacy to the world and to the Americas in particular. The Ambassador of Spain to Bosnia and Herzegovina, H.E. Maria Molina Alvarez de Toledo laid a wreath in memory of their comrades in Camp Butmir.

Our Greek comrades introduced EUFOR troops to a unique insight to the different styles of Greek dress, past times and cuisine during their national week. A highlight included the traditional clothing from different areas of Greece. There was a man from the North East part, called THRAKI, a lady from the Greek Islands of the Aegean Sea and a couple, a man and a lady from PONTOS, whose people now live mainly in north part of Greece mainly. The week was opened and closed with a flag raising ceremony with Deputy Head of Mission Greek Embassy in Sarajevo Georgios Kollias, in attendance. The week was a great success and a fantastic view of Greek culture and history.

The Austrian national week was filled with a variety of Austrian traditions and past times such as log sawing, table football, barrel tapping, music and traditional dress. The week also included flag raising ceremonies and a celebration of Austrian national day on 26 October. The 26 October celebrates the day the Austrian parliament declared the nation's neutrality and independence from foreign powers. Parades, festivals, and fireworks mark the holiday across the country. The closing event was a significant highlight of the week and perfectly displayed



Spanish Wreath Laying

the spirit and humor of the Austrian contingent.

The next national week saw the Turkish contingent introduce our troops to its rich history, traditions and culture. As part of the Turkish National Week, the 101st anniversary of the Republic of Türkiye was also celebrated. EUFOR troops had the chance to taste foods such as döner, çiğ köfte and baklava, and watch traditional folk dances. EUFOR troops received a brief on the "Vuran" armored vehicle, accompanied by Turkish tea and Turkish delight. There was also a unique patch developed and distributed for the event. The Republic Day of Türkiye included a ceremony to mark the importance of commemorating the proclamation of the Republic of Türkiye. The event included an array of traditional dancing, video exploring the exquisite landscape of Türkiye and the activities of the Turkish Armed Forces. The event was attended by H.E. Sadık Babür Girgin, Ambassador of Türkiye to Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The Polish national week took place in November. The week also celebrated Polish Independence Day on 11 November. The national day commemorates the anniversary of the restoration of Poland's sovereignty in 1918. Flag raising ceremonies accompanied by the awarding of commemorative medals from the 27th

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Greek Traditional Clothing



Austrian Party

Polish contingent of EUFOR to the COM EUFOR, DCOM EUFOR and COS EUFOR. The week gave EUFOR troops a welcomed chance to learn about the history of Poland and experience different Polish traditions and culture. Commander of EUFOR Major General László Sticz praised the contingent's loyalty and devotion to duty, qualities reflective of the Polish nation and its peoples.

The Czech and Slovak contingents provided a unique combined national weeks. The week also included both nations' national holidays on 17 November, a day when in 1939 students demonstrated against the Nazi regime in Prague and in 1989, student protests sparked the Velvet Revolution and ultimately helped lead to the downfall of the communist regime. During the week, there was the opportunity for EUFOR members to view cinematic classics from each nation, to partake in each nation's different foods and drinks and flag raising ceremonies.

Our Romanian colleagues held their national week at the beginning of December. The week included the Romanian National Day, "Great Union Day"; this annual public holiday is celebrated every year to mark the unification of Transylvania, Bassarabia, and Bukovina, with the Romanian Kingdom in 1918. Each year, on first of December, the Romanian flag is flown over Romanian homes and institutions. During the national week, there was a host of activities such as a movie night and sporting competitions while the DFAC served a variety of traditional Romanian cuisine. The week was opened and closed with a flag raising ceremony, as is the custom in EUFOR. During his opening speech, Deputy COM EUFOR praised Romania for its longstanding commitment to peacekeeping in Bosnia and Herzegovina started with the deployment of an engineering battalion in March 1996.

The final nation week of 2024 was that of the German contingent. The week was packed with a host of experiences for the soldiers of EUFOR to embrace. With freshly brewed coffee at the tea and coffee stand with delicious winter cake, the flavors of traditional savory German cuisine, a day at the shooting range, the harmony of German music and a basketball tournament, EUFOR was truly treated to an eventful few days. The week was a great opportunity to experience the rich culture and heritage of the German peoples. The video produced for the week allowed for a more in depth view of German geography, cities and culture. It also included the 2014 World Cup victory in Rio de Janeiro.



Turkish Traditional Dance



Polish Flag Raising



Czech and Slovak Flag Parties



Romanian SNR Addresses Troops



German Contingent Opens National Week

Medal Parades in Camp Butmir



EUFOR Operation Althea Medal



COM EUFOR Presents Medal



COS EUFOR Awards Medal to Dutch Troops

Since our last edition of EUFOR Forum, three medals parades have taken place. The first was in October, the second in November and third in December.

In cognition of their unwavering service to EUFOR and Bosnia and Herzegovina, soldiers and civilians are presented with the European Union's Common Security and Defence Policy Medal for Operation Althea.

The Medal is awarded by the High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, Mr. Josep Borrel Fontelles to EUFOR personnel in recognition of having fully met the requirements of eligibility and having completed the necessary period of service as a member of the EU mission. The Medal was first awarded in 2004 and is given to every international member who serves in EUFOR. It is tradition for the medal to be worn for the whole day after it is awarded.

During the medal parade in October, 421 soldiers, airmen, sailors and marines from 16 nations received their Common Security and Defence Policy Medal for Operation ALTHEA. During his speech, Commander of EUFOR Major General László Sticz highlighted that the medal parade "stands as a symbol of what can be

**Bulgarian Soldier with Medal**

accomplished when nations come together for a shared goal. For those of you who have completed your tour of duty, today is especially significant. Each of you played a vital role in maintaining a secure and stable environment in Bosnia and Herzegovina."

A highlight of the ceremony was the awarding of the Hungarian military medal of merit to DCOM and COS. The medal was awarded by COM EUFOR in recognition of the contribution, dedication and loyalty to the successful implementation of the Hungarian Command Year of EUFOR by both leaders. Major General Sticz emphasized that both brigadier generals are strong pillars of the European Union's peacekeeping mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The "Honours for the Partnership" has been established in 2018 and is awarded by the Chief of Defence of the Hungarian Defence Forces to foreign soldiers in recognition of their outstanding performance while carrying out joint tasks with Hungarian troops.

In November, EUFOR held the second parade. Soldiers and civilians from Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Germany, Greece, Italy, Portugal, Romania and Türkiye were presented medals by COM EUFOR, Major General László Sticz, DCOM EUFOR Brigadier General Lorenzo Dal Maso and DCOS Sp Colonel Anastas Bakalov.

In December, over 130 soldiers were awarded for their medal. Soldiers including our two canine members of the mission and civilians from Austria, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Poland and the Netherlands received the European Union's Common Security and Defence Policy Medal.

**Civilian Personnel Receive Medal****Proud Recipients**

Key Leader Engagement

Romanian Minister of National Defence

Commander EUFOR Major General László Sticz held a meeting with the Romanian Minister of National Defense H.E. Angel Tîlvăr and Romanian Deputy Chief Head of Defence for Operations and Training Lieutenant-General Iulian Berdilă in Camp Butmir in October. They discussed the importance of the Romanian contingent in EUFOR Operation Althea and Commander EUFOR highlighted his appreciation of their contribution. They also discussed EUFOR's support to the local authorities in BiH to maintain a safe and secure environment.



Bulgarian President

Commander EUFOR Major General László Sticz met with the President of Bulgaria, Rumen Radev in Camp Butmir in October. They discussed the security situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina, the importance of the Bulgarian contingent in EUFOR and EUFOR's efforts to assist in maintaining a safe and secure environment in BiH. Troops from the Bulgarian contingent also met with President Radev and spoke about their experience and role in EUFOR.



EEAS

Commander EUFOR Major General László Sticz welcomed Head of Division at the European External Action Service (EEAS) responsible for the Western Balkans and South East Europe Zuzana Michalcová

Šutiaková and EEAS Desk Officer for Western Balkans Demir Firuze in Camp Butmir in November. They discussed the security situation of BiH as well as EUFOR's mission to support the local authorities in the provision of the safe and secure environment as part of EU's comprehensive approach in BiH.



EUFOR's Operation Commander

Commander of EUFOR Major General László Sticz briefed both Lieutenant General Cottereau and Brigadier General Pawluk on the Althea Operation in BiH.



He joined Lieutenant General Cottereau in a number of meetings with High Representative Christian Schmidt, Deputy OSCE Head Thomas Bush and with Chief of the Joint Staff of BiH Armed Forces, Lieutenant General Gojko Knežević, Deputy Chief of Staff of Bosnia and Herzegovina Major General Mirsad Ahmić.

Hungarian MoD and CHOD

The Hungarian Minister of Defence of the Republic of Hungary, Kristóf Szalay-Bobrovniczky and Lieutenant General Gábor Böröndi, Hungarian Chief of General Staff visited Camp Butmir. COM EUFOR Major General László Sticz briefed them on the ongoing security situation in BiH, Hungary's time as mission lead and EUFOR's assistance to our local partners to ensure a safe and secure environment in BiH. Kristóf Szalay-Bobrovniczky and Lieutenant General Gábor Böröndi, Hungarian Chief of General Staff joined EUFOR troops for a morning Battle PT in the camp.



British Minister of State for Defence

Commander EUFOR Major General László Sticz met with Lord Coaker, British Minister of State for Defence and H.E. Julian Reilly, British Ambassador to Bosnia and Herzegovina in November. They were joined by members of the UK Ministry of Defence.



COM KFOR

Commander of EUFOR Major General László Sticz met with Commander of KFOR Major General Enrico Barduani. They discussed the current security situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina, EUFOR's 20-year anniversary events and the ongoing activities EUFOR conducts to assist in the provision of a safe and secure environment in Bosnia and Herzegovina.



Deputy Minister of Defense of Bosnia and Herzegovina

Commander EUFOR Major General László Sticz met with Deputy Minister of Defense of Bosnia and Herzegovina Aleksandar Goganović. The Deputy Minister expressed his gratitude to EUFOR for providing assistance to BiH and its citizens during the flooding in BiH. They also discussed the decision of the United Nations Security Council to extend the mandate of EUFOR.



EUFOR signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Mountain Rescue Service Prenj from Konjic on 22 October 2004.

The purpose of the memorandum is to ensure common support and assistance between the two organizations. This further shows EUFOR's commitment to assisting our local partners in the provision of a safe and secure environment in BiH.

Three participants signed the memorandum. Representing EUFOR was the Commander of EUFOR, Major General László Sticz. Representing the Defence Staff of Hungary was Colonel Ferenc Könczöl, the Acting Commander of the Air Forces Command of the Hungarian Defence Forces. Representing the Mountain Rescue Service Prenj from Konjic, represented by Mr. Mahmutović, Chair of the Managing Board of the Mountain Rescue Service Prenj from Konjic. Mr. Dangubić from the Mountain Rescue Service Prenj from Konjic was also in attendance.



Following the signing of the MoU with EUFOR, members of Mountain Rescue Service (GSS) Prenj from Konjic took part in joint training with EUFOR Aviation Detachment. The training was part of the H145M Helicopter Hoist Training for Bosnian Mountain Rescuers Course. The joint training represented the commitment of EUFOR to continue to assist local agencies in training in order to be prepared for future operations.

MEDEVAC / CASEVAC



The arrival of the H225M saw the departure of the Mi-17 crew from EUFOR.

Having performed in a significant, professional and above all vital role during their time here, we wish to thank them for their service and wish them the very best in their future endeavors.

The H225M can be utilized in a variety of different roles such as MEDEVAC/CASEVAC, Search and Rescue and Tactical transport and utility. Its ability to transport supplies and personnel is important to the ability of EUFOR to continue supporting and assisting in the provision of a safe and secure environment in Bosnia and Herzegovina.