

Kosovo is not Bosnia: The UNMIK/KFOR/MNB(E) Experience

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ABSTRACT

The number one lesson that seems to appear in every military After Action Review was "Kosovo is not Bosnia." This paper attempts to highlight some of these differences and surface a number of the first year challenges faced by UNMIK, KFOR and the US element supporting Multinational Brigade East. The Center for Army Lessons Learned defines *lessons learned* as, "a lesson is learned when behavior changes," therefore, the Kosovo observations presented contain both new and revisited experiences yet to be lessons learned. In the final analysis, the successes of the first year of Operation Joint Guardian were because good people made it happen.

PROVINCE OF KOSOVO

The providence of Kosovo lies in the central part of the Balkan Peninsula in the southernmost part of Serbia. It is a landlocked area covering about 11,000 square kilometers.

It is slightly smaller than the US state of Connecticut and consists of two lowland areas separated and surrounded by highlands. The lowest terrain is in the west-central part of the province and the highest elevations (2,600 meter and over) are found in the west and southwest along the Albanian and Macedonian borders. The province is bordered by the remainder of Serbia from the northeast through the east, by the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (FYROM) on the southeast, Albania on the southwest, and Montenegro on the west. Pristina, the provincial capital and Kosovo's largest city, is approximately 240 kilometers south-southeast of Belgrade and 80 kilometers north-northwest of Skopje, FYROM.

An ethnically mixed population of Albanians, Serbs, Romas, Turks, and Gypsies has inhabited the area for centuries. The estimated population of about 2 million people is overwhelmingly comprised of Albanians, about 90%. The province has the highest population density in the Balkans, 210 inhabitants per square kilometer. The average family size is seven. Poverty before the war was pervasive and remains so and the living standards are less than one-third the level of those in Serbia and Montenegro as a whole. The Albanians call Kosovo "Kosova" and the Serbs refer to the area as "Kosovo-Metohija or Kosmet." The majority of Albanians are Muslims. Other religions observed are Greek orthodox and Roman Catholic. The Serbs are Serbian Orthodox Christians. The Albanians are believed to be descendents of Illyrians, the aboriginal inhabitants of the western Balkan Peninsula, who were compressed into their present-day mountain homeland and compact communities by the Slavs. The Serbs are Slavic.

PRELUDE TO INTERVENTION

Until 1989, the Kosovo region enjoyed a high degree of autonomy within the former Yugoslavia even though the Albanians pressed for an elevation of the status of Kosovo into a republic within the federation. The conflict reached a new stage of intensity in 1989 when Serbian leader Slobodan Milosevic forcibly altered the status of the region, removing its autonomy and bringing it under the direct control of Belgrade, the Serbian capital. The entire structure of regional administration was dismantled and practically overnight Albanians were dismissed from their jobs, denied education in their own language, and exposed to massive abuse of their human rights and civil liberties. Kosovo became a de facto Serbian colony.

The Kosovar Albanians strenuously opposed the move. They organized a referendum and opted for independence. Led by Ibrahim Rugova, they conducted a non-violent campaign to win their right to self-determination. In the hope that the international community would deliver a just solution, the Kosovars built a parallel society with certain instruments and institutions of local and sovereign authority. The policy of non-violence was not, however, rewarded either by the Serbian authorities or the international community. Despite many warnings that the conflict in Kosovo would escalate into open and armed conflict, no steps were taken to prevent it.

The emergence of the guerrilla movement, the Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA) or *Ushtria Clirimtare E Kosoves* (UCK) in Albanian, was a predictable consequence. In June 1996, the KLA/UCK appeared publicly for the first time, assuming responsibility for a series of attacks against Serbian police stations in Kosovo. The KLA/UCK was not a unified military organization subordinated to a political party. Its strength, however, swelled from

some 500 active members to a force of around 15,000. The KLA/UCK used mainly small arms to start with but by 1998 its forces were armed with rocket propelled grenades, recoilless rifles, anti-aircraft machineguns, and mortars. During 1998, open conflict between Serbian military and police forces and Kosovar Albanian forces resulted in the deaths of over 1,500 Kosovar Albanians and forced 400,000 people from their homes. The international community became gravely concerned about the escalating conflict, its humanitarian consequences, and the risk of it spreading to other countries. President Milosevic's disregard for diplomatic efforts aimed at peacefully resolving the crisis and the destabilizing role of militant Kosovar Albanian forces was also of concern.

On 28 May 1998, the North Atlantic Council, meeting at Foreign Minister level, set out NATO's two major objectives with respect to the crisis in Kosovo, namely:

- Help achieve a peaceful resolution of the crisis by contributing to the response of the international community;
- Promote stability and security in neighboring countries with particular emphasis on Albania and the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia.

On 12 June 1998 the North Atlantic Council, meeting at Defense Minister level, asked for an assessment of possible further measures that NATO might take with regard to the developing Kosovo Crisis. This led to consideration of a large number of possible military options and on 13 October 1998, following a deterioration of the situation the NATO Council authorized Activation Orders for air strikes. This move (diplomacy backed by threat—persuade) was designed to support diplomatic efforts to persuade the Milosevic regime to withdraw forces from Kosovo, cooperate in bringing an end to the violence and facilitate the return of refugees to their homes. At the last moment, following further diplomatic initiatives including visits to Belgrade by NATO's Secretary General Solana, US Envoys Holbrooke and Hill, the Chairman of NATO's Military Committee, General Naumann, and the Supreme Allied Commander Europe, General Clark, President Milosevic agreed to comply and the air strikes were called off.

UN Security Council Resolution (UNSCR 1199), among other things, expressed deep concern about the excessive use of force by Serbian security forces and the Yugoslav army, and called for a cease-fire by both parties to the conflict. In the spirit of the UNSCR, limits were set on the number of Serbian forces in Kosovo, and on the scope of their operations, following a separate agreement with Generals Naumann and Clark. It was agreed, in addition, that the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) would establish a Kosovo Verification Mission (KVM) to observe compliance on the ground and that NATO would establish an aerial surveillance mission. The establishment of the two missions was endorsed by UN Security Council Resolution 1203. Several non-NATO nations that participate in Partnership for Peace (PfP) agreed to contribute to the surveillance mission organized by NATO. In support of the OSCE, the Alliance established a special military task force to assist with the emergency evacuation of members of the KVM, if renewed conflict should put them at risk. This task force was deployed in the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (Turkey recognizes the Republic of Macedonia with its constitutional name) under the overall direction of NATO's Supreme Allied Commander Europe.

Despite NATO threats to use military force and international diplomatic attempts to stabilize the conflict, the situation in Kosovo flared up again at the beginning of 1999,

following a number of acts of provocation on both sides and the use of excessive and disproportionate force by the Yugoslav Army (VJ) and Serbian Special Police (MUP). Some of these incidents were defused through the mediation efforts of verifiers of the OSCE-led KVM but in mid-January, the situation deteriorated further after escalation of the Serbian offensive against Kosovar Albanians and in particular, the massacre of 45 ethnic Albanian civilians in Racak. Renewed international efforts were made to give new political impetus to finding a peaceful solution to the conflict. The six-nation Contact Group (France, Italy, Germany, Russia, United Kingdom and United States) established by the 1992 London Conference on the Former Yugoslavia met on 29 January. It was agreed to convene urgent negotiations between the parties to the conflict, under international mediation.

NATO supported and reinforced the Contact Group efforts by agreeing on 30 January to the use of air strikes if required, and by issuing a warning to both sides in the conflict. These concerted initiatives culminated in initial negotiations between the two sides (KLA representatives led the fragmented Albanian political parties and Yugoslavia sent a delegation approved by its parliament) in Rambouillet near Paris, from 6 to 23 February, followed by a second round in Paris, from 15 to 18 March. At the end of the second round of talks, the Kosovar Albanian delegation signed the proposed peace agreement, but the talks broke up without a signature from the Serbian delegation. Many felt the agreement itself was very advantageous to the Kosovars (the agreement called for a de facto protectorate, something the Albanians had been asking for a long time) and hence, they had little problem signing it. On the other hand, the Serbs considered the deployment of NATO forces as an assault on their sovereignty and therefore, refused to sign the peace deal. Immediately afterwards, Serbian military and police forces stepped up the intensity of their operations against the ethnic Albanians in Kosovo, moving extra troops and modern tanks into the region, in a clear breach of compliance with the October agreement. Tens of thousands of people began to flee their homes in the face of this systematic offensive.

NATO TAKES MILITARY ACTION

On 20 March 1999, the OSCE KVM was withdrawn from the region, having faced obstruction from Serbian forces to the extent that they could no longer continue to fulfill their task. US Ambassador Holbrooke then flew to Belgrade, in a final attempt to persuade President Milosevic to stop attacks on the Kosovar Albanians or face imminent NATO air strikes. Milosevic refused to comply, and on 23 March the order was given to commence air strikes (Operation Allied Force).

From 24 March through 9 June NATO flew more than 38,000 sorties prosecuting the air war over Serbia. NATO's political objectives were to stop the killings in Kosovo, allow the refugees to safely return home, and create conditions for a political settlement. From the outset, NATO planned to use aerospace power as a means to achieve its objectives while minimizing casualties among Alliance personnel and in targeted areas. Initially, US national leaders and the North Atlantic Council prepared for a short conflict defined by limited objectives. This expectation of quick results shaped NATO and US planning efforts. NATO forces began air operations over Serbia seeking to achieve air superiority and force Milosevic to cease aggression in Kosovo. While the initial attacks achieved tactical success, they did not have their desired political effect (diplomacy backed by force—coerce). NATO's effort grew in intensity until the end of the conflict. The US Air Force, in support of NATO, flew

78 days of intensive aerial combat operations with the loss of only two manned aircraft and no casualties as a result of enemy action. It had committed resources and performed military operations at levels equivalent to a major theater war. The air campaign successfully allowed NATO to achieve its overall political objectives in the Serbian province of Kosovo. NATO's enduring strength, cohesion and resolve proved to be the most significant factors contributing to the successful prosecution of the air war.

During the course of the NATO air campaign, International organizations estimated there were some 800,000 refugees who fled Kosovo into neighboring Albania and Macedonia. Several hundred thousand of these refugees fled to Macedonia alone and settled into camps just south of the Kosovo-Macedonia border. An estimated additional 590,000 were internally displaced. Together, these figures implied that over 90% of the Kosovar Albanian population had been displaced from their homes. An American Association for the Advancement of Science analysis suggested that the refugee flow patterns did not correlate positively with either the NATO bombing or mass killing patterns. The analysis concluded that the data did not support the theory that the refugees fled but was more consistent with the view that it was an organized expulsion.

The unprecedented influx of refugees into the Former Republic of Macedonia and the large number of ethnic Albanians forced from their homes and stranded in "no-man's land" overwhelmed the combined capacities of the government in Skopje, the UNHCR and various relief agencies. At the request of the UNHCR, NATO forces in the Former Republic of Macedonia were put to work around the clock to build a number of refugee camps to its specification and then turned them over to the control of designated NGOs. In a matter of days four major refugee centers were up and running. NATO continued to provide certain essential technical support for reception and onward movement of aid cargo until such time that the necessary civilian support capabilities could be brought on-line. NATO countries also responded to the appeals from the UNHCR and the Skopje government by offering to provide temporary asylum for more than 110,000 Kosovar refugees. They provided aircraft to move more than 60,000 people to all 19-member countries. Partner countries also provided asylum for some 10,000 refugees.

In Albania, the refugee challenge was even greater. Operation Allied Harbour was NATO's first humanitarian operation. Normally, such operations are almost exclusively the domain of civilian organizations, both international and non-governmental, but, in the case of the Kosovo crisis, by the end of March 1999 these agencies were unable to cope with the massive influx of refugees into Albania. Within a fortnight over 200,000 refugees had arrived from Kosovo and NATO was the only organization quickly able to meet the expanding need. HQ AMF(L) was deployed within five days and much credit should be given to the nations and NATO HQs in deploying their forces and the augmentees so quickly. The soldiers and staff arrived "on the run," setting to work within twenty four hours of arrival, and within a few weeks, working closely with the civilian sector and the Albanian Government, the crisis was under control. Of course the crisis did not end there and by 15 June 1999 there were over 450,000 refugees in the country. But the provision by NATO of medical, engineer, transport, security and staff support prevented Milosevic from destabilizing Albania and proved instrumental in sustaining the refugees and in their eventual return to Kosovo.

In support of the NATO-led Operation Allied Harbour, Joint Task Force (JTF) Shining Hope, a USAFE-led operation, was established by USEUCOM on April 4, 1999, to help alleviate the suffering and provide immediate relief to more than 450,000 Kosovar refugees

fleeing into Albania and Macedonia. The JTF headquarters was located at the USAFE Warrior Preparation Center near Ramstein Air Base, Germany and orchestrated the humanitarian relief efforts through a small forward-deployed cell located in a series of tents on the Tirana-Rinas airport in Albania. The first US built camp, named Camp Hope, opened on May 12, 1999 to accept the initial increment of Kosovar Albanian refugees. The 26th Marine Expeditionary Unit (MEU) provided security for Camp Hope. The United States worked closely with the UNHCR and other relief organizations to ensure a comprehensive and adequate response to the humanitarian crisis caused by the ethnic cleansing and atrocities that were conducted by Serb forces. Never before had the US military accepted such a massive humanitarian responsibility. During its first 50 days of operation, JTF Shining Hope delivered more than 3,400 tons of food, equipment, and medical supplies to those in need.

On 10 June 1999, NATO Secretary General Javier Solana announced that he had instructed General Wesley Clark, Supreme Allied Commander Europe, to temporarily suspend NATO's air operations against Yugoslavia. This decision was taken after consultations with the North Atlantic Council and confirmation from General Clark that the full withdrawal of Yugoslav forces from Kosovo had begun. The withdrawal was in accordance with a Military-Technical Agreement concluded between NATO and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia on the evening of 9 June. The agreement was signed by Lt. General Sir Michael Jackson, on behalf of NATO, and by Colonel General Svetozar Marjanovic of the Yugoslav Army and Lieutenant General Obrad Stevanovic of the Ministry of Internal Affairs, on behalf of the Governments of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and Republic of Serbia. The withdrawal was also consistent with the agreement between the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and the European Union and Russian special envoys, President Ahtisaari of Finland and Mr. Victor Chernomyrdin, former Prime Minister of Russia, reached on 3 June.

The NATO Secretary General announced that he had written to the Secretary-General of the United Nations, Mr. Kofi Annan, and to the President of the United Nations Security Council, informing them of these developments. The Secretary General of NATO urged all parties to the conflict to seize the opportunity for peace and called on them to comply with their obligations under the agreements that had now been concluded and under all relevant UN Security Council resolutions. Paying tribute to General Clark and to the forces which had contributed to Operation Allied Force, and to the cohesion and determination of all the Allies, the Secretary General stated that NATO was ready to undertake its new mission to bring the people back to their homes and to build a lasting and just peace in Kosovo.

On 10 June the UN Security Council passed a resolution (UNSCR 1244) welcoming the acceptance by the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia of the principles on a political solution to the Kosovo crisis, including an immediate end to violence and a rapid withdrawal of its military, police and paramilitary forces. The Resolution, adopted by a vote of 14 in favor and none against, with one abstention (China), announced the Security Council's decision to deploy international civil and security presences in Kosovo, under United Nations auspices.

Acting under Chapter VII of the UN Charter, the Security Council also decided that the political solution to the crisis would be based on the general principles adopted on 6 May by the Foreign Ministers of the Group of Seven industrialized countries and the Russian Federation - the Group of 8 - and the principles contained in the paper presented in Belgrade by the President of Finland and the Special Representative of the Russian Federation which was accepted by the Government of the Federal Republic on 3 June. Both documents were included as annexes to the Resolution. The principles included, among others, an immediate

and verifiable end to violence and repression in Kosovo; the withdrawal of the military, police and paramilitary forces of the Federal Republic; deployment of effective international and security presences, with substantial NATO participation in the security presence and unified command and control; establishment of an interim administration; the safe and free return of all refugees; a political process providing for substantial self-government, as well as the demilitarization of the KLA; and a comprehensive approach to the economic development of the crisis region.

The Security Council authorized Member States and relevant international organizations to establish the international security presence, and decided that its responsibilities would include deterring renewed hostilities, demilitarizing the KLA and establishing a secure environment for the return of refugees and in which the international civil presence could operate. The Security Council also authorized the UN Secretary-General to establish the international civil presence and requested him to appoint a Special Representative to control its implementation. Following the adoption of UNSCR 1244, General Jackson, acting on the instructions of the North Atlantic Council, made immediate preparations for the rapid deployment of the security force (Operation Joint Guardian), mandated by the United Nations Security Council.

The first NATO-led elements (force backed by diplomacy —seize and secure) entered Kosovo at 0500 on 12 June. On this same day, a Russian convoy coming from SFOR, through Serbia, arrived at Pristina airport as well. As agreed in the Military Technical Agreement, the deployment of the security force — Kosovo Force (KFOR) — was synchronized with the departure of Serb security forces from Kosovo that had started on 10 June. During the Kosovo entry, security capability was enhanced by the use of attack helicopters provided from Task Force Hawk. At 1200 hours on 20 June, the Serb withdrawal was completed (12 hours ahead of schedule) and KFOR was well established in Kosovo.

At its full strength KFOR would be comprised of some 50,000 personnel. It was a multinational force under unified command and control with substantial NATO participation. Agreement had been reached on the arrangements for participation by the Russian Federation. More than twelve other non-NATO nations also indicated their intention to contribute to KFOR. Also on 20 June, following confirmation by the Supreme Allied Commander Europe (SACEUR) that Serb security forces had vacated Kosovo, the Secretary General of NATO announced that, in accordance with the Military Technical Agreement, he had formally terminated the air campaign. On 21 June, the KLA/UCK undertaking of demilitarization and transformation was signed by COMKFOR and the Commander in Chief of the KLA/UCK (Mr. Hashim Thaci) moving KFOR into a new phase of enforcing the peace and supporting the implementation of a civil administration under the auspices of the UN.

KOSOVO IS NOT BOSNIA

There are some similarities between Bosnia and Kosovo. Slobodan Milosevic was the thug-in-charge responsible for both calamities and the calamities were in the same general geographical and cultural areas. The violence directed against the ethnic Albanian civilians in Kosovo by Serb paramilitary groups was indistinguishable from that directed against Bosniaks and Croats in Bosnia. Although there were important lessons learned in Bosnia,

there were also significant differences between the two operations that precluded directly applying all lessons from Bosnia. Considering the application without understanding the Kosovo uniqueness could have had particularly dangerous results, a mindset sometimes referred to as “preparing to fight the last war.” Kosovo was not Bosnia and most likely never will be.

Bosnia was a historical sideshow for Serbs where as Kosovo was center stage. Technically, Bosnia was independent when it became subject to Serbian interference but Kosovo was internationally recognized as still part of Yugoslavia. Kosovo is the mystical heartland of Serb nationalism. It is central to the Serbian people’s perception of themselves and lies at the heart of the Serbian military, religious and economic history. Three of the greatest battles in Serbian history took place in Kosovo Polje (near Pristina the capital of Kosovo) and all were against the “Islamic scourge” of the time. The Serbian vision of themselves as warriors and the defenders of Christendom are rooted in Kosovo. The rise of the independent Serbian church began here in the late 1300’s and three of the greatest monasteries in the Church’s history lie in Kosovo—Decani, Pec and Gracinica. Economically, Kosovo has always been a source of raw materials and hard currency because of its mineral wealth. The Trepce mine complex north of Metrovica and its older and currently non-productive mine in Novo Brdo have been key drivers in the economy of the Former Republic of Yugoslavia for hundreds of years. As a result of its significant place in Serbian history, Kosovo was not just another province to be lost once again to the “Islamic” invaders but rather a birthright for all Serbs.

Albanians living in Kosovo are culturally and socially similar to those living in Albania. They value their families and ethnic heritage and personal honor is also important. A majority of Albanians honor a traditional institution called the *besa* (sworn truce). Adherence to the *besa*, family honor, hospitality, and a patriarchal order are considered the basis for successful relationships. In contrast to the situations in Croatia and Bosnia, little intermarriage has occurred between Serbs and Albanians in Kosovo. There are other Albanians who engaged in blood feuds, resisted governance by others, and distrusted outsiders. Among Albanians this behavior is referred to as the Kanun or Code of Lek Dukagjin (a system of customary law passed on through oral tradition through the centuries). The taking of blood for blood and head for head described in the code are only part of the numerous references regulating grazing rights, abandoned land, the hospitality extended to guests, the protection of religious property, and the working of mills and blacksmiths. The people of Kosovo have actively engaged in blood feuds for much of this century but unlike Montenegro and Albania, where the clan took vengeance, in Kosovo it was extended family (oldest male, usually the grandfather, resides as lord of the house and the household can extend to include second cousins) that was the main executor of retribution.

The international community did not view the conflict in Bosnia to be a catalytic war but Kosovo was. All-out fighting in the province could have threatened to involve Albania, Montenegro, fracture Macedonia, and possibly even pulled in Greece and Turkey. It, therefore, became necessary to be more careful about erring over Kosovo than was the case for Bosnia. A few NATO bombing runs helped bring Milosevic to the table over Bosnia in 1995 but this was not the case for Kosovo. Serbian capitulation only came after several months of a mini-Desert Storm-like devastating bombing campaign that included not only Kosovo but also Serbia and the center of power Belgrade. The Bosnia Serbs composed a motley and underpowered thuggery while the Yugoslav military (VJ and air defense) and paramilitary (MUP) posed a much more serious threat to both NATO air and ground forces.

To Moscow, Kosovo looked uncomfortably like Chechnya and to Beijing a bit too much like Tibet. In Bosnia, NATO policy was in harmony with the professed aim of the Bosnian state: security and independence for a multiethnic democracy. NATO policy was not in harmony with either moderate or militant Albanians who demanded not a re-established autonomy but independence. As a result, European allies and NATO were somewhat reluctant to intervene militarily without an enabling UN Security Council resolution.

Overall responsibility for the implementation of the civil and military tasks agreed in the Dayton Peace Agreement for Bosnia was divided between the Peace Implementation Council Steering Board (not a standing internationally recognized political organization) through the Office of the High Representative (OHR) and the North Atlantic Council (NAC) through the NATO chain of command. The OHR was tasked to coordinate the activities of the civilian organizations and to remain in close contact with the IFOR commander. Initially, no formal mechanism existed to develop unified political direction necessary to synchronize civil and military policy between these two bodies and this was a significant shortfall that had ramifications across all issue areas. For Kosovo, the United Nations Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1244 provided the political mandate including the role of the international security force. Specifically, UNSCR 1244 detailed the close relationship required between the civil authorities—United Nations Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK)—and the military authorities—Kosovo Force (KFOR). The resolution directed that the Special Representative of the Secretary General (SRSG), Dr Bernard Kouchner, coordinate closely with the international security presence (KFOR) to ensure that both presences operated towards the same goals and in a mutually supportive manner. Commander KFOR made it clear to his forces that the success of KFOR was linked inextricably to the success of UNMIK. An extremely close liaison was maintained between UNMIK and KFOR including daily meetings between the SRSG and COMKFOR and KFOR command level staff support to UNMIK and UNMIK liaisons with KFOR and the Multinational Brigades to facilitate planning, coordination and information sharing.

Deployment of the NATO-led multinational Implementation Force (IFOR) into Bosnia was the culmination of years of international activity and negotiations to bring the warring parties to the negotiating table and to start the rebuilding process. Military deployment planning commenced more than two years prior to the Dayton Peace Accord being signed. The role of the military was to help the parties implement a peace accord to which they had freely agreed in an even-handed way. It was also believed that the warring factions were ready to quit fighting, at least for a while. Therefore, IFOR was not in Bosnia to fight a war or to impose a settlement on any of the parties. It was there to help create a safe and secure environment for civil and economic reconstruction. At the outset, the first task of the military was to separate the warring factions and create a “Zone of Separation.” The ZOS was four kilometers wide, two kilometers on either side of the agreed ceasefire line, between the Federation troops and the Bosnian Serbs. The second most important mission was to ensure the former warring factions placed all units and equipment in designated barracks and cantonment areas. Following the successful separation of the forces, the military provided a secure environment to allow the rebuilding process to begin.

By contrast, in Kosovo KFOR primary tasks were to ensure the withdrawal of Yugoslav forces, establish law and order, establish a safe and secure environment, and demilitarize the Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA). The VJ and MUP withdrawal went without a major incident. There was no zone of separation in Kosovo but a 25 kilometer wide Air Safety Zone and a five kilometer wide Ground Safety Zone were created that extend beyond the

Kosovo providence border and into the rest of the Former Republic of Yugoslavia. No military forces and equipment were allowed in this area but verification over flight was permitted. In Bosnia, de facto partitioning occurred with the establishment of the Inter-Entity Boundary Line between the Federation and Serb Republic and included the reunification of Sarajevo. In Kosovo, the major population groups were and still are still mixed together and, while enclaves do exist, boundaries or security zones do not protect them. As a consequence, the ethnic populations mixed every day in a very uneasy and tenuous truce. The Kosovo people were not war weary. Much of the population in Bosnia was tired of fighting after years of conflict. In Kosovo, the overt and truly violent conflict really only lasted less than a year and there was plenty of fight left in many of the former belligerents. Hence, a major challenge was keeping the lid on ethnic tensions and tackling crime. Demilitarization of the KLA was successfully implemented and it was transformed into the Kosovo Protection Corps (KPC), civilian emergency organization under the UN interim administration. Its 5,000 members have sworn to abide by the instructions of legal authorities, to respect human rights and to perform all duties without any ethnic, religious or racial bias. It was intended to be a multi-ethnic organization and Albanians, Roma, and Turks have joined but no Serbs yet.

Planning for the operations in Kosovo as part of the NATO-led multinational Kosovo Force (KFOR) took place in an atmosphere of high uncertainty. Although ground peacekeeping operations had been discussed for several months prior to the deployment, the first plans were predicated on a negotiated peace settlement. These plans were meant to head off hostilities and to halt ethnic cleansing against the Kosovar Albanians. As a result of the intensive NATO air campaign and persistent shuttle diplomacy of President Martti Ahtisaari of Finland, the European Union's envoy, and Viktor Chernomyrdin, the Russian envoy, the strategic impasse with Serbia was suddenly turned into a tactical military action on the ground in Kosovo as a result of Serbian capitulation. The Serbian parliament and the Federal Yugoslav Government ratified a G8-developed peace deal on 3 June 1999.

Several days of intensive negotiations with representatives of the Yugoslav Armed Forces (VJ) and Ministry of Internal Affairs (MUP) followed and the outcome on 9 June 1999 was a Military Technical Agreement (MTA) that set out in detail what was to be in effect a "relief in place" between the withdrawing Yugoslav forces and the advancing KFOR troops. One day later on 10 June 1999, the United Nations (UN) Security Council adopted Resolution 1244 which formalized the mission for the International Security Presence provided by the NATO-led KFOR and the International Civil Presence know as UNMIK (UN Interim Administrative Mission in Kosovo). KFOR entered Kosovo from the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia on 12 June 1999 ("D-day") with a force of 20,000 troops split up into six brigades led by France, Germany, Italy, the US and two UK. Within six days all lead elements had entered Kosovo in an operation that demanded considerable skill and professionalism.

Unlike Bosnia where French and UK forces were already in place as part of the UN Protection Force (UNPROFOR) and a UN communications infrastructure existed in country that could be and was used by deploying elements of IFOR, there were no allied forces in Kosovo and no communications infrastructure to support the deployment. Fortunately, during the last weeks of May, NATO nations built up KFOR force levels in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia in anticipation of a possible ground deployment. Successful resolution of the Kosovo conflict demanded that the departing VJ and MUP forces be followed closely by arriving KFOR ground forces in order to avoid a power

vacuum in the cities and countryside where attacks and reprisals by Kosovo Serbs and Albanians needed to be kept in check by threat of the use of military force. The KFOR intent was to hug the VJ and MUP as closely as possible during their withdraw.

Both Bosnia and Kosovo were multinational military operations and the respective countries were divided into sectors and a responsible lead-nation military was assigned to each sector under a single chain of command under the authority of a NATO commander. In Bosnia there were three sectors: North, South East and South West. Multinational divisions were assigned to each under Commander IFOR, a US commander: MND (North) under the US, MND South East under the French and MND South West under the UK. Kosovo was divided into five sectors and multinational brigades led by France, Germany, Italy, the UK and US were assigned to each under Commander KFOR, a non-US commander.

The NATO-led KFOR command has undergone a number of changes since its arrival in Kosovo on 12 June 1999. The initial KFOR deployment was under the command of the Allied Command Europe Rapid Reaction Corps (ARRC) and headed by British Lt. General Sir Michael Jackson. General Jackson handed over the command to German General Klaus Reinhardt of Allied Land Forces Central Europe (LANDCENT) in October 1999. After six months, April 2000, General Reinhardt handed over the command to Spanish Lt. General Juan Ortuno, commander of the five-nation European military force, EUROCORPS. EUROCORPS was originally a Franco-German initiative but today it consists of soldiers from Belgium, Luxembourg and Spain as well as France and Germany.

A 1993 agreement between SACEUR and EUROCORPS specified that EUROCORPS would adapt itself to NATO structures and procedures for rapid integration into NATO if necessary and this was the basis for its use in KFOR. EUROCORPS assumed command of KFOR and placed some of its staff in key KFOR positions but did not replace all of the NATO-nations staffed KFOR Headquarters' elements. In October 2000, command of KFOR was turned over to Italian Lt General Carlo Cabigiosu from Allied Forces Southern Europe (AFSOUTH). KFOR commanders all came under SACEUR who up until May 2000 was US Army General Wesley Clark and was replaced then by US Air Force General Joseph Ralston.

Serious challenges faced KFOR upon arrival in Kosovo. The threat of conventional conflict was very real. Yugoslav military forces were still present in large numbers. The VJ was not defeated on the battlefield and it was not clear if they intended to fully comply with the MTA requiring its peaceful and complete withdraw. Deploying KFOR forces had meeting engagements with withdrawing VJ operational forces, had convoys that intermixed and had to deal with a continuous stream of well-armed stragglers. The KLA/UCK, too, were well armed and highly visible. They believed they won the war and ought to have a right to enjoy the fruits of their victory. Furthermore, the KLA(UCK) had its sights on becoming the Army of Kosovo but KFOR had plans to disarm and demilitarize them. In fact, disarming some heavily armed KLA forces was necessary in earlier stages of the KFOR deployment. There were also splinter groups, the rogue warriors, who participated for personal gains that had to be dealt with. Fighting was still going on.

There were far too few interpreters and linguists to help KFOR soldiers on the ground to deal with serious conflict situations. Sign language only goes so far in trying to de-conflict fighting situations when one doesn't speak the language. Nearly a million people were refugees outside of Kosovo and many started to return in the middle of the KFOR deployment. Many of those who had remained in Kosovo lived in daily fear for their lives.

Homes were destroyed, roads and fields mined, bridges down, schools and hospitals out of action. Radio and TV was off the air.

In Bosnia, even after years of civil war, there were still competent, functioning civil governments when IFOR deployed. In Kosovo there was no civil government, no law enforcement, no judicial system, no functioning banks, commerce was reduced to a barter system, and public services supporting transportation, water, power, telecommunications, and garbage collection were dysfunctional. Unemployment was widespread, exceeding 90%. Crime was flourishing. Ethnic-violence and revenge killings were common occurrences. The military quickly found themselves in the position of becoming the mayor, fire chief, police chief, dial 911 emergency services, and any other role necessary to bring stability and law and order to the towns and areas occupied. Ordinary life in Kosovo was suspended. Visions of the “Wild West,” “Roaring 20’s,” “Mafia and Organized Crime,” and “City Gangs” all come to mind when one thinks of the Kosovo ground environment faced by the NATO-led Operation Joint Guardian.

In Bosnia, establishment of the OHR and other International Organization presence in country was significantly behind the NATO military force deployment. The OHR had to be created, funded, and staffed after the military had already arrived and was not given the overall authority that was required to direct and synthesize multiple civil and military actions. Furthermore, the OHR was not a UN Special Representative with UN authority and the UN was reluctant to play a lead role in Bosnia after its poor UNPROFOR experience. The NATO-led Implementation Force (IFOR) did not report to the OHR. IFOR reported to the North Atlantic Council (NAC) through the NATO chain of command and the OHR reported to the Peace Implementation Council Steering Board. Therefore, there was no internationally recognized political organization providing overall direction. This hampered synchronization of civil-military activities and actors operated autonomously within a loose framework of cooperation, but without a formal structure for developing unified policy.

In Kosovo, UNMIK tried to do better with the establishment of a four-pillar structure (UNHCR—Humanitarian Assistance; UN Civil Administration—Districts, UNIP, Judiciary; OSCE—Police Schools, Media, Elections; and EU—Reconstruction Investments) under its leadership but this was a first-ever civil administration operation for them, procedures were not adequate to guide their actions and it was difficult to get qualified and experienced staff to fill key UN positions. Under the UNMIK construct, KFOR was employed to support the 4-pillar structure by providing a safe and secure environment. The NATO-led KFOR had its own reporting chain and COMKFOR was not the UN Force Commander. Although KFOR proved not to be a paper tiger and the UNMIK approach showed good potential, there was a lack of a clear international vision and agreed strategy and plan for Kosovo. In some cases there was even a lack of UNMIK authority for directing and synchronizing activities of the civil-military actors and this added frustration to achieving progress.

For Kosovo, UNSCR 1244 gave KFOR full responsibility for Kosovo until the arrival of the UN Civil Authorities. KFOR provided law and order and began to rebuild the shattered infrastructure and prepare for a return to normality. KFOR troops cleared mines and unexploded munitions. Bridges, roads and radio transmitters had to be repaired. Military engineers had to bring up the main “Kosovo A” power station near Pristina, organize garbage collection and generally restore vital community services with the priority being schools, hospitals and other public facilities such as power, water and telecommunications. With the onset of winter in mind, emphasis had to be placed on repairing villages in the high

mountains. These were not tasks ordinarily associated with classical soldiering. As a result, for both Bosnia and Kosovo operations, the military in addition to providing security had to fill gaps where there was an absence of credible civil agency capabilities to act and this raised expectations for continued military support for such actions (some times referred to as “mission creep”) and in some cases slowed the creation of the necessary civilian capabilities to meet the infrastructure reconstruction and nation-building needs.

Despite these frustrations and coordination challenges including coordination of the efforts of over 250 Non-Governmental Organizations (NGO) and an almost impenetrable tangle of international organizations jointly responsible for establishing a new civil order, the early collaborative efforts and close working relationship of UNMIK and KFOR resulted in some progress being made after one year but achieving a stable civil administration in Kosovo remained a significant challenge. Unlike the military that can act and react swiftly, thanks to its command structure, training, discipline and capabilities on the ground, civil bureaucracies lack many of these qualities and capabilities and take far longer to act. After a year, UNMIK has begun to take over much of the work started by KFOR, most importantly the UNMIK-Police have begun to assume police responsibilities and have established and started training the civilian police, the Kosovo Police Service.

The end of one year of UNMIK presence introduced some unintended complications for the civil administration situation in Kosovo due to the fact that there was a pending sizeable staff turnover of some of the non-military organizations such as UNMIK Police and UN Civil Administration staff. These changes had the potential to introduce continuity and coordination problems and loss of institutional knowledge that might add unneeded challenges to achieving and sustaining a stable operation. UNMIK also suffered from an unusually high turnover of staff throughout its first year and there was a lack of available skilled staff willing to fill key vacancies. The military exit strategy in Kosovo was directly tied to the success of UNIMK—the military ticket home. Although some progress has been made to date, it has been limited and this suggests that the military and international organizations may be there for some time to come.

UNITED NATIONS INTERIM ADMINISTRATION MISSION IN KOSOVO (UNMIK)

*“The task before the international community
is to help the people in Kosovo to rebuild
their lives and heal the wounds of conflict.”*

UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan

In Kosovo, the United Nations faced a sweeping undertaking that was unprecedented in its complexity and scope for any international institution. No other mission had ever been designed in which other multilateral organizations were full partners under United Nations leadership. On 10 June, the Security Council authorized the Secretary-General to establish in Kosovo an interim international civilian administration under which the people of the war-ravaged province could enjoy substantial autonomy. The Council took its action by adopting resolution 1244 after NATO suspended its air operations following the withdrawal of security forces of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia from Kosovo. Secretary-General Kofi

Annan presented to the Council an operational concept that has come to be known as the *United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK)*. On 12 July, in his follow-up report to the Council, the Secretary-General presented a comprehensive framework for the UN-led international civil operation in Kosovo.

The Security Council vested in the UN Mission authority over the territory and people of Kosovo, including all legislative and executive powers, as well as the administration of the judiciary. Never before had the United Nations assumed such broad, far-reaching and important executive tasks. As the Secretary-General said, the UN will have an “immense” task of restoring a semblance of normal life to the province. Among its key tasks, the Mission was to:

- Promote the establishment of substantial autonomy and self-government in Kosovo;
- Perform basic civilian administrative functions;
- Facilitate a political process to determine Kosovo's future status;
- Support the reconstruction of key infrastructure and humanitarian and disaster relief;
- Maintain civil law and order;
- Promote human rights; and
- Assure the safe and unimpeded return of all refugees and displaced persons to their homes in Kosovo.

In a massive international effort to turn war-devastated Kosovo into a functioning, democratic society, four international organizations and agencies worked together in one operation under the leadership of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Dr. Bernard Kouchner (France), who assumed office on 15 July. He took over from the Secretary-General's interim Special Representative, Mr. Sergio Vieira de Mello, who led the UN's advance team to Kosovo to immediately establish a UN presence on the ground, assess the situation and finalize an operational concept for the UN Mission in Kosovo. As chief of Mission, Dr. Kouchner presided over the four sectors involved with implementing the civilian aspects of rehabilitating and reforming Kosovo. Those sectors, also known as the “four pillars,” were:

- *Civil Administration*, under the United Nations itself;
- *Humanitarian Assistance*, led by the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees;
- *Democratization and Institution-Building*, led by the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe; and
- *Economic Reconstruction*, managed by the European Union.

The work of UNMIK was to be conducted in five integrated phases:

1. *Phase I:* The Mission will set up administrative structures, deploy international civilian police, provide emergency assistance for returning refugees and displaced people, restore public services and train local police and judiciary. It will also develop a phased economic recovery plan and seek to establish a self-sustaining economy.
2. *Phase II:* The focus will be on administration of social services and utilities, and consolidation of the rule of law. Administration of such sectors as health and education could be transferred to local and possibly regional authorities. Preparation for elections will begin.
3. *Phase III:* UNMIK will finalize preparations and conduct elections for a Kosovo Transitional Authority.
4. *Phase IV:* UNMIK will help Kosovo's elected representatives organize and set up provisional institutions for democratic and autonomous self-government. As these are established, UNMIK will transfer its remaining administrative responsibilities while supporting the consolidation of Kosovo's provisional institutions.
5. *Phase V:* This concluding phase will depend on a final settlement of the status of Kosovo. UNMIK will oversee the transfer of authority from Kosovo's provisional institutions to institutions established under a political settlement.

KOSOVO FORCE (KFOR)

KFOR consisted of 50,000 men and women. Nearly 42,500 were from over 30 countries and deployed in Kosovo and another 7,500 provided rear support through contingents based in the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, in Albania, and in Greece. KFOR contingents were grouped into five multinational brigades and a lead nation designated for each multinational brigade. Although brigades were responsible for a specific area of operation, they all fell under a single chain of command under the authority of Command KFOR. This meant that all national contingents pursued the same objective to maintain a secure environment in Kosovo. They did so with professionalism and in an even-handed manner towards all ethnic groups.

In accordance with UNSCR 1244, the mission of KFOR was to:

- *Establish and maintain a secure environment in Kosovo, including public safety and order.*

KFOR had the mandate to enforce law and order until the UN Mission in Kosovo could fully assume this responsibility. This was achieved by patrols, air surveillance, checkpoints, responses to emergency calls, search operations, border control, investigation of criminal activities and arrest or detention of suspected criminals. After just three months in Kosovo, KFOR troops

arrested hundreds of suspected criminals, confiscated quantities of weapons and ammunition, and restored the overall security and stability of the province. KFOR presence allowed more than 775,000 refugees and displaced people to come back in Kosovo and feel secure again. A constant drop in the rate of murder, arson and looting signaled a potential return to normal life might not be far ahead. Special attention was paid to the protection of minorities, who were often the victims of ethnic tensions and hatred.

- *Monitor, verify and when necessary, enforce compliance with the conditions of the Military Technical Agreement and the UCK Undertaking.*

KFOR was actively involved in the demilitarization of Kosovo. With the arrival of KFOR, military and police forces from the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia completed their withdrawal and met the final timelines of the Military Technical Agreement. Also KLA forces were compliant with the terms of the Undertaking of Demilitarization and Transformation. This Undertaking was a voluntary commitment for immediate cessation of hostilities and for a step-by-step demilitarization of the KLA, which was completed on 20 September 1999. Tons of weapons and ammunition were seized or handed to KFOR. These included thousands of pistols and rifles, hand grenades, anti-personnel mines, rocket launchers, artillery pieces, mortar bombs, rifle bombs, anti-tank mines, fuses, explosives, and even anti-tank rockets and missiles. The KLA was disbanded and all KLA weapons stored in secure weapons storage sites under the control of KFOR. The transformation of the former KLA was underway through resettlement programs, the creation of the Kosovo Police Service and the stand-up of the Kosovo Protection Corps, which was to be an unarmed civil relief organization involved in the rebuilding of Kosovo's infrastructure.

- *Provide assistance to the UN Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK), including core civil functions until they are transferred to UNMIK.*

KFOR and UNMIK were Partners in an international effort to restore Kosovo and help the local population to transform the province into a free and democratic society open to all. Although KFOR's main responsibility was to create a secure environment, the multinational force provided resources, skills and manpower to various organizations and agencies working under the UNMIK umbrella. Examples of KFOR involvement can be found in a variety of sectors such as: public works and utilities, construction, transportation, railway operations, mine clearance, border security, fire services, protection of international workers, food distribution, removal of unexploded ordnance, mine-awareness education, medical services, etc.

As noted earlier, Kosovo was divided into five sectors and a lead nation from the members of the NATO alliance was assigned responsibility for each sector. For each sector, a Multinational Brigade (MNB) was established under command of Commander KFOR. The US was responsible for MNB (East), the French for MNB (North), the Italians for MNB (West), the Germans for MNB (South) and the British for MNB (Central). Nations contributing troops in support of KFOR were as follows:

- *From NATO nations:* Belgium, Canada, Czech Republic, Denmark, France (MNB-North HQ, Mitrovica), Germany (MNB-South HQ, Prizren), Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Italy (MNB-West HQ, Pec), Luxembourg, The Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Spain, Turkey, United Kingdom (MNB-Central HQ, Pristina), and United States (MNB-East HQ, Urosevac).
- *From non-NATO nations:* Argentina, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bulgaria, Estonia, Finland, Georgia, Ireland, Jordan, Lithuania, Morocco, Russia (North), Russia (East), Slovakia, Slovenia, Sweden, Switzerland, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates (North) and United Arab Emirates (East).

On the basis of the MTA and UNSC 1244 agreement, the Greek Governmental Council on Foreign Policy and National Defense met on 11 June 1999 and decided to send a Hellenic Contingent of brigade level (34 Mech. BDE), in the framework of the “Joint Guardian” operation, under the name of GFSU (Greek Force Support Unit) whose task would be to create a safe environment for the inhabitants of Kosovo and to secure the safe return of refugees and those expelled. The tasks of the GFSU were as follows:

- Monitor, verify, and enforce as necessary the provisions of the Military Technical Agreement in order to secure a safe and secure environment.
- Establish and support the resumption of core civil functions.
- Provide combat support and combat service support throughout the KFOR area of operation in order to facilitate COMKFOR's mission.
- Assist in the movement and destruction of confiscated weapons, including EOD support.
- Assist UNMIK in the reestablishment of civil infrastructure.
- Provide response to traffic accidents and incidents.
- Provide convoy escorts as directed.
- Perform medical exams and evacuation to population of Kosovo.

As a result of the successes achieved in Bosnia, a Multinational Specialized Unit (MSU) was assigned to COMKFOR and elements of the MSU to his MNBs. The MSU was a Military Police Force, a police force with military status and an overall police capability. The MSU in KFOR consisted of a regiment of Italian Carabinieri and a platoon of Estonian Army. The MSU elements from the Italian Carabinieri had substantial experience in combating organized crime and terrorism. The MSU possessed human resources and dedicated investigative tools to analyze subversive and criminal organizations structure and provided prevention and repression resources to be used as a KFOR asset. The MSU conducted general patrolling operations in order to maintain a regular presence within the KFOR AOR. Such operations were in support of KFOR routine patrol activity and allowed the MSU to interact with the local community while deepening their overall knowledge of evolving criminal and security assets of each area. Each detachment in the KFOR AOR had a

different strength depending on the public order and security situation of the area. The primary tasks of the MSU were to:

- Maintenance of a secure environment.
- Law enforcement.
- Information gathering.
- Presence patrol.
- Civil disturbance operations.
- Counter terrorism.
- Criminal intelligence on organized crime.

KFOR Headquarters Rear in the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia had its Headquarters at the “Gazella” Shoe Factory in the capital Skopje. Headquarters Rear was responsible for sustaining the so-called “Communications Zone” (COMMZ) in the KFOR theater rear area. The KFOR COMMZ area of responsibility encompassed the sovereign independent nations FYR of Macedonia, Greece (COMMZ South), Albania (COMMZ West), and, to a certain extent, Bulgaria (COMMZ East). Personnel from 17 nations were present in the HQ Rear in Skopje. Seventeen of the 39 participating nations in Kosovo had National Support Elements (NSE) south of the border. There were approximately 4,000 troops in the FYR of Macedonia. The main mission of the headquarters was the reception, staging, onward movement, and integration of KFOR contingents moving through the COMMZ. KFOR Headquarters Rear was also the primary point of contact for the respective National Support Elements. At times, 1,000 military vehicles per day crossed the respective national borders in convoys.

MNB(E) AND TASK FORCE FALCON

In support of the UN sanctioned operation Task Force Able Sentry, monitoring of the Serb border, there were US forces already in Macedonia. NATO deployed the ARRC to the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia in February 1999 in anticipation of achieving a ceasefire agreement. Task Force Falcon was activated on 4 February 1999. Initially it was envisioned to be a reinforcement Brigade to serve as the US component of a NATO-led Kosovo Force (KFOR) whose mission would be to conduct peacekeeping operations in Kosovo province in support of the Rambouillet Peace Accords. The 1st Infantry Division, the Big Red One, was earmarked for this mission and began training in March 1999 while diplomatic discussions continued.

Failure to achieve a diplomatic agreement with Milosovic resulted in NATO initiating the air campaign Operation Allied Force on 24 March 1999. Both NATO and US forces were in Macedonia as NATO prosecuted the air war to force Milosevic to capitulate. In April, Task Force Hawk deployed to Tirana, Albania for possible use in conducting deep strike operations in support of the air war. The 26th Marine Expeditionary Unit (MEU) deployed to

Tirana, Albania the end of April to provide physical security for Camp Hope—a refugee camp managed by the US Air Force. In early June, an agreement with Belgrade was achieved to permit the unopposed entry of KFOR into Kosovo under the Military Technical Agreement in support of UNSCR 1244.

The 1st Infantry Division Commander called upon the 2nd Brigade, 1st ID, to immediately deploy, under the command of BG Craddock, USA, as the initial US entry force for Task Force Falcon. Elements of US Task Force Hawk (12th Aviation and an armored/mechanized task force from the 1st Armored Division's 1st Battalion) were relocated from Albania to Macedonia within hours after the Serbs accepted the terms to end the bombing and were prepared to enter Kosovo as part of the US enabling force. The 26th MEU was ordered to turn over the security mission to the USAF and immediately proceed to Thessaloniki, Greece and then on to Macedonia to support peace operations in Kosovo. As a result, the 2nd Brigade Combat Team included not only US Army forces but also the 26th MEU. On 12 June 1999, the US element of the KFOR force entered the war torn province of Kosovo by land and air. US Army paratroopers of the 82nd Airborne Division 2nd Battalion, 505th Parachute Infantry Regiment staged an air assault and raised the American flag on the hill near Urosevac that would be known thereafter as Camp Bondsteel and awaited the arrival of the initial land entry force led by BG Craddock, USA. The following day, Task Force Falcon established its headquarters at Camp Bondsteel on the rolling, hilly grazing land a few miles west of Urosevac. A few days later, the 26th MEU occupied the city of Gnjilane and surrounding area.

Although there were numerous gaps and ambiguities in the mission guidance and information provided to the MEU. Neither an end state nor a transition plan was ever provided to the MEU. The MEU established its presence as a well-disciplined force with authority, power and conviction. It seized the initiative by employing the tactics of remaining visible, mobile and approachable. As the Marines put it, "We came to win, others came not to lose." In early July, the Marines were replaced by US Army elements. The US entry force quickly grew into the Multinational Brigade East which was composed of forces from eight nations: Greece, Poland, Russia, United Arab Emirates, Ukraine, Jordan, Lithuania, and the United States.

As US forces moved into their sector, scenes of destruction and desolation were everywhere. Paramilitary forces were still operating and minefields, destroyed equipment and burned out homes cluttered the landscape. The initial NATO and US planning did not anticipate the enormity of the operation. It was significantly more than simply the military entering Kosovo through a border crossing. Further complicating the situation was the fact that the main supply route was the only feasible route (not mined) and the "stay in place" refugee campaign hadn't work. There was an earlier than expected and massive return of refugees into Kosovo. As a result, returning Albanian refugees crowded the roads along with KFOR, UN, contractor and humanitarian assistance vehicles. In fact, some contractors were already in Kosovo and met KFOR soldiers as they crossed the border.

The local civil government was dysfunctional so civil administration and law and order functions such as mayor, police chief and fire chief had to be temporarily assumed by the military. There were criminal elements with whom they had to deal. The VJ/MUP were not defeated on the battlefield so it was not clear if they intended to comply fully with the MTA. The departing VJ and MUP forces were accompanied by fleeing Kosovo Serb civilians (a new wave of ethnic cleansing) and followed closely by arriving KFOR ground forces. This

was done to forestall a power vacuum in the cities and countryside, where attacks and reprisals by Kosovo Serbs and Albanians needed to be kept in check. The threat of the use of KFOR military force—KFOR intent was to hug the VJ and MUP as closely as possible during their withdraw, often passing each other on the roads—kept the situation from getting out of hand.

Early TFF efforts focused on monitoring and verifying withdraw of VJ/MUP forces in accordance with the Military Technical Agreement and later the demilitarization and transformation of the Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA). Withdraw of the VJ/MUP forces was a success and the next challenge facing TFF was the KLA who attempted to establish itself as a viable military force. In a major incident, the Marines had to entrap and disarm a heavily armed company of KLA soldiers (116 men and women). The eventual disarming and transformation of the KLA into a civilian emergency organization, the Kosovo Protection Corps (KPC), was considered one of the major KFOR and UNMIK successes. Nightly explosions and routine exchanges of gunfire with unidentified hostile forces were the norm during the summer of 1999. Establishing a safe and secure environment was accompanied by establishing law and order, providing emergency humanitarian assistance, and supporting UNMIK and other agency's efforts to help prepare the Kosovo residents and returning Albanian and Roma refugees for the winter.

On 12 August, BG Craig Peterson, USA, assumed command of MNB(E)/TFF. Winter's approach was accompanied by a reduction in violence and lawlessness but it did not vanish completely. Ethnically motivated troubles continued and in October 1999, MNB(E) repositioned forces along ethnic fault lines and gradually violence began to decrease.

On 10 December 1999, BG Rick Sanchez, USA, assumed command of MNB(E)/TFF and the 3rd Brigade, 1st ID, assumed the TFF mission. During the winter months, MNB(E) continued to expand its presence throughout the US sector and began to prepare for possible increases in ethnic violence and insurgency activities. This new focus expanded the MNB(E) mission beyond purely peace support operations and introduced expanded boundary security and counter insurgency operations. In January and February 2000, MNB(E) began to see nascent insurgent activity along the Kosovo-Serbian boundary and an increase in ethnic violence, particularly in the French sector and the city of Mitrovica. From 19 to 24 February, TFF elements were sent to MNB(N) to support KFOR efforts to quell ethnic violence and tensions in the divided city of Mitrovica. On 15 March, MNB(E) elements struck at least 5 sites simultaneously along a 28 km front to seize weapons and ammunition earmarked for insurgents operating in Southern Serbia. This sent a strong message that KFOR and MNB(E), in particular, would not condone nor support any activity that threatened a safe and secure environment in Kosovo.

Throughout the spring, MNB(E) continued to demonstrate and foster multinational support and interoperability during Operation Dynamic Response 2000 and the rotation of numerous reinforcing units from MNB(S) and MNB(W) who had contributed immensely to MNB(E)'s mission of interdicting insurgent movement and supplies. Two major crowd control actions in Serb-dominated towns occurred, one on 1 March in Gornje Kusce as the result of soldiers arresting a weapons violator during a routine house search operation and the other on 4 April in Sevce where a weapons violator was arrested as well. The events required the use of MPs with riot gear and K9 dog teams. The commander on the scene in Gornje Kusce incident requested permission to use non-lethal weapons but the request was

denied. Use of non-lethal weapons for the Sevice incident was requested and approved by KFOR. There were 19 TFF personnel injured during the Sevice riot.

Maintaining a safe and secure environment continued to be the major mission but assisting with further development of Kosovo and re-establishing essential services throughout the US sector were supported as well. MNB(E) units adopted schools and facilitated spring planting through the delivery of seed, fertilizer and fuel. Over \$3.4 million dollars of Department of Defense humanitarian assistance funds were allocated to rebuild schools, public utilities and health care facilities. TFF also coordinated and facilitated the restoration of electrical power and telephone services, especially to the Serb enclaves. As KFOR's one-year anniversary approached, MNB(E) began to experience an increase in incidents of ethnic violence in its sector and hostilities along its border with Serbian, the Presevo valley in particular. In spite of these renewed hostilities, TFF continued to support UNMIK, NGOs and other International Organizations efforts to restore fundamental public services and lay the groundwork for the eventual transfer of functions to the appropriate civil institutions.

On 20 June, 1st ID relinquished TFF leadership to the 1st Armored Division. BG Randal Tiesen, USA, took over command and it did not take long for the 1st AD to get its first real series of tests. On the evening of 23 June a group of about 800 Serbs, angry that US soldiers and Polish soldiers could not do more to find a missing elderly man from Susice, a small mountain village near Strpce, attacked and trashed the UNMIK office in Strpce. The end of June saw demonstrations and rock throwing in Kamenica, a grenade explosion in a yard behind a Serbian residence in Cernica, and an explosion destroyed a Serbian Orthodox Church in the village of Podgoce. As a result of these violent actions, sanctions were placed on the Serb residents of Strpce and Albanian residents of Kamenica until they could demonstrate an earnest interest in cooperating with UNMIK and KFOR.

BG Tieszen's assignment was a short tour, he was informed of reassignment shortly after taking over command of MNB(E)/TFF. He claimed he heard about it, as others did in the task force, from a *Stars and Stripes* article before he was officially informed. BG Dennis Hardy, USA, took command the end of July 2000. The frequent turnover of USKFOR commander's (in Bosnia it took more than two years to see a similar number of commanders for the US-led contingent) and 6-month rotation of units created significant turbulence and posed interesting leadership (morale, cohesion, and organizational climate) and continuity of operations (shifting changes of direction and focus) challenges for MNB(E)/TFF. At the same time, KFOR and the other MNBs experienced similar cycles of forces' rotation and commander departures.

The revolving US command door raised concern on the part of some that careers and administrative requirements were being put above getting the mission accomplished and providing quality leadership—the Kosovo peacekeeping mission was a work in progress and the Army's most important and visible mission. There have been three COMKFOR's and a fourth will take over in October 2000. Not only have there been changes in HQ KFOR, the Chairman of the NATO Military committee changed in May 1999 followed by the NATO Secretary General in October 1999 and then in May 2000 SACEUR changed from Army to Air Force with General Ralston, USAF, replacing General Clark, USA. These represented significant changes from the highest levels of NATO command down to the lowest levels supporting the NATO Balkan's operations and the Kosovo deployment in particular.

Professor Charlie Moskos, Northwestern University, conducted a study of soldier morale in the fall of 2000 and found that morale was substantially higher at the beginning of the tour than at the end. It was also higher for soldiers at the “tip of the spear” such as the Civil Affairs, PSYOP, MPs, and maneuver units. The lowest morale was with the logistic and administration soldiers who were located on the major base camps doing routine work and those pulling stationary guard duty. It was also discovered that 60% of the soldiers used email daily and 20% several times a week. Regarding re-enlistments, both 1 ID and 1 AD experienced high re-enlistment rates—the high re-enlistment was largely attributable to soldiers doing what they joined the Army to do.

There was an interesting morale problem surfaced by the MNB(E) Chaplin. He stated that he experienced one of the more severe morale problems he had ever encountered. The Chaplin said he had soldiers lined up every day outside his office to speak to him. Apparently the problems were with the younger troops, some who volunteered or wanted to go to Kosovo as a way to save some money. For many of the young soldiers, this was their first separation and they and their loved ones were having problems dealing with the loneliness and handling problems at home from afar. Interestingly, a contributing factor was the great military communication system that allowed daily email and voice contact with family and loved ones that on the surface appeared to be a good thing for morale but it turned out this may have been the source of the problems of the young soldiers visiting the Chaplin. Issues that would have been normally sorted out at home or with the help of family support groups at the home station were apparently being discussed daily via email and the telephone and small problems suddenly became big ones—an unintended consequence of the modern information age.

The US military officers felt strongly that soldier training was what made them good peacekeepers and therefore, there was no need to develop a constabulary force whose focus would be on peacekeeping missions alone. The principle argument was the fact that the environment could change almost instantly from the low end of the conflict spectrum to the high end. Indeed, the level of violence could run from low to high in a matter of kilometers in Kosovo.

There were many challenges in conducting civil-military operations (CMO) in Kosovo but the lack of an overarching integrated KFOR CMO plan was viewed as a major shortfall of the operation. MNB(E) in their after action report emphasized the need for an overall KFOR CMO campaign plan that clearly articulated the intent, provided concise guidance and measures of effectiveness to conduct CMO and measured progress towards an agreed end state. This was not just a KFOR headquarters problem, however, an overall CMO campaign plan for MNB(E) did not exist either and the other MNBs probably did not have one as well. As a result, the CMO activities in MNB(E) were not fully integrated and synchronized with KFOR, other MNBs or within MNB(E) elements and maneuver units. KFOR did not provide a plan to coordinate and synchronize CMO activities between the MNBs and the KFOR requested reports and sponsored meetings were primarily used to inform KFOR, the MNBs and some other organizations such as UNMIK of activities within the KFOR and respective MNB sectors.

Broad CIMIC guidance and intent was provided by KFOR to the MNBs along several lines of operations: freedom of movement, humanitarian support, public safety, civil administration, infrastructure repair, economics and commerce, and democratization. Measures of effectiveness and end states for the lines of operation were not specified. KFOR

produced a daily SITREP based on reports provided from each MNB and meetings were held at HQ KFOR every two weeks between CA/CIMIC chiefs—coordination, informing and consensus building. Assessments of the information and recommended and directed actions were not provided to the MNBs from KFOR.

The CMO activities within MNB(E) were hampered by the absence of an overarching campaign plan and means for measuring the status and effectiveness of the CIMIC lines of operation at the municipal/maneuver unit level. The maneuver unit's focus was providing a safe and secure environment, and in executing that mission they performed limited CMO activities such as sponsoring town meetings and coordinating with IOs/NGOs. The focus of the Civil Affairs teams was to perform extensive CMO activities along the CIMIC lines of operation to support the Task Force Falcon Commander's intent and the maneuver units in their AORs. The potential for disunity of effort, where the CMO activities intersect and overlap, existed because CMO actions were not synchronized by an integrated campaign plan. Furthermore, neither Civil Affairs nor maneuver units had been provided phased objectives with means to measure the effectiveness of CMO activities. As noted earlier, an overall CMO campaign plan for MNB (E) did not exist. This was due in part to the lack of guidance and direction from KFOR headquarters in Pristina. Even though, the MNB(E) Civil Affairs teams were engaged in CMO activities on a daily basis, there was no clear statement of what the priority and main effort actually was. This being said, many of the CMO activities were reactionary (based on the current situation) rather than deliberately planned, synchronized and leveraged to attain an overall objective.

Following a field assessment in March 2000, which identified that the international community lacked a Kosovo-wide capacity to assess reconstruction needs, planners at SHAPE set up a Kosovo Development Group (KDG). The KDG was detached under the authority of the European Union's Kosovo reconstruction department. Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Italy, and Spain volunteered a staff of 18 trained officers, who worked in teams of three in the province's five sectors as well as in Pristina. KDG teams traveled throughout the province, identifying and prioritizing reconstruction projects in cooperation with local authorities and the 120 or so NGO organizations operating in Kosovo. The projects, which used EU funding, covered all aspects of reconstruction from repairing infrastructure to regenerating the economy. The cost of deploying the KDG was shared among the participating nations, KFOR and the UE. The nations covered salaries, KFOR provided lodging and workspace and the EU covered transportation and supplementary expenses.

Information Operations (IO) has different meaning to different people and organizations. At the KFOR headquarters level, IO was fundamentally reduced to a truth projection information campaign that supported the KFOR mission and the success of UNMIK. The KFOR military mission was to create a safe and secure environment, including public safety and order, and to provide assistance to UNMIK, including core civil functions until they were transferred to UNMIK. The KFOR information campaign was crafted to support this mission. For the Multinational Brigades, IO took on different forms—there was no consistency in implementation across KFOR and the MNBs.

In the US-led sector, MNB(E), IO was driven by the US Joint Pub 3-13 concept of Information Operations as an integrating strategy and therefore, was an effort to integrate the activities of various commanders, staff elements, and soldiers from the MNB(E) headquarters and subordinate multi-national battalion forces to achieve synergistic effects through

targeting and protecting information, the infrastructure used to transfer information, the decision makers that used information, and the information gathering and processing functions supporting those decision makers. In support of KFOR, MNB(E) conducted maneuver, civil-military, and information operations to accomplish their mission of maintaining a safe and secure environment in the Brigade's sector of responsibility. The MNB(E) Information Operations section planned and executed IO to influence key decision makers and members of the local population to behave in manners that supported MNB(E) operations to maintain that safety and security.

Although the primary mission of the MNBs was to support KFOR, the MNBs had other missions to support that were unique to the needs of their sectors. For example, MNB(E), needed to consider interdiction on its borders with FROM and Serbia and boundaries with MNB(S) and MNB(C), escalating ethnic tensions (had one of the highest population of Serb enclaves in Kosovo) and increased UCPMB and VJ/MUP activities in the Presevo Valley. National priorities, interests and constrains also influenced the focus and conduct of the MNB Information Operations activities. National "Red Cards" could be employed to restrict KFOR and MNB actions and they were. Therefore, the MNBs had to carefully balance the focus and allocation of their limited Information Operations resources consistent with mission needs and related implementation constrains.

The lack of a strategic end state for Kosovo and overarching strategic plan to guide and help synchronize the IO efforts of UNMIK and KFOR and its MNBs resulted in multiple and loosely connected information campaigns occurring simultaneously in the Kosovo AOR. Not only were their differing plans and disconnects among UNMIK, KFOR and its MNBs, the other international organizations and NGOs had individual information campaigns aimed at furthering their own agenda that were in some cases in conflict with UNMIK and KFOR campaigns. Additionally, Information Operations was still in its formative stages in NATO and many of the Allied nations so doctrine (where it existed) differed and experience and understanding of its concepts and principles varied among the players. Implementation across KFOR and its MNBs was inconsistent and cross-MNB collaboration, coordination and leveraging was somewhat problematic in spite of KFOR-sponsored weekly IO working group efforts to foster cross-MNB coordination.

Information Operations in Kosovo were aimed at gaining international support, influencing key Kosovo decision makers and shaping the local attitudes to behave in manners that supported KFOR soldiers and operations. The effort focused on providing operationally relevant information to leaders and the population rather than conducting perception management. KFOR viewed its key weapons to be everybody involved in the operation but more specifically public information, PSYOP, Civil-Military Cooperation and the Joint Implementation Commission. The MNB(E) information operations weapons of choice were the maneuver battalions, public information, PSYOP, Civil Affairs, special services and aid such as military escorts to/from Serbia and MEDCAPs and DENCAPs, Special Operations and the Joint Implementation Commission. Use of disinformation, propaganda and deception were not allowed. Only "White" PSYOP was employed and there was no counter propaganda campaign in spite of extensive use of propaganda by the Serbs. Misinformation and propaganda flowed in sector from various sources, including media from sources internal to Kosovo as well as external to the province in Serbia and Albania. Word of mouth from travelers throughout the region and sector also constituted a large source of misinformation and disinformation.

Propaganda in Kosovo tended to be very simplistic and obviously contrived. Serbian propaganda lacked credibility with the local population, especially ethnic Albanians. There was also disinformation on the Internet. KLA-FOR Online (<http://www.kfor-online.com/>) was an example of a web site that was a sick spoof of the KFOR and NATO official web sites and depicted the UN SRSG and the NATO Secretary General as Nazi's and lauded the successes of the Albanians with NATO's help to get rid of the Serbs in Kosovo. The general rule of thumb was not to react to disinformation and propaganda but react to selective issues of importance and tell the truth. Direct refutation of propaganda only served to give it credibility. The goal was to create conditions for the implementation of a political settlement and this targeted areas such as promote a safe and secure environment, deter violence and criminal activities, encourage a free and open society, promote a positive UNMIK and KFOR image, and mine and UXO awareness to name a few. The target population was mainly 20 to 50 year olds and was a mix of Roma, Turkish, Albanian and Serbs. Teenagers were not a major factor in the KFOR information campaign. In Bosnia, the German PSYOP product "MIRKO" was specifically targeted for teenagers and was one of the more successful products produced by the IFOR/SFOR information campaign. A similar product was not funded for Kosovo and little effort was directed at addressing teenager needs.

UNMIK, OSCE (did not have an information campaign for elections), KFOR and MNB approaches and products included use of newspapers (including inserts for local papers), magazines, posters, handbills, radio/TV, press conferences and releases, and Internet web sites. Unlike Bosnia where the newspaper "Herald of Peace" was published as a single paper in two languages, in Kosovo because of the ethnic hatred separate Albanian and Serb language newspapers and magazines had to be produced. UNMIK published the "UNMIK News," OSCE the "UPDATE," UNHCR the "Humanitarian News," KFOR the "KFOR Chronicle," and at the MNB level the US for example produced the "K-Forum" and "Falcon Flier." Paid inserts for local newspapers (mainly, Albanian since there was no Serb press in country) were employed by KFOR and for MNB(E) this was done by the task force PSYOP team. KFOR produced a monthly magazine the "Dialogue." KFOR and the MNB PSYOP teams used posters and handbills extensively, especially for focused activities, such as, land mine and UXO awareness, stop the violence, and safe and secure environment. KFOR and MNB(E) both funded radio stations and KFOR TV programming as well. Finally, in MNB(E) the information operations team created "Talking Points" that addressed key KFOR and sector issues and objectives for the information campaign. Typical subjects addressed a wide range of interest areas such as refugee returns, civil registration, mine awareness, transfer of authority for the 1 ID to 1 AD, rule of law and stopping the violence, role of Kosovo Police Service, and status of UNSCR 1244. These "Talking Point" were updated weekly or as required and distributed to all levels of command and served to provide a common perspective and educate those involved in the operation so that while on patrol or engaged in discussions with the local populace and community leaders the soldiers were prepared to discuss in some detail issues and initiatives. Commanders on the ground viewed this as a very effective tool for their use in conducting operations.

Assessment of IO progress was extremely difficult. The measure of effectiveness was highly subjective and dependent on interpretive judgment—changes in people's attitudes and behaviors were not as readily identifiable as the destruction of physical assets. Furthermore it was extremely difficult to obtain information to support hard analysis. Information campaign product testing and assessments of effectiveness used multiple but simple approaches. Local hires were used as well as random street testing before going final with a publication or product. A Gallop Poll was sponsored by KFOR and conducted Kosovo-wide

every 3 months. Radio shows were taped and reviewed as part of the quality monitoring. OSCE performed daily media monitoring and provided daily and weekly summary reports of radio, TV and print media activities. KFOR and its MMBs also used open source monitoring to assess information campaign effectiveness.

In MNB(E), the IO-cell collected assessments and feedback from the maneuver brigades, MPs, PA, CA, PSYOP, SOCCE, JIC, MEDCAPs and others who had direct contact with the public, clergy and political leaders and used these inputs along with SITREPs, INTSUMs, OSINT reports such as the *Daily Faclon* produced by the TFF G2, and other reports to assess the effectiveness of its information campaign and related Information Operations activities. Land Information Warfare Activity (LIWA) headquarters also provided its resident field support team supporting the TFF IO cell with international and regional media analysis reports produced at Ft Belvoir, VA. Unit feedback at the weekly LIWA- chaired IO working group was also a good source of information and insights on effectiveness and issue areas. The KFOR IO working groups were also used to solicit MNB feedback, ideas and issues and to promote COMKFOR intentions and concerns and to establish a shared understanding of the information situation awareness across KFOR and its MNBs—consensus building.

In spite of good soldier training, there was a need for additional training to prepare US units for peace operations. Combat arms units were called upon to execute a set of tasks that were not normally associated with their Minimum Essential Task List (METL), e.g., tankers fight mounted but in Kosovo they dismounted and operated as infantry. MPs quickly found themselves becoming investigators. Although quite versed in MP procedures, many lacked the basic fundamentals of police investigation and time had to be taken to train them—ask the right questions at the right time, protection and sharing of “police information” and collection of information from non-police elements. Crowd control and use of non-lethal weapons were important capabilities that required additional training and equipment once in country. Urban combat techniques needed to be incorporated into pre-deployment training—virtually every soldier that patrolled needed to be trained and drilled on room entry techniques, house clearance operations and other related combat activities. Civil-Military operations need to be incorporated into the military training and education programs—conducting a town meeting, developing negotiation and conflict resolution skills and other CMO related activities were learned on the ground after deployment. Information operations training and education was needed—it was a new concept for maneuver units.

It was felt that the battalions could do their own Individual Readiness Training (IRT) training. The Combat Replacement Center (CRC) training was felt to be too Bosnia oriented and not focused enough on Kosovo—training implied that Bosnia and Kosovo were similar when in fact they were very different. The sharing of lessons from earlier Kosovo deployments was problematic. There was a need for a single point of contact to go to for information on Kosovo before deploying—soldiers were interested in learning more about the country and its people and culture. The KFOR Handbook (DOD-2630-011-99, July 1999) was inadequate and out of date. It focused too much on military aspects and not enough on the non-military things the soldiers needed to know to deal with the local religious and civil leaders. Additionally, they needed better information to execute their peace operations responsibilities. Finally, it needs to be smaller and something the soldier can carry around in his pocket. Increased leader reconnaissance activities provided more in-country hands-on visits. In turn these visits served to better prepare the incoming leaders by allowing them to see on a first-hand basis the terrain, the people, and the real-world problems they would have to deal with when they took command.

The maneuver units had to operate with the MPs (including UNMIK-Police) policing activities and there were overlaps in maneuver unit civil-military operations and Civil Affairs activities. Since coalition operations are a reality in peace operations, US units needed to operate with multinational units that employed different tactics, techniques and procedures and the US was not always the commander, e.g., US units operating in the Russian, Greek and Polish sectors of MNB(E) and COMKFOR was not US. Thus it was necessary to accommodate doctrine, culture, and language differences as well. With no prior training with the multinational units they would be working with on the ground, the US units had to hit the ground running and adapt real-time. Joint patrols and exchange and coordination meetings were held with units such as the Russians and MNB(E) sector boundary units such as the Fins, Swedes, and the Brits. German, Austrian and Dutch units were OPCONed to TFF for a short period of time and US units were temporarily deployed out of sector to Mitrovica to help the French with riot control. There was also a need to improve the ability to coordinate and direct air-ground operations with multinational units where the US was not the on the scene commander, e.g., the Strpce riot which occurred in the Polish sector of MNB(E).

Although improvements are constantly being made to help better prepare new US units for deployment to Kosovo, opportunities remain to improve training. Relevant in-country Ops-Intel databases and archives were maturing—not without growing pains and a lot of work still needed to be done to improve the archiving process and transfer to the new units. Mission Rehearsal Exercises were improving and were considered a good training vehicle for preparing the brigade and battalion level for deployment. It was felt, however, that the MREs needed to put more emphasis on exercising the field units—battalions and their companies and platoons—and provide a more realistic depiction of the environment they would face on the ground including cultural and social situational awareness.

The TOA (Transfer of Authority) and RIP (Replacements in Place) process was managed very carefully to attempt to assure a quality hand off. TOA status was briefed daily at the BUB. The TFF COS was the primary continuity between staff and commanders. As such, he had to help adapt the staff and task force processes to the new commander's desires. He reviewed the planned RIP and continuity book with the outbound officers and then got with both the inbound and outbound officers to review the status to ensure a proper hand off took place—the burden for capturing lessons and preparing for and facilitating a quality transition rested with the outgoing officers and staff. There was an eight-day hand-off period—four days right seat ride and four days left seat ride wherever possible. Managing the RIP was, however, a constant challenge but the real challenge was building the team. For a number of different reasons, a frequent turnover in staff was being experienced before their six-month assignment was completed. This meant the short-term person was not handing off much in terms of insights to the new person and this made it difficult to stabilize the staff—resulting in a constant state of rebuilding the team.

In spite of the extensive preparation, there was a spooling up time required once the new team hit the ground and took control of the operation—this would be the first time the team actually worked together. The reality was that each commander operated differently. The units and experience of the commanders and their staff were different but situation awareness was not negotiable—this was why it was important to insist on a quality hand-off for TOA/RIP. One outcome was certain; the belligerents would test each new team in its early weeks at the reigns. A constant reminder by General Sanchez and re-enforced by Col Landry, TFF Chief of Staff, to the new members of the task force team was to “maintain tactical patience and don't rush to failure.”

UNMIK AND KFOR SUCCESSES AND FAILURES AFTER ONE YEAR

On 12 June 1999, KFOR arrived in the province where at least 900,000 people, mostly Kosovo Albanians, had either been evicted, or had fled in fear for their lives. Tens of thousands of Albanians were feared dead. Most cities, such as Pristina the capital, were ghost towns. The civil structures, economy, and administrative services were dysfunctional and there was no law and order. Lot's has changed in a year and in despite setbacks, lack of hope, and challenges for the future, UNMIK and KFOR can claim some accomplishments and successes in this war torn providence. The United Nations Special Representative Bernard Kouchner stated at a one-year anniversary press conference, "The Kosovo mission is a success.....Technically, politically, in terms of administration, in terms of human rights, in terms of protection, we have achieved a lot."

Under KFOR's protection, the vast majority of Albanians has now been able to return, albeit at a speed and in numbers much greater than predicted. The VJ/MUP forces withdrew without major incidents, although some looting and burning took place as they left. However, neither KFOR nor the UN anticipated the level of revenge violence against remaining Serbs that would accompany the return of Albanian refugees to Kosovo. The flow of ethnic cleansing suddenly reversed and KFOR priorities had to be shifted quickly towards the protection of minorities and prevention of reprisals. To prevent attacks, or acts of revenge, KFOR increased the number of troops on the ground at any one time. For example, in Multinational Brigade East alone, 190 security patrols were mounted every day, 65 checkpoints were manned and 64 facilities, such as Serb patrimonial sites, were guarded. The growing UNMIK Police presence throughout the province also helped to deter violence and maintain law and order. As a result of KFOR and UNMIK efforts, security improved in general but remained a significant challenge in the Serb areas where KFOR continued to provide 24 hour a day, seven days a week protection. UNMIK and KFOR continue to focus on trying to make the Serbs feel safe in Kosovo and to encourage others who left the province to come back. Few Serbs have returned but efforts continue to be pursued to facilitate more returns.

Since KFOR arrival, the KLA has been demilitarized and transformed. Its former members are now contributing to the rebuilding of Kosovo as civilians, through their participation in the Kosovo Police Service or in the provisional Kosovo Protection Corps. In addition to the thousands of weapons voluntarily handed over as part of the demilitarization process, over 12,000 illegally held weapons have been confiscated and are now in the process of being destroyed. Some of the former illegal weapons owners are in custody and the amnesty campaign currently ongoing has resulted in many more weapons being voluntarily surrendered.

UNMIK alone employs some 70,000 local public workers and KFOR and contractors such as Brown and Root who support MNB(E) also employ a large number of locals. In fact, Brown and Root may be the largest company employing locals. It has been estimated that about 500,000 students have returned to school, many being ethnic Albanians who had not been allowed to attend classes for a decade. Reconstruction of political and financial structure was under way as well.

When KFOR arrived, there were an estimated 40,000 land mines in the province, laid either by Yugoslav forces or the KLA. KFOR Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) teams cleared mines from all the major routes and population centers, and also marked the remaining sites known to contain mines or other unexploded ordnance. Mines and unexploded ordnance were cleared from more than 16,000 homes, 1,200 schools and 1,200 miles of road. KFOR ran an extensive mine awareness campaign in the media and through visits to local schools. The work by done by KFOR EOD was not without risk and unfortunately, it has taken its toll: Two KFOR EOD personnel have lost their lives and three have been injured in clearing the mines.

Crime was out of control on the streets when KFOR arrived. UNMIK Police crime statistics show a huge decline since the KFOR and UNMIK-Police arrived. There has been a decrease in murders, arsons, kidnappings and looting. Murder rates of about 50 per week have been reduced to an average of six per week.

In many other areas, KFOR has provided support to UNMIK and NGOs through its involvement in reconstruction and humanitarian projects. KFOR has built or repaired 200 km of roads and reconstructed or repaired six major bridges. Key infrastructure such as schools and utilities have been repaired and brought back into service. KFOR doctors and other medical specialists have treated approximately 50,000 local patients and 13 military field hospitals have been set up. KFOR assisted UNMIK in importing and distributing humanitarian aid, including food, clothing and building materials for houses. Key to this effort was the restoration of the region's aging power plant near Pristina and the province's transport system, including the reopening of Pristina airport and starting to get the rail system working again through the repair of hundreds of miles of railroad.

The presence of crowds of people, largely Albanians, walking safely on the streets, doing their daily business or shopping, or simply buying a local newspaper printed without censorship, provides further testament to UNMIK and KFOR achievements. However, in spite of these positive accomplishments and the presence of KFOR soldiers, the international community has failed to stop a new wave of ethnic cleansing in Kosovo. In fear of reprisals and their safety, the intellectual Serbs left during the air war and many of the other Serbs left as the Yugoslav army pulled out of Kosovo and none has returned. After the summer of 1999 less than half of the pre-air war Serb population was left in Kosovo. The approximately 100,000 remaining Serbs lived in enclaves or divided cities and as noted earlier, protected 24 hours a day, seven days a week by KFOR soldiers.

Moderate Serb leaders, such as Bishop Artemije, President of the Serb National Council of Kosovo, has reported that during the first year of the KFOR operation more than 1,000 Serbs have been killed, some 1,200 have been kidnapped or disappeared, over 10,000 Serb homes have been destroyed, some 80 Serb churches have been destroyed and the violence against Serbs continues. Serbs have been expelled from firms and institutions where they worked and the Albanians control the education and medical system. The Serbs no longer have freedom of movement and their civil and human rights have essentially been taken away. Although the violence and attacks against Serbs has decreased somewhat, it has not ceased. The remaining Serbs are barely surviving and there is a fear that they will eventually disappear from Kosovo.

A lot remains to be done, especially in restoring human rights and providing freedom of movement and opportunities for the Serbs. Stopping the violence must occur before the

peace process can move forward. KFOR can only try to provide a secure and safe environment. Real peace must be built by the people in Kosovo themselves. Mutual acceptance of the different ethnic groups is key to the future.

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