

# GUARDIAN EAST



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## Kosovo Border Police and KFOR work together on Administrative Boundary Line



Kosovo Force and Kosovo Border Police conduct a joint patrol on the Administrative Boundary Line between Kosovo and Serbia, Nov. 17, in Rogaqic. MNBG-E is beginning to integrate KBP into ABL patrols as part of their mission to ensure safety, security and freedom of movement in Kosovo. (Photo by Sgt. David I. Marquis)

**By Capt. Dave Chace**

**Multinational Battle Group-East**

**K**FOR Soldiers were joined by Kosovo Border Police while conducting a multinational patrol on the Administrative Boundary Line separating Kosovo and Serbia.

These patrols, conducted several times per month by KFOR Soldiers, ensure safety, security and freedom of movement along the ABL.

U.S. Army Soldiers from the Connecticut National Guard's 1st Battalion, 169th Aviation Regiment, joined a squad of Armenian soldiers and Kosovo Border Police officers for a dismounted patrol in a section of the ABL, showing different check points as well as their jurisdiction, Nov. 17, 2015, in Rogaqic, Kosovo.

The KBP also regularly patrol Kosovo's border with Montenegro, Albania and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia.

The ABL is the boundary line between Kosovo and Serbia, running from the Montenegro border in the west, to the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia border in the southeast.

"This is the first step, and there will be many more of these," said Lt. Col. Jeffrey LaPierre, the commander of the Southern Command Post, assigned to Multinational Battle Group-East. Since the current KFOR rotation of forces entered Kosovo this summer, this was their first joint ABL patrol alongside the KBP.

"I view this event as two fold; there is a strategic goal and a tactical goal," he said. "The strategic goal is for KFOR to support KBP in their ABL security mission, but as we move forward on the tactical side, for KBP to be the lead with KFOR assisting."

"I would like to thank everybody for the cooperation, and I believe today was a very good experience for us," said Sgt. Ramush Spahiu, a team leader

with the KBP. "It is very special for us that we have finally patrolled these check points, and learned where we can and cannot pass."

"I also believe that we will work even harder to raise our capacities to fulfill our duties," Spahiu said. "As Kosovars, we know that we have challenges and we must be vigilant and work harder within the joint operations of KFOR."

"I hope that we can continue our joint patrols with KFOR," he added.

"I think that everything went really well today and this was a starting point to build on," said Capt. Demetrius Treadway, an operations officer with the MNBG-E SCP. "Right now we are just pointing out different routes for us to follow during our patrols."

"[The KBP] should be up on the ABL doing their part and conducting the patrols, and we are here to train and assist them in that," Treadway said.

## Partners, here and at home: N.C. Guard and Moldova train and serve in Kosovo



Command Sgt. Maj. Charlie Sanders poses with Moldovan soldiers during a Nov. 5 training event at Camp Nothing Hill, Kosovo. (Photo by Sgt. Erick Yates)

By Staff Sgt. Mary Junell

### Multinational Battle Group-East

A North Carolina National Guard unit's deployment to Kosovo has brought them closer than ever to a partner military with which they have a long history and bright future.

Since 1996, North Carolina National Guard and Moldovan Soldiers have been training together under the State Partnership Program, which pairs National Guard Soldiers with the armed forces or equivalent of America's global partners and allies.

NCNG Soldiers routinely travel to Moldova to conduct combined training missions as part of their cooperative, mutually beneficial relationship with the eastern European country.

Together, the U.S. and Moldovan forces represent two of more than 30 nations participating in KFOR.

"We routinely train with Moldova," Simpson said, "but this is the first opportunity we've had to actually partner with them in an operational environment."

The Moldovan Soldiers serving in Kosovo are assigned to MNBG-E's counterpart Multinational Battle Group-West, but were briefly attached to MNBG-E in order to give the partners soldiers a chance to build on their already established relationship.

"It definitely provides a familiar face for the Moldovans and for us," said U.S. Army Capt. Sam Barrow, the commander of A Company, 1st Combined Arms Battalion, 252nd Armor Regiment.

"Coming into this, some of the Soldiers in my company have had a chance to work with the Moldovans before and if not, they recognize their patch and the Moldovans recognize the 30th ABCT's patch. It kind of broke down barriers early on."

Barrow also said the State Partnership Program had prepared his team to work with the many multinational contingents represented throughout KFOR.

"It takes the initial shock factor out of it," Barrow said. "These guys are not just from some other country. They are our partners, both here and back home."



Maj. Jamie Bowen, the senior operations officer for the 30th Armored Brigade Combat Team and MNBG-E headquarters, joins A&A Learning Center students in touching handprints painted by U.S. students from Saint Francis de Sales Catholic School in Beckley, West Virginia, during a Nov. 23, 2015, visit to the learning center in Pristina, Kosovo. The handprints were given along with donated school supplies delivered by MNBG-E Soldiers, who visited the school as part of a community outreach effort that included practicing language skills. (Photo by Sgt. Erick Yates)

## Values and Leadership: Army Reserve Military Police Soldier finds purpose in Kosovo deployment

Story and photo by Sgt. Erick Yates

### Multinational Battle Group-East

A Cleveland native, mother and U.S. Army Reserve Soldier was awarded the title of distinguished honor graduate in her Basic Leader Course while challenging herself outside of the familiar surroundings of home during a deployment to Kosovo.

Spc. Clarissa Mitchell, a military police Soldier from the 363rd Military Police Company, out of Grafton, West Virginia, and assigned to MNBG-E, was among 50 KFOR Soldiers who graduated the latest BLC iteration on Nov. 17.

BLC was taught over a three week period where Soldiers learn administrative duties and responsibilities of an NCO.

"This was not an easy course to just breeze through," said Mitchell.

"I definitely was not expecting to be the distinguished honor graduate for my class, but I learned a lot throughout the process that is going to make me a better Soldier and leader," she explained after the ceremony.

"During this course we learned everything from administrative processing to acting as a leader of a tactical patrol and making on-the-spot decisions as an NCO," she said.

Mitchell, a resident of Dilliner, Pennsylvania, and mother to a 3-year-old daughter, said being a mother helped inspire her to participate in the Kosovo deployment.



Spc. Clarissa Mitchell accepts the distinguished honor graduate award for her Basic Leader Course during a Nov. 17 on Camp Bondsteel.

"I wanted to go on a mission where I truly felt I was helping others," she said. "Having the chance to meet MP Soldiers from other multinational forces and learn in a different environment has made this deployment memorable."

Mitchell said that the experience she has gained from this deployment has given her some new career options to think about when she returns home and has even thought about becoming a parole officer.

"This mission has allowed me to not only build new relationships with people from all over Europe, but has helped me gain further understanding of the Army values and leadership," Mitchell said. "I now see the role it plays not only in my military career and how it carries over to my civilian job and who I am as a mother."



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