



## Major General Anton Waldner Assumes Position of Commander EUFOR in BiH



“I took over as Force Commander of EUFOR in BiH just over one month ago and want to use this forum to address all Althea personnel, especially those members of the mission whom I have not yet had the chance to meet.

My predecessor told me about the dedication and professionalism of all the EUFOR military personnel here and I trust that this commitment will continue during my year-long tender.

This operation is here to contribute to ensuring a safe and secure environment within which this country can develop politically and economically in order to become self-supporting.

Every operation should have a clear aspiration, a goal that can be universally understood and the motto I have chosen to summarise our agenda is “Sustainable Stability”. This motto I believe captures the essence of our mandate and I expect this to be kept in mind by the highest staff officers down to the troops on the ground whilst carrying out your work here.

I believe our mission here to be very necessary and whilst I have previous operational experience in this region, I see new and interesting challenges ahead. I thank you all for your service so far and look forward to working together in the future.”

**Major General Anton Waldner**



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This is my third and final edition of Forum magazine as my tour will shortly end. A great deal has happened in the last 2 months in EUFOR. Both COM and COS have changed, many of you were involved in preparing for and conducting Exercise Kalinovik and the Public Affairs Office has seen a considerable media interest in all of it.

Please support my successor by continuing to send in photographs and information about the good work being carried out by EUFOR personnel. Goodbye and good luck.

**Lt Cdr Michael Fitzpatrick  
EUFOR Spokesperson**

COMEUFOR  
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EUFOR Public Affairs Chief  
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## Major General Anton Waldner Assumes Position of Commander EUFOR in BiH

**COMEUFOR: “I assure the population, the politicians and the international organisations that EUFOR will remain a dependable, flexible and supportive partner”**

On 28 March 2017 a Ceremony was held in the Helicopter Hanger at EUFOR HQ, Camp Butmir for the Change of Command of both the EUFOR Operation Commander and Force Commander positions. General Sir Adrian Bradshaw handed over to General Sir James Everard as the Operation Commander of EUFOR operation Althea in BiH. Major General Friedrich Schrötter handed over as Commander EUFOR, the Force Commander position in Sarajevo, to Major General Anton Waldner.

The EU Special Representative Lars-Gunnar Wigemark, the

Chairman of the EU Military Committee General Mikhail Kostarakos, Joint Force Command Naples Chief of Staff and Head of European Union Command Element Lieutenant General Luciano Portolano and Chief of the Joint Staff of the Armed Forces BiH Lieutenant General Anto Jeleć were in attendance.



Speaking at the ceremony General Everard said “I am pleased we have seen real progress here since 2004 and the start of Op Althea. These are however uncertain times. External influences at play in the wider Western Balkans region, and in BiH, have the potential to challenge progress. In the face of such challenges it is essential that we persevere together and demonstrate joint commitment to a persistently methodical approach and steady progress. In this necessary co-operation between politicians, leadership and the people of Bosnia-Herzegovina, in EUFOR you have no finer partner.”

**19 Nations are still engaged in EUFOR. This shows the international will to contribute to the development of the country not only with words and money, but also with Soldiers and Civilians dedicated to spending part of their lives here to help.**

Major General Waldner stated “19 Nations are still engaged in EUFOR. This shows the international will



General Sir James Everard receives the flag from General Mikhail Kostarakos



Major General Anton Waldner being presented the flag by General Sir Adrian Bradshaw



Left to right: Major General Friedrich Schrötter, General Sir Adrian Bradshaw, General Mikhail Kostarakos, General Sir James Everard, Major General Anton Waldner

to contribute to the development of the country not only with words and money, but also with soldiers and civilians dedicated to spending part of their lives here to help. The tasks remain the same: capacity building of the AFBiH and contributing to a safe and secure environment. The executive mandate allows the significant reinforcement of the Force at short notice and I will not hesitate to call these reserve forces if they are required. I assure the population, the politicians and the international organisations that EUFOR will remain a dependable, flexible and supportive partner.”

EUFOR Operation Althea is currently made up of soldiers from 14 EU member states and 5 partner nations. EUFOR contributes to the maintenance and stability of a Safe and Secure Environment in BiH and helps to promote a climate in which the peace process can continue.



Brigadier General Albert Sáfár Commanding the Parade

### COMEUFOR Visits EUSR for First Official Meeting With Amb Wigemark



On 31 March 2017 COMEUFOR, Major General Anton Waldner, visited the EU Delegation in Sarajevo for his first official meeting with the EU Special Representative, His Excellency Ambassador Lars-Gunnar Wigemark.

EUFOR works very closely with the EU Delegation in BiH to ensure coordination as part of the EU Comprehensive Approach for ongoing development in the country.

### Slovakian Chief of Defence Staff Visits EUFOR HQ



On 29 March 2017 the Chief of General Staff of the Slovak Republic, General Milan Maxim, visited EUFOR HQ, Camp Butmir for a short meeting with the new Commander EUFOR, Major General Anton Waldner. He was greeted by an Honour Guard made up of Turkish troops from the Multinational Battalion.

The Slovak Republic has 40 soldiers in BiH as part of Op Althea and runs 3 LOT Houses across the country in Novo Sarajevo, Foca and Visegrad.

## Chief of Staff Transfer of Authority Ceremony

**On Tuesday 11 April 2017, Brigadier General József Szpisják assumed the position of Chief of Staff of the European Union Force (EUFOR) in Bosnia and Herzegovina. He took over from outgoing Chief of Staff Brigadier General Albert Sáfár.**

The ceremony took place in Camp Butmir and was attended by Commander EUFOR, Major General Anton Waldner, numerous distinguished visitors and delegates from Bosnia and Herzegovina and the International Community.

In his speech, the new Chief of Staff emphasized that change was not easy and many obstacles still needed to be overcome. He further stated “Our mission is to contribute

to the peaceful cohabitation of different cultures in a single country”. Brigadier General Szpisják thanked his predecessor and assured Commander EUFOR of his full commitment and support.

The outgoing Chief of Staff, Brigadier General Albert Sáfár, expressed his gratitude to all representatives of the institutions and organizations that had contributed to the common successes over the past year. He also thanked the servicemen and women from 19 troop contributing nations for their commitment and wished his successor all the best for his tour of duty.

Commander EUFOR, Major General Anton Waldner, in his speech pointed out the crucial role of the Chief of Staff

in creating a synergy in the multinational EUFOR Headquarters comprising of military as well as civilian personnel of so many different nations. He praised Brigadier General Sáfár’s contribution to the success of the EUFOR mission and cordially welcomed his replacement, Brigadier General József Szpisják who has already served in this position in 2013.



COMEUFOR, Major General Anton Waldner presents the flag to Brigadier General Szpisják



Incoming COS Brigadier General József Szpisják, COMEUFOR, outgoing COS Brigadier General Albert Sáfár



Marching off of the colours after the transfer of authority



## EUFOR Thrills Guests with a Display of Military Capabilities

On 23 March 2017 COMEUFOR, Major General Friedrich Schrötter, hosted a large group of international guests and journalists in Kalinovik barracks where EUFOR personnel put on a 2-hour demonstration of military capabilities. The scenario centred around a group of personnel being protected and evacuated to a safe area by EUFOR Multinational Battalion (MNBN) and the guests were involved in the scenario, playing the evacuees.

The event started with a welcome statement from COMEUFOR

followed by an exercise brief from the MNBN Commander.

The practical elements were initiated by a helicopter fly-by then the visitors got

to witness Crowd and Riot Control tactics, with soldiers protecting them from aggressive protestors. After being issued with protective equipment, the visitors then proceeded, by bus, towards a 'safe location', accompanied by a military convoy acting as an escort. Along the way there was a simulated ambush and the visitors dismounted the bus and witnessed 'live fire' shooting from the soldiers. The exercise finished with a helicopter flight back to the camp for all the guests.

EUFOR, as a military force is required to exercise the full spectrum of military operations. Accomplishing challenging tasks in training facilitates professionalism and develops the capabilities of the organization. This is essential for EUFOR's primary task, namely supporting the maintenance and stability of a safe and secure environment in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

**Along the way there was a simulated ambush and the visitors dismounted the bus and witnessed 'live fire' shooting from the soldiers. The exercise finished with a helicopter flight back to the camp for all the guests.**





# EXERCISE

## KALINOVIK MARCH 2017

**Units Involved**

- EUFOR Helicopter Detachment
- EUFOR Multinational Battalion (AUT, HUN, TUR)
- Air to Ground Surveillance
- International Military Police

**Operational Activities**

- Area Security Operations
- Civil Disturbance Operations
- Evacuation of Personnel
- Extraction of Personnel
- Live Firing
- Air Evacuation
- EOD - Countermeasures



**EUFOR, as a military force has to exercise the full spectrum of military operations. Accomplishing challenging tasks in training and exercise facilitates the overall professionalism and capabilities of the organization. This is essential for EUFOR's primary task, namely supporting the maintenance and stability of a safe and secure environment in Bosnia and Herzegovina.**



Minister Pendeš meets with Maj Gen Waldner

## COMEUFOR Officially Meets BiH Minister of Defence for First Time

On 29 March 2017, the Minister of Defence of BiH, Marina Pendeš, and her associates, received a visit from the new Commander EUFOR in BiH, Major General Anton Waldner, on the occasion of his assuming the position of EU Force Commander in BiH. The aim of the meeting was to inform him of the activities of the Ministry of Defence and Armed Forces of Bosnia and Herzegovina and discuss co-operation between the MoD and AF BiH with the EUFOR mission in BiH.

The Minister expressed her gratitude to the EUFOR mission, which has contributed to the stabilization and reform process in BiH to a great extent, and also for the co-operation and assistance provided by EUFOR to our Armed Forces in the area of training and capacity building.

In addition, she underlined the commitment of BiH to becoming part of the European Union (EU) and NATO as a strategic goal of the country, mentioning just some steps made towards the accession to the EU, including the signing of the Agreement between BiH and the EU on establishing a framework for the participation of BiH in EU crisis management operations. Major General



Waldner was also briefed on the main activities of the MoD BiH, and Pendeš pointed out the MAP activation as a priority activity, which above all requires progress to be made in finding solutions for the issues of prospective military property. She also mentioned the adoption of the strategic document Defence Review and the Plan for the Modernisation of the Armed Forces of BiH.

Minister Pendeš said that the priority activities included the Plan for the Implementation of the Defence Review, the process of solving the issues of surplus ammunition, mines and explosive ordnance, participation of the AF BiH in peace support operations, humanitarian de-mining as well as the continuation of joint training and exercises with EUFOR troops in BiH.

Major General Waldner expressed his pleasure as he would be part of the efforts made by local and international players in providing support to the efforts of BiH on its path towards Euro Atlantic integration. He expressed his confidence that future co-operation between EUFOR and the MoD BiH and AF BiH would continue successfully, in particular emphasizing the area of capacity building and training of AF BiH members, which primarily contribute to the building of capacities and capabilities of the AF BiH and adaptation and implementation of standards compatible with those of NATO.

## COMEUFOR Pledges Continued Support to Surplus Ammunition Destruction

**On 29 March 2017 the closing ceremony for project EXPLODE was held in the Army Hall in Sarajevo to mark its successful completion.**

The event was hosted by the UN Development Programme (UNDP) and was attended by the Minister of Defence Marina Pendeš, Chief of the Joint Staff Lieutenant General Anto Jeleć, COMEUFOR Major General Anton Waldner, and COM NATO HQ Sa Brigadier General Giselle Wilz.

After a video introduction, speeches were given by Minister Pendeš, Mr Melvin Asin from the EU Delegation, Mrs Sezin Sinanoglu from UNDP and COMEUFOR. Mrs



Melisa Durak Buljubašić from UNDP moderating the event

Sinanoglu thanked EUFOR for its excellent support to the project, in particular the expert advice and drive from Colonel Martin Trachsler, the EUFOR Special Advisor for Weapons and Ammunition Disposal.

COMEUFOR said: “I will continue to support all activities within the Masterplan, particularly the new EU funded project focussing on the disposal of ammunition. I give my assurance that I will provide relevant expertise and my personal engagement as needed.”

Project EXPLODE, also known as Explosive Ordnance and Remnants of War Destruction Project in BiH, was funded entirely by the EU with over 4.6 million Euros and implemented by the UNDP starting in June 2013, completing in November 2016.

The successor project which is yet to be named will continue the good work through to 2018, by which time it is planned to have dealt with all surplus ammunition in the country.



L-R Sezin Sinanoglu, Maj Gen Waldner, Brig Gen Wilz



Alouette III Helicopters Leaving the EUFOR Mission

## EUFOR Says Goodbye to its Alouette III Helicopters after 7 Years

**On 4 April 2017 the Austrian Armed Forces' Alouette III Helicopters flew from EUFOR HQ, Camp Butmir for the last time.**

The light utility aircraft has been the primary medical evacuation and rescue helicopter of the EUFOR in BiH in since 2009. Their role will now be carried out by purposely re-fitted Augusta Bell (AB) 212 helicopters which are already part of the mission.

As the AB212 helicopters were primarily used for transport purposes, this role will now be passed to a new-to-mission Austrian Armed Forces air asset; the Pilatus PC-6 Porter Short Take-Off and Landing (STOL) utility aircraft. Chief of Staff EUFOR, Brigadier General Albert Sáfár, attended the final farewell celebration



in the hangar at Camp Butmir on 3 April.

The Alouette III helicopters were used for multiple rescue operations over the 7 years with the mission, helping out mine victims on Jahorina in 2011, with an avalanche in 2012 and with the flooding in 2014. Nearly 300 people were airlifted to safety including 88 injured personnel receiving MEDEVAC assistance with

the aircraft clocking over three and a half thousand hours of flight time total.

The Pilatus PC-6 Porter aircraft can carry up to 6 people or 800kg of equipment or a mix of both. It has a range of 400 Nautical Miles (NM), or 900 NM if using its external fuel tanks and can land on an air strip as short as 300m.

## Urban Operations Training

### Armed Forces of BiH Supported by EUFOR's Capacity Building & Training Programme



A unit of the Armed Forces of BiH conducted Urban Operation Training inside their barracks in Prijedor. A EUFOR Embedded Advisory Team supports the unit on the path to interoperability with NATO.

The 6th Infantry Brigade of the Armed Forces of BiH is dedicated to the NATO "Partnership for Peace Planning and Review Process". This is an important step to achieve military interoperability with armed forces of NATO member states.

A EUFOR Embedded Advisory Team is designated to the 6th Infantry Brigade in Banja Luka to support their development, with a special focus on the preparation for International Peace Support Operations.

EUFOR, as one of its primary tasks, provides Capacity Building & Training support to the Armed Forces of BiH in order for them to continuously improve their capabilities and achieve international standards.



## Courtesy Call of Commander EUFOR with the Chairman of BiH Presidency



COMUEFOR welcomed by the Chairman of the BiH Presidency H.E. Dr Mladen Ivanić

On 10 April 2017, the Chairman of BiH Presidency His Excellency Dr. Mladen Ivanić met with the newly appointed Commander of EUFOR, Major General Anton Waldner.

The general political and security situation in BiH was discussed, and the parties expressed their expectations that there would be no major turbulence in the next period.

Dr. Ivanić mentioned the adoption of the Defence Review as a strategically important document and pointed out the need for activating the Membership Action Plan, which above all requires progress to be made in finding solutions for the issues of prospective military properties.

In the process of solving the issues of surplus ammunition as well as training for AFBiH, EUFOR will continue its presence and support.

The Commander of EUFOR informed H.E. Dr. Mladen Ivanić about the activities of EUFOR in BiH, underlining that EUFOR would continue to engage in maintaining a safe and secure environment.



COMUEFOR during the meeting with the Chairman of the BiH Presidency H.E. Dr. Mladen Ivanić

## Siblings Recognize Explosive Remnant of War during EUFOR Mine Risk Education

**A EUFOR Mine Risk Education (MRE) helped a 6-year old boy and his sister to recognize an item in their home's backyard as a dangerous Explosive Remnant of War (ERW).**

When shown an ERW demo panel to pupils in Donje Vodicevo, two siblings, aged 6 and 7, identified an item in the backyard of their family home.

The members of the Chilean Liaison and Observation Team (LOT) in Banja Luka contacted the police and the Civil Protection Agency (CPA) to pursue the information given by the children.

In fact an unexploded rocket was found in a tree next to the family's



Chilean LOT members with Mrs. Zgonjanin and her children

house in Velika Zuljevica, a small village in the Novi Grad municipality where previously no ERW had been reported.

Local police cordoned off the area and specialists safely removed the rocket, which had been there for years already, Nikola (6) and Nikolina's (7) grandfather told the police.

The family had not been aware of the ERW, so the EUFOR Team

conducted an individual MRE for them.

The 17 EUFOR LOTs who are located throughout Bosnia and Herzegovina conduct MRE training for pupils and at-risk groups such as forestry workers, hunting clubs, etc. In 2016 alone, more than 20,600 persons were trained under the framework of MRE in order to raise awareness and increase safety. MRE forms one of EUFOR's key efforts in support of all BiH demining activities.



Unexploded rocket lying in a tree



Nikola and Nikolina pointing at the ERW in their garden

## LOT Livno Honours International Women's Day



Visit to the women's association in Tomislavgrad by LOT Livno.

The 8 March is International Women's Day and celebrated all over the world to commemorate the movement for women's rights. In honour of this day, Livno LOT House visited the Women's Association in Tomislavgrad which stands for cooperation and advancement of women. They are a women-only organization in Tomislavgrad and are recognized for their work on the economic empowerment of women and discrimination and violence against women.

The visit was very well received by the members of the association. During the meeting the head of the association delivered a lecture on the importance of women's role in society and the activities of the association. She said: "This non-governmental association has been continuing its activities for 15 years. 43 women serve here voluntarily. The aim of the association is to raise the level of knowledge and self-esteem among as many women as possible. We have organized many courses in the previous years to achieve this."

Chief Master Sergeant Yunus Öge, Deputy Commander of LOT Livno, praised the head of the Women's Association for their accomplishments, enthusiasm to interact with all people and for improvements in the area for the sake of the BiH community. He also stressed the importance of women in society. After the meeting, which had a very pleasant atmosphere, Chief Master Sergeant Öge gave gifts to the Women's Association on behalf of EUFOR to commemorate the day. The head of the Women's Association expressed her appreciation to all LOT members for their visit and gifts. She stressed the importance of what their visit signifies and highlighted the motivation gained from the praise of the LOT personnel.

EUFOR LOT Livno personnel are proud to express how sincerely grateful we are to these women who work for the sake of community improvements.

**OR-9 Nesib Tayyar**

## University of Sarajevo Students Visit EUFOR



Maj Kovacs briefing the Students.

On Wednesday 26 April 2017 a multinational group of 13 students and lecturers from the University of Sarajevo visited EUFOR HQ to obtain information on the EUFOR Althea mission in BiH.

The group was greeted by members of the Public Affairs Office before receiving a brief from Major Alexander Kovacs, COMEUFOR's Office Manager, on the EU Comprehensive Approach and EUFOR's role in it. The mix of academics and students were from the International Relations Department, part of the Faculty of Business and Administration at the International University of Sarajevo. Their main interest was in EUFOR's role in the creation of contemporary European politics and its reason to be in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The short visit finished with a group photograph in front of the HQ building and feedback from the students on the benefit of the visit was very positive.



The students outside EUFOR HQ

# soldiers' corner

## Changes in Butmir Mar/Apr 17

- General Sir James Everard took over from General Sir Adrian Bradshaw as the Operation Commander
- Major General Anton Waldner took over from Major General Friedrich Schrötter as COMEUFOR
- Brigadier General József Szpisják took over from Brigadier General Albert Sáfár.
- The Alouette III helicopters flew from the mission for the last time.
- The French PX moved opposite the DFAC and took over the Spanish Bar to create a Paris Café.

## Look forward to May/Jun

- EU Day Celebration in Sarajevo 9 May 2017
- 20 Years of Service Celebration Event 19 May 2017
- Hungarian National Defence Day 19 May 2017



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