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New EUFOR Commander

Major General Helmut Habermayer took over Command from outgoing COM EUFOR Major General Anton Wessely.



European Parliament delegation

COM EUFOR welcomed a European Parliament delegation consisting of members of the Security and Defence Subcommittee.



International Women's Day

To celebrate IWD 2023, COM EUFOR hosted a reception with all female soldiers and civilian employees based in Camp Butmir.



International Day of Military Sports

Camp Butmir celebrated the 2023 CISM International Day of Military Sports.

Commander EUFOR Major General Helmut Habermayer

EUFOR Public Affairs Chief Lieutenant Colonel Christian Fiedler

Forum Magazine Staff

Editor in chief Captain Emer Kelly

Layout Mr. Jasmin Zeherović

Photographs contributed by WO2 Rafael Schicher Mustafa Čomor

We also thank EUFOR Multinational Battalion EUFOR LOT Houses

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Editor in Chief



Hello and welcome to the latest edition of the EUFOR FORUM! This is my first edition as Editor in Chief and I would like to take this opportunity to introduce myself. I joined the Irish Defence Forces in 2009 and I am an Infantry officer. I have Bachelor and Master's Degrees in education and have recently worked in Irish Defence Forces J7 Training and Education Branch. I have deployed overseas on two previous

occasions, to UNIFIL in 2016 and 2018. To date I have thoroughly enjoyed my role as Mission Spokesperson. I have particularly enjoyed meeting with members of each contingent and learning more about BiH and the troop contributing nations of EUFOR. I look forward to the future challenges and opportunities that my role in EUFOR will bring.

This edition of EUFOR focuses on the COM EUFOR Change of Command ceremony and COM EUFOR's first months in EUFOR during which time he welcomed a number of high level visits to Camp Butmir, met with political and military leaders in BiH and began visiting EUFOR LOT houses.

Also in this edition, we celebrate international women's day, acknowledging the work of all female soldiers and civilians in Camp Butmir. We have also summarised Exercise Achilles I which took place in February. Finally, in this edition we highlight some of the sporting events which have taken place so far in 2023, including Runolist, CISM International Day of Military Sports and a table tennis completion.

A reminder to our colleagues across EUFOR, please remember the PAO when you are conducting any activity or project. Feel free to send us stories, pictures, articles or any ideas and suggestions.

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4:42 PM - Feb 21, 2023 - 706 Views

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Final preparation for the first ever Ski Mountaineering Competition in BiH - RUNOLIST 2023. #runolist2023 #zoi84 #euforbih #gssbih



4:36 PM · Feb 21, 2023 · 662 View

Today, COM EUFOR Maj Gen Habermayer visited the Peace Support Operations Training Centre (PSOTC) BiH, where he met with Colonel Elvedin Omić, PSOTC Commandant. During the visit COM EUFOR was briefed on PSOTC activities and discussed on going cooperation between #EUFOR and #PSOTC.



This week EUFOR, supported by AFBiH, conducted the annual Mine Risk Education course in Rajlovac barracks. The course had 23 students, including 13 students from EUFOR LOT Houses. On Thursday the course was visited by the EU delegation of members of the Security and Defence Subcommittee.

Major General Habermayer, new EUFOR Commander



On 18 January at EUFOR HQ in Camp BUTMIR, Sarajevo a ceremony took place to mark the Change of Command of the Force Commander of Operation Althea, European Union Force in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Major General Helmut Habermayer of the Austrian Army took over Command from outgoing COM EUFOR Major General Anton Wessely also of the Austrian Army. During his address the outgoing COM EUFOR, Major General Wessely stated that it had been his honour and privilege to cooperate with colleagues, the wider international community and BiH political and institutional representatives, working together in contributing to the goal of maintaining a safe and secure environment for all the people in BiH.

Incoming COM EUFOR, Major General Habermayer in his address to the ceremony, congratulated his predecessor Major General Wessely on his achievements as COM EUFOR and acknowledged the commitment of the 21 Troop Contributing Nations, whose soldiers contribute to the success of the EUFOR mission.

Major General Habermayer outlined his full commitment to accomplish the EUFOR ALTHEA mission and stated that he would continue the path of his predecessor to strengthen EUFOR's military capabilities. He stated that EUFOR would remain a credible, impartial and supportive partner, prepared for any situation that might arise.

He stated that, in the spirit of the European Union's Comprehensive Approach, he is looking forward to continuing working together with EUFOR's international partners, the High Representative, the European Union Special Representative, the OSCE and the co-located NATO Headquarters in Sarajevo as well as with the Ministry of Defense and the Law Enforcement Agencies of Bosnia and Herzegovina. In addressing the EUFOR's soldiers Major General Habermayer stated that he was looking forward to meeting them all in person as soon as possible and emphasised the importance EUFOR's motto: "One Mission, One Team".

The ceremony was also addressed by the EUFOR Operation Commander Lieutenant General Hubert Cottereau and the EU Special Representative Ambassador Johann Sattler.

Since assuming the role of COM EUFOR, Major General Habermayer commented that *"For me, commanding EUFOR Althea in Bosnia and Herzegovina is both an honour and an important responsibility."*



Speaking on the role and responsibility of EUFOR, Major General Habermayer stated *"EUFOR is present with its liaison and observation teams in all parts of the country, maintaining close contacts with local leaders and citizens of all political, ethnic and religious communities. I continue to adhere to EUFOR's main responsibility in assisting the government of your country to maintain a safe and secure environment. I also hope to find out how EUFOR can be of help in promoting the newly granted European candidate status. EUFOR has been and will remain an integral part of the implementation of the EU's Comprehensive Approach towards Bosnia and Herzegovina. "*

Major General Habermayer has identified his main Lines of Aciton centered on small arms inspection and registration for all the Law Enforcement Agencies across Bosnia and Herzegovina. Concerning EUFOR, the COM intends to strengthen the force by enhancing Force Protection capabilities and air mobility capacity.

Throughout the first three months of his appointment, Major General Habermayer has conducted introductory visits with military and political leaders from Bosnia and Herzegovina and the international community. He stated that **"Being able to raise the national flags of more EU member and even third states in Camp Butmir will be another important expression of commitment to help Bosnia and Herzegovina along its European path."**

Speaking in relation to what the role of COM EUFOR means to him personally, Major General Habermayer stated **"As a young officer in the Austrian General Staff, I always wanted to come here. It seems that my original wish becomes reality.** The kindness and hospitality that I have experience from the common people on the street is heart-warming. I hope that I will have the opportunity to see other picturesque and historic sites of this beautiful country, and get to know its history, cultural diversity, and of course its rich cuisine, by the end my tour. I am happy to say, that I have already started to learn my first words and phrases in the local language." Major General Helmut Habermayer joined the Austrian Armed Forces (AAF) in 1977 and graduated from the Theresian Military Academy as Army Reconnaissance Officer in 1981. His first assignment was as a Commander of a Reconnaissance Platoon, often patrolling along the Iron Curtain, followed by the assignment as Commander 3rd Reconnaissance Company of the AAF elite Reconnaissance Battalion. In 1985, he was deployed to SYRIA and commanded the 3rd High Mountain Company of AUSBATT/ UNDOF on the Golan Heights. He then was selected for General Staff training and upon completion was assigned as General Staff Officer G3 at the Military Command Lower Austria.

In 1993, he was appointed J2 in the Operations Division at the MOD, responsible for military reconnaissance and military security. He was strongly involved in maintaining situation awareness during the war in former Yugoslavia. Consequently, he became the AAF Liaison Officer to the Commission of Experts, investigating war crimes on the territory of former Yugoslavia. In 1996, he completed a posting as Chief of Staff of the Military Command Tirol, followed by the 88th Senior Staff Officers Course at the NATO Defence College in Rome. From 1998 to 1999, he commanded the famous Mechanised Infantry Battalion 35 of the 3rd Mechanised Infantry Brigade, which goes directly back to the "Dampierre Kürassiere" of 1619. In 2000, he was selected to study at the National Defence University at Washington, DC and earned a Master of Science in Strategic Resources Management. He then was deployed for a second time as National Commander of the AAF in KOSOVO.

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He returned to the MOD as an expert on the AAF Reform 2010 in the J2-Branch, Operational Intelligence and Network Centric Warfare. In 2006, he was appointed Head of the Military Strategy Division. In this capacity, he was strongly involved in the transformation process of the AAF and the development of network-enabled capabilities and cyber-use in military operations. In 2010, he attended the General Flag Officers and Ambassadors Course at the NATO Defence College. Thereafter, he was promoted to Capability Director of the AAF, which included being Chief Information Officer and Cyber Coordinator of the AAF. In this capacity, he was also Cyber Defence Adviser to the National Security Council. In 2021, the Secretary General of Defence appointed him to the Cabinet of the Defence Minister to manage the 5-year Government Defence Program. Academically, he holds a Master's Degree from the University of Vienna and a Master's Degree of the National Defence University, Washington, D.C. He has published several articles on Hybrid Warfare and Cyber Threat and Security.

MG Habermayer is married with two children and lives near Vienna.

COM EUFOR welcomed a European Parliament delegation



On 22 February COM EUFOR Major General Habermayer welcomed a European Parliament delegation consisting of members of the Security and Defence Subcommittee to Camp Butmir. The visit came as part of the delegation's three day visit to BiH from 20 to 23 February.

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The delegation included Chairman Gheorghe-Vlad Nistor (FPP. Romania) and Subcommittee members; Leopoldo López Gil (EPP, Spain), Dietmar Köster (S&D, Germany), Thijs Reuten (S&D, Netherlands), Klemen Grošeli (Renew Europe, Slovenia), Viola Von Cramon-Taubadel (Greens/ EFA, Germany).

On arrival the delegation visited an equipment display from EUFOR's Multinational Battalion including displays from Austrian, Bulgarian, Turkish, Romanian and Hungarian contingents.

Following this, the delegation were briefed on the security situation in BiH, demining operations conducted in support of the BiH Armed Forces and the role of EUFOR in area of Arms Control in BiH.

COM EUFOR stated that he very much appreciated the interest of the SEDE Sub-Committee in the EUFOR mission and the security situation in BiH. He requested that the Sub-Committee would continue to support and strengthen the EU's commitment to the Safe and Secure Environment for all the peoples of BiH.

As mandated by the European Parliament's Conference of The Subcommittee on Security and Defence (SEDE) provide a forum for public debate on, and parliamentary scrutiny of, all EU action in the area of the Common Security Defence Policy. This can be related to institutions, capabilities or operations. SEDE aims to contribute to the formulation of EU security and defence policy and work to building closer relations with strategic partners.

Presidents, during the visit the delegation aimed primarily to assess the EU's military operation EUFOR Althea and the security situation in BiH.



Admiral Joachim Rühle visited Butmir





On 19 February, COS Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe (SHAPE) Adm Joachim Rühle was welcomed at Camp Butmir by COMEUFOR Maj Gen Habermayer, COM NATO Headquarters Sarajevo Brig Gen McGaha and Chief of the Joint Staff AFBiH Lt Gen Mašović. COMEUFOR and Adm Rühle had a positive discussion surrounding a number of matters relating to EUFOR



On 22 February, COM EUFOR Major General Habermayer and COM NATO Headquarters Sarajevo Brigadier General McGaha welcomed COS Allied Joint Force Command Naples Lieutenant General Vasco Angelotti to Camp Butmir. Lt Gen Angelotti was greeted with an Honour Guard consisting of personnel from the Romanian contingent

COM EUFOR visited Brčko District

On 8 March COM EUFOR Maj Gen Habermayer visited Brčko District. The visit coincided with celebrations marking the 23rd anniversary of the Brčko District.

On arrival, COM EUFOR met Principal Deputy High Representative Jonathan Mennuti and a delegation of Brčko officials.

COM EUFOR was happy to be in Brčko to celebrate this special day and was very impressed by the inclusivity of the event.

Following the meeting, COM EUFOR attended a ceremony marking the anniversary. During the ceremony, speeches were made by Head of the Delegation of the Special EU Representative in BiH Mr Johann Sattler, Principal Deputy High Representative Mr Jonathan Mennuti and a delegation of Brčko officials.

Throughout the ceremony there were a number of musical performances by the Svetislav Ban Tisa Milosavljević Chamber Orchestra.



EUFOR celebrated International Women's Day (IWD)







IWD takes place on 8 March every year and has been celebrated globally for over 100 years.

This morning, to celebrate IWD 2023, COM EUFOR Maj Gen Habermayer hosted a reception with all female soldiers and civilian employees based in Camp Butmir. During the reception, COM EUFOR gave a short speech where he welcomed all in attendance and thanked them for their contribution to the mission. He noted that the female soldiers and officers of EUFOR and NATO HQ Sarajevo have impressed him through their professionalism and dedication to work. Furthermore, he highlighted the continuity and high level of performance of female civilian personnel, who make up exactly 50% of EUFOR local civilian employees.

COM EUFOR commented that, as we celebrate IWD 2023 we note that 2023 has been identified as European Year of the Skills, stating that *"Women should be encouraged to advance in science, engineering, technology and mathematics. Those fields are crucial and constitute a high demand in the job market, yet they are still dominated by men. This fundamental issues also applies to the military."*

The UN first celebrated IWD in 1975 and continues to celebrate IWD annually on a global scale. This year, the UN are celebrating the global theme of "DigitALL: Innovation and technology for gender equality" for IWD. Among the key messages of this theme is the gender digital divide globally, highlighting that 259 million fewer women have access to the internet than men. Furthermore, online violence is one of the leading causes of the gender digital divide globally. However, DigitALL for IWD 2023 also aims to recognize and celebrate women and girls who are championing the advancement of transformative technology and digital education.

COM EUFOR then invited Com NATO HQ Sarajevo, Brig Gen McGaha to speak, during which she thanked all women in attendance for supporting her, the mission, their families and each other, noting that she is proud to serve alongside these women.

Following this, all females in attendance were presented with flowers as a sign of EUFOR's appreciation of its female members.

Commenting after the event, Gender Advisor to COM EUFOR Nikolina Marceta said "IWD is an occasion to remember and mark all the struggles women had to go through and the strength they invested on their path to equality which is in many areas around the world as well as in many segments of different societies still not achieved. Women of EUFOR are here because they rightfully belong here and they are certainly contributing to diversity which we need and welcome. Security has no gender and we need to be able to understand all the differences in relation to security concerns of people of Bosnia and Herzegovina. All our men and women are required to understand those differences to achieve the best possible results".

Currently, there are 75 female soldiers, NCOs and officers under the command of COM EUFOR. There are female soldiers among the ranks of 15 troop contributing nations. Bulgaria has the largest number of female soldiers with 14.





Achilles I - the first in a series of force protection exercises



On 27 and 28 February, Exercise Achilles I/2023 took place in Camp Butmir. The aim of this exercise was to practice EUFOR personnel in the application of Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) related to force protection. The exercise was planned and organized by J3/7 branch and a number of Evaluation Teams monitored the progress of the exercise in order to provide feedback.

Despite the inclement weather conditions, the exercise was a huge success and beneficial learning experience all. During the exercise, EUFOR HQ personnel practiced the establishment and conduct of the Crisis Activation Team (CAT). The CAT plays an essential role in the conduct of Military Decision Making Process (MDMP) and in determining EUFOR's actions





during a crisis. The Quick Reaction Force (QRF) were evaluated on their reaction times, ability to secure the camp and response to evolving incidents. Specialist teams including medical personnel and Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) teams were activated as part of the exercise in response to a variety of scenarios.

Exercise coordinator Lieutenant Colonel Sack commented, stating that "Force Protection is one of the main concerns for any mission. Exercise ACHILLES proved that highly trained soldiers from 21 different nations are able to work together under tough conditions and that EUFOR has in place well-functioning and completely adequate Force Protection measures."

Exercise Achilles I/2023 is the first in a series of force protection exercises which will take place in 2023. Each subsequent exercise will pose increasingly more complex scenarios in order to enhance the capabilities of EUFOR. We look forward to the challenge!



EXERCISE

COM EUFOR visited LOT Houses

On 3 March Commander COM EUFOR inspected the German Liaison and Observation Team (LOT) in Čapljina and the Swiss LOT in Mostar.

On 4 March Maj Gen Habermayer continued his troop inspection in Jablanica where he met with the members of the Turkish LOT.

During COM EUFOR's visit to each LOT House he received key briefings on their activities and the general security situation in each area.





On 3 March COM EUFOR visited the Brčko LOT House, where he met with members of the Austrian contingent who are based there and received a brief on their activities and engagement.



Čapljina

On 3 March 2023 Maj Gen Habermayer paid a visit to the 4th Brigade of the Armed Forces of Bosnia and Herzegovina, located in Čapljina Barracks.

Colonel Zdravko Rezo, the Commander of the 4th Brigade welcomed COM EUFOR and updated him on the current status and challenges within the brigade.





Since the start of EUFOR's mission, BiH has been developing into a stable and peaceful country for its citizens. As an important part of the system designed to prevent threats to the safe and secure environment, 19 EUFOR LOT Houses are there for you all over Bosnia and Herzegovina.

They are EUFOR's link to local communities and authorities.

The EUFOR teams living in these houses are also your opportunity to stay in touch with EUFOR, and with your help we can maintain peace and stability throughout the country.

They are guided by the Coordination Centre in Camp Butmir, Sarajevo. This Coordination Centre has been installed as a part of EUFOR to have full and timely situational awareness related to events in BiH and to propose actions related to security issues.

While the EUFOR LOT houses have a limited area of responsibility, the Coordination Centre is responsible for the whole geographical area of BiH. Knowledge of what is important to the people of BiH enables EUFOR to provide support in maintaining a Safe and Secure Environment in Bosnia and Herzegovina.



EUFOR welcomed a new military contingent from the Netherlands

On 12 January EUFOR welcomed a new military contingent from the Netherlands

to EUFOR Operation Althea, marking the occasion with a flag raising ceremony in Camp Butmir. After a hiatus of six years, the Netherlands have recommitted troops to the mission, with more potentially to follow.

In his address to the assembled guests at the flag raising ceremony, Ambassador Jan Waltmans reiterated the commitment of the Netherlands to supporting stability and security in Bosnia and Herzegovina with the arrival of the new staff officers.

The addition of the Netherlands brings the total number of nations contributing to EUFOR up to 21.





The MNBN under the command of Lt Colonel Matthias Lampl





Lt Col Matthias Lampl took over command of the Multinational Battalion on 22 September 2022. He commands over 600 soldiers from 6 nations: Austria, Bulgaria, Hungary, Romania, Turkey and North Macedonia. Lt Col Matthias Lampl is an experienced military officer with a varied career. After graduation from the military academy in 1992, he has worked as both a commander and in staff functions in various commands.

In order to fulfill the mandate, MNBN ensure EUFOR visibility and develop and maintain area familiarisation by conducting approximately 100 operational patrols monthly such as foot patrols and long range patrols. Foot patrols are conducted through towns and villages in order to interact with and get to know the local population. In addition to its operational commitments,







MNBN regularly conducts training to maintain operational capability, participates in parades and high level visits by conducting honor guards and constitutes the force protection of CAMP BUTMIR.

It must be acknowledged that in order to fulfill its tasks, MNBN conducts significant coordination and liaison with EUFOR HQ, the NSEs and the AFBiH. COM MNBN wishes to thank the NSEs for their ongoing support to his troops. Furthermore, in thanking his troops he stated:

"As the commanding officer of the Multinational Battalion I would like to thank all of my soldiers for their professionalism and high levels of motivation in executing their multiple tasks"

Highlights

- * Exercise EUFOR Quick Response 2022
 - From 17 October to 20 November 2022, the longest quick response exercise there was, five troopcontributing nations MNBN also conducted parades and static and dynamic displays

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- The Military Parade for the COM EUFOR Change of command
- RECCE Team from Estonia January 2022
- RECCE Team from the Netherlands February 2022
- 13 LOT House Evacuation exercises from September 2022 to December 2022
- Hungarian and Bulgarian Embassy Evacuation exercise October 2022



Alpine Ski Mountaineering started officially in Bosnia and Herzegovina

RUNOLIST 🚱 🕑 🚳

2023

Ski mountaineering (abbreviated to skimo) is a skiing discipline that involves climbing mountains either on skis or carrying them, depending on the steepness of the ascent, and then descending on skis. There are two major categories of equipment used, free-heel Telemark skis and skis based on Alpine skis, where the heel is free for ascents, but is fixed during descent. The discipline may be practiced recreationally or as a competitive sport.

Competitive ski mountaineering is typically a timed racing event that follows an established trail through challenging winter alpine terrain while passing through a series of checkpoints. Racers climb and descend under their own power using backcountry skiing equipment and techniques. More generally, ski mountaineering is an activity that variously combines ski touring, Telemark, backcountry skiing, and mountaineering. On 3 February, RUNOLIST 2023, the first ever Bosnian ski mountaineering event was held in the Bjelašnica resort.

The event was a joint collaboration between EUFOR, the Armed Forces

of Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Federation of the Mountain Rescue Services. The commander of the Austrian EUFOR Contingent, Colonel Peter Nagelstrasser, signaled the start of the race for the 60 competing athletes.





First in female competition

It was interesting, you shouldn't start too fast, the race was hard or maybe not, it depends how you approach it. If I have the opportunity I will be here next year.



First in soldiers competition

My favoruite disciplines are biathlon and crosscountry skiing. This is my first competition with ski mountaineering skis! The first one and the victory!



First in civilians competition

In the last 4 years, with his partner from Dubrovnik Lazar Badanjac (2nd on Runolist competition) Lukšić climbed on skis to the highest peaks in Croatia, Montenegro and Albania. There are three distinct categories within the competition;

Category WOMEN:

Jerneja Mihevc, SLO Valérie Erceau, FRA Emira Hukić, BIH

Category SOLDIERS:

Tomaž Žemva, SLO Iztok Arbajter , SLO Damijan Kromar, SLO

Category CIVILIANS:

Lukša Lukšić, HR Lazar Badanjac, HR Jerneja Mihevc, SLO

Runolist is the local translation of the Edelweiss flower, a symbol for alpine sports and alpine forces within the Austrian Army and mountain rescue teams.

There were 60 athletes from Bosnia and Herzegovina, Slovenia, Germany, Austria, United Kingdom, USA, Italy, Slovakia, Croatia and France participated. The winner of the soldiers category, Tomaž Žemva, crossed the finish line at MEĐUSTANICA in 43 minutes and 50 seconds. The race was a great success for the involved security staff with all 60 athletes safely crossing the finish line.



Camp Butmir celebrated International Day of Military Sports



On 18 February Camp Butmir celebrated the 2023 CISM International Day of Military Sports.

COM EUFOR, Major General Habermayer welcomed all participants and announced the start of the race. Over 150 personnel walked or ran the 2.2km route.

Capt Jean-François of the French contingent was the first to cross the finish line.



What is CISM?

The International Military Sports Council (CISM) was founded on 18 February 1948 by five founding nations –Belgium, Denmark, France, Luxembourg and the Netherlands and today has 140 member countries.

CISM Mission:

Endorsing friendship amongst soldiers, CISM is the worldwide international military sport organization devoted to bringing together armed forces personnel from all nations through sports activities, thus enabling the physical training, military readiness and education for the armed forces.

International Day of Military Sports was celebrated globally in 2023 with several walks and races taking place. Check out the CISM website and social media channels to see pictures of International Day of Military Sports events in Sri Lanka, Belgium, Palestine, Iraq, Luxembourg, Lebanon and more!

Instagram: @cismmilsport Twitter: @CISM_HQ Facebook: @HQCISM Youtube: @cismchannel





Morale and Welfare Activities



Morale and Welfare Activities (MWA) organize and provide a variety of functions and activities in order to develop and maintain morale and welfare of EUFOR personnel. These activities include sports competitions, trips and social events. This month, MWA activities include a chess tournament hosted in Millennium Bar and a table tennis tournament held in the gym.

Make sure to check out the MWA calendar to keep up to date with all future MWA activities and events!



The chess tournament took place across a numbe of evenings in March.

The winners of the tournament were Marian Sirbu (1st place), Franz Strobl (2nd place), Mustafa Čomor (3rd place)

Table tennis tournament

29 participants in Men's Singles and 11 pairs in Men's Doubles from 8 different countries (Romania, Macedonia, Chile, Turkey, Bulgaria, Austria, Slovenia and Poland) took part, making it one of the most massive table tennis tournaments ever organized at Camp Butmir. A total of 41 matches were played in both categories, by official ITTF rules.

Winners by categories:

Men's singles:

1st place – Preda Marius (Romania) 2nd place – Kogoj Uros (Slovenia) 3rd place – Achovski Nikolai (Bulgaria)

Men's doubles:

1st place – Kolev Rumen, Ganev Kiril (Bulgaria) 2nd place – Ivankovski Evgeni, Tsokovski Stanyo (Bulgaria) 3rd place – Preda Marius, Gheroghica (Romania)



COM EUFOR Change of command Ceremony









EUFOR ALTHEA



18 JANUARY 2023