

GUARDIAN EAST



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“Thank you for what you do” National Guard Bureau leaders visit troops at Camp Bondsteel



Gen. Frank J. Grass, the chief of the National Guard Bureau, introduces himself to an audience of more than 200 service members during a Nov. 24 town hall event at Camp Bondsteel. During his visit, Grass spoke about the importance of KFOR's mission and the future of the National Guard. (Photo by Sgt. Erick Yates)

By Capt. Dave Chace

Multinational Battle Group-East

U.S. service members supporting NATO's peacekeeping mission in Kosovo represent the military force that America needs today, said the Chief of the National Guard Bureau during a Nov. 24 visit with troops stationed at Camp Bondsteel, Kosovo.

U.S. Army Gen. Frank J. Grass and his senior enlisted adviser, U.S. Air Force Chief Master Sgt. Mitchell O. Brush, held a town hall meeting with more than 200 U.S. Army Soldiers during a Balkans visit that also included official meetings with Kosovo's president and defense minister.

American and multinational soldiers, who serve as part of NATO's Kosovo Force mission, have earned the respect of Kosovo's senior officials through their professionalism and dedication to the mission, Grass said.

“Kosovo is a place that has been successful in bringing about peace,” Grass said, emphasizing the importance of America's regional presence and engagement with its NATO partners.

The U.S. troops represent one of 33 nations serving on KFOR's 20th rotation of forces since 1999, with a mission to ensure safety, security and freedom of movement for the people of Kosovo.

A primarily reserve-component force of U.S. Army Soldiers make up KFOR's Multinational Battle Group-East, which is led by the North Carolina Army National Guard's 30th Armored Brigade Combat Team headquarters. Known as “Old Hickory” and based out of Clinton, North Carolina, this is the 30th ABCT's third deployment since 9/11.

In Kosovo, MNBG-E's approximately 750 U.S. Army citizen-Soldiers from Alabama, California, Connecticut, Florida, Maryland, Texas, West Virginia and Puerto Rico serve alongside more than 700 troops from Armenia, Germany, Hungary, Poland, Slovenia and Turkey.

Grass paid special recognition to the multinational forces in the audience who are valuable participants in the National Guard's State Partnership Program, such as Polish soldiers' ongoing partnership with the Illinois National Guard.

Through the State Partnership Program, 76 countries are training and deploying alongside National Guard service members, he said.

In MNBG-E's efforts to support the State Partnership Program, U.S. forces in KFOR have also worked to support Iowa's partnership with Kosovo and North Carolina's partnership with Moldova.

The National Guard will have more chances to serve in Europe and across the globe in the coming years, Grass said.

“Europe is going to open up some opportunities, with our friends from Romania, Poland, Latvia, Estonia, Lithuania—all of our NATO partners,” Grass said. “We want to exercise together.”

For example, Air National Guard jets are serving on 90-day rotations with U.S. partners in Europe.

Predictability is a key part of the guard's ability to deploy and continue building partnerships.

“[The National Guard] provides trained and ready forces,” to include the KFOR peacekeeping force sitting before him, Grass said. “You leave your jobs, you leave your families, and launch and execute a mission. That's what you're doing now.”

The audience ranged from 20-year-old rookies to seasoned veterans with as many as six overseas deployments and 21 home-state activations.

In closing, the National Guard's top general asked each Soldier to thank their families and employers back home for their support throughout this holiday season.

“It's a tough time to be away from your family, no doubt about it,” Grass said. “It's hard to be away from your loved ones, but take care of each other—look out for each other during this time.”

“To make that leap to join the military, and then make that next leap to deploy—you are the best of the best of what we have in the National Guard,” Grass said. “Thank you for what you do.”



KFOR and Kosovo Border Police conduct a joint patrol on the Administrative Boundary Line between Kosovo and Serbia, Nov. 17, in Rogaqic, Kosovo. KFOR is beginning to integrate KBP personnel into ABL patrols as part of their ongoing partnership, and in support of safety and security in the region. (Photo by Sgt. David I. Marquis)

Tis the season for following ethical gift-giving guidelines

By Capt. Timothy Haga

MNBG-E Judge Advocate, Ops Law and Legal Assistance

It is the gift-giving season. In the Nov. 15 *Guardian East* newsletter we touched on sending things home to family and friends. This week's topic is gift-giving among co-workers. Of course there are multiple layers of rules about what you can and can't do. Some things to consider include the relationship between the giver and the recipient, to avoid things such as showing favoritism or trying to curry favor.

As always, we have posted a PowerPoint presentation with additional information and guidelines on the MNBG-E Judge Advocate General public shared drive. Feel free to consult members of the MNBG-E JAG office for additional information.



U.S. Army Soldiers deployed to Kosovo recite the Noncommissioned Officer's Creed during a graduation ceremony for Class 449 of the U.S. Army Basic Leader Course, Nov. 17 on Camp Bondsteel. This was the second cycle of the BLC for the current Kosovo Force MNBG-E rotation. (Photo by Sgt. Erick Yates)

SPARTAN

25 PULL UPS
50 DEAD LIFTS
50 KETTLE BELL SNATCHES
50 PUSH UPS
50 BOX JUMPS
50 FLOOR WIPERS
25 PULL UPS
At CMLT

POC 1: Sgt. Ferenc Radoczi
Cell: 049-766-263
E-Mail: radoczif@gmail.com

POC 2: Sgt. David Marquis
DSN: 5200
E-Mail:
david.i.marquis.mil@mail.mil

All participants will receive a certificate and t-shirt
Medals for top 3 male and top 3 female teams

Register by DEC. 12, 2015
DEC. 19, 2015

TEAM WORKOUT CHALLENGE



U.S. Army Sgt. Kegan Hurley, a medevac noncommissioned officer deployed to Kosovo with the 345th Combat Support Hospital, loads a German Rheinmetall MG-3 during a multinational familiarization fire held Nov. 24, in Prizren, Kosovo. (Photo by Sgt. David I. Marquis)



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