

THE *Maryland* State Partnership Edition

 **ALINE**



Celebrating 20 Years with Estonia



Celebrating 10 Years with Bosnia and Herzegovina



Inside this issue:



THE Maryland LINE



22



6



8



9



10



12



18



16



20

Feature Stories

- 6 Maryland celebrates partnerships: Estonia & Bosnia and Herzegovina
- 10 Estonian Air Force pilots deploy with Maryland National Guard
- 16 The Forgotten Front
- 20 Special Forces in Estonia
- 22 Sabre Strike 2013

- 4 Maryland Guard partners with Bosnia and Herzegovina for peace, security
- 8 State of Maryland signs Memorandum with Estonia
- 9 Adjutant General Hosts Bosnian Deputy Minister of Defense
- 12 Maryland Guard trains Estonian Air Force pilots
- 13 Estonian Border Guard Cross of Merit
- 24 State Partnership Program

14 On The LINE

On the cover:

A Maryland Army National Guard Soldier sight opposing forces during the Erna Raid 2007 military event in northern Estonia Aug. 9, 2007.

The Ambassador and BiH Minister of Defense signed a Memorandum of Understanding confirming continued funding of the International Military Education and Training program in Mostar June 5, 2008.

Governor:
Martin O'Malley

Adjutant General:
Maj. Gen. James A. Adkins

Design & Layout:
Assembled from past publications



Military Department
Maryland National Guard
Public Affairs Office
Fifth Regiment Armory
29th Division St.
Baltimore, Md. 21201
ng.md.mdamg.list.pao@mail.mil
410-576-6179

Contributors:
Lt. Col. Charles Kohler
1st Lt. Kristofer Baumgartner
Maj. Wade Minami
Capt. Joseph Winter
2nd Lt. Jessica Donnelly
Staff Sgt. Thaddeus Harrington
Staff Sgt. John Higgins
Spc. Loni Kingston
Spc Kieth Muckler
(AF) Staff Sgt. Benjamin Hughes
American Forces Press Service





Maryland Army National Guard Soldiers from the 253rd Engineer Company (Sapper) hitched a ride with the New Hampshire Air Guard to Puerto Rico this year for annual training. Nearly 50 Citizen Soldiers from the La Plata, Md., based unit along with eight soldiers from Bosnia and Herzegovina flew to Camp Santiago Joint Maneuver Training Center July 13-27. While there, they trained side-by-side with the 1013th Engineer Company (Sapper) and the 232nd Dive Team from Puerto Rico. The Maryland and Puerto Rican Citizen Soldiers shared best practices, experiences, and lessons learned with each other during the two-week AT.

MD Assists Bosnians with Disaster Training

Several Marylanders traveled to Bosnia-Herzegovina (BiH) recently where they presented hazardous material and disaster management techniques to their military and civilian counterparts. Maryland Army National Guard (MDARNG) members Maj. Chris Cole and Maj. George Spence along with Maryland Department of the Environment's (MDE) Alan Williams were in the Balkans April 1 through April 8 conducting the training.

Thirty-one Bosnian civilians and military personnel attended the training which included two practical exercises. Prior to the team's departure, their Bosnian counterparts provided them with a list of training objectives allowing the three instructors to tailor their training to their counterparts needs. Training examples incorporated hurricane Katrina response efforts and emergency response to Baltimore's 2001 Howard Street tunnel fire.

Cole, who served as team leader for the trip, has 15 years experience of environmental management with the MDARNG. Spence is currently deputy commander of the MDARNG's 32nd Civil



Disaster training participants take time out from training for a class photo.

Support Team while Williams is the administrator for the MDE's Emergency Response and Planning Program.

The training was conducted through Maryland's State Partnership Program with BiH which was established in 2003.

The National Guard State Partnership Program (SPP) links U.S. states with partner countries for the purpose of supporting the security cooperation objectives of the Combatant Commander. The program's goals reflect an evolving international affairs mission for the National Guard using the unique civil-military nature of the Guard to interact with both active and reserve forces of foreign coun-

tries. The State Partners actively participate in a host of engagement activities ranging from bilateral familiarization and could lead to training exercises opportunities, fellowship-style internships, and civic leader visits and medical events. All activities are coordinated through the Theater Combatant Commander and the U.S. Ambassadors' country teams, and other agencies as appropriate, to ensure that National Guard support is tailored to meet both U.S. and country objectives.

Maryland also has a State Partnership Program with Estonia. It was established in 1993.



Maryland Guard partners with Bosnia and Herzegovina for peace, security

By Amaani Lyle
American Forces Press Service



Armed forces from Bosnia and Herzegovina deployed with a military police task force to Afghanistan's Kandahar province in January, thanks to ongoing training and integration with the Maryland National Guard.

The integration, which began in 2003 through the National Guard State Partnership Program, ranks among the Bosnia Armed Force's top accomplishments since civil unrest began in the former Yugoslav republic region two decades earlier, said Evelyn Farkas, deputy assistant secretary of defense for Russian, Ukrainian and Eurasian affairs.

"This partnership is a testament to the great strides Bosnia has made to become a real contributor within the international security landscape," Farkas said. "The troops are stepping up and showing significant progress in their capabilities and professionalism, moving them closer toward the goal of membership in the NATO alliance."



Citing one of the most recent success stories of U.S. National Guard and foreign nation pairings, Farkas explained

"This partnership is a testament to the great strides Bosnia has made to become a real contributor within the international security landscape"

"It's all about sharing our experiences as the National Guard and building trust and confidence in the citizens of their country"

that Bosnia's highly-trained and capable force shows promise that would have seemed unachievable in the mid-1990s. But the Maryland National Guard, she said, has brought a sense of community that distinguishes itself from conventional joint training missions.

"The Bosnians display a great sense of pride, confidence and teamwork that has, in part, been built during these military and security exchanges," Farkas said. "The work they're doing with the Maryland National Guard has not only primed them to support International Security Assistance Force Afghanistan missions, but [also has] prepared them for international security involvement around the world."

NATO officials said they have long since championed nation partnership and collaboration, concepts that have gained particular interest in an era of fiscal uncertainty.

"The partnership with Bosnia yields benefits that are hard to quantify on paper, but definitely result in forces that are now better equipped, more credible and

making progress toward meeting NATO standards -- which ultimately creates efficiencies,"

Farkas said.

Army Maj. Gen. James A. Adkins, Maryland's adjutant general, said the program builds partnership capacity and relationships as it facilitates Bosnia and Herzegovina's journey to NATO membership.

"We build relationships at the squad, platoon and company level, where these individuals work together time after time, and we've seen that come together in the Bosnian deployment with us to Afghanistan," he said. "The Bosnians are willing and able partners in anything we do on the battlefield."

In many cases, the general added, the training is reciprocal.

“They’ve provided sound instruction and expertise in dealing with mines and other things they’ve experienced in their country [so] we can take advantage of their knowledge,” he said.

Adkins also has seen the 20-year journey in Maryland’s additional partnership with Estonia, noting that both Maryland and Estonia are coastal states with populations centered in a large port city.

“It’s all about sharing our experiences as the National Guard and building trust and confidence in the citizens of their country,” Adkins said. “It’s also important to show the relevance of what the military does to support the local community in their country.”

Trust at the senior level resonates at all levels,

and ideally allows U.S. and Bosnian troops to tackle problems, place resources against those problems and brainstorm on final solutions, Adkins added.

“It’s critical that everyone in the command sees the value of the exchanges and partnerships to develop that trust,” he said.

Farkas said she remains optimistic that Bosnia and Herzegovina will continue to thrive within the State Partnership Program, which now features 65 participating nations that enhance U.S. combatant commanders’ capabilities around the world.

“There is still work to be done, but Bosnia certainly continues to move forward with the support of the National Guard,” she said.



MARYLAND CELEBRATES PARTNERSHIPS:



By the Maryland National Guard Public Affairs Office



Governor Martin O'Malley recognized the 20 and 10 year anniversaries of the Maryland National Guard's partnerships with Estonia and Bosnia and Herzegovina with a reception for senior delegations from the two nations May 13, 2013, in Annapolis, Md.

The Maryland National Guard established its State Partnership Program with Estonia in 1993 to assist with the Baltic state's transition to an independent nation after the collapse of the Soviet Union. In 2003, the Maryland National Guard began another partnership, this time with Bosnia and Herzegovina, to help stabilize that country following the break-up of Yugoslavia and the ethnic conflict that followed. The program promotes civil and military cooperation to promote peace, stability, prosperity and democratic principles.

During the past two decades, the State Partnership Program enhanced relationships between the United States and these countries through hundreds of military and civilian exchanges. Cooperation spread, over the years, beyond military-to-military

ESTONIA & BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA

exchanges to civilian collaboration. Salisbury University in Maryland and Tartu University in Estonia, for example, established a relationship as a result of the State Partnership Program.

“Over the last 20 years, the Maryland National Guard has been a pioneer in this type of international engagement,” said O’Malley. “The organization’s success with two state partnerships has been a terrific benefit to not only the state of Maryland, but also to the nation as a whole.”

Two pilots from Estonia, Capt. Rene Kallis and Capt. Martin Noorsalu, are serving with the Maryland National Guard on a 3-year tour. They recently returned from Afghanistan with the Maryland Army National Guard’s C Company, 1st Battalion, 169th Air Ambulance Company where they flew medical evacuation missions alongside Maryland pilots.

Twenty-six military policemen from the Armed Forces of Bosnia and Herzegovina deployed last fall to Afghanistan with the Maryland National Guard’s 115th Military Police Battalion to support the International Security Assistance Force. These soldiers are fully integrated into the unit and conduct operations with Maryland Guard members.

“The partnership between Maryland and Bosnia and Herzegovina is a classic example of how it works,” said Gen. Frank J. Grass, chief of the National Guard Bureau. “We took a country out of war, and we worked together as they went from a consumer of security to a producer of security.”

Nationwide, the State Partnership Program currently involves 65 different partner counties and nearly every state and territory in the nation cov-

ering Africa, Asia, Europe and Latin America. Some states have two programs. Although many of the partner nations have deployed together, in 2012, Maryland’s became the first program ever to have supported two co-deployments with two different partner nations at the same time.

“Over the past 20 years, we have achieved great success through our partnerships while supporting U.S. foreign policy objectives,” said Maj. Gen. James A. Adkins, the adjutant general of Maryland. “As we look forward to the future, the SPP remains a cost-effective engagement program that produces results beneficial to the United States and our partners.”



1ST APPEARED
MAY 2009

State of Maryland signs Memorandum of Understanding with Republic of Estonia

Governor Martin O'Malley and Mr. Nicolai Vojeikin, deputy governor of the municipality of Harju County in the Republic of Estonia, signed a memorandum of understanding designed to encourage and strengthen cultural and social relationships between the state of Maryland and Harju County on May 18, 2009.

"This agreement is further affirmation of our long-standing partnership between the state of Maryland and the Republic of Estonia, and in particular, Harju County," said Governor Martin O'Malley. "This memorandum of understanding provides us a tremendous opportunity to combine our respective rich knowledge and resources to further research in academia as well as our industrial and public sectors."

The Maryland National Guard has partnered with the Republic of Estonia since 1993 through the State Partnership Program, which

was originally designed as outreach by the U.S. to new democracies in Eastern and Central Europe and the former Soviet Union.

The Maryland National Guard's relationship with the Estonian military has encompassed a wide range of military-to-military, military-to-civilian and civilian-to-civilian efforts with an emphasis on civil and military cooperation—all within the context of civilian control of a professional military. The Maryland Military Department also has shared best practices related to state emergency management processes, procedures and techniques through the Maryland Emergency Management Agency.

In 2003, Maryland was also selected to partner with Bosnia and Herzegovina as part of the State Partnership Program, in large part due to the state of Maryland's relationship with the Republic of Estonia.



**1ST APPEARED
APRIL 2010**

**ADJUTANT GENERAL HOSTS BOSNIAN
DEPUTY MINISTER OF DEFENSE**



(from left to right) Lt. Col. Alija Kozljak, advisor for military diplomatic and international affairs for Bosnia-Herzegovina; Mr. Zivko Marjanac, deputy minister of defense for policy and planning; Brig. Gen. James A. Adkins, the adjutant general of Maryland; Mr. Sasa Konjevic, Bosnia-Herzegovina chief of cabinet of the deputy minister of defense; and Lt. Col. Bozo Skopljakovic, Embassy of Bosnia-Herzegovina defense attache. The minister and his men visited the Camp Fretterd Military Reservation in Reisterstown, Md., where he received a briefing on the Maryland Military Department and its capabilities.

By Sgt. John Higgins
Maryland National Guard Public Affairs

The Maryland Military Department greeted members of the Bosnia-Herzegovina Defense Ministry April 15, 2010, in Reisterstown, Md., under the auspices of the National Guard State Partnership Program, to discuss the state's military and emergency response capabilities.

Brig. Gen. James A. Adkins, the adjutant general of Maryland hosted the Bosnian delegation, lead by Mr. Zivko Marjanac, deputy minister of defense for policy and planning. Marjanac is responsible for international cooperation, military intelligence affairs and security as well as command, control and communications for the Bosnia-Herzegovina Ministry of Defense.

The briefing at Camp Fretterd Military Reservation gave the minister and his staff a better un-

derstanding of how the Military Department and the National Guard manage emergency situations. They discussed the recent record-breaking back-to-back snow storms in February and the department's response to Hurricane Katrina.

The delegation had a chance for some hands-on training with Camp Fretterd's Engagement Skills Trainer 2000. Lt. Col. Bozo Skopljakovic, Embassy of Bosnia-Herzegovina defense attaché and Mr. Sasa Konjevic, Bosnia-Herzegovina chief of cabinet of the deputy minister of defense, were able to fire air-powered M-16 assault rifles to test their skills at shooting.

The State Partnership Program was launched in Europe as part of the initial outreach by the United States to new democracies in Central and Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union. The SPP

brings together U.S. states and territories with partner nations through a range of military, civil-military and civil activities under the Maryland Military Department. The partnership program emphasizes civil and military cooperation with civil control of a professional military. Maryland was selected to partner with Bosnia-Herzegovina in 2003.



(From left to right) 1st Lt. Michael Kehs from the 32nd Civil Support Team explains how to use chemical detection equipment to Lt. Col. Alija Kozljak, Mr. Zivko Marjanac and Lt. Col. Bozo Skopljakovic of the Bosnia-Herzegovina defense ministry.

Estonian Air Force pilots deploy

By 2nd Lt. Jessica Donnelly
Maryland National Guard Public Affairs Office



(Above) Capt. Rene Kallis and Capt. Martin Noorsalu review their flight plan before leaving on their deployment. (Opposite page) Capt. Rene Kallis and Capt. Martin Noorsalu, along with Family and Maryland National Guard members, walk out to the UH-60 Blackhawk that the Estonian Air Force pilots left in. (Below) Capt. Rene Kallis and Capt. Martin Noorsalu say goodbye to their wives and children during the deployment ceremony, Aug. 24.



Pilots with the Estonian Air Force, who have been assigned to the Maryland National Guard for the past year, deployed from Weide Army Airfield in Edgewood, Md., Aug. 24, 2012.

Once overseas, Capt. Rene Kallis and Capt. Martin Noorsalu will be attached to C Co., 1st Battalion, 169th Aviation Regiment which deployed to Afghanistan earlier this year.

“[Our deployment] is a big step for the Estonian Air Force,” said Kallis.

He added, that the deployment is the first of its kind and that hopefully it will pave the way for more Estonian service members to deploy in the future.

The Estonian pilots learned to fly UH-60 ‘Blackhawk’ helicopters with the Maryland National Guard after completing the qualification course at Fort Rucker, Ala. Kallis explained that the Blackhawk is much different than the aircraft they are used to flying in Estonia, which is much smaller, but they have been conducting plenty of flying hours to get familiar with the new aircraft.

“We’re glad that you’ve made it to this point in your training,” said Maj. Gen. James A. Adkins, the adjutant general of Maryland. “We can’t wait to have you back.”

When the Estonian pilots return from their deployment, they will continue

with Maryland National Guard

“We want you to feel like one of our Soldiers because you are our Soldiers. You’ve trained for a year with us, you’re going into combat with us, and when you get back, you will still be flying with us.”

**-Maj. Gen. James A. Adkins
Adjutant General of Maryland**

serving with the Maryland National Guard, rotating through various positions to include flying, maintenance and operations.

“It will be a tremendous experience and training for you both,” said Adkins. “We want you to feel like one of our Soldiers because you are our Soldiers. You’ve trained for a year with us, you’re going into combat with us, and when you get back, you will still be flying with us.”

The Estonian pilots are assigned to the Maryland

National Guard as part of the State Partnership Program. The National Guard's 65-nation, 20-year-old SPP provides unique partnership capacity-building capabilities to combatant commanders and U.S. ambassadors through partnerships between U.S. states, territories and the District of Columbia and foreign countries. The SPP was launched in Europe as part of the initial outreach by the United States to new democracies in Central and Eastern Europe and the for-

mer Soviet Union.

The Maryland Military Department has had a partnership with Estonia since 1993, and has another partnership with Bosnia-Herzegovina that has been in place since 2003.

C company is a medical evacuation aviation unit that is deployed in support of Operation Enduring Freedom with approximately 40 members and six of their UH-60 “Blackhawk” helicopters. The helicopters are based at Weide Army Airfield.



Maryland Guard trains



Estonian Air Force pilots for deployment



By 2nd Lt. Jessica Donnelly
Maryland National Guard Public Affairs Office

Pilots with the Estonian Air Force have been training with the Maryland Army National Guard, learning to fly rotary wing aircraft and preparing for deployment with the unit.

Capt. Rene Kallis and Lt. Martin Noorsalu have been attached to C Company, 1st Battalion, 169th Aviation Regiment, training on UH-60 'Blackhawk' helicopters in preparation for a deployment to Afghanistan in support of Operation Enduring Freedom.

The unit mobilized during a ceremony held Feb. 3, 2012, and departed for training at Ft. Hood, Texas, before continuing on to Afghanistan.

Kallis and Noorsalu will join the unit overseas and are scheduled to participate in six months of the year-long deployment.

"We'll be working together with the

Maryland National Guard ... and we hope to act as co-pilots," added Kallis about the deployment.

After they return from deployment, Kallis and Noorsalu will remain with the Maryland Army National Guard, rotating through various staff positions to get more first-hand experience and training on how a rotary wing unit is Maryland National Guard trains Estonian Air Force pilots for deployment managed.

During their time in the U.S., Kallis and Noorsalu have completed the UH-60 qualification course at Fort Rucker, Ala., as well as conducted high altitude training with the OH-58 'Kiowa' helicopters in Colo. They also participated in pre-mob training, such as chemical warfare training and squad lanes, with the 169th to prepare for the deployment.

"We've gotten a lot of experience and good training," said Kallis of his time with the MDNG.

The Maryland National Guard has a

relationship with Estonian through the National Guard's State Partnership Program, which brings together

U.S. states and territories with partner nations to enhance international security and promote understanding, trust and stability.

"Maryland has a long history of partnership with Estonia," said Maj. Gen. James Adkins, adjutant general of Maryland.

"We've been partnering with Estonia for nearly 19 years, we've grown up together. ... Long-term, enduring relationships have developed through this partnership." Adkins added, "There is no program with a greater value because of the relationships it creates."

C Company, 1st Battalion, 169th Aviation Regiment is a medical evacuation aviation unit. The unit, which is known by their nickname... "the Misfits," is commanded by Capt. Teresa Parrotta and is based out of Weide Army Airfield.



ESTONIAN BORDER GUARD CROSS OF MERIT

Sgt. Thaddeus Harrington
Maryland National Guard Public Affairs Office

Chief Warrant Officer Gaven Meadows, tactical operations officer in the 29th Combat Aviation Brigade's Charlie Company 2-224 Aviation Regiment, received the Estonian Border Guard Cross of Merit Class III award during a ceremony at the Estonian Embassy in Washington D.C., Nov. 24, 2010.

The award was established in 1997 to recognize public servants, in exceptional cases, and other persons determined worthy of merit by the Estonian Border Guard. It has three grades; the highest class is first class.

The Class III Cross of Merit is awarded for: Due diligence for border surveillance, border control, search and rescue at sea, marine pollution detection, localization and liquidation or other activities related to internal security.

Chief Meadows was selected for this award because of his support of the Office of Defense Cooperation in Estonia and the Estonian Border Guard during his 2006-09 tour as part of the National Guard's State Partnership Program. He worked to get a U.S. grant through the U.S. European Command's Counter Narcoterrorism Program to construct two helicopter bases of operation for the Border Guard. The two bases established counterdrug aviation support in the eastern part of Estonia.

"I greatly appreciate the award and the recognition. The biggest award for me was being able to work with the Border Guard and all the Estonian defense forces," said Chief Meadows. "It was just an amazing experience. It felt really great to be able to help a partner develop a capability."



down to this shopping mall where he'd stay at this arcade machine [helicopter simulator], and he drew a crowd. Seems he was the only one that was able to fly it."

"We are so thankful," said Bonnie Meadows, mother of Chief Meadows. "We're thankful that other people can see the merit in him, not just his dad and mom."

The military was something he wanted to do early on stated Bob Meadows, father of Chief Meadows.

While his father traveled to the District of Columbia on business, the then 13-year-old Chief Meadows asked his father to pick up a book on helicopters. In the Smithsonian National Air and Space Museum library, Bob found an Army basic helicopter-training manual.

"He read the whole thing many times," said Bob. "He took me

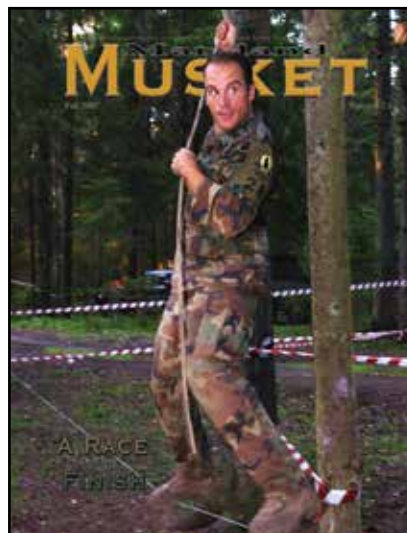
The National Guard's State Partnership Program began in 1993 following the collapse of the Soviet Union. The program is intended to increase cooperation between former Warsaw Pact countries and the United States. It also fosters mutual interests and establishes long-term relationships across all levels of society. It introduces these countries to democracy, assists them in building professional military intuitions and helps their responses to civil emergencies.



On the +LINE



Staff Sgt. Thaddeus Harrington, a photojournalist for the Maryland National Guard, dons an Explosive Ordnance Disposal 9 suit while on a Humanitarian Mine Action mission in Estonia May 21, 2013. The U.S. Government humanitarian mine action program assists selected countries in relieving human suffering and in developing an indigenous mine action capability while promoting U.S. interests.



A Special Forces Soldier navigates an obstacle during Erna Raid 2007, held in northern Estonia. The annual Erna Raid tests Soldiers' skills and endurance over six days of grueling competition.



This summer Maj. Gen. James A. Adkins the adjutant general of Maryland traveled to Estonia to meet with President Toomas Hendrik Ilves. Twenty years earlier, they stood for a similar photo when Adkins was a lieutenant colonel assigned as the Bilateral Affairs Officer in Estonia and Ilves was the Minister of Foreign Affairs at the time.

Senior Master Sgt. Brian McNabb, 175th Maintenance Operation Flight senior controller, discusses the A-10C with Maj. Slobodan Simic and Capt. Zeljko Krajina, Armed Forces of Bosnia-Herzegovina public affairs officers, during their tour of Warfield Air National Guard base in Middle River, Md., Sept. 14.



A woman awaits treatment from physicians from the 175th Wing, Maryland Air National Guard, in a schoolhouse in Luka, Bosnia as part of a joint force medical humanitarian effort to provide medical attention to the people of Bosnia and Herzegovina July 2006.



Mr. Zeljko Komsic, chairman of the tri-presidency of Bosnia and Herzegovina visits the Annapolis Armory and observes the capabilities of the Maryland National Guard's 32nd Civil Support Team.



Eight Soldiers of the MDARNG's 115th Military Police Battalion spent more than three weeks in Visoko, Bosnia and Herzegovina Sept. 8-30, 2010. The MDARNG Soldiers personally verified the destruction of nearly 12,000 M16A1 rifles of a 30,061-rifle stockpile identified by the BiH Ministry of Defense as excess inventory. The United Nations Developmental Program provided funding for a local contractor to do the actual demilitarization of the weapons.

The Forgotten



Front

It has been more than 11 years since the leaders of Bosnia, Croatia and Serbia signed a cease-fire agreement that halted the war in Bosnia. But the damage was done. More than 200,000 people perished during the conflict. The war was devastating and the scars are visible to this day.

“The economy took a huge hit after the war,” said Air Force Lt. Col. Phillip “Randy” Brown, commander of the 175th Medical Group, Maryland Air National Guard. “Fifty percent of the population is without jobs. The people of Bosnia and Herzegovina are under resourced, they don’t have access to medical care; at least not to the level they should.”

In July 2006, the 175th Med. Group of the Maryland Air National Guard spent a month in their “sister-state” BiH, during their annual training, administering basic aid to local villages.

The humanitarian effort was a joint effort that combined members of the Maryland Air National Guard and Maryland Defense Force with Bosnian soldiers and translators. It was the first mission to bring the three forces together.

Approximately 80 members of the Maryland Military Department ventured to BiH as part of a humanitarian relief mission. Among the group were dentists, optometrists, physicians, physicians’ assistants, medics and nurses, many of whom perform their job on the civilian side as well.

Most of these people do their job on a daily basis and are good at their job on the civilian side, said Brown.

The mission gave the troops an opportunity to do something different than the normal annual training,

said Master Sgt. John Wissman, acting first sergeant of the 175th Med. Group.

Preparation for this mission was extensive.

“We embarked upon two site surveys, worked with local non-government organizations, with the local embassy and Eagle Base, Tuzla, said Lt. Col. Steven Benden, commander of the 175th Security Forces Squadron, Maryland Air National Guard. “[We] went out and selected sites. We went to each area and selected schools and/or community centers to set up the medical mission.”

A reconnaissance team was sent to BiH a week before the first medical teams to make sure the sites were ready, said Senior Master Sgt. Steve Bloodsworth, senior health technician for the 175th.

“Flyers and radio announcements were made to inform the Bosnians of the mission,” said Bloodsworth.

United States Air Forces in Europe provided \$70,000 that was utilized for medication, said Bloodsworth.

Each day the group would travel to individual villages and set up a makeshift clinic, making due with what was available to them.

Triage was the first stop for incoming patients. Interpreters were present to help patients fill out paperwork that described the patients’ medical issues.

Once they were finished with their “in-processing” they were sent to the appropriate clinic: dental, optometry, general practice or urgent care. In many instances, patients were

Text and photography by Spc. Loni Kingston



Air Force Lt. Cols. Richard Colgan (left) and Robert Barish of the Maryland Defense Force, attached to the 175th Wing, Maryland Air National Guard, review a patient's heart condition outside a community center in Banovici, Bosnia as part of a joint force effort to supply basic medical assistance in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

seen at more than one clinic.

Each clinic saw its fair share of patients with their fair share of problems.

“Small children have rampant decay; a lot of adults are already missing many of their teeth,” said Lt. Col. Rita Kurek, dentist with the 175th Med. Group.

“My job is to provide basic dental care, help them understand what is causing their decay and teach them preventative measures,” said Kurek.

Medical Laboratory Technician, Staff Sgt. Robert Davis of the 175th said the major medical issues that he saw were diabetes and urinary tract

infections.

The medical laboratory technicians provided chemistry testing to further assess the patients' conditions.

Once patients have been treated they either went to the pharmacy for medication or out-processed.

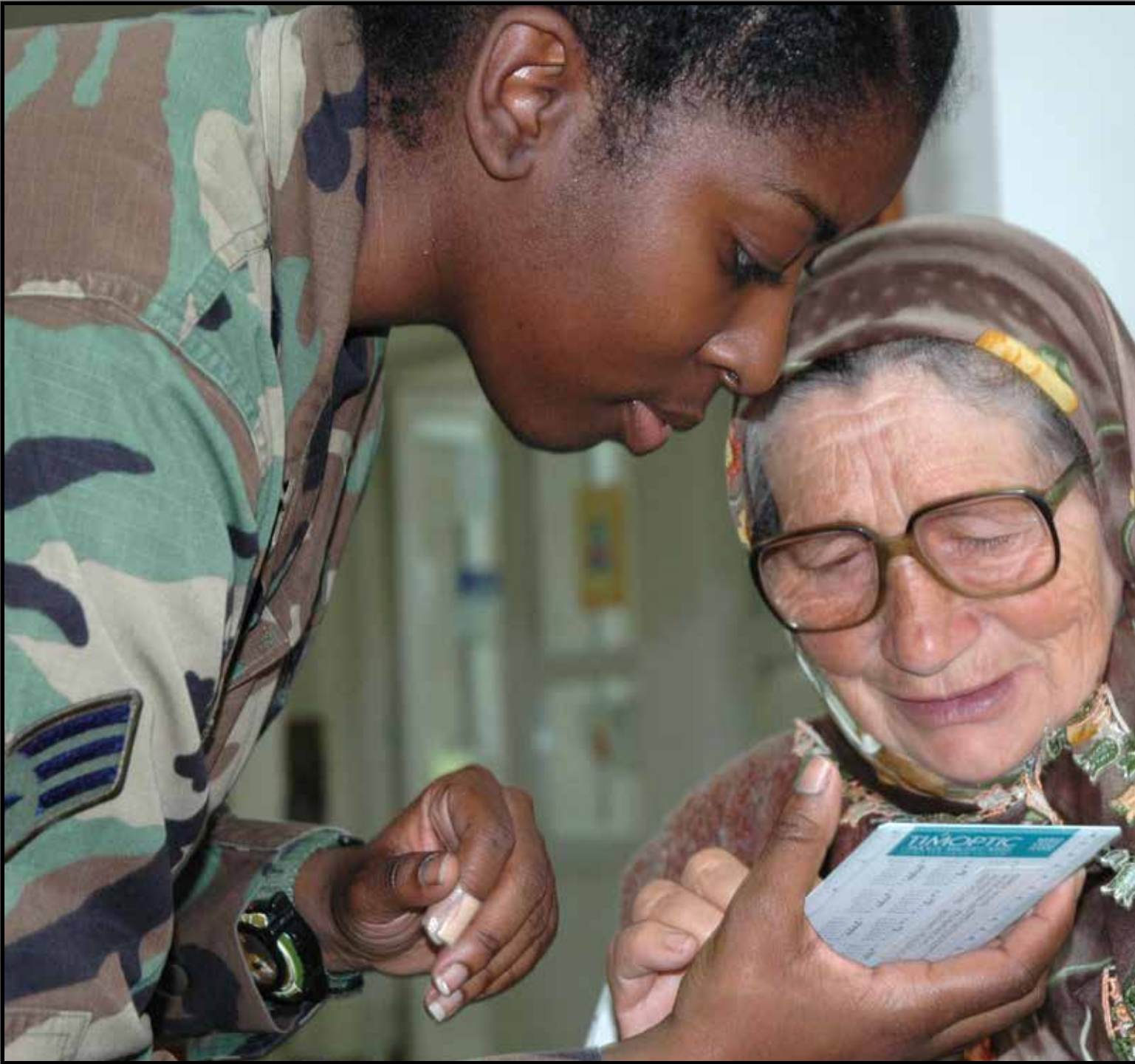
People walked for miles to reach the clinic; in some instances they walked all day to receive medical care.

“There is practically no health care available,” said Semsudin Mujic, president of the village of Luka.

The

Forgotten

Front



A local woman is given the gift of sight after not having the proper treatment for many years, as Airman 1st Class Jocelyn Campbell of the 175th Wing, Maryland Air National Guard, tests her new prescription glasses in a schoolhouse in Skugric, Bosnia as part of a joint force humanitarian effort to supply medical treatment to the people of Bosnia and Herzegovina.



On an average day medics saw approximately 200 people. However, there are still many people who will continue to go without the critical health care they need.

“It’s a drop in a bucket, but it’s a drop,” said Brown. “It’s a step in the right direction. You have to start somewhere.”

And local residents agreed.

Adem Ustrlic, municipality representative, Bonovici BiH said, “If we help one man, we help the whole world.”

The fulfillment these service members have gained during this mission is immeasurable.

“Seeing the faces of those people who have received care is totally rewarding,” said Wissman.

“I think we all want purpose in life and this is definitely a purpose,” said Brown.

The mission was meant to accomplish two things; provide Airmen with training and to provide medical relief to those in need.

“We are here to train and to make ourselves better medics, but sometimes I think making yourself better is actually helping others and that’s why we are here,” said Brown.



“It’s a drop in a bucket, but it’s a drop. It’s a step in the right direction. You have to start somewhere.”

-Air Force Lt. Col.
Phillip “Randy” Brown,
commander,
175th Medical Group-

SPECIAL F

TEXT AND PHOTOGRAPHY BY SPC. KEITH MUCKLER



Capt. Adolphus Houck makes his way across a northern Estonia waterfall during the Erna Raid 2007 competition in northern Estonia. The competition tests Soldiers' skills and endurance over six grueling days of competition.

ORCES IN ESTONIA



ern Estonia. The annual Erna Raid

After six grueling days ranging over **247,000 acres** in northern Estonia, the United States team finished third among international countries and 15th overall in Erna Raid 2007, matching last year's results against international entries. Erna Raid is billed as one of the world's longest and most difficult military competitions.

Although Germany and Finland's two teams were first through third respectively among non-Estonian international competitors, the United States was actually third among international countries since they entered only one team. Multiple Estonian teams competed to round out a total of 30 four-man teams from nine nations in the final standings. In addition to Finland, Germany and the United States, the other countries at this year's Erna Raid were Sweden, Denmark, Norway, Czech Republic, Portugal as well as host country Estonia; China and Romania sent official observers.

The team commander of the four-man U.S. contingent, stated that "The team did great. It was the first time the team had worked together and the first time any of the competitors had been to that competition. So they were competing against [other countries] that sent the same team every year . . . we had a new team, inexperienced, and they did really well...It is a very, very serious competition in Europe, with all the other countries...taking it very seriously. And we have to go over and compete against that mindset and that training set."

The team commander further stated that this year our team placed higher [overall] than any other U.S. team previously competing and they tied last

year's team for the highest international ranking.

The competition started August 6th with an amphibious assault landing and then continued with day and night tasks, including orienteering, individual and vehicular obstacle courses, river crossing, rifle marksmanship, knife throwing, urban combat, negotiating a minefield, setting explosives on a bridge, a medical casualty response and a final 10K run (6.2 miles) with equipment and weapons that ended in a 40-yard low-crawl under barbed wire. All tasks were timed and judged by international military umpires.

The team commander explained that "The competition area covered 1,000 square kilometers [247,000 acres] and the actual route that the competition team covered was 250 kilometers [155 miles.] It's important to know they did it in 3-1/2 days." The balance of the time was spent in other competitive activities.

The U.S. team was composed of four Soldiers from the Maryland Army National Guard along with a four-man support team. Maryland and Estonia have been partners for 14 years in the National Guard's State Partnership Program. The State Partnership Program helps to strengthen military-to-military contacts between the U.S. and the Estonian military.

The 14th annual Erna Raid competition commemorates the actions of the Erna long-range military reconnaissance units as well as the Estonian resistance known as the "forest brothers," who assisted them in fighting Soviet Army occupation. The competition took place in the same area of northern Estonia where the original Erna group operated during World War II.

Sabre Strike 2013:

Multinational partnership

By Capt. Joseph Winter
175th Wing

6/26/2013 - Amari Air Base, Estonia -- The Air Component of Sabre Strike 2013 concluded June 10 as four A-10C, a KC-135 Aircraft and over 100 Maryland and Pennsylvania Air National Guard members departed Amari Air Base, Estonia. The departure signaled the end of two weeks of multinational exercises in the Baltics and a celebration of 20 years of the Maryland National Guard and Estonian Defense Forces State Partnership Program.

"The exercise was an overwhelming success," said U.S. Air

Force Brig. Gen. Scott L. Kelly, Commander, 175th Wing, Maryland Air National Guard. "We had the opportunity to solidify our already strong relationship with the Estonia Army and Air Forces while providing comprehensive training with close air support."

Amari Air Base hosted the 175th Wing, Maryland Air National Guard including four A-10C Aircraft and over 80 personnel and the 171st Air Refueling Wing, Pennsylvania Air National Guard including a KC-135 Aircraft and over 20 personnel.

Both units led the Air Component of Sabre Strike 2013 which

was hosted this year by Lithuania and now in its third year of execution, Sabre Strike involved approximately 2,000 military personnel from 14 nations including, Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia, Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Great Britain, Poland, Romania, NATO's Multinational Corps Northeast, U.S. Army Europe, U.S. Air Forces in Europe, Joint Multinational Training Command, Joint Multinational Simulation Center, Joint

Multinational Readiness Center, 5th Signal Command, 21st Theater Sustainment Command, the United States Army and Air National Guard, and U.S. Army Cadet Command. Norway and Sweden sent observers.

Maryland Air Guard A-10C aircraft along with French Mirage and Estonian L-39 fighters provided close-air support to those troops on the ground while flying out of Amari, whereas the KC-135 tanker from the Pennsylvania Air National Guard provided aerial refueling support.

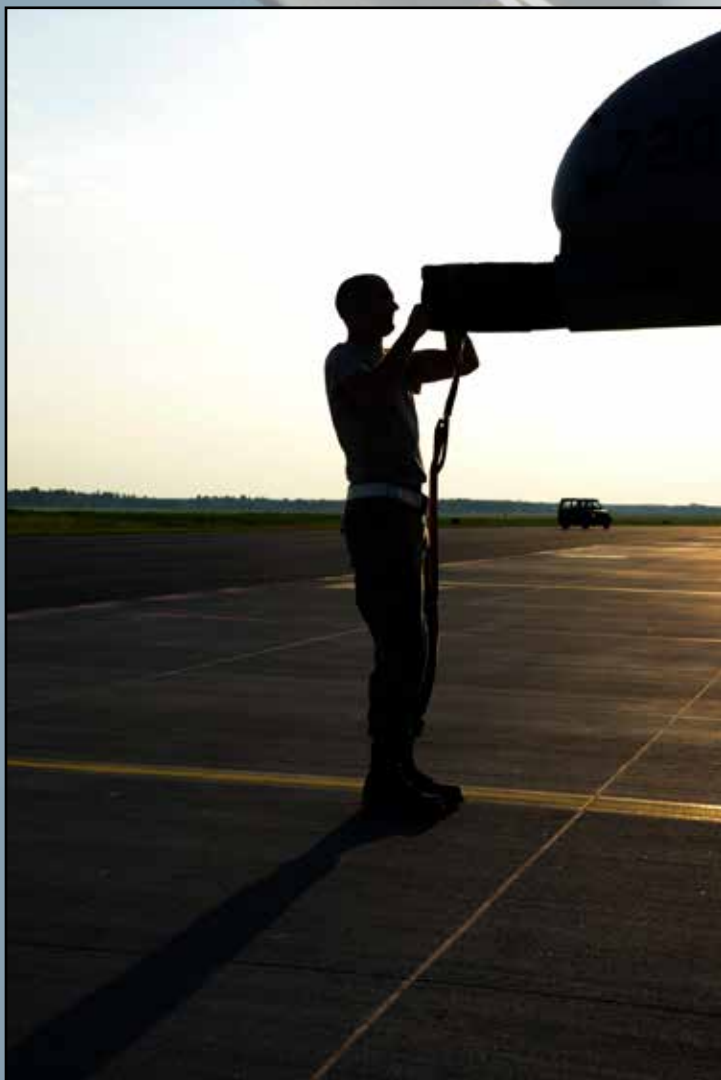
This year's exercise also marked twenty years of partnership between Maryland and Estonia, as well as Pennsylvania and Lithuania, as participants in the National Guard's State Partnership Program.

"I was a young Lt. Col. when we started the program," said Maryland Adjutant General Maj. Gen. James Adkins. "I've seen a tremendous journey from former republic of the Soviet union to NATO member."

Those relationships have yielded results, as Estonian pilots have deployed alongside Maryland Air National Guardsmen in Afghanistan. That can't be accomplished without those enduring relationships, according to Adkins.

Similarly, Pennsylvania Army National Guardsmen have deployed alongside Lithuanian soldiers on four rotations to Afghanistan.

"It's a great occasion," said U.S. Air Force Lt. Col. Paul Zurkowski of the 104th Fighter Squadron, Maryland Air National Guard. "teaching and learning from our Estonian counterparts on what their capabilities are, learning



partnership in the Baltics strengthening the state between Maryland and Estonia.

what their air and ground personnel do and how they prepare to engage in conflict establishes a baseline of our joint capabilities and gives all of us an appreciation for the work we do, jointly."

"The support and collaboration of the Estonian Defense Forces, particularly the Estonian Air Force is outstanding," said Kelly. "I am proud to call their personnel not only a strong partner but also

lifelong friends. I look forward to continued joint exercises and a sustained and actively engaged commitment with both of our organizations.



Germany



Denmark



France



Lithuania



Romania



Estonia



Finland



Maryland



USA



Poland



Czech Republic



Great Britain



Norway



Latvia



Sweden





STAFF PART PRO

STATE



PARTNERSHIP

PROGRAM

Photography and Text by Spc. Thaddeus Harrington

The National Guard's State Partnership Program began in 1993 following the collapse of the Soviet Union. The program is aimed at increasing cooperation between former Warsaw Pact Eastern European countries and the United States. It also fosters mutual interests and establishes long-term relationships across all levels of society. It introduces these countries to democracy, assists them in building professional military institutions and helps their responses to civil emergencies. Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania were the first countries to join the partnership program, and the Maryland National Guard was partnered with the Republic of Estonia. The Maryland Guard was instrumental in getting Estonia into NATO and in 2003, became one of the first states to have a second partnership; one with Bosnia and Herzegovina.

"Maryland was setting an example with the state partnership program with Estonia," said Maj. Jon C. Eisberg, Deputy Chief and Bilateral Affairs Officer for the Office of Defense Cooperation U.S. Embassy, Sarajevo, Bosnia-Herzegovina. Eisberg, a Westminster, Md. native and the former commander of A/1-158 Cavalry Regiment, was asked by the adjutant general to take the deputy chief position in 2006.

The SPP consists of military-to-military interactions – training exercises, unit personnel exchanges and noncommissioned officer development; military-to-civilian interactions – military support of civil authority, disaster response and consequence management; and civilian-to-civilian interactions – developing professional institutions through civic leader visits, university education exchanges, professional and chamber of commerce exchanges.

"As the program matures, then we'll start to get into the civilian aspects. We have done some civilian-to-civilian events. We've done two civic leader visits. We brought both civilian leaders from Maryland as well as business leaders and educators over here to meet some of their counterparts in an attempt to create self-sustaining relationships," said Eisberg.

The many military-to-military events that the Maryland National Guard supported has helped reform the BiH armed forces, contributing to their entrance into the Partnership for Peace program. State Partnership Program is a bilateral program, while the Partnership For Peace program is a multilateral NATO program and among the first steps into NATO accession. The two programs are not tied together, but the SPP can assist a nation in getting into PFP.

During the June 5 U.S.-BiH Military Cooperation Day in Mostar, the MDNG's Color Guard conducted a joint presentation of the Colors. This was the first time that they have played such a role in a Bosnian event. The ceremony included a joint U.S.-BiH paratrooper drop and a flyover by F-16s. Later the ambassador along with the BiH government signed a Memorandum of Understanding, confirming continued funding of

Continuation on next page.



VLASENICA, Bosnia-Herzegovina, July 17, 2008 – Airmen from the Maryland Air National Guard's 175th Civil Engineer Squadron pressed ahead full bore with two humanitarian construction projects in Bosnia-Herzegovina officials said.

According to Lt. Col. John P. McVicker, commander of the Middle River-based squadron, the Maryland Air National Guard helped to restore an elementary school and a monument to three American diplomats who died during Bosnia's civil war.

"We've got 72 people split between two locations," McVicker said. "Obviously, most of our effort is being put into getting the school up and running. What we're doing here is something the local community could never afford on their own. It will make a huge difference for the children here."

The unit began arriving in Bosnia on July 13, and most members stayed through July 25, when troops from California took their place. Approximately 15 of the Maryland engineers stayed on to provide continuity and see the projects through to completion.

In addition to the benefit the local population derives from the project, deployments of this nature also help the U.S. military meet its training objectives.

"We get experience in planning and actually deploying to a foreign country," said Chief Master Sgt. Michael W. Bosse, civil engineering manager for the 175th Wing. "You can practice your skills at home all you want, but until you have to actually go someplace and do it, with the language barriers, the infrastructure limitations, and all the other things you didn't count on, you don't really understand the challenges that are involved."



Photography and Text by Cpt. Wade Minami



the International Military Education and Training program.

In the summer of 2006, the 175th Air Wing of the Maryland Air Guard completed a medical humanitarian mission. They served more than 2,000 patients in 14 different villages, providing medical access to people who normally would not have had it.

The 235th Civil Engineering Flight of the 175th Wing is renovating the interior of a primary school in the town of Vlasenica in eastern Bosnia. This humanitarian assistance project falls under the Guard's deployment for training program to get training on real-world projects for members of civil engineer squadrons.

They will work and live in the town where the school is located for 30-40 days. In addition to renovating the school, the 235th along with Bosnian engineers plan to repair the Igman War Memorial. The memorial is dedicated to a U.S. ambassador, a U.S. diplomat, a U.S. Army colonel and a French Army driver who were killed in 1995 when their vehicle rolled off the road on the side of Igman Mountain.

From September 1-16, the 115th Military Police Battalion is scheduled to send 15 MP's to Sarajevo to conduct joint training exercises.

Since the beginning of the State Partnership Program in 1993, the program has evolved and now pairs 59 countries around the world with 50 state Guard organizations.

I see the program maturing, said Eisberg. "I see Maryland becoming an integral partner in assisting BiH refine a professional well-trained military on the road to NATO integration. I see Maryland and Bosnia conducting more and more activities together to include deploying together," said Eisberg.

"Today, our armed forces remain committed to preserving peace and stability in this region and stand ready to assist Bosnia and Herzegovina as it further integrates into NATO. The United States Armed Forces stood by Bosnia and Herzegovina during some of the most difficult times in its recent history and will remain a deeply committed friend, partner and ally as you move towards a brighter future," said Charles English, U.S. ambassador to BiH, during the Military Cooperation Day ceremony.

Final Frame



Saber Strike is a long-standing, multilateral, multifaceted, U.S. Army Europe-led security cooperation exercise primarily focused on the three Baltic States. The exercise spans multiple locations in Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia and involves approximately 2,000 personnel from 14 countries. The Maryland Air National Guard provided A-10 close air support aircraft, and the Pennsylvania Air National Guard supported with KC-135 aerial refuelers.

PHOTOGRAPHY BY AIR FORCE STAFF SGT. BENJAMIN HUGHES