

# ALBANIA – KOSOVO DEFENCE COOPERATION





# **Albania – Kosovo Defence Cooperation**

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## ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

<b>AAF</b>	Albanian Armed Forces
<b>BG</b>	Brigadier General
<b>CoS</b>	Chief of Staff
<b>E&amp;T</b>	Education and Training
<b>KAF</b>	Kosovo Armed Forces
<b>KLA</b>	Kosovo Liberation Army
<b>KSF</b>	Kosovo Security Forces
<b>LTC</b>	Lieutenant Colonel
<b>MKSF</b>	Ministry of the Kosovo Security Forces
<b>NAT</b>	NATO Advisory Team
<b>Ret</b>	Retired
<b>SSSR</b>	Strategic Security Sector Review
<b>STANAG</b>	[NATO] Standard Agreement
<b>TRADOC</b>	Training and Doctrine Command
<b>O&amp;M</b>	Operations and Maintenance

## ABSTRAKT

Ethnic commonalities and affiliations between the Albanians of Albania and Kosovo, along with the two governments' commitment to cooperation in general, are both conducive to intense defence cooperation between the two countries. Defence cooperation between Albania and Kosovo, which began in the early 1990s, can be characterized as falling into three distinct periods: first from 1991 until the end of Kosovo war in June 1999; second from June 1999 to Kosovo's declaration of independence in February 2008; and third post-independence, when cooperation between the countries began running normally. However, various countries in the region and the international community have shown some uneasiness, both implicitly and explicitly, about such cooperation between Albania and Kosovo. Furthermore, the depth and quality of this cooperation remains short of expectations due to overlap with similar cooperation with other countries, sometimes combined with Albania's inability to provide the necessary expertise.

The areas in which defence cooperation between Albania and Kosovo is most developed are military education and training (E&T) and Euro-Atlantic integration. The removal of constitutional limitations on Kosovo's defence sector, which is expected to take place in the near future, would allow a true armed force to be built, and would in turn provide a new opportunity for defence cooperation between Albania and Kosovo. While this cooperation should be widely developed, it must also be done carefully to ensure that all such activities are carried out to a high standard. In particular, certain high-visibility areas such as 'operations' should be given priority for cooperation due to the mutual benefits they can provide in helping to resolve security situations which might arise and their positive effect on public opinion and on the general climate of cooperation and security between the two countries and beyond.

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## INTRODUCTION

Despite being divided from each other politically and physically for many decades, the Albanians of Albania and their ethnic brethren in Kosovo (along with those in southern Serbia, Macedonia and Montenegro) have never lost their sense of a common national identity.<sup>1</sup> Historically, the two groups constitute a single nation which was separated a century ago,<sup>2</sup> tightly bound by the Albanian language spoken throughout the area (albeit with slight dialectal variations) along with a shared set of values. During the 1999 Kosovo crisis, more than half a million Kosovo Albanians were accommodated in Albania, mostly in the houses of the population.<sup>3</sup> Generally speaking, this cultural affinity has helped to enhance the effectiveness of the help which Albania has offered Kosovo in order to develop capabilities, as well as making it easier for such contributions to be accepted. In addition, both governments have shown demonstrable willingness to cooperate in a number of areas, which is especially manifested in joint governmental meetings which periodically have taken place in both Albania and Kosovo.<sup>4</sup> Albania also has a keen interest in Kosovo being a stable and resilient state, as the two states not only share borders but also an interest in security and prosperity, which in turn also has a positive effect on the security of the region as a whole.

This favourable background creates the impression that defence cooperation between Albania and Kosovo is developed and well-refined. The analysis in this study thus ad-

dresses the following questions: How institutionalized is defence cooperation between Albania and Kosovo? How persistently and comprehensively (in terms of time and scope) has it been developed? What are some of the outcomes of this cooperation, where does it fall short, and what could be done better in the future?

A combination of qualitative and quantitative methods was used in preparing this study. Important sources used include bilateral defence agreements signed by Albania and Kosovo, annual reports from the Ministry for the Kosovo Security Forces, the Republic of Kosovo's analysis of its own Strategic Security Sector Review and twelve semi-structured interviews with current or former high officials in the defence sectors of Albania and Kosovo conducted in February and March 2015. In addition to the personal experience of the author, who held important positions with the Albanian General Staff and at the Ministry of Defence for around a decade, several studies conducted mostly by Kosovar researchers have made very useful contributions to qualitative analysis and have helped in reaching conclusions concerning the progress and objectives of Kosovo's defence institutions, as well as how the defence sector in Albania and Kosovo can be reformed. Some books covering the pre-independence period in Kosovo have been very helpful in examining past relations between Albania and Kosovo (both in the area of defence and in general). Finally, to better capture the nature of this cooperation, some brief comparisons have been made with other partners of the Kosovo Security Force, followed by related conclusions.

This study is composed of two parts, the first of which deals with the specificities of politics, security and defence in Kosovo. After a more in-depth analysis of defence matters – especially the legal, conceptual and structural setting of Kosovo's defence institutions – it draws some conclusions about the most plausible and affordable type of defence, given the conditions of Kosovo. The second part focuses on the issue of defence cooperation

1 For more on this issue see: Vickers, "The role of Albania in the Balkan region", *Chaillot Paper* 107, pp. 11–27.

2 This was decided at the Conference of Ambassadors in London between late 1912 and mid-1913, shortly after Albania's declaration of independence on 28 Nov 1912 and the defeat of the Ottoman Empire in the 1912–1914 Balkan Wars.

3 The scale of this movement of people is shown by the fact that the number of displaced persons from Kosovo was equal to around 20% of the total population of the Republic of Albania. The population of some cities (such as Kukës in North-Eastern Albania) almost tripled.

4 Two such meetings have taken place so far, in January 2014 and March 2015, at which several agreements have been signed covering almost all core areas of governance.



between Albania and Kosovo, analysing how such cooperation has developed over time, what areas of cooperation have been developed so far, what has gone smoothly, what could be improved and how this can be accomplished. The study ends with specific conclusions and recommendations on how more effective cooperation in defence matters can be established between Albania and Kosovo.

## PART I: KOSOVO'S DEFENCE SECTOR – STILL IN THE MAKING

### 1 Security in the Balkans

Despite the optimism of almost all the official security documents produced in the region, the security situation in the Balkans remains delicate. According to two academics, *“The peace-building mission in the Balkans is not yet accomplished [...] Only when all the region's countries are irreversibly on a course toward the EU will we be able to celebrate. [...] Until then, we need to keep the Balkans on track, ensuring that Bosnia, Kosovo and Macedonia remain on the train.”*<sup>5</sup> These conclusions are much in line with the perception of the region's population. In 2014, WIN Gallup International conducted research on the readiness of the citizens of 64 countries to defend their homelands. Among Balkan states, the citizens of Kosovo were found to be the most willing to fight a war for their homeland, with 58% of respondents saying they would do so.<sup>6</sup> According to this research, about 45% of citizens of Balkan states are ready to go to war, compared to around 25% in Western Europe, a fact which shows that the region's population remains on alert and retains a highly militant attitude compared to people in the rest of Europe. At the same time, US Secretary of State John Kerry claims that sev-

eral Balkan countries, including Kosovo, are *“in the line of fire”* due to Russia's efforts to reignite *“a new kind of East-West zero sum game that is dangerous and unnecessary”*.<sup>7</sup>

Several recent surveys of the Kosovo public's perceptions of security reveal that the majority of citizens share this fear, showing particular distrust of Serbia. According to a survey conducted by the Kosovo Centre for Security Studies [KCSS] in October 2013, 64% of interviewees saw Kosovo's national security as “threatened”, with 16% considering the level of threat to be “very high”, while more than 69% of respondents considered Serbia to be a hostile country.<sup>8</sup> A fairly high proportion of Kosovo's population [26% of respondents in the above-mentioned survey] believe that another armed conflict in the region is possible in the near future.<sup>9</sup> However, the presence of NATO forces in Kosovo means that a direct military attack on Kosovo remains a distant, though not unimaginable, possibility.<sup>10</sup>

Despite security concerns, the building of Kosovo's defence system is affected by political considerations. Armed forces are considered a significant indicator of a normal state, and there are few exceptions (in Europe, only Israel, in addition to Kosovo) to the general rule that states devote a significant portion of their human, material and financial resources to building their militaries and keeping them up-to-date. As Kosovo is a newly created state, its society is highly sensitive to any step towards full statehood. In particular, the issue of the armed forces has been important enough, especially during the SSSR process [2012–2014], to partially eclipse other security sector reform issues.<sup>11</sup>

<sup>5</sup> Petersen and Server, “The Balkans Can Still Be Lost”, 2010.

<sup>6</sup> For more information about the willingness of the citizens of other Balkan countries to fight for their homeland, see: [http://www.wingia.com/en/services/end\\_of\\_year\\_survey\\_2014/regional\\_results/8/46/](http://www.wingia.com/en/services/end_of_year_survey_2014/regional_results/8/46/)

<sup>7</sup> John Kerry's appearance before a US Senate subcommittee, February 2015, available at: <http://www.worldreview.info/content/kosovo-russia-s-sights-ukraine-style-conflict> and: [http://www.b92.net/eng/news/world.php?yyyy=2015&mm=02&dd=25&nav\\_id=93293](http://www.b92.net/eng/news/world.php?yyyy=2015&mm=02&dd=25&nav_id=93293)

<sup>8</sup> Kosovo Barometer, December 2013, p. 6.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid., p. 8.

<sup>10</sup> Muja, “What next for the KSF, an army or not?” 2013, pp. 8–9.

<sup>11</sup> For more information, see: F Qehaja, “The Development Context of the Strategic Security Sector Review”, 2013.

## 2 The Defence System in Kosovo

There are several current definitions of modern armed forces, largely due to the growing unpredictability of threats and the variety of means and methods used to combat them in a mix of conventional and asymmetric ways. Despite this, it is still largely accepted that a modern military should first of all be capable of conducting operations in the three dimensions of battle space: width [across the front], depth and vertically [involving air transportable troops, as well as air-to-air and surface-to-air fire].

Despite the existence of the NATO-led KFOR defence mission, Kosovo lacks a typical defence system which can “*protect [...] its territory, air space, [...] critical national infrastructure and national interests*”.<sup>12</sup> Although the Kosovo Security Force (KSF) is considered a quasi-military organization, restrictions placed on it by the international community mean that it is unable to conduct modern warfare operations in any of the dimensions mentioned above. The UN Secretary General’s Comprehensive Proposal for the Kosovo Status Settlement, commonly known as the Ahtisaari Plan, prescribes that “*The IMP [International Military Presence] shall be responsible for providing a safe and secure environment throughout the territory of Kosovo [...] until [...] Kosovo’s institutions are capable of assuming responsibility [...] for the security tasks performed by the IMP*”.<sup>13</sup> Regarding defence institutions, the Ahtisaari Plan provides that “*the KSF shall be lightly armed and possess no heavy weapons, such as tanks, heavy artillery or offensive air capability. The KSF is to consist of no more than 2,500 active members and 800 reserve members*”.<sup>14</sup> The plan goes on to state that the KSF “*shall be primarily responsible for crisis response, explosive ordnance disposal,*

*and civil protection*”.<sup>15</sup> Nevertheless, the KSF’s hierarchy and structure is entirely based on NATO’s military ranking system, while its recruitment, training and capacity building processes have been led by NATO and are based on standards applied in the militaries of democratic countries.<sup>16</sup>

Since these limitations were imposed for a period of five years, ending in June 2012,<sup>17</sup> the recently finalized Strategic Security Sector Review (SSSR) recommended that the Kosovo Armed Forces (KAF) be built as “[...] *a national military force [...] equipped to perform defense missions, authorized to serve in country and deploy abroad to support peace support operations [...] a professional force [...] built to NATO standards as appropriate*”.<sup>18</sup> Referring to the above-mentioned characteristics of modern warfare, and considering the limited resources of a small, newly established country such as Kosovo, it would be reasonable for the KAF to be designed to develop capacities that would enable it to conduct combat operations in at least two dimensions. For the third (vertical) dimension, it could plausibly develop some air defence capability. A survey conducted in 2011 with informed personnel from the Ministry for the KSF (MKSF) found that the KSF and a limited number of Assembly members had some interesting views about what military equipment should be deemed necessary for the defence role of the future KAF. Realistically, they suggested light armoured vehicles, helicopter transportation capabilities, light artillery and air-defence.<sup>19</sup>

The further elaboration of this study has been carried out in the assumption that in the near future the KSF will evolve into a real, conventional armed force, similar to other militaries in the region.

12 Winkler, “The reform and democratic control of the security sector and international order”, DCAF, 2002, p. 10.

13 Ahtisaari Plan, 2007, Article 14.4. A more generalized version of this formulation is provided in Article 126 of Kosovo’s Constitution.

14 Ibid., Annex 8, Article 5.2.

15 Ibid., Annex 8, Article 5.4.

16 Vrajolli and Kallaba, “Kosovo’s path towards the NATO PfP Program”, 2012, p. 16.

17 Ahtisaari Plan, 2007, Annex 8, Article 5.3.

18 SSSR Analysis, Prishtina, 2014, p. 30.

19 For more information see: S. Geci, “Kosovo Security Force, Post 2012”, 2011, pp. 35–38.

### 3 Strategic Security Sector Reform Program

The formal termination of the international supervision of Kosovo's independence in September 2012 was considered "the appropriate time to lay the foundations for the ability of the Kosovo government to defend the State at all levels in a realistic, affordable and holistic manner."<sup>20</sup> In April 2012, the Kosovo government announced a new strategic security sector reform [SSSR] program,<sup>21</sup> aimed at defining the security strategic environment, identifying security threats and recommending measures to cope with them. The government's SSSR analysis highlighted that the region now "consists of allied countries, and nations, which are already or aspire to be members of EU and NATO",<sup>22</sup> noting that "The threat of conventional state-against-state war is significantly diminished [while] risks, challenges, and threats that could affect Kosovo's security stem more from economic inequity, terrorist activities, nuclear and other weapons of mass destruction, proliferation of small arms, organized crime including trafficking, and cyber crime".<sup>23</sup> With such a complex security environment in the region, and given Kosovo's limited capacities, the SSSR considered the best way of strengthening national security to be "a collaborative policy on defense and security with NATO and the EU [alongside] regional security cooperation initiatives".<sup>24</sup> On the other hand, the SSSR recommended "the transition of the KSF to the Kosovo Armed Forces with the mission of protecting the nation's territorial integrity, providing military support to civil authorities in disaster situations, and participating in international peacekeeping operations".<sup>25</sup> The future Kosovo Armed Forces [KAF] will comprise "a maximum of 5,000 active [...] and 3,000 reserve personnel".<sup>26</sup>

Taking the presence of KFOR, Kosovo's limited resources and the lack of urgency into consideration, the SSSR recommended that the KAF be built up gradually in three phases. Phase one, from 2014 to 2016, will create "the necessary constitutional, legislative, doctrinal and conceptual foundations for the new force", emphasizing "professionalism, institution building and [decisions on] material acquisitions".<sup>27</sup> In Phase two, running from 2017 to 2019 and focused on "improving [...] command, control and communications capabilities [and] procuring essential individual and collective equipment", the KAF will reach its initial operational capability.<sup>28</sup> Phase 3, from 2020 to 2024, will finalize the "Long Term Development Plan", under which the KAF will reach full operational capability.<sup>29</sup>

As expected, the SSSR's recommendation to create the KAF drew harsh criticism from Serbia, with one minister deeming it "absolutely unacceptable" and claiming that the KAF was intended to be "used against Serbs" and that it could "prefigure inter-ethnic conflict".<sup>30</sup> However, some civil society analysts in Serbia were less categorical. In the view of one writer, "Transforming the KSF into an army does not represent a security threat for Serbia, the Serbs in Kosovo or for the region".<sup>31</sup>

Among the positive aspects of the SSSR process is the fact that this was the first process to be fully undertaken by Kosovo's institutions. It has also attained a level of inclusiveness and transparency that exceeds that of traditional security institutions. It appears that Kosovo's political leadership has opted for a small military force, dedicated to defensive and humanitarian missions. The proposed development of the defence sector means that Kosovo's intended partnership with NATO and the relations it has already established with the defence ministries and

<sup>20</sup> SSSR Analysis, p. 7.

<sup>21</sup> This is the second SSSR to take place, following that conducted in 2006 as part of the UN Development Program.

<sup>22</sup> SSSR Analysis, p. 16.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid, p. 16.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid, p. 27.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid, p. 5.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid, p. 31.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid, p. 31.

<sup>28</sup> Ibid., p. 32.

<sup>29</sup> Ibid., p. 32.

<sup>30</sup> See: [http://www.b92.net/eng/news/politics.php?yyyy=2014&mm=03&dd=14&nav\\_id=89649](http://www.b92.net/eng/news/politics.php?yyyy=2014&mm=03&dd=14&nav_id=89649)

<sup>31</sup> Stakić, at [http://www.avim.org.tr/bulten\\_print/en/87342](http://www.avim.org.tr/bulten_print/en/87342)

armed forces of several countries, including Albania, will gradually gain normal military-to-military symmetry. On the other hand, the SSSR process has faced some difficulties, in particular related to the national and regional political agenda, which have resulted in some delay.<sup>32</sup> In addition, the SSSR process, the political and media discourse and public interest have been dominated by the creation of the Kosovo Armed Forces, with other security issues and institutions being sidelined.<sup>33</sup>

## PART II: ALBANIA – KOSOVO DEFENCE COOPERATION

Given the tense relationship between the two countries during the Cold War, it is understandable that defence cooperation between Albania and Yugoslavia (let alone between Albania and Kosovo) was impossible. The bloody conflicts in Yugoslavia, starting in the early 1990s, were also to seep into Kosovo. During that calamity, Albania was expected to be Kosovo's first and most prominent supporter, both politically and militarily, however the rapport between Albania and Kosovo was both very complicated and underdeveloped, especially prior to March 1999 when the NATO air campaign against Serbia began.

### 1 Albania-Kosovo defence cooperation over time

Three distinct phases of defence relations between Albania and Kosovo can be identified: first between 1990 and 1999, second from 1999 to 2008 and third from 2008 onwards.

### Phase 1 (1990–1999):

In 1990, Albanian leader Ramiz Alia<sup>34</sup> allegedly allowed a group of 35 Kosovo Albanians to be trained on Albanian territory for a period of six weeks under an informal agreement with then Kosovo Prime Minister in exile, Bujar Bukoshi. This group, mostly selected from among the Kosovar diaspora, were trained in the use of light weapons and the basics of military leadership. However, upon completing their training, only five of the 35 returned to Kosovo, and the whole endeavour had no practical impact on the Kosovo liberation movement.<sup>35</sup> Between 1992 and 1997, during the presidency of Sali Berisha,<sup>36</sup> “*all of the discourse and action in Tirana about Kosovo was confined to the diplomatic arena, while military action by the Kosovar Albanians against the Serbian occupation was ruled out.*”<sup>37</sup> Furthermore, the Albanian government was put under pressure at the time, particularly by the British government, to close down alleged training camps on Albania's territory and arrest KLA personnel. According to the authors of one book dealing with the period, “*It could be argued that the [Albanian] government betrayed the nation by giving way to these pressures and moving against the nascent KLA.*”<sup>38</sup> Several KLA leaders were arrested in Tirana between 1993 and 1997, including KLA founder Adem Jashari, political spokesman Hashim Thaçi and Llap group leader Zahir Pajaziti.<sup>39</sup> The anarchy which overtook Albania in 1997<sup>40</sup> created an opportunity for KLA members to base themselves in North and Northeast Albania,

32 One of these political considerations is the fact that the creation of the KAF must be preceded by constitutional changes which require the approval of at least two thirds of those Assembly members representing minorities. [Ahtisaari Plan, Article 10.1 and the Constitution of the Republic of Kosovo, Article 144/2].

33 For more on this, see: Welch, “Kosovo's Home-Grown SSR: The Strategic Security Sector Review – Part One”, available at: <http://www.ssrresourcecentre.org/2014/06/19/kosovos-home-grown-ssr-the-strategic-security-sector-review-part-two/>

34 Ramiz Alia was the last ruler of the communist era in Albania. He was forced to resign in April 1992, shortly after the victory of the Democratic Party in Albania's March 1992 general election.

35 Interview with Col [retired] Goxhaj Dilaver.

36 Berisha took office as President of Albania in March 1992 and was forced to resign in June 1997 after a left wing coalition won the parliamentary elections triggered by the social, political and economic crisis caused by the collapse of pyramid schemes.

37 Pettifer and Vickers, “The Albanian Question”, 2009, p. 96.

38 Ibid., p. 98.

39 Ibid., p. 98.

40 This situation was caused by anger at the failure of high-risk investment schemes in which nearly every family lost hard-earned savings.

while “[T]he Tirana authorities turned a blind eye to the activities of Kosovar insurgents in Albania”.<sup>41</sup>

Albania later provided a forward operational and logistical base facility for NATO’s campaign against Serbia (1999), as well as humanitarian assistance for Kosovo Albanian refugees. However, although the Albanian government gave the KLA political backing, it provided little, if any, direct military support. Contributions made to the KLA at this time by individual Albanians, provided privately and on a voluntary basis, are another matter. Between mid-1998 and February 1999, Major Adem Shehu trained around 200 Kosovar fighters, organized into groups of eight to ten volunteers. Shehu joined the KLA in February 1999, becoming commander of the 153rd brigade.<sup>42</sup> By spring 1999, there were 148 Albanians from Albania among KLA fighters, one of whom, Colonel Goxhaj, even rose to the position of Deputy Chief of the KLA General Staff. Thirty KLA members from Albania lost their lives during the war in Kosovo.<sup>43</sup>

### Phase 2 (1999–2008):

In June 1999, NATO troops were deployed in Kosovo. Serbia’s army and security forces were withdrawn beyond the Serbia-Kosovo administrative border, while its institutions ceased to carry out any function on Kosovo’s territory. The United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) was established, “with authority over the territory and people of Kosovo, including all legislative and executive powers and administration of the judiciary”.<sup>44</sup> At this time, Albania started to support several areas of governance building in Kosovo, as well as cooperating in the security sector, initially with UNMIK and later with Kosovo’s nascent security institutions,

mostly in relation to police and border control. While Albania offered support to KFOR at this time, largely related to road, seaport and airport facilities, there is almost nothing to be noted regarding the Kosovo Protection Corps. Although the initial KFOR presence of about 50,000 troops was a guarantee against external threats, political sensitivities meant that both UNMIK and NATO felt uneasy about any defence initiative coming from Albania which would involve Kosovo’s institutions or the presence of Albania’s military in Kosovo. This was implied rather than explicitly expressed, but as a consequence, despite two civilians from Kosovo attending the High Security Studies Course in Albania in 2002, nothing else can be recorded for this period regarding defence cooperation between Albania and Kosovo.<sup>45</sup>

### Phase 3 (2008 onwards):

Kosovo’s declaration of independence in February 2008 and the ensuing recognition of the Republic of Kosovo by the USA and many other countries (including Albania) paved the way for real defence cooperation between Albania and Kosovo on an institutionalized basis. Several defence agreements have been signed by the two countries, starting with the 2010 Memorandum of Understanding and followed by agreements on the Status of Forces (SOFA) in 2013, Euro-Atlantic Integration in 2014 and Military Education and Training, also in 2014. So far, almost all initiatives for cooperation between Albania and Kosovo have provoked some sensitivity in other countries, particularly Serbia. One significant example of this was the reaction of Serbia’s politicians, media and public opinion to the SOFA Agreement. Even though the agreement was formulated in accordance with NATO’s SOFA terms, it was interpreted as a step towards a “Greater Albania”, with then Deputy Prime Minister Aleksandar Vučić issuing a denun-

41 Vickers, “The Albanians”, London, 1999, p. 254.

42 Polovina, “A colonel between Tirana and Prishtina”, 2007, pp. 106–107.

43 Interview with Col [Ret.] Goxhaj Dilaver,

44 UNMIK background statement, available at: <http://www.un.org/en/peacekeeping/missions/unmik/background.shtml>

45 Interview with an informed person at the Albanian TRADOC.



ciation of the Albanian Government.<sup>46</sup> Due to this sensitivity, international authorities operating in Kosovo have always been hesitant to accept contributions offered by Albania. Nevertheless, defence cooperation between Albania and Kosovo has progressed, and now covers almost the entire spectrum of military activities. But, as will be elaborated in the following sections, the quality and impact of this cooperation falls short of expectations, at least for the moment.

## 2 Areas of defence cooperation

The top leadership of the KSF was installed in 2008, with the minister being appointed in June and the commander in December, while the first 106 soldiers to be recruited took their oath in June 2009.<sup>47</sup> Among the areas covered by the first cooperation agreement between the Albanian MoD and Kosovo's MKSF, signed in February 2010, are security policy and doctrine, education and training, legislation, information exchange, public relations, and cultural and sport exchanges.<sup>48</sup> To coordinate this cooperation, two high level steering groups were set up, one in each country's ministry and led by the deputy ministers.<sup>49</sup> In fact, this cooperation had taken place earlier through several joint activities culminating in January 2010 when two KSF teams comprising a combined total of 16 people, along with supporting equipment including vehicles and four motorboats, were sent to Albania to help deal with the floods in the Shkodra region.

Being a new state, Kosovo faces various challenges in its attempts to build its core state structures. On the one hand, since its de-facto independence in 1999 it has benefited from assistance provided by the governments of other countries in various areas,

including the security sector. On the other hand it has been impossible so far to entirely avoid duplications in this assistance. As Agim Çeku, then KSF Minister and head of the SSSR Steering Committee, once complained: *"We have had a history of individual building of security institutions with different mentors. [...] Now Kosovo is gradually taking ownership of all processes, [...] so we can eliminate duplication of capabilities and so we can be coordinated. [...] [W]e can build an orchestra that will produce music, not just noise."*<sup>50</sup> Similarly, the MKSF and KSF have established bilateral cooperation with a variety of other defence ministries and armed forces, which sometimes overlap or duplicate each other. Due to Albania's limited resources, its support for Kosovo is not really comparable to that provided by some other countries. Nevertheless, as mentioned above, due to the common language and Albanian experts' better situational awareness, defence cooperation between Albania and Kosovo can be more effective in some ways.

## 2.1 Euro-Atlantic integration

Kosovo is deeply committed to establishing and maintaining peaceful neighbourly relations and to being part of broader security structures. Its aspiration to join NATO is explicitly expressed in all its security documents,<sup>51</sup> while over 88% of its population is firmly supportive of the integration process.<sup>52</sup> Nevertheless, despite NATO's active role in establishing Kosovo's security institutions after 1999, and the progress already made by these institutions, and the KSF in particular, under its patronage, the Partnership for Peace (PfP) accession process has not yet started.<sup>53</sup> NATO membership is a po-

46 For more on this, see: [http://www.setimes.com/cocoon/setimes/xhtml/en\\_GB/features/setimes/features/2013/07/11/feature-01](http://www.setimes.com/cocoon/setimes/xhtml/en_GB/features/setimes/features/2013/07/11/feature-01)

47 See: <http://www.mksf-ks.org/repository/docs/Brosura%20ANGLISHT%20-%20finale%207.02.2011.PDF>, p. 8.

48 See: <http://www.mksf-ks.org/?page=2,24,131>

49 Interview with the Defence Attachés of Albania and Kosovo.

50 Welch, "Kosovo's Home-Grown SSR: The Strategic Security Sector Review - Part One", available at: <http://www.ssrresourcecentre.org/2014/06/18/kosovos-home-grown-ssr-the-strategic-security-sector-review-part-one/>

51 Vrajolli and Kallaba, "Kosovo's path towards the NATO PfP Program", 2012, p. 13.

52 Avdiu, "Kosovo's alternatives towards NATO Membership", 2015, p. 25.

53 This is because four NATO members have not yet recognized the Republic of Kosovo.

litical process from the perspectives of both the aspirant country and NATO, but defence is traditionally the area in which the most effort is expended. Thus, in 2014 Albania's MoD and Kosovo's MKSF signed an agreement on "cooperation and assistance in the area of Euro-Atlantic and regional integration".<sup>54</sup> To date, several activities have taken place based on this agreement, aimed at familiarizing key KSF personnel with NATO and its work. An important component of this has been Albania's lobbying efforts in support of Kosovo's Euro-Atlantic agenda – both on a bilateral basis with its NATO counterparts and during several NATO gatherings. On the other hand, for any document submitted to NATO by Serbia within the PfP framework, Albania has been sensitive and submitted observations about Serbian formulations which imply rejection of Kosovo's independence.<sup>55</sup> Some official statements from Serbia even claim that Albania has blocked NATO's approval of these documents due to their formulations related to Kosovo.<sup>56</sup>

As it is an inescapable requirement for any country following a NATO membership or partnership agenda, the adoption of NATO standards [STANAGs] is a significant part of Kosovo's Euro-Atlantic integration efforts. The scale of this endeavour is shown by the fact that just the non-confidential STANAGs number over 1,300, organized in various categories [administrative, operational, logistical etc.]. It is a real challenge for a novice merely to grasp how many STANAGs there are, while adoption of each STANAG (whether full or partial) has implications both financially and in terms of efforts which must be made. Working closely with experts from the Albanian Armed Forces Strategic Studies Centre, we have noted progress in both the methodology of this process and its institutionalization. The process has been for-

malized through an executive order from the KSF minister and related regulations, while an inter-departmental board has been established in the KSF, chaired by the head of the Operations Department.<sup>57</sup> Practical adoption of STANAGs began in 2015, according to a plan which starts with some "capstone" and "keystone" doctrinal documents. Overall, what has been done so far constitutes a promising foothold for further work, but real progress towards adoption of STANAGs remains to be made in the near future.

## 2.2 Conceptual development

It is usually concepts that take the lead in lighting the way towards any significant change, and thus concepts have been defined as the "foundations", "keystones" and "capstones" for every important undertaking. Development of defence concepts in Kosovo has lagged due to the limitations imposed by the Ahtisaari Plan regarding KSF missions and tasks. The SSSR process has paved the way for significant breakthroughs in this regard, especially by recommending that the KSF be converted into the KAF and by providing the foundations for the preparation of two important documents, the National Security Strategy [NSS] and the National Defence Strategy [NDS].

Cooperation in this area between Albania and Kosovo started in 2012, with the establishment of direct links between the KSF's Training and Doctrine Command [TRADOC] and the AAF's TRADOC [especially the AAF Centre for Security Studies].<sup>58</sup> So far, "doctrinal hierarchy" has been determined, with the General Doctrine serving as the capstone and seven other doctrines<sup>59</sup> as keystone documents,

54 See: <http://www.ata.gov.al/shqiperi-kosove-protokolle-bashkepunimi-ne-fushen-e-mbrojtjes-144442.html>

55 Interview with Albanian Minister of Defence Mimi Kodheli [in Albanian], available at: <http://revistajava.al/kryesore-ne-kopertine/20141124/pse-u-mbyllen-dosjet-e-korrupsionit-ne-ushtri>

56 See: [http://www.b92.net/eng/news/politics.php?yyyy=2015&mm=01&dd=16&nav\\_id=92890](http://www.b92.net/eng/news/politics.php?yyyy=2015&mm=01&dd=16&nav_id=92890)

57 Interviews with informed personnel of the KSF's Plans and Policies Department and the Commander and Chief of Staff of TRADOC.

58 Interviews with informed persons from the former AAF Centre for Security Studies and the Commander and Chief of Staff of TRADOC.

59 These doctrines are related to personnel, intelligence, operations, logistics, defence planning, communications and training [interview with the Commander and Chief of Staff of TRADOC].

alongside a large number of regulations and manuals. Two doctrines have been drafted so far: the General Doctrine and the Training Doctrine. However, the General Doctrine has not yet been fully implemented due to its direct relationship with the yet undrafted NSS and NDS, as well as its reference to the KAF and its classic defence missions and tasks, which cannot be established without constitutional amendments. On the other hand, the Training Doctrine, which has been almost entirely taken from that of the AAF, has been approved and is being used to organize the KSF's entire training process.<sup>60</sup>

It is worth making some observations relevant to analysis of the conceptual setting and process of the KSF. First, the particularities of the top-down process for altering Kosovo's constitution are also affecting conceptual and doctrinal development. It is almost impossible to make any progress in the preparation of doctrines while preparation of the NSS and NDS is stalled due to the Ahtisaari Plan's stipulation that constitutional changes require the approval of two thirds of those Assembly members representing minorities [Article 10.1]. Second, again due to constitutional complexities, the phase 1 objective – the “completion of the legal constitutional framework, doctrines and concepts for the new force” – is very difficult to achieve in the anticipated timeframe (2014–2016).<sup>61</sup> This means that it is necessary to combine efforts to find appropriate solutions for the constitutional and legal framework with attempts to draft the conceptual and doctrinal framework. Third, SSSR recommendations concerning the mission of the future KAF constitute a significant shift from the KSF's current concentration on humanitarian missions to a focus on the nation's territorial integrity, with responsibility for emergency management to be handed to the Ministry of Internal Affairs.<sup>62</sup> As there is “a growing trend in every state for military forces to perform more and varied functions distinct from their

traditional tasks”,<sup>63</sup> the recommended transfer of responsibility will probably not happen. Due to their unique capabilities, high level of readiness and ability to deploy at short notice, “armed forces have become one of the first institutions that policymakers turn to when confronted by the kinds of civil security challenges prevalent today”.<sup>64</sup> Engaging the military in civil security tasks is often viewed as cost – and risk – free. Thus, the KSF (or the future KAF) should be prepared to undertake a broad range of tasks, ranging from humanitarian missions to traditional defence. Because of this inevitability, these roles should be formally reflected in all the related conceptual and doctrinal documents. Fourth, it might be more practical for the KSF/KAF to exploit contextually the AAF's experience and its conceptual and doctrinal documents.<sup>65</sup> In this way, while the constitutional and legal standoff continues, the KSF could save time and energy by adopting some less sensitive doctrines from the AAF, such as the CIMIC Doctrine.

### 2.3 Resource management

Since 2011, the KSF has used the so called, “Planning-Programming-Budgeting-Execution System” [PPBES]<sup>66</sup> to manage its resources. Devised in the USA in the early 1960s, and used there ever since, this system has been adopted by most countries of the former communist bloc. One of the merits of the PPBES is its capacity to link defence strategies, programs and budgets in one integrated structure, in which budgets stem from programs and programs in turn from operational capabilities, which for their part are designed to serve the objectives of the National Security Strategy (NSS) and the National Mili-

63 Clarke J, “Armed Forces at Home”, *Per Concordiam* Volume 6, Issue 1, 2015, p. 11.

64 Salesses R, “Mission: Homefront – A perspective on the role of military forces in civil security”, *Per Concordiam* Volume 6, Issue 1, 2015, p. 8.

65 This is also supported by an agreement between the Albanian MoD and the MKSF, “On Education and Training”, 2014, Article 4/8.

66 Interview with informed personnel at the KSF Plans and Policies Department.

60 Ibid.

61 Annual report 2014, p. 26.

62 SSSR Analysis, p. 5.



tary Strategy [NMS]. The system has proved advantageous in many cases, especially in providing managers with an effective and flexible means of both showing and handling inputs (money) and outputs (operational capabilities). However, it has proved unsatisfactory, and has even failed, whenever budgeting has dominated, as this component is in the hands of politicians, whose horizons extend only one to three years into the future. In contrast, the planning and programming components are usually produced by professionals with mid- to long-term vision.

In 2012, as part of PPBES cooperation between Albania and Kosovo, Albanian experts delivered a series of presentations to the MKSF leadership and MKSF and KSF heads of departments, while an adviser has been attached to the MKSF budget directorate since the end of 2009.<sup>67</sup> Unfortunately, this cooperation almost ceased after 2012, when the MKSF began to cooperate with the US Defense Resource Management Institute, which is organizing training events in Kosovo, while some top KSF officials involved with the PPBES are being trained in the USA.<sup>68</sup>

### 2.3.1 Planning

PPBES planning is largely a matter of deciding which threats and security objectives plans should be designed to deal with, which capabilities are required and where it is better to invest (in terms of human resources, equipment, infrastructure or training) in order to best deal with existing security challenges, and how an optimal balance of the armed forces between effectiveness and cost can be measured and maintained. Some of the most common planning products are: the National Security Strategy (NSS), the National Military Strategy (NMS) and the Long Term Development Plan (LTDP), as well as the supporting plans for the LTDP, such as the Human Resources Strategy (HRS), the Logis-

tic Support Plan, the Modernization Plan etc. The SSSR process which was conducted in Kosovo between April 2012 and March 2014 can also be considered part of the planning process due to its focus, its applied methodology and the package of strategic documents it recommended be prepared, such as the NSS, the Defence Strategy, the LTDP, the Personnel Plan, the Supporting Plan for Operations and Training, the Supporting Plan for Communication, the Logistic Support Plan and the Medical Support Plan.<sup>69</sup> Coincidentally, the SSSR took place at almost the same time as Albania's Strategic Defence Review [SDR], which was conducted between February 2011 and April 2013. Though the defence ingredient was more pronounced in the SDR, there were many commonalities between the two processes in regard to the institutions involved,<sup>70</sup> the methodology applied,<sup>71</sup> the coordinating authority<sup>72</sup> etc. Nevertheless, cooperation between the two processes was sparse and mostly consisted of information provided by the Albanian MoD to the MKSF about thematic areas for scenarios and some techniques for assessing and determining the capabilities needed to cope with each scenario. No explanation was found for this lack of cooperation during the preparation of this study, although it could be assumed that this was because both processes were assisted by the US Defense Institution Reform Initiative [DIRI].<sup>73</sup> As both had the same men-

69 MKSF Annual Report 2014, p. 27.

70 In addition to the MoD, six other institutions were involved in the Albanian SDR process (the ministries of Foreign Affairs, Interior, Finance, Transportation and Justice and the State Intelligence Service).

71 Both the SSSR and the SDR applied a so-called "capability based" planning methodology, where a set of the most likely scenarios was developed (12 and 13 scenarios respectively, ranging from domestic humanitarian and classic defence operations to contributions to conventional or humanitarian operations abroad). The necessary capabilities were determined against these scenarios along with the respective resources, financial in particular (interviews with informed persons at the KSF TRADOC and the Albanian MoD).

72 In Kosovo, the coordinating authority (the chairman of the steering committee) was the Minister of the KSF, while in Albania it was the Deputy Minister of Defence.

73 DIRI is part of the US Department of Defense (interview with an informed person from the Albanian MoD; Welch, "Kosovo's Home-Grown SSR: The Strategic Security Sector Review - Part One", at: <http://www.ssr-resourcecentre.org/2014/06/19/kosovos-home-grown-ssr-the-strategic-security-sector-review-part-two/> )

67 Interview with Mr. Dedgjoni, former Albanian General Staff deputy director for programs.

68 Ibid.

tor, there was no need for Albania and Kosovo to cooperate or share information. However, the Albanian MoD will be able to support the MKSF in preparation of future strategic documents, as soon as the solution for the aforementioned constitutional impasse is found. The AAF's plan to revise its NMS, LTDP and some other supporting plans during 2015<sup>74</sup> will contribute to this cooperation.

### 2.3.2 Programming

Programming constitutes one of the most distinct novelties of the PPBES, with revolutionary effects on defence resource management. This is due to its products, Defence Programs, and their role in connecting plans [visions] with budgets [resources]. Defence programs are output centred, focused on operational capabilities, and are clearly distinguishable from budget programs, which are by nature input centred, interested mostly in allocated money and its phased spending. While the role of defence programs is unique, building them in a way that enables them to play that role is a real challenge. To overcome this, first a corps of qualified managers must be built, which takes time. Second, programming should be empowered with its deserved authority over budgeting. Budgeting, influenced by the political or financial conjuncture of the day, frequently imposes its will and determines the way money is spent, regardless of what has already been planned, thus "putting the cart before the horse".

In fact, despite the above-mentioned presentations from Albanian experts aimed at familiarizing the MKSF and KSF leadership with the PPBES, this kind of cooperation between the AAF and the KSF is so far lacking. Given the SSSR's objective that, from 2017, essential individual and collective equipment will be purchased for building up the KAF,<sup>75</sup> it is of crucial importance for the KSF to start pre-

paring its defence programs. Unfortunately the AAF is unable to provide this support for the KSF, because programming remains the weakest point in the Albanian system of defence resource management, as can be seen from official sources which reveal cases of money being spent without producing capabilities, or equipment being purchased but never used.<sup>76</sup>

### 2.3.3 Budgeting

The budgeting process is very important, because if funds cannot be provided for an activity, the related planning becomes futile and its execution impossible. On the other hand, since budgeting deals with real money in the hands of political leaders, it has the potential and the tendency to impose itself on planning and programming rather than being led by them. Analysis of KSF budgeting brings some special features to the fore. First of all, the KSF is unable to make use of all the funds allocated to it. Despite the fact that in 2013 the approved budget was around 5.2% lower than planned spending,<sup>77</sup> and about 3.6% lower in 2014<sup>78</sup> [something which happens on a smaller scale in almost every organization], budget execution up to the end of November 2012 was about 76%<sup>79</sup> [60% in investment] and 93% in 2014<sup>80</sup> [no data is available for execution of budget categories this year]. Another problem with KSF budgeting is the manner in which money is allocated to the various budget categories, which differs significantly from the practice of other similar organizations. MKSF annual reports show that 40% of the entire KSF budget is allocated to personnel, about 23% to operations and maintenance [O&M] and about 36% to investment.<sup>81</sup> Since investment is not listed as a separate category from equipment and infrastructure, it is hard to calcu-

74 Albanian MoD Directives, 2014, see: [http://www.mod.gov.al/images/PDF/direktiva\\_mbrojtjes\\_2014.pdf](http://www.mod.gov.al/images/PDF/direktiva_mbrojtjes_2014.pdf) and 2015 ([http://www.mod.gov.al/images/PDF/Direktiva\\_Mbrojtjes\\_2015.pdf](http://www.mod.gov.al/images/PDF/Direktiva_Mbrojtjes_2015.pdf))

75 MKSF Annual report, 2014, p. 26.

76 Albanian Minister of Defence Mimi Kodheli, speech at Luarasi University, *Military* newspaper, 21 Nov 2014.

77 MKSF Annual Report, 2013, p. 10.

78 MKSF Annual Report, 2014, p. 7.

79 MKSF Annual Report, 2012, p. 9.

80 MKSF Annual Report, 2014, p. 7.

81 Ibid.

late the portion of the budget which is spent on each of these, although it can be assumed that a significant amount of money is still being spent on infrastructure. NATO documents show that member countries allocate on average about 50–55% of their defence budgets to personnel, about 30% to O&M, about 15–20% to equipment and less than 2% to infrastructure.<sup>82</sup> Informed persons at the MKSF argue that the abovementioned differences are a result of the KSF's manner of budget categorization, which in the future will be gradually brought into line with NATO's budgeting methodology.

The level of unspent budget in the investment category is related to the well-known propensity of budgeters to make cuts where it is convenient for them to do so for economic or political reasons, without regard for any operational consequences this could cause. This happens most often in the investment and O&M categories, and training is the subcategory which bears the brunt of these reductions. Operational capabilities are composed of personnel, O&M, equipment and infrastructure, in prescribed proportions. Any cuts made blindly by budgeters, disregarding these proportions, thus distorts capabilities and often renders them ineffective, which indicates that operational commanders should have more say in the matter. In this respect, Albania should be a useful partner for cooperation, as acknowledged by NATO, which through its NATO Advisory Team (NAT) proposed that such support be provided by Albania. In response, an AAF finance expert was assigned to work with and assist the KSF Budget Directorate. After more than two years of this assistance, from 2009 to 2012, which was appreciated by both the MKSF and the NAT, this individual was suddenly replaced by someone with no expertise in the area. As a consequence, this cooperation was interrupted.

<sup>82</sup> NATO, "Financial and economic data relating to NATO defence", 2014, pp. 8–9.

## 2.4 Education and training

Cooperation in education and training (E&T) has been easiest to accept in the complicated regional context. Given the above-mentioned sensitivities about Albanian initiatives, this has been the most appropriate type of defence cooperation between Albania and Kosovo. Another advantage offered by Albania in this area is the common language. While E&T activities offered by other countries usually take place in English, meaning there is a serious language barrier, training courses offered by Albania are (with one exception) conducted in Albanian, making it much easier for KSF students to attend. The agreement on "Cooperation on the area of military education and training", signed by Albania and Kosovo in 2014,<sup>83</sup> deals with the unification of E&T structures and curricula, joint exercises and joint pre-deployment training for missions abroad, etc., reserving up to 10% of places on courses in Albania for Kosovar students.<sup>84</sup>

The structures of Albania's and Kosovo's military E&T institutions are similar, with the Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC) taking on this responsibility in both countries, while the missions, tasks and structures of the subordinate institutions of both TRADOCs also resemble each other.<sup>85</sup> A significant number of E&T curricula in Kosovo's TRADOC have been adopted from Albania, with some slight modification in order to bring them into full conformity with KSF's mission, which does not include classic defence tasks.<sup>86</sup>

Albania has offered support for postgraduate education on courses for individuals at the level of staff officer (captain), general staff

<sup>83</sup> See: <http://www.ata.gov.al/shqiperi-kosove-protokolle-bashkepunimi-ne-fushen-e-mbrojtjes-144442.html>

<sup>84</sup> Interview with the Commander and the Chief of Staff of Kosovo's TRADOC.

<sup>85</sup> Kosovo's TRADOC consists of 5 centres (for university studies, basic training, specialized training, professional-staff training and collective training) and one sector for the development of doctrines. This is very similar to Albania's TRADOC, which only lacks a centre for university studies.

<sup>86</sup> Interview with the Commander and the Chief of Staff of Kosovo's TRADOC.

officer [major], and senior officer [lieutenant colonel], as well as a high security studies course. However, the statistics show that participation in these courses has been low. In every academic year since 2002, with the exception of 2010 and 2012 when 23 and nine Kosovar officers respectively attended these courses in Albania, there have been between zero and two participants. In total, 46 officers from Kosovo attended military courses in Albania between 2002 and 2014, or an average of 3.5 students per year.<sup>87</sup> This figure is lower than those for some other countries in and outside the region, with Turkey providing support for nine Kosovar students per year, Macedonia five, the USA four and Croatia 2.5.<sup>88</sup> Among the reasons for these lower than expected figures it is the fact that the KSF is unable to fill all the places offered by other countries on E&T courses,<sup>89</sup> while Albania offers courses for ranks between captain and colonel, which as the KSF has existed for only six years are few in number.

One of the areas in which Kosovo needs most support is in preparing its cadets to join the KSF officers' corps. Currently, this level of military education is carried out both in Kosovo, at the KSF's Centre for University Studies,<sup>90</sup> and abroad, in countries such as the USA, Turkey and Macedonia.<sup>91</sup> Unfortunately, in 2008 Albania closed its own institutions providing this level of military education. After several years of considering various projects, and when the issue of training junior officers became very urgent for the AAF itself, a solution was finally found in 2014, with officers

being prepared in the USA through cooperation with the New Jersey National Guard.

Since 2012, the KSF has been able to establish a good tradition of field, command post and simulation exercises. These have been conducted both in country (about 5–6 exercises per year, involving almost all principal units) and abroad.<sup>92</sup> Multinational exercises in which the KSF has participated are of particular importance for those KSF staff members and troops involved, because of the valuable experience they have gained of action and decision making in various scenarios. In this context, the KSF and AAF cooperated on two exercises in 2013<sup>93</sup> and 2014. However, due to Albania's lack of training ranges which can accommodate field exercises involving a variety of scenarios, this cooperation has remained limited.<sup>94</sup>

## 2.5 Operations

An armed force's very reason for existence is its ability to conduct and successfully conclude operations. As mentioned above, the KSF is primarily responsible for crisis response, explosive ordinance disposal and civil protection missions.<sup>95</sup> The KSF's reaching of full operational capability, as recognized by NATO in July 2013,<sup>96</sup> represents an important milestone in its professionalization. While cooperation between Albania and Kosovo in a conventional operation to protect their territories seems quite unlikely, due to the above-mentioned decline of conventional threats, there is great potential for cooperation in civil protection. Albania and Kosovo share several disaster risks, including floods, wildfires and earthquakes, and since such disasters often have cross-border effects, there is much to be gained from such cooperation. Cooperation towards this end could be pursued in

87 Interview with an informed person at Albania's TRADOC.

88 MKSF Annual Report 2013, p. 29 and MKSF Annual Report 2014, p. 23.

89 In 2011 and 2012, the KSF participated in 51 and 80 types of training with 11 and 20 countries respectively, including Albania, the USA, the UK, Lithuania, Turkey, Estonia, Germany, the Netherlands, Japan, Slovenia, and Hungary – MKSF Annual reports 2011; 2012 and interview with the commander of Kosovo's TRADOC.

90 In Kosovo, about 12–16 junior officers graduate annually from a 4-year, two-diploma course at the University Studies Centre, at a cost to the FSK budget for the full course of about 4,000 Euros per person – interview with the Commander and Chief of Staff of Kosovo's TRADOC.

91 MKSF annual reports 2011–2014.

92 For more information concerning exercises see the MKSF's 2012, 2013 and 2014 annual reports.

93 In 2013, 39 KSF personnel participated in such exercises in Albania – MKSF Annual Report 2013, p. 29.

94 Interview with informed personnel at the KSF and AAF.

95 Ahtisaari Plan, 2007, Annex 8, Article 5.4.

96 MKSF Annual Report 2013, p. 5.

several areas, including joint training, sharing of experience and information or even pooling resources in order to use them more effectively and enable significant cost savings for each country. Among the factors which facilitate this cooperation is the fact that the AAF and KSF both play a more prominent role in civil emergencies than do other countries' armed forces. In Kosovo, even though according to current legislation the KSF performs a "supporting role" in civil emergencies, in reality *"the KSF has been playing a primary role as the first responder"*,<sup>97</sup> and the same is true in Albania. So far, as already mentioned, KSF troops have participated in three humanitarian relief operations in Albania, the most significant of which took place in January 2010.

One of the Strategic Objectives of the MKSF for 2015 is to make plans for and begin sending troops to participate in NATO-led operations abroad.<sup>98</sup> One of the most challenging measures related to this commitment is pre-deployment training, and the experience gained by the AAF through its contributions abroad,<sup>99</sup> combined with its training facilities [in the extent they exist], could be exploited by the KSF. Some of the joint field and command post exercises carried out by the AAF and KSF, as mentioned above, serve that purpose well and should continue in the future.

## CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The ethnic commonalities and affiliations between the Albanians of Albania and Kosovo, as well as the two governments' commitment to cooperation, create a strong foundation for increased defence cooperation between the two countries in order to heighten security both for themselves and for the region at large.

Despite these advantageous factors, defence cooperation between Albania and Kosovo has not yet reached its full potential. There appear to be three main reasons for this. First is the openly expressed or implied uneasiness of the international community and some of the region's countries about any initiative by Albania to cooperate with Kosovo in this way. Second, Albanian defence assistance to Kosovo is both quantitatively and qualitatively outmatched by that provided by other governments. Third, due to its own limitations the Albanian MoD has sometimes failed to provide the best experts to assist the KSF.

Albania and Kosovo should find ways to cooperate across the whole spectrum of defence activities, but the focus should be on areas where this cooperation is most effective, such as the development of concepts and doctrines, military education and training, Euro-Atlantic integration etc.

While political solutions are required to the existing constitutional restrictions on the development of a real defence sector, the preliminary work of conceptual and doctrinal development that has already started should be furthered through the preparation of drafts in order to ease rapid approval, as soon as the political climate will allow. To this end, some current documents of this nature could be adopted from Albania with only slight modification.


Resource [defense] planning is one of the areas where assistance for a newly built organization such as the KSF/KAF might be most precious. Unfortunately, implementation of the Planning, Programming, Budgeting and Execution [PPBES] system is lagging in the AAF. Thus, despite the importance of assistance in this area for the KSF, the AAF can only provide modest support, mostly related to planning.

While cooperation in the above-mentioned areas is formative, cooperation in the area of operations is doubly beneficial. As well as resolving specific situations, such as humanitarian crises or conventional or asym-

97 SSSR Analysis, 2014, p. 29.

98 MKSF Annual report 2014, p. 28.

99 The AAF's contribution to peace missions started with the deployment of one company to BiH in 1996, and increased significantly to about 430 personnel between 2008 and 2010. See more at: <http://www.aaf.mil.al/english/index.php/misione-aktuale> and <http://www.aaf.mil.al/english/index.php/misione-te-kryera>



metric threats, it also improves the military organization's structure and performance. Cooperation between the AAF and KSF in the area of operations is therefore of reciprocal benefit and should be strengthened. Joint exercises based on well planned scenarios are the most effective ways to improve interoperability. Furthermore, as this kind of cooperation deals with high visibility activities, it has a very positive effect on public opinion in both countries.

Finally, it is important to recognize that defence cooperation between Albania and Kosovo should not be seen as a one way street. Any assistance provided to Kosovo's defence institutions will also have positive effects on Albania's military staff and units.



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## ABOUT ORGANISATIONS

### **KOSOVAR CENTRE FOR SECURITY STUDIES (KCSS)** **Kosovo**

The Kosovar Center for Security Studies (KCSS) is a non-governmental and non-pro-fit think tank established in 2008 with the main aim of developing research studies in the security sector. KCSS conducts research and organizes conferences and seminars in the related fields of security policy, rule of law, justice, and monitoring of the security sector. KCSS activities contribute to strengthening the principles of democratic oversight of security institutions in the Republic of Kosovo.

### **THE INSTITUTE FOR DEMOCRACY AND MEDIATION (IDM)** **Albania**

The Institute for Democracy and Mediation (IDM) is an independent non-governmental organization founded in November 1999 in Tirana, Albania. IDM aims at strengthening the Albanian civil society through monitoring, analyzing and facilitating the Albania's Euro-Atlantic integration processes and helping the consolidation of good governance, especially in the security sector. IDM's expertise and services are employed by a broad range of actors, such as decision makers, central and local state actors, foreign assistance missions and international organizations, society, media and academia of security institutions in the Republic of Kosovo.

## ABOUT PROJECT

The Security Research Forum is a joint project of three independent think tanks from Belgrade (BCSP), Prishtina (KCSS) and Tirana (IDM) specialized in research of security issues. The Security Research Forum is meant to foster balanced debate among think-tank community, academia, public policy and media in order to provide research-based alternative solutions to ongoing challenges of cooperation among Serbia, Kosovo and Albania.

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