



Introduction by the Commander of the Estonian Defence Forces Vice Admiral Tarmo Kõuts

Security in today's Euro-Atlantic area is indivisible. We all share the same risks, ranging from political instability and organised crime to extreme cases of terrorism, which can sadly no longer be described merely as potential. The burdens involved in limiting these risks must be shared. Therefore, it is essential to highlight Estonia's commitment to its international obligations, especially in today's world where the scope of threats sometimes exceeds the traditional understanding of threats and crisis.

Whether the peace operations are initiated to fulfil traditional peacemissions or are adapted to incorporate new demands as crisis response operations, it is essential that each country begin its contributions to the missions from within. In regards to preparing the Estonian Defence Forces for such tasks, the establishment of proper training and command structures are essential. I would not feel confident in sending Estonian troops abroad if I was not certain in our ability to prepare them to be fully professional; but I am confident, and the Estonian servicemen and women who have been deployed abroad confirm this belief.

In addition to internal preparations, co-operation with troops from allied and partner countries have

provided us with invaluable experience in the multinational military environment, NATO staff procedures and co-operation duties. This experience has clearly had a positive impact on the development of the Estonian defence forces as a reliable component of Euro-Atlantic security.

Estonia continues its commitment to the NATO-led operations in the Balkans, the UN-led missions in the Middle East and to the OSCE border-monitoring mission in Georgia. The past eight years of troop commitment have prepared us to also declare our willingness and ability to participate in the European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP) by contributing to the

pool of forces. Likewise, in support of the multinational anti-terrorist operation Enduring Freedom, Estonia is planning to deploy troops within a joint Baltic Air Movement Control Element during the first half of 2002.

Sincerely,

Vice Admiral Tarmo Kõuts
Commander of the Estonian
Defence Forces





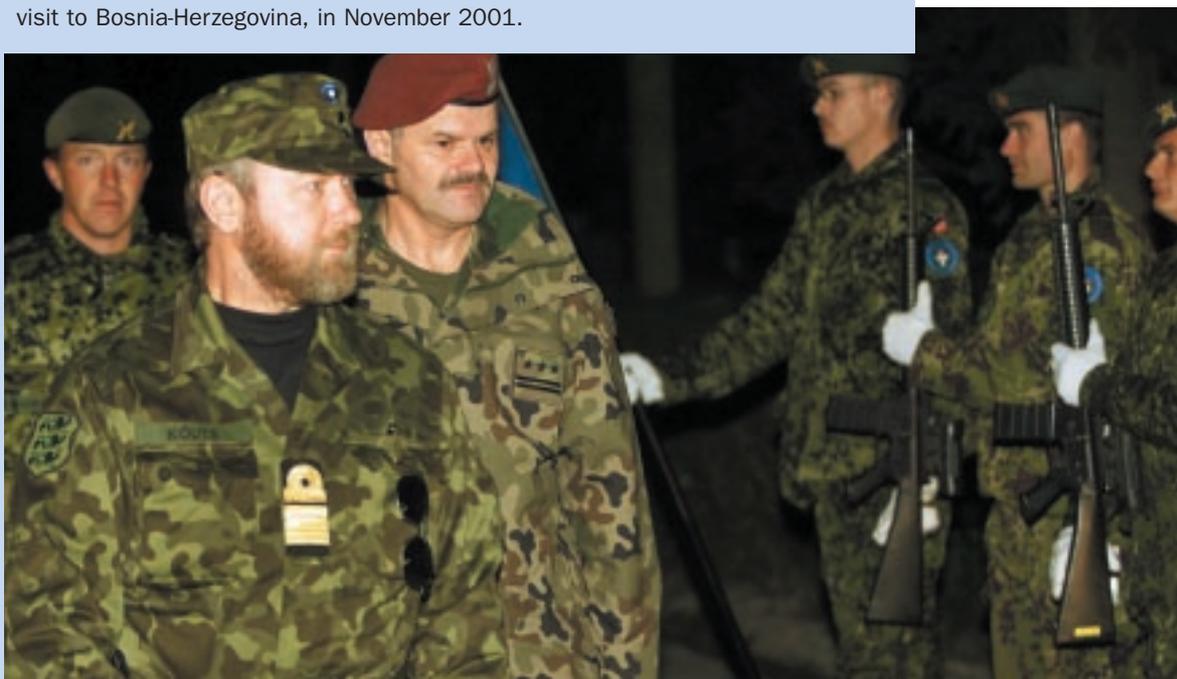
Dear Reader,

Over the years the Estonian representatives, including military personnel, border guards and civilian police officers, have actively participated in a number of peace operations and missions. The Ministry of Defence of Estonia, in co-operation with the General Staff of the Defence Forces and with the assistance of the Estonian Peace Operations Centre, has prepared this booklet to provide an overview of Estonia's participation in and preparation for peace operations.

This booklet aims to give an overall picture of Estonia's Defence Forces participating in peace operations. Comprehensive information is combined with an insight into the military aspects of training for peace operations within the Estonian Defence Forces. We are honoured that our Italian friends, with whom we participate in KFOR, have submitted their comments on teamwork with the Estonian troops. Down-to-earth reflections on peace operations, by our own troops, are presented in the section entitled, "Peacekeepers in Their Own Words."

***Sincerely,
NATO and International Organisations Department,
Ministry of Defence of the Republic of Estonia
March 2002***

Commander of the Estonian Defence Forces ***Vice Admiral Tarmo Kõuts*** during his visit to Bosnia-Herzegovina, in November 2001.





Overview of Estonian Participation in Peace Operations

Estonia participates in peace operations with the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO), the United Nations (UN) and the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE). Since 1995, over 800 military personnel have participated in various peace operations and roughly 140 military personnel participated in 2001.

Estonia has taken several measures to increase the capability of its defence forces in order to participate successfully in peace operations including cost-effective allotment of funds, personnel post-mission placement and improvements in pre-mission and general training. These developments are derived from the experiences that we have gained from completed UN, NATO, OSCE and WEU missions.

The Estonian Defence Forces also gains useful operational experience through the Joint Baltic Military project Baltic Battalion (BALTBAT), which is an infantry battalion capable of fulfilling international peace operations. It is composed of three companies, one from each of the Baltic States: Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania. The battalion has received high-level training and has experience in the international operations. BALTBAT is participating in the joint exercise, STRONG RESOLVE, with NATO and PfP countries, March 2002.

The participation in peace operations has given Estonia many valuable practical lessons. These experiences are useful to the enhancement of our operational capabilities and increase our know-how when preparing for future missions.

Estonia presently contributes to the NATO-led Peace Support Operations in the Balkans, the OSCE Border Monitoring Operation Mission (BMOM) in Georgia, and the United Nation Truce Supervision Organisation mission (UNTSO) in the Middle-East.





Estonian officers in Lebanon as part of UNIFIL mission, 1997



Approximately 500 Estonian military personnel have participated in the SFOR operations

Completed Missions

UNPROFOR

Between March 1995 and October of 1995, Estonia deployed 2 infantry sub-units to the United Nations Protection Force in Croatia. Estonian troops served within the Danish contingency. At the end of 1995, the United Nations decided to terminate the mission and thus Estonia ended its participation.

UNIFIL

From December 1996 to June 1997 the Estonia Infantry Company (ESTCOY) of the Baltic Battalion (BALTBAT) participated in the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) in South-Lebanon as part of the Norwegian battalion. This was the first time Estonia sent a company level contingent to a peacekeeping mission.

MAPE

Estonia participated in the Western European Union led (WEU) Multinational Advisory Police Element in Albania with border guard officers between 1997-2001.

UNMIK

Between 1999-2001, Estonian police officers participated in the United Nations Mission in Kosovo. Before serving in Kosovo Estonians participated in the United Nations police mission in Bosnia-Herzegovina.

Ongoing Missions

SFOR

Estonia began its participation in the NATO-led operation in Bosnia-Herzegovina, the Implementation Force (IFOR), in 1996 and continued to participate in it when the operation was renamed Stabilisation Force (SFOR) in 1997.

Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania and Denmark have developed a six-month rotation system regarding the participation of Baltic forces within the Danish contingency. While only one Baltic country at a time will have a company sized unit deployed, the other Baltic countries



will continue participation in the headquarters with staff officers. Estonia recently concluded its participation with one Reconnaissance Company in SFOR/NPBG. However, Estonia continues its presence in SFOR with 2 staff officers.

Additionally, between 1996-2000 Estonia posted staff officers to several IFOR/SFOR headquarters in Doboj, Zagreb and Sarajevo.

KFOR

Estonia participates in the NATO-led Kosovo force (KFOR) Multinational Specialised Unit (MSU), with a military police unit within the Italian Carabinieri contingency. Estonian participation began in December 1999 and the units serve in KFOR on a 6-month rotational basis.

In addition to participation in the KFOR MSU, since March 2001 Estonia has posted an officer to the KFOR headquarters to handle Civil-Military Co-operation.

UNTSO

Estonian military personnel have participated in the United Nations Truce Supervision Organisation mission in the Middle-East since 1997. Presently, one Estonian officer is serving in this mission. The average length of service with the mission is one year.

OSCE BMOM

Estonia participates in the OSCE Border Monitoring Operation Mission in Georgia with one border guard officer.

Estonian peacekeepers on their everyday ride around the village.



Stojan Neskovic, headman of the Konopljista village meeting with Estonian **officer Helari Pilve**.





Future Plans

Estonia is ready to participate in international crisis response operations and/or other international missions. Accordingly, Estonia has every intention of continuing its participation in SFOR and KFOR until deemed no longer necessary by the international community. Estonia also holds participation in the UNTSO and OSCE BMOM missions in high regard and will continue to be actively involved in these operations.

If necessary, Estonia is ready to seriously consider enlarging the number of forces it has deployed or deliberate the deployment of additional forces. As a believer that security is indivisible this is a commitment to international peace and stability, which

Estonia does not take lightly.

In November 2000, Estonia declared its preliminary contribution to the European Union Headline Goal for the establishment of the European Rapid Reaction Force capable of fulfilling Petersburg tasks. This pledge includes: the Estonian contingent of the Baltic Battalion, a light infantry battalion (EST-BAT) ready by 2005; a military police unit; an explosive ordnance disposal unit; civil-military co-operation (CIMIC) specialists, two mine-countermeasures vessels and a mine-countermeasures support ship. These forces are the same ones identified for participation in NATO and PFP operations, training and exercises.

Colonel P. KIÄSKOU briefing visitors about NPBG's responsibilities >

Mine-marking is among the daily tasks of the peace-keepers.



Participation in Peace Operations from 1995 to Present

Estonian Units and Personnel



As of March 15, 2002 Units and personnel	Timeframe	Mission	Participation with
ESTPLA 1,2 Infantry units	1995	UNPROFOR	DANBAT
ESTPLA 3 Infantry unit	1996	IFOR	NORDPOL/DANBAT
ESTPLA 4,5,6 Infantry units	1997-1998	SFOR	NORDPOL/DANBAT
ESTCOY BALTBAT infantry unit	1996-1997	UNIFIL	NORBAT
Military officers Press	1996-2000	SFOR	NORDPOL HQ
Military officers Staff	1996-2000	SFOR	NPBG HQ
Military officers Observers	1997-present	UNTSO	
Border guard officers Police advisors	1997-2001	MAPE/WEU	
BALTCON 1 Infantry company and staff element	1998-1999	SFOR	NORDPOL HQ
Military officers Military Police	1998-1999	SFOR	DCOMLOG/CSPT
BALTCON 2,3 Support units	1999-2000	SFOR	NPBG
Military officer Personnel	1999-2000	SFOR	LANDCENT
Military officers CIMIC	2000-present	KFOR	KFOR HQ
Border guard officers Monitors	2000-present	OSCE	
BALTSQN 1-5 Reconnaissance companies/ staff officers	2000-present	SFOR	NPBG/NPBG HQ
Civilian police officers	1999-2001	UNMIK	
ESTPATROL 1-5 Military Police units	1999-present	KFOR	MSU

Commander of BALTSQN-4 **Captain Eero Kinnunen**.

Nordic Polish Battle Group (NPBG) flag display.





Estonian troops In KFOR Multinational Specialised Unit (MSU)

In the MSU (Multinational Specialised Unit), a regiment mainly composed by the Italian Carabinieri and directed, depending (as the other five Multinational brigades) form COMKFOR, there is a platoon formed by 21 Estonian soldiers and commanded by a young officer.

The Estonian contingent, organically assigned to one of the two MSU companies, co-operates effectively with the Italian personnel, granting the defence of the compound and executing numerous external duties aimed to the Kosovar territory control, info-gathering operations and other tasks for everyone's benefit.

The Estonian soldiers are helpful and mainly English speakers. They have socialised since the

beginning with the MSU Carabinieri and the other military personnel from the several nations present in theatre. During an exercise they showed their capabilities and expertise in the specific field of public order and crowd control activity.

The discretion with which they operate and the different uniform from the one used by the Carabinieri, with whom they have a close relationship, made them so popular in the field that the Chronicle, a fortnight magazine pertaining to the international mission in Kosovo, decided to dedicate an article of them in its 17th number.

***Captain Roberto De Cinti, MSU – G2
Pristina, September 2001***

Estonian and Italian Carabinieri MSU officers in Macedonia at Skopje Airport, August 2000.



Training Aspects of Peace Operations



Military personnel of the Estonian Peace Operations Centre in Paldiski.

Training is an essential part of the preparation for peace operations. Estonia takes this matter very seriously and this approach has led to developments in many training programmes and projects within Estonia and with Estonia's defence co-operation partners, especially Latvia, Lithuania and Denmark. While pre-mission training takes place in co-operation with the defence forces of the country with which we are participating, basic training is conducted in Estonia at the Peace Operations Centre located in the north-west town of Paldiski.

Much training also takes place within the Baltic Battalion (BALTBAT) project, which encompasses the 3 Baltic states and 13 supporting nations. This assistance includes personnel, finance, training and equipment components. An important element of the BALTBAT training is the international support rendered by the BALTBAT Training Team (BTT), whose main objective has been to train the trainers. Additionally, BALTBAT personnel have participated in several NATO Partnership for Peace exercises. These preparations have established BALTBAT as an infantry battalion capable of successfully executing peace operations.



Training at the Estonian Peace Operations Centre

The preparation and training of Estonian troops for peace operations takes place at the Estonian Peace Operations Centre. This centre was first established in Tallinn as the Single Peacekeeping Company in September 1994. However, a year later, the unit was relocated to Paldiski and by June 1997 the Estonian Single Peacekeeping Company was reorganised and renamed the Estonian Peace Operation Centre. It has become a widely respected part of the Estonian Defence Forces.

The Estonian Peace Operations Centre regularly conducts various training courses. The main goal is to provide expert training at the platoon level with the end goal of producing a professional cadre for the Baltic Battalion. The primary or base programme is the Military Training Course (MTC). This course is approximately 15 weeks long and is based on the basic training program used by the British Royal Marines. This programme is conducted twice a year. The courses included in the basic programme cover a wide range of topics varying from weapons training, tactics, topography, navigation, first aid and communications to language skills.

The basic training programme educates competent troops to be able to sustain themselves whilst on a mission. A great part of this sustainability derives from the special attention paid to the physical capacity of the soldier and the mastering of weapons training.

The development of language skills is a very important part of the programme. Standardised military terminology is introduced and must be passed according to the set levels. Prior to deployment introductory language courses of the country with which Estonia will participate are also given.

Skilled instructors conduct the various training courses. The instructors have either completed the instructor's course at Adazi, the BALTBAT headquarters located in Latvia, or they have completed the instructor's course at the Estonian Peace Operations Centre.

Practicing classroom theory on the grounds of a former factory in Estonia.





Recruitment of Personnel for Peace Operations

Estonian units for peace operations are established from professional military personnel and the reserve forces. When applicable, individuals from the rescue service and personnel from the civilian police force may participate.



The Social Guarantees of Soldiers Partaking in Peace Operations

The welfare of Estonian soldiers participating in international peace operations is provided for by the Defence Service Act, which covers the paying of salary and the necessary actions to be taken in the event of disablement and/or death of a soldier. Soldiers also agree to a service contract, which provides certain guarantees and regulates service terms.

Captain Toomas Peda

Head of the Training Department of the Estonian Peace Operations Centre and the former Commanding Officer of the Estonian Military Police Unit in KFOR/MSU and ESTPATROL - 2.





The Role of PSOs in the Development of the Estonian Defence Forces

The Estonian forces trained for peace operations are interoperable with NATO units. Personnel are familiar with NATO procedures, language and terminology, and they are prepared to participate in Combined Joint Task Force (CJTF) operations if required.

The participation in international operations has a number of side-effects for the Estonian Defence Forces (EDF). One of the most important issues, that of the transfer of Western military experience, has been successful. There are a number of officers and NCOs who have served in the NATO led Peace Support Operations and are now influencing the rest of the defence forces. This enhances the operational capabilities of national units by a continuous rotation of sub-units and personnel into an operational environment, in which NATO standards and principles are being used for training, exercises and eventual deployments. The deployments in SFOR and KFOR have clearly demonstrated this effect. The actual value of the PSO units as an instrument for training and development depends on the rotation of personnel to and from the national structures, utilising their knowledge and skills gained in PSO units. Additionally, the participation in peace operations has elevated Estonia's status as a reliable military partner and our servicemen have proven to be ambassadors for our republic. Their professional

approach and reliable performance has assured our partners that Estonian troops are interoperable, flexible and trustworthy.

Training for the peace operations has also helped to provide the Estonian Defence Forces with complex training programmes and presented an opportunity to compare different countries' training methods. It has contributed valuable information and experience into the creation of Estonia's own national doctrines and training manuals.

Service in peace operations forces is based on volunteer principle. There is no doubt that professional soldiers are better prepared, both physically and mentally than their conscript counterparts. Through intensive exercises the professional soldiers receive a thorough education and become more disciplined. After leaving active service they can accept careers with high degrees of responsibility. It is not rare that former servicemen in the peace operations units do go on to fill middle or high level managerial posts in the private or public sector. Moreover, they are also forming a part of a small, but highly reliable reserve for the EDF.



Major Meelis Kiili
NATO Eastern Atlantic Area Partnership Staff
Element
Training and Education Officer,
Head of the Estonian Peace Operations Centre
1998-1999



Peacekeepers – In Their Own Words

Various operations and missions have been carried out with a common goal of ensuring peace by a multitude of unique individuals. Their actions, thoughts and ideas are what make operations and missions work. Likewise, it is they who provide useful feedback in the way of lessons learned and are able to educate others upon return to service in Estonia. To show a glimpse of the attitude and comments on everyday mission life, teamwork and leisure time of the Estonian personnel we conducted a question answer session at the Estonian Peace Operations Centre with individuals from differing PSO experience. The following is a compilation of the session and their answers have been kept honest and straightforward.

Head of the Estonian Peace Operations Centre, **Major Aivar Jaeski**, speaking with Italian Carabinieri stationed in Kosovo about Estonian pre-mission preparations.





Major Sergeant Ants Torim, served as a military observer from August to October in 1995 in ESTPLA-2 in the UNPROFOR mission. In 1997 from April to October Major Sergeant Torim served as a military policeman in ESTPLA-4.

How do you rate the co-operation between Estonia and the state with which it served during your mission(s)? With whom was co-operation the most productive and why?

Very easy-going co-operation with Danes, contact with representatives from various other countries remained, unfortunately, minimal.

What did you gain by participating the mission(s)?

Self-confidence and courage; was able to see what my colleagues were really like, how others react in various situations. Learned to respect the value of good leadership.

Is there anything you would like to add about your participation in the mission(s)?

All soldiers should participate in at least one mission; in order to see the practical side of the things.



Second Lieutenant Aarne Lätte served in SFOR as a personnel officer, chaplain, leisure time co-ordinator and finance officer. Presently, Second Lieutenant Lätte serves as Chaplain of the Peace Operations Centre.

How do you rate the co-operation between Estonia and the state with which it served during your mission(s)? With whom was co-operation the most productive and why?

We had especially good relations with the Nordic countries, with whom we share a similar cultural background.

How did you spend your free time during the mission(s)?

Tried to talk with people as much as possible and become familiar with the local culture and history.



First Sergeant Alar Abe, served as the platoon sergeant from December 1996 to June 1997 in the United Nation's Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL). From October 1998 to March 1998, First Sergeant Abe served as the leisure time co-ordinator and financial officer in BALTCO-1 in SFOR. First Sergeant Abe has also participated in the NATO PSO exercise, Peace Shield 2000.



How do you rate the co-operation between Estonia and the state with which it served during your mission(s)? With whom was co-operation the most productive and why?

Co-operation with the other serving countries has always been very good. The best co-operation has been with the Norwegians, Germans and Americans. The reason being that they are always rational and ready to help.

What did you gain by participating the mission(s)?

Improved my English language skills, was able to see foreign lands and peoples, saw how representatives from various counties deal with administration (for example, staff work). Experience in dealing with various crisis situations.

How did you spend your free time during the mission(s)?

During my first mission, I partook in organised trips, improvised sporting competitions, watched television and video movies.

As for the second mission, I along with my co-workers were responsible for organising entertainment and leisure time activities for the others – bingo games, trips, karaoke, run the camp's café and the gym, organised cultural events, administration of video rentals, organised charity events, etc.



Second Lieutenant Kaido Lainjärv served from December 1996 to June 1997 in ESTCOY in UNIFIL dealt with communications and was the headquarters' driver. Second Lieutenant Lainjärv's second mission was to SFOR in BALTSQN-1. There he served as the head of the headquarters group.



How did the training received help in the fulfilment of mission assignments?

General training did fulfil the needs of the mission, the training received in BALTBAT gave a very strong base, so much so that the Estonians were as prepared as representatives from other countries and in some cases Estonians were even more prepared.

How do you rate the co-operation between Estonia and the state with which it served during your mission(s)? With whom was co-operation the most productive and why?

Co-operation has always been good although, in my opinion, co-operation has been most effective with the Norwegians. Of course, there have been problems but mostly only at a personal level.

Is there anything you would like to add about your participation in the mission(s)?

Missions are not a day at the beach! A person is not a machine; the important thing is not to overload the men.

Traditionally the Estonians take first place at various sporting events. Our speciality is tug-of-war and in SFOR we came in first in the shooting competition.



"Estonia would not contribute to such important tasks as safeguarding stability and ensuring democracy if we were not confident that we could do so in a professional and reliable manner".

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Tarmo Kõuts', located below the quote.

Vice Admiral Tarmo Kõuts

Commander of the Estonian Defence Forces

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