



KFOR, the quiet work of stabilization: General Vergori's first round of consultations

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PRISTINA — Major General Roberto Vergori's tenure as Commander of KFOR (KFOR XXXI) has begun with a pragmatic, measured approach focused on maintaining communication channels and directly monitoring developments on the ground. His institutional and operational activities are structured along three complementary lines of effort, conducted in full respect of the parties and roles established by the international mandate.

The Serbian dimension: security dialogue with Belgrade, presence in the North, and support for religious communities

Engagement with the Serbian component and management of the northern area remain central to ensuring transparency and preventing mutual misunderstandings:

- **Military talks in Belgrade:** The visit to the Serbian capital for a meeting with the Chief of the General Staff of the Forze Armate Serbe, General Milan Mojsilović, confirmed the value of the direct telephone line (*hotline*), a key coordination tool for ensuring mutual predictability of military activities along the administrative boundary line (*Administrative Boundary Line* - ABL).
- **Diplomatic coordination with Ambassador Luca Gori:** During his stop in Belgrade, General Vergori met with Italy's Ambassador to Serbia, Luca Gori. The discussion made it possible to assess the regional political and diplomatic situation and strengthen synergy between KFOR Headquarters and Italy's diplomatic network in support of stability in the Western Balkans.
- **Patrols in the North:** The Commander's presence in the northern municipalities (Zvečan, Leposavić, Zubin Potok), together with Admiral George M. Wikoff (Commander of JFC Naples), made it possible to assess on the ground the operational effectiveness of security arrangements and the conduct of patrols along the ABL.
- **Meeting at Gračanica Monastery:** Talks with representatives of the Serbian Orthodox Church demonstrated the multinational mission's commitment to safeguarding cultural and religious heritage and preserving the memory of local communities.

Analytical perspective: *In this context, KFOR's role takes the form of facilitation and assurance. Keeping communication channels open with Belgrade and ensuring a visible, impartial presence in the North helps reduce the likelihood of tactical incidents and provides a framework of predictability for the benefit of the entire resident population.*

Kosovo's institutional framework: cooperation with the Ministry of Defense and the KSF

In Pristina, the Command's agenda focused on institutional meetings with Minister of Defense Ejup Maqedonci and the Commander of the *Kosovo Security Forces* (KSF), General Bashkim Jashari:

- **Operational constraints and emergencies:** The discussions reaffirmed the procedural boundaries requiring prior authorization from the KFOR Commander for any deployment of

the KSF in the north, focusing cooperation on developing technical civil protection capabilities.

- **Response chain and mobility:** During the consultations, the three-tier security structure was reaffirmed — the *Kosovo Police* as the first responder, EULEX as the second, and KFOR as the final guarantor (*third responder*) — underscoring the importance of ensuring full freedom of movement for all communities.

Analytical perspective: *Engagement with Pristina's political and military leadership follows a path of institutional continuity. Ongoing dialogue makes it possible to share assessments of the security situation and ensure that joint activities or local initiatives proceed in accordance with UN Security Council Resolution 1244, avoiding overlaps or gaps in coordination.*

Regional consultations: coordination in Tirana with the Albanian CHOD and Italian diplomacy

To complete his initial introductory visits in the area, General Vergori traveled to Albania for a series of institutional consultations:

- **Meeting with the Albanian CHOD:** In Tirana, the Commander met with the Albanian Chief of Defense, Brigadier General Arben Kingji, sharing assessments and information on stability in the Western Balkans and Albania's contribution to Atlantic Alliance initiatives.
- **Visit to the Embassy of Italy:** His presence in Tirana also included a coordination meeting with the Italian diplomatic representation, helping to align the mission's technical-military aspects with the bilateral and multilateral cooperation activities promoted in the region.

Analytical perspective: *Consultations with Tirana and ongoing contact with Italian diplomacy reflect the need to place KFOR's operational management within a broader regional dialogue. Involving regional actors encourages a shared approach to security challenges, supporting the stabilization processes promoted by the international community in the Western Balkans.*

Conclusions

General Vergori's first round of engagements confirms KFOR's intention to act as a neutral and measured stabilizing factor in the region. By balancing its presence on the ground with ongoing dialogue among Belgrade, Pristina, and Tirana, the Italian command reaffirms the value of preventive diplomacy in protecting all communities. In a complex environment, continuity in communication channels remains the primary tool for ensuring a safe environment and preventing escalation.