

UK underlines commitment to Western Balkans with extension of troops in Kosovo

News story

UK troops will continue to contribute to the NATO Mission in Kosovo (KFOR) until at least 2023.



UK troops have helped to promote peace as part of KFOR since 1999

The continuing presence of British Army personnel in the NATO force, which for over two decades has helped maintain peace and stability in Kosovo, signals the UK's ongoing commitment to the wider Western Balkans region's security, stability and prosperity.

Defence Secretary Ben Wallace said:

NATO is the bedrock of UK security and it is because our Armed Forces step forward to protect peace alongside our partners that it remains so. The extension of our commitment to KFOR underlines our unwavering commitment to the Western Balkans region, where NATO has helped to bring stability for over two decades.

The UK has been a key contributor to the UN-mandated NATO force, known as KFOR, since it first entered Kosovo in 1999 as a peacekeeping force to bring peace and stability following the conflict of the 1990s.

UK forces have since worked to enhance KFOR's Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance capability, significantly increasing the mission commanders' situational awareness – ensuring the operation can provide a safe and secure environment for the entire population. KFOR acts as one of the main security providers in Kosovo, with troops contributed by some 30 nations including Italy, Turkey, Poland and the US, as well as the UK. The UK's contribution

includes a battalion-sized high readiness Strategic Reserved Force based in the UK, ready to deploy at short notice.

As set out in the recently-published Integrated Review into security, defence, development and foreign policy and Defence Command Paper, the UK remains committed to NATO which remains the bedrock of our security.

It comes after the Prime Minister announced in November an increase in Defence funding of over £24-billion across the next four years, enabling our Armed Forces to adapt to meet future threats.

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