Beat: Politics

NATO reinforcements start arriving in Kosovo

For the "unacceptable violence"

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USPA NEWS - NATO reinforcements started to arrive in Kosovo on Monday June 5, 2023, following the unprovoked and unacceptable violence which left almost 40 KFOR peacekeeping troops injured in clashes last week. Around 500 Turkish service members from Türkiye's 65th mechanized infantry brigade will make up the bulk of the NATO reinforcements. The Turkish Battalion will be deployed in Kosovo for as long as necessary. An additional battalion of NATO reserve forces has also been put on higher alert to be deployed if needed.

Following talks with President Recep Tayyip Erdogan in Istanbul on Sunday, NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg thanked Türkiye for sending reinforcements to Kosovo. Mr Stoltenberg said: "Türkiye is an important and highly valued Ally, making key contributions to NATO. This includes troops for our peacekeeping mission in Kosovo, which is even more important now, when tensions are high. I thank Türkiye for sending reinforcements to northern Kosovo, following the recent unrest."

At the informal meeting of NATO Foreign Ministers in Oslo last week, the Secretary General said: "Our message both to Belgrade and to Pristina is that they have to engage in good faith in the EU facilitated dialogue; that is the only path to peace. At the same time, NATO has a responsibility to ensure stability in Kosovo, and that is the reason why we have been there for many years and why we now are increasing our presence in the region."

NATO has been leading a peacekeeping operation in Kosovo since 1999 in support of international efforts to build stability in the region. KFOR's mission is to maintain a safe and secure environment and freedom of movement for all communities living in Kosovo, in accordance with its mandate under United Nations Security Council Resolution 1244. KFOR currently consists of over 4,200 troops contributed by 27 NATO Allies and partners.

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