

# 1-37 on patrol in Kosovo

Story and photos by  
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PARTES, Kosovo -- A 1st Armored Division tank platoon has made an immediate impact since its arrival in the small town of Partes in Kosovo. Even though continuously occupied with checkpoints, patrols, and traffic, the platoon's achievement is apparent. Their success lies in the relative peace and safety that has continued in the area, despite the transition of the peacekeepers.

"We are posted out here to maintain a safe environment for the people of Partes," said Staff Sgt. Dwight C. Boatright, 3rd Platoon, Company A, 1-37 Armored Battalion squad leader. "We are stationed out here in a battery factory in a Serbian town. It is sort of like being on an island since we are mostly surrounded by Albanian villages. We work right here so the people of Partes can move in and out, escorted most of the time. We are here to keep things quiet."



**A soldier from 1-37 searches a local national who was pulled over for not complying with checkpoint instructions.**



**Pfc. Jason Rumsey signals to the driver of a passing vehicle to slow down along the main road through Partes.**

The platoon maintains a checkpoint in the center of Partes across the street from the town's church.

"We make sure that the local and outside traffic coming through slows down to respect the people of Partes," said Boatright. "Most of the traffic coming through here is heading towards Gnjilane and they are going kind of fast so we slow them down. We also do dismounted patrols and walk through the town to show people presence. We basically let them see that KFOR cares about their needs and concerns."

According to Cpl. Michael Wallace, 3rd Platoon, Company A, 1-37 Armored Battalion, Platoon Sergeant, the people of Partes have been receptive to the platoon.

"So far they have treated us the same as they treated the last unit that was here because they know our mission is the same," said Wallace. "There are a few who are quite friendly. They know why we are here, They understand that we have families of our own and we are still here. They respect that."

According to Pfc. Jason Rumsey, a

3rd Platoon, Company A, 1-37 Armored Battalion, loader, the platoon understands the importance of their mission.

"There are little kids who run up and down this street and play," said Rumsey. "If we were not here to do our job then there would be a lot more deaths caused by traffic accidents because the people around here don't have licenses. They have not had any driver's training courses, so they do not know how to drive all that well. We are here to keep the kids safe and everybody else that walks through Partes safe."

Third Platoon, Company A, 1-37 Armored Battalion, Platoon Leader, 2nd Lt. Michael E. Persin likes how the mission has gone so far.

"I have no real concerns other than standard security," said Persin. "We have a great relationship with the people here. I have no complaints about the people we have had to deal with, at all. They had a great relationship with the previous platoon that was stationed here prior to us. We are trying hard to pick up right where they left off and keep things on an even keel."