



## *Contents*

Page 2 The Year it Snowed by Chaplain (Major) Patrice Borne

Page 5 U.S National Guard and its State Partnership Program-7 New York National Guard and Sweden

Page 7 The United States, Finland and Sweden Strengthen Closer Partnerships

Page 8 U.S-NATO in 'Dynamic Front' November 2024

Page 9 Inspirational Speech: NATO Secretary General's Statement on U.S Veterans Day, November 2024

Page 10 Acknowledgments

Website: [U.S. Europe World Affairs.com](https://www.useuwa.com)

Twitter: <https://twitter.com/USEUWAffairs>

## The Year it Snowed by Chaplain (Major) Patrice Borne

Posted on [December 16, 2024](#) by [U.S Europe World Affairs.com](#)

**By Chaplain (Major) Patrice Borne, 41<sup>st</sup> Infantry Brigade Combat Team, Oregon Army National Guard, deployed to Kosovo in support of the NATO KFOR mission**

Growing up in the deep south, we wore summer clothes in the month of December. I remember waking up on a Christmas morning putting on shorts and sweating as I walked downstairs to our multicolored lite Christmas tree with silver streamers blowing around from the window unit above it. I would hear the weather man say that morning that it was going to be a sunny 85 degrees for the day with no change for the week. During Christmas season my parents were often busy in the kitchen cooking for our large family. The house smelled divine and the heat from the oven of pies made it scorchingly hot inside, but this extra heat meant it was Christmas in the Borne house. This was the best season of the year because my brothers and extended family would be together. The house was hot, but somehow watching the snowy Christmas shows on TV each year made me feel like temperatures were cooler. I dreamt of snowy mornings with everything white and fresh. I wanted to build a snowman and make ice angels like what I saw on TV. I wanted it to be cold were we lived for Christmas. I hoped for it so bad that I recall praying for it to snow. I remember waking up and before I got up I would plead with God for it to be all white outside. I believed that if I just had enough faith and prayed, I could somehow have snow on Christmas morning.

I wonder what the shepherds in the field from the Bible thought as they witnessed an angel of the Lord appearing to them with a message? Did Mary have certain thoughts as she was told she would carry a baby born of the Holy Spirit? Josheph, Mary's betrothed was with child and what was Joseph's response? All of these scenarios seem shockingly impossible. These seem as unbelievable as snow in 85 degree weather, yet their outcome required a measure of trust for their faith to be revealed. The shepherds did indeed go at the advisement of a host of angels informing them of a Savior being born in the town of David; Bethlehem. The shepherds heeded the message and by faith witnessed what had been promised to them for many generations. "A shoot will come up from the stump of Jesse; from his roots a branch will bear fruit.

The Spirit of the Lord will rest on him.” Isaiah 11. Mary too received the news of her pregnancy and expressed, “I am the servant of the Lord. Let this happen to me as you say.” Scriptures add that as the baby grew her friend told her, “You are blessed because you believed (have faith) that what the Lord said to you would really happen.” Luke 1:45. Joseph struggled to believe and was ready to divorce Mary quietly. His faith deepened as the Lord revealed the truth of the circumstance in a dream. By faith Joseph married Mary and believed she carried the Savior of the World.



**Today I am deployed in a place that could use some faith.** In the short time I have been here I have witnessed the people of Kosovo strive to better their days with hope and resilience for a brighter tomorrow. I see the courage in their eyes as restaurants and other businesses open and patiently serve their patrons. I watched as young adults study for test for degrees in professions such as lawyers, doctors, and social workers that will enhance their cities. Additionally, I have met with Imams that open their doors to all and promote peace and hope. These actions take faith that moves mountains and there is no shortage of that faith in this place.

During those years as a young child clinging to hope of seeing snow paid off. One year my parents brought us to magical place where snow was as tall as the height of my dad that stood at 5'7. The snow didn't happen in my town or state but I did see it and made snowmen and snow angels. Faith may not have an outcome that way we think it should, but it may come in other ways of vacations to Pikes Peak, and courage to move in impossible circumstances, or taking a stand to believe life will be better one day. Faith can and will always move mountains.

This year during our rotation of KFOR 34, hope is in the air. In the short time TF Jungleer has been boots on the ground Soldiers and leaders have been eager to bring hope in the communities by providing conversational English, building relationships with community leaders, and supporting the people that live here with kindness. Tonight is one such night. Soldiers are gathering to bring gifts to a community of children. Coordination for this effort has been in progress for a month. Additionally, an ecumenical service will take place in the Peace Keepers Chapel around this holiday season. All are invited from every belief to participate. This time of year hope is shining bright on Camp Bondsteel, Kosovo, and RC-East is front and center.

Get more news from [NATO-KFOR Regional Command East](#)

*Acknowledgments: Article by Chaplain (Major) Patrice Borne, 41st Infantry Brigade Combat Team, Oregon Army National Guard, in NATO KFOR mission. Image: KFOR Chapel Christmas 2024 ©Army Chaplain (Major) Patrice Borne/ U.S Army in NATO-KFOR.*

## U.S National Guard and its State Partnership Program-7 New York National Guard and Sweden



**The New York National Guard** has established a State Partnership Program (SPP) with the Sweden. The official agreement was signed in a ceremony in New York City’s Freedom Tower on July 12 this year. This partnership marks a significant achievement in strengthening the bilateral military cooperation between the United States and Sweden.

Prior to this partnership, in December 2023, the United States and Sweden signed a **Defense Cooperation Agreement (DCA)** to strengthen the multilateral security and defense cooperation between the two countries.

*“Allies, friends and partners are stronger together than they are individually — especially against those who want to destroy freedom and independence.” Expressed Maj. Gen. Raymond Shields, the Adjutant General of New York during the official ceremony July 12, 2024*

*“This is a big moment for us, and we are honored to be here, ... the partnership will not only enhance operational abilities, it will also strengthen the bonds of friendship and a new understanding between our forces and our countries.” Elaborated Minister of Defence of Sweden Pal Jonson during the official ceremony July 12, 2024*

The New York National Guard has been actively engaged in international partnerships through its State Partnership Program (SPP) and other global collaborations. It has a State Partnership Program with **South Africa since 2003** and with **Brazil since 2019**.

Additionally, it has a bilateral security cooperation agreement with the Israeli Defense Forces since 2019 and a joint military training and exchanges in Greenland with Denmark since 2023.

***The State Partnership Program presents innumerable benefits to both U.S and its partner regions and nations, including:***

- **Enhancing security and defense cooperation:** The program helps to strengthen the security and defense for the U.S and its partner nations and promotes regional stability by joint military training, cultural exchanges, and building military capabilities and collaborations.
- **Humanitarian assistance:** The program provides humanitarian assistance and disaster relief efforts during crisis and in the time of peace.
- **Economic development:** The program facilitates economic development by providing financial, medical, and educational assistance to the partner nations.

***“In recent years, Guardsmen have conducted about 1,000 training exchanges with their foreign counterparts annually, focusing on everything from peacekeeping operations to leadership development, lifesaving techniques and cyber defense.” Stated the office of Governor Hochul of New York, July 12, 2024***

Additional reading: [\*The Pennsylvania-Lithuania and New York-Brazil partnerships were named the Department of Defense National Guard State Partnership Program partnerships of the year for 2022.\*](#)

[Sweden officially joins NATO](#)

[National Guard's State Partnership Program \(SPP\)](#)

[Oregon National Guard trains for peacekeeping deployments](#)

**Acknowledgments:** Sources: U.S Army/ National Guard. Image: Major Gen. Ray Shields, left, the adjutant general of New York; Pal Jonson, Sweden's Minister for Defence; Marcos Soler, Deputy Secretary for Public Safety for the State of New York; and Major Gen. Johan Pekkari, Sweden's Chief of Policy and Plans, sign the document. New York's Freedom Tower on July 12, 2024. ©U.S. Army /National Guard photo by Stephanie Butler. Article by Editor in Chief, Catherine S. Schmidt.

## The United States, Finland and Sweden Strengthen Closer Partnerships

Posted on [November 4, 2024](#) by [U.S Europe World Affairs.com](#)

The United States European Command hosted high-level military delegations from Finland and Sweden in a military forum to strengthen closer partnerships with both countries. The trilateral forum opened a crucial platform to optimize Finland and Sweden's military capabilities, and accelerate their integration into NATO's operational architecture and framework. The event took place in USEUCOM HQ in Germany on October 3, 2024

*“The military forces of our three nations have longstanding relationships operating together in the land, air, sea, space and cyber domains. These relationships have continued to develop after years of exercising together in the extremely harsh, demanding environments of the High North,” highlighted U.S. Air Force Maj. Gen. Russell Driggers, U.S. European Command’s Director of Plans, Policy and Strategy, during the forum Oct. 3, 2024 ©USEUCOM*

*“America’s military relationship with Finland and Sweden not only enhances regional security but also embodies a shared commitment to democratic values and collective defense.” Continued Maj. Gen. Driggers,*

*Acknowledgments, source © U.S European Command. Article by Catherine S. Schmidt, Editor in Chief. Copy righted material*

## U.S-NATO in 'Dynamic Front' November 2024

Posted on [November 8, 2024](#) by [U.S Europe World Affairs.com](#)

A U.S. Army Europe and Africa's directed Exercise 'Dynamic Front' is currently underway in Finland, Estonia, Germany, Poland, and Romania from November 4-24.

The exercise is led by ***U.S 56th Artillery Command***, and hosted by Finland. It projects NATO's capabilities across the continent, from the Black Sea to the Arctic region.



*'Dynamic Front' is one of the largest multinational training exercise bringing military personnel from [28 NATO](#) Allied and partners' armed forces including: **Brazil, Bulgaria, Canada, Croatia, Czechia, Estonia, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Kosovo, Latvia, Lithuania, North Macedonia, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Türkiye, UK and the U.S.***

*Acknowledgments, source and logo © U.S Army Europe and Africa. Article by Catherine S. Schmidt, Editor in Chief.*

# *Inspirational Speech*

## NATO Secretary General's Statement on U.S Veterans Day,

November 11 2024



“It is Veterans Day in the United States.

A chance to celebrate the American men and women who answered their country's call. This is a message for you.

Your patriotism, courage and sacrifice are the foundation on which our freedom is built. From the beaches of Normandy, to the fall of the Iron Curtain, to defending our way of life today.”

### NATO Secretary General - Statement on Veterans Day, 11 NOV 2024

“I pay tribute to all of you.

Including those who stand shoulder to shoulder in NATO with your European brothers and sisters. Let me also thank your families who have sacrificed so much.

I have always been deeply impressed by the American personnel I meet. You take pride in your duty, put service before self, and stand ready to protect, with honour and integrity. You represent the best of the United States.

**On this day, and all days, thank you for your service.”**

*Acknowledgments: Video/ message/image © NATO. With special thanks to the media team at NATO for the permission.*

## ***Acknowledgments***

*Acknowledgments: “The Year it Snowed by Chaplain (Major) Patrice Borne” by Chaplain (Major) Patrice Borne, 41st Infantry Brigade Combat Team, Oregon Army National Guard, in NATO KFOR mission. Image 1: KFOR Chapel Christmas 2024 © Army Chaplain (Major) Patrice Borne / U.S*

*Article “U.S National Guard and its State Partnership Program-7 New York National Guard and Sweden” Sources: U.S Army / National Guard. Image 2: Major Gen. Ray Shields, left, the adjutant general of New York; Pal Jonson, Sweden’s Minister for Defence; Marcos Soler, Deputy Secretary for Public Safety for the State of New York; and Major Gen. Johan Pekkari, Sweden’s Chief of Policy and Plans, sign the document. New York’s Freedom Tower on July 12, 2024. © U.S. Army / National Guard photo by Stephanie Butler. Article by Editor in Chief, Catherine S. Schmidt.*

*NATO Secretary General’s Statement on U.S Veterans Day, Video/ message /image © NATO. With special thanks to the media team at NATO for permission.*

**All Rights Reserved**