

The Blue Beret

September 2007



Leaders Meet

THE BLUE BERET

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Editorial

September 5th marked the first time the leaders have met in 14 months. Welcome as the UNPA official residence get-together may have been, the message issued afterwards signified that there is still a way to go.

Perhaps all concerned, both participants and those sceptical onlookers, should heed the example of two other gatherings held during the month. On 21 September, the International Day of Peace, the Cyprus Veterans of World War II, a body of men (and women) from the two communities, reminded us yet again that the United Nations remains the shining symbol of their generation's aspiration "to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war".

Similarly, the World Peace Prayer representatives from Japan attending that Peace Day ceremony alongside Ledra Palace modestly reminded us that the inspiration for the peace pole they presented UNFICYP stemmed from the determination never to forget, never to repeat the awful devastation of Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

Here in the UNPA, in late September, UNFICYP's Argentinian and British contingents, led by our Force Commander Maj. Gen. Barni and Chief of Staff Col. Fraser-Hopewell, attended a memorial service for all who fell when their two nations faced one another in the Falklands/Malvinas conflict some 25 years ago.

Surely, there is a lesson here for us all. Surely, Cypriots would agree that it is time to move on towards a settlement. Just look around. There are examples everywhere. Ireland and now Korea are a case in point.

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Leaders Meet in UNPA

Greek Cypriot leader, H.E. Tassos Papadopoulos, and Turkish Cypriot leader, H.E. Mehmet Ali Talat, met for three hours at the UNFICYP Chief of Mission's official residence in the UNPA on 5 September, their first meeting since they convened in the presence of then Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs Ibrahim Gambari on 8 July 2006.

On conclusion of the latest meeting, SRS Michael Møller read out the leaders' joint statement as follows:

"Mr. Papadopoulos and Mr. Talat held a discussion in a constructive atmosphere and agreed on the need for the earliest start of the process and discussed other issues

leading to a comprehensive settlement.

"They agreed to continue their contacts through the United Nations and to meet again when appropriate."



Media awaiting the leaders



On 23 September, Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon met briefly with H.E. Mr. Papadopoulos at UN Headquarters. Topics covered included climate change, the current status of dialogue between the two sides, ongoing support to UNFICYP, and the issue of missing persons. The SG emphasized the importance of implementing the 8 July 2006 agreement. Mr. Papadopoulos was in New York for the opening session of the General Assembly.

H.E. Mr. Talat is expected to meet with the SG, also in New York, in mid-October.

Unique Tribute Serves as a Fitting Example

Led by Force Commander Maj. Gen. Rafael Jose Barni and Chief of Staff Col. Peter Fraser-Hopewell, members of the Argentinian and British contingents joined together for a special memorial service in St. Columba's Church in the UNPA on 26 September to commemorate those who died in the Falkland Islands/Malvinas conflict 25 years ago.

Force Commander Maj. Gen. Barni spoke movingly and eloquently at the unique ceremony.

"We are here to pay tribute to the servicemen and women from the navies, the land forces and the air forces of both sides who gave their lives in the conflict for the Islands in 1982.

"It is particularly poignant that this service is conducted in Cyprus; an island with a turbulent history whose troubles we are all more than familiar with; and an island that remains divided today.

"Those that fought in 1982 did so with conviction for their cause. While both sides fought ferociously and with valour in pursuit of what they believed to be right, they fought with honour and with respect for the forces opposing them and the people of the other nation.

"That the conflict sought political objectives is the

reason that both the Argentinians and the British are now able to serve successfully together as part of UNFICYP as both comrades and friends.

"It is a fitting tribute to those who lost their lives 25 years ago, that the soldiers, sailors, marines and airmen of both former adversaries work so closely together today in the common service of peace. That we are all able to put the past behind us and are able to look to the future, should serve as an inspiration to the people of Cyprus."



Force Commander and Chief of Staff at the memorial service



Peace Day Ceremony in Buffer Zone

International Day of Peace was observed by UNFICYP with a peace candle ceremony alongside Ledra Palace Hotel, Nicosia on 21 September. Attending the event hosted by UNFICYP Chief of Mission Michael Møller were members of the Cyprus World War II Veterans' Association, members of the diplomatic and international community and representatives of both communities on the island.

During the ceremony, three Japanese volunteers, members of the World Peace Prayer Society, presented the UNFICYP Chief with a two-metre high peace pole.

In his remarks, SRSB Møller noted that those attending the event "in this special crossing space" were linking up with millions of people of goodwill around the world to proclaim their belief that the day was best celebrated through observation of a global ceasefire.

"Whether veterans of the Second World War or veterans of this island's conflict and division, many of you here today are familiar with the respite and relief associated with a ceasefire. Your first hand experience offers a potent message to the younger generations standing alongside you here today. Who better than you, the veterans, to point out how worthwhile a worldwide stay of conflict for the sake of peace can be – even if it is only for this one precious day each year." Møller pointed out that a ceasefire should be a springboard for peace building, and not just an end in itself:

"Thirty-four years ago, this buffer zone we stand within became a fact of island life. It was intended to offer a breathing space in which to try and nurture new beginnings. The reassurance it offered the distraught and displaced victims of conflict was not intended to become a multi-generational comfort zone. Nor was it intended to be a barrier to progress, inuring people against the responsibility and need for dialogue and contact in the ongoing search for a lasting and comprehensive settlement."

The SRSB stressed that world peace starts with peace in our hearts and homes, in our neighbourhoods, in our villages, in our cities and extends beyond all political borders.

Pointing to the peace vigil candle alongside him, Møller said: "Let us rekindle our commitment to the reunification of this island. Let us take inspiration from the peace pole our guests from Japan are about to place in UNFICYP custody. Let us take counsel from the wisdom of the Second World War veterans. Let our presence here today serve as a rededication to the cause of peace."

Møller stressed that here in Cyprus, the people are an untapped resource for solving the island's problems yet their willingness to engage and move forward, if allowed, cannot be questioned.

He referred to a meeting the previous day held at Ledra Palace by UNDP-Action for Cooperation and Trust and its key bi-communal partners to urge Cypriots to work together to build the social foundations for a durable Cyprus settlement.

"In the last two years, more than 14,000 Cypriots from all communities have been involved in a range of citizen-driven, peace building, and reconciliation activities supported by UNDP- ACT. They know that lasting



CM receives peace pole from representatives of the World Peace Prayer Society

peace in Cyprus can only come through regular and sustained people-to-people contacts," he said.

Masayo Shibamoto, representative of the non-denominational World Peace Prayer Society, said Cyprus is a good place for a peace pole, an area that is the cradle of civilization, yet beset by so many problems. The pole itself can do nothing, but serve as the symbol of the message of peace and the starting point for new ideas. "It's the hearts of the people that matter and change can only come from within the hearts of the people," she said.

The society has planted around 200,000 poles in 180 countries carrying its message of peace. A peace pole stands in the lobby of the United Nations headquarters in New York, by the tour desk. UN personnel, NGO representatives and visitors alike are invited to place their prayer or message of peace inside the hollow pole, which features the prayer "May Peace Prevail on Earth" in the six official UN languages.



Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot World War II veterans come together on peace day

Cyprus World War II Veterans' Association President Loizos Demetriou in a brief address noted that he and his comrades were well aware of the misery and destruction caused by wars and were therefore all the more willing to support peace initiatives.

"We are living in a region of the world where violence and wars are not unknown and our duty to work for peace is therefore greater," he said.

In his International Day of Peace message, Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon described peace as one of humanity's most precious needs and also as the UN's highest calling. He said it defines our mission, drives our discourse and draws together all of our worldwide work, from peacekeeping and preventive diplomacy to promoting human rights and development.

The SG described the day as an occasion to take stock of our efforts to promote peace and well being for all people everywhere. It is an opportunity to appreciate what we have already accomplished, and to dedicate ourselves to all that remains to be done.

People-to-People Peace Building

Lasting peace in Cyprus can only come through regular people-to-people contacts, UNDP Programme Manager Jaco Cilliers told a public briefing on peace building held at Ledra Palace on 20 September 2007

According to Cilliers, during the past two years, ACT has supported peace building and reconciliation initiatives. These have brought together over 14,000 Cypriots from all communities in practical cooperation and exchanges which aim to enhance the quality of life of people on the island.

"Our work with citizens' groups makes us believe that the desire for constructive and meaningful co-operation between Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots is strong and, given the opportunity, these contacts have the potential to improve relations between the two communities," he said.

Research commissioned by UNDP-ACT, indicated that of those who had contact with people of the other community, 82% of Greek Cypriots and 65% of Turkish Cypriots confirmed it enhanced inter-communal trust and left a positive impression.

The research also showed that a growing number of Cypriots actively pursue contact with people from the other community, believing that this

will eventually make a contribution to resolving the Cyprus problem.

Cilliers said the UN wanted to challenge the idea that there is nothing to celebrate on a divided Cyprus. "It's about how to keep hope alive. It takes as long to get out of a conflict as it does to get into one." Civil society in Cyprus was growing, but needed nurturing and remained a huge, untapped resource, he added.

The UNDP Programme Manager

said UNDP-ACT projects show that young people embrace diversity when given the opportunity. "Over 80% of participants in peer learning programmes have forged and maintained friendships which bridge the Green Line, keeping in contact mainly via Internet chat and email.

"People will find mechanisms to keep in contact and given the opportunity these contacts have the potential to improve relations," Cilliers said.



UNDP-ACT Programme Manager Jaco Cilliers at briefing

UNLB – The Brindisi Connection

Several UNFICYP staff members attended various training courses at the United Nations Logistic Base Training Centre (UNLB) in Brindisi, Italy, this month.

The UNLB provides logistic support, telecommunications and training facilities for all peacekeeping operations around the world.

The Training Unit acts as a hub for DPKO and other UN departments and agencies, and provides logistic and administrative support for courses, seminars and workshops.

Finance Assistant Evrikos Demetriou and Finance Administrative Assistant Vera Koushiappa attended a number of finance-related courses, while HIV/AIDS Focal Point Netha Kreouzos attended the annual HIV/AIDS Workshop.

Demetriou, who attended the Sun Systems Advanced Training and the Chase Insight Training, said, "Although the courses were intensive, they were informative and useful and will definitely contribute to improving productivity and efficiency."

It was also a good opportunity to meet colleagues from other missions, exchange ideas and experiences, he said. "It seemed like you had people from every country on earth there – it was a great mixing of cultures and by the end of the week, we had become one big, UN family," he said.

An impressed Demetriou said the UNLB facilities were of a very high standard and created a positive working environment. But the physical environment is nothing without the human element, and that was what made the difference.

The UNFICYP staff agree that their colleagues at UNLB, who see hundreds of "UN invaders" descend on them from other missions, and HQ almost every day were professional, patient and obliging in their assistance. From checking on lost luggage for course participants, who, in most cases, were not too happy to be left in the same jeans for three days, to helpful offers about the location of banks, nearest pharmacies and numerous other strange and unusual requests, all were handled efficiently and – above all – with good humour.

Netha Kreouzos

Force Commanders' Conference



Deputy Secretary-General Asha-Rose Migiro meets Force Commanders of UN Peacekeeping Operations at HQ, New York

Force Commander Maj. Gen. Rafael José Barni attended the DPKO Heads of Military Components Conference in New York from 4-7 September.

The annual conference provides a platform for the Military Heads of the UN's 20 missions to exchange information and ideas as well as receive information on DPKO policy and guidelines for future actions to be taken in the field.

Although there is a huge diversity in the problems missions deal with, depending on the nature of the situation faced on the ground, there are many common themes for all Military Heads of Missions, FC Barni said on his return to UNFICYP.

There are common problems and over-arching policies that need to be implemented and the gathering was an opportunity for DPKO to spell these out and enter into a dialogue with the individuals charged with implementing them.

The FC noted that the four days were a time to exchange ideas and best practices, not only during the formal sessions but also over lunches and coffee breaks where discussions invariably continued.

The main themes of the conference included a briefing by DPKO on the new division between the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and the Department of Field Service – on the reporting procedures and

structure. The FC explained that DPKO will take the lead and coordinate both divisions so there is clarity for the FCs on the ground. Other issues that were discussed were interaction with the media – general principles and situations; shared experiences; UN security management; and gender issues. There was also a session with military and police representatives from the member states. The FC said he found this latter session particularly interesting as representatives of the troop contributing countries had the opportunity to ask questions of the Military Heads of Missions and create a direct dialogue with them on issues of relevance to them.

The conference attendants were received by Deputy SG Asha-Rose Migiro. Overall, FC Barni said, the participants appreciated the opportunity to discuss problems faced in the field and to learn from the community of practice of others. It was also useful to meet with the Military Adviser in New York to discuss individual mission concerns as well as review policies and directives of DPKO. FCs were able to meet with their counterparts and establish bonds for regional cooperation, as happened between UNFICYP and UNIFIL during the evacuation last July. Indeed, the issue of extending UNFICYP's regional cooperation with other missions in the area like UNTSO and UNDOF was also raised in discussion.

Netha Kreouzios

CITS Conference

There has always been a requirement for logistical cooperation between the Middle East missions of UNTSO, UNDOF and UNIFIL not least because the operational area of responsibility (AOR) of UNTSO overlaps with the AOR of its neighbours. An important aspect of this cooperation is in the area of Communications and Information Technology (CIT). Regular inter-mission meetings have for many years, taken place to coordinate efforts to provide integrated, modern and cost-effective CIT systems.

Until recently UNFICYP found itself on the periphery of this grouping having no direct communications links to the Middle East missions, attending these meetings only sporadically or via telephone. Developments in south Lebanon in 2006 showed that UNFICYP can play an important role for the Middle East missions even if events do not directly affect our mission. Advances in technology, requirements for technical training and the need to share resources – both material and technical expertise – also demonstrated that it is now important for UNFICYP



to be an active participant in these discussions.

UNFICYP hosted the regional CIT conference on 27-28 September this year with each mission sending three representatives. Discussions ranged from cost-sharing for terrestrial leased-lines between the regional missions and UNLB, to hosting of regional technical training in an effort to reduce training expenditures.

OpEd: Leadership and Climate Change

by Ban Ki-moon

Every day brings new evidence. Climate change has become a personal reality, for each and every one of us on this planet.

Just recently, to cite the latest example, scientists in the United States reported that the Arctic ice cap is melting faster than ever thought possible. By their calculations, 40% of the summer ice covering the Arctic sea will be gone by 2050. Earlier studies had predicted that this wouldn't happen for another century.

It's small wonder, then, that climate change has shot to the top of the world's political agenda. That is why I have invited world leaders to the United Nations for a high-level meeting tomorrow. I am deeply concerned that our current response falls far short of what is required.

The meeting is a political call to action, a time for all countries, big and small, to grasp the moral imperative of tackling climate change with a new urgency, and to begin to understand our mutual self-interest in doing so. Climate change is a defining issue of our time.

The science is clear. Earlier this year, the world's top scientists, under the auspices of the United Nations Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, laid it out with unprecedented clarity. Global warming is real. Its impact, if unchecked, could be devastating if not catastrophic over the coming decades. We know what we have to do. We have affordable measures and technologies to do it. We must begin to attack the problem, right now.

What we do not have is time. Traveling in Chad recently, I saw first-hand the humanitarian toll of climate change. An estimated 20 million people depend on a lake and river system that has shrunk to a tenth of its original size over the past 30 years. In Africa right now, the worst rains in memory are washing hundreds of thousands of people from their homes. These are signs of what is to come. The problems our generation faces will be worse for our children, particularly if we do not act.

In calling this high-level meeting, I have challenged the world's presidents and prime ministers to show leadership. Leadership is about choices, especially hard choices and setting new directions. It is about vision and political will – the ability to see ahead to what we must do, and to force the pace of change. I know it will not all be painless. But only through early action can even more pain be avoided.

We must, collectively, place the highest value on action. And the burden is highest on industrialized countries. Those responsible for creating the bulk of the problem bear the greatest responsibility to reduce the emissions that cause climate change.

At the same time, developing countries must be given incentives to fully join the effort. Our solutions to global warming cannot demand sacrifices they cannot, fairly, be asked to make. Developing nations have a right to growth and economic development. They have a right to lift themselves out of poverty, with our continuing help. In these efforts, we must engage the private sector, stimulate economic activity, use new financing and market-based approaches, develop and transfer know-how, and create jobs.

Our earth is more fragile than we might think. Whole ecosystems that support millions of lives face significant disruption. In some cases, whole countries and peoples – not only animal species – are at risk of disappearing.

And the effects are being felt most acutely by those least able to cope and least responsible for the problem. This is a moral issue. Our responses must be guided by the principles of common responsibility and the common good.

National action must be at the centre of our response. So far, those efforts have been inadequate. Fifteen years after the Framework Convention on Climate Change was agreed upon in Rio, and ten years after the Kyoto Protocol (whose first commitment period expires in 2012) carbon emissions in the industrialized nations are still rising.

Yet national policies are not enough. The invisibility of borders when it comes to climate-affecting gases, and the broad range of political and economic interests involved, requires international cooperation. We have an ideal framework. It's called the United Nations – uniquely equipped to serve as a forum for hammering out a meaningful, equitable and sustainable long-term solution to global climate change.

In this crossroads year – the year in which governments have accepted the compelling findings of the IPCC, the year in which public awareness of climate change has come to dominate political agendas across the globe – I am calling on world leaders to exercise leadership. To act. Business as usual will not do.

At the UN Climate Change Conference this December in Bali, governments must work with urgency and creativity to put a negotiating framework in place. We need a new and comprehensive multilateral accord on climate change that all nations can embrace.

For all of us, this is a defining moment. We all have a historical responsibility to future generations. Our grandchildren will be our judges.

Global leaders show will for climate change "breakthrough"

Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon welcomed the political will shown by world leaders at the 24 September meeting in New York, for a climate change breakthrough at the Bali Conference on Climate Change scheduled for December.

"This has been a ground-breaking, historical event," he said, praising the world leaders for showing the political leadership necessary for change. It had been the largest-ever meeting of Heads of State and Government on climate change, the SG added, noting that more than 80 Heads of State and Government had attended.

The leaders had sent a clear signal to the world's citizens that climate change "is getting the attention it deserves". He said the high-level event represented "a sea-change in the response to climate change", amounting to "a major political commitment for a breakthrough" when they convene in Bali.

"Leaders have indicated that we need to step up the pace. We must urgently begin an inclusive process on a new international climate change deal at Bali. This process needs to cover all aspects of the solution to climate change: adaptation, emission reductions, climate-friendly technologies and the necessary financial architecture," the SG concluded.

Coming Together in Brindisi

HIV/AIDS Focal Point Netha Kreouzos attends her first international conference on HIV/AIDS

DPKO invited HIV/AIDS advisers and focal points from 15 missions to participate in the fourth annual HIV/AIDS workshop – this year hosted at the United Nations Logistic Base in Brindisi, Italy.

Newly inducted into the HIV/AIDS team, for me the workshop was an intensive five days of absorbing as much information as possible without being too overwhelmed at the task before me in the year ahead.

Arriving at the brand new Brindisi Airport with its luminous yellow chairs I found my excitement intensifying – I can see my colleagues chuckling at that, saying it is not possible for that stupid smile to get any bigger.

The luminous yellow chairs made for my first introduction to a member of the HIV/AIDS team. Musulmani Shindano was seated beside me waiting for the conveyer belt to cough up his luggage. Once the belt was turned off, it dawned on us that our luggage had not made its way to Brindisi. I soon came to associate Musulmani, who is the Database Manager/Trainer of the HIV/AIDS Unit in UNMIL, Sierra Leone, with a deep rumbling laugh and seriously

organised spreadsheets with facts and figures about the induction training, peer education and voluntary counselling and testing conducted in his mission.

That evening, a gathering was arranged at one of the waterfront cafeterias where all the course participants could meet old friends or acquaint themselves with newer team members. I gradually put faces to the emails and, as one of the newest members of the team, was immediately welcomed into the fold by a group of people drawn from the four corners of the globe and astonishingly diverse backgrounds. However, in this truly international environment, and as a South African-born Cypriot, I think we Africans outnumbered the rest of the world in representatives, which gave a warm feeling of home for me.

Next morning I got up early – too early, nervous I would be late for the shuttle bus that would take us to the UNLB. I was the first up for breakfast and found myself in an empty dining room, which only served to increase my anxiety. Needless to say, the more experienced met up for breakfast at a more reasonable hour.



Then, to my great relief, they directed us to the rendezvous point, Piazza Cairolì. Seeing all the participants arriving in their suits and ties, I felt somewhat out of place in my grubby jeans that I had been wearing on the plane. Dr. Megh Gurung, HIV/AIDS Policy Adviser, reassured me, however, that part of the training experience is losing your luggage. At the last workshop, his luggage had been missing for four days – yet every day the participants would say to him you look different today. So for three days I learnt to appreciate the bare essentials until my luggage finally arrived.

The first day of introductions and brief presentations of the work in each mission over the last year left me feeling a little overwhelmed – both at the amount of work carried out, not only by the advisers, but also by the other focal points in often extreme working conditions. It is all in a day's work for them to carry out induction briefings or training for peacekeepers in sectors in remote areas that could only be reached by UN helicopter or plane. That is why Dr. Ingrid Schriels, HIV/AIDS Adviser for MINUSTAH, says her backpack not only carries her materials, but often serves as a pillow for the long journey home, either by plane or helicopter – whatever is available.

From large missions like the Sudan and Congo, to smaller missions like Georgia, the common theme was ensuring UN peacekeepers and members of the host communities have the essential facts

about HIV/AIDS, knowledge of how to protect themselves and their families from HIV infection and to live positively with HIV as well as contribute towards a tolerant, equitable and compassionate UN-system work place.

The first day set the tone for the rest of the course.

Remarkable work by highly dedicated individuals in challenging circumstances and the frustration of feeling that more needs to be done on awareness, prevention, peer education training, voluntary confidential counselling and testing as well as care for UN staff living with HIV/AIDS.

This frustration however was turned into creative solutions for problems via sharing of best practices and lessons learnt in all areas of responsibility from condom dispensers to information and guidance on standard operating procedures to support the new policy for HIV units in peacekeeping missions.

As the youngest member, my comments at the close of the workshop to the team were about how humbling and educational it had been to hear of the work conducted by the DPKO HIV/AIDS team. I told them that I felt like I had a mountain to climb. But I also said I was reassured by the fact that behind me, there are strong hands, making sure I don't fall and that they are helping to push me up slowly but surely. So I hope when I meet my colleagues from the four corners of the globe next year, I will be able to report that I have achieved the minimum standards they have set.

My enthusiasm for the workshop experience was shared by my colleagues who stressed that it was a great forum to report back from the field and discuss solutions with policy



Joint session of chief medical officers and HIV/AIDS advisers and focal points

advisers. Team leader Dr. Megh Gurung, HIV/AIDS Policy Adviser, summed it up by saying, "Together we can make a difference!"

Stephen Talugende, Chief of the UNFIL HIV/AIDS Unit said, "It was a great opportunity for sharing experiences, lessons learnt and best practices."

Dr. Ingrid Schriels, HIV/AIDS Policy Adviser in MINUSTAH said, "It was the opportunity to identify common challenges and constraints and contribute to DPKO's policy and framework, based on field experience."

Michael D.M. Munywoki, HIV/AIDS Policy Adviser, UNMIS, said, "It was a great platform for discussing Minimum Standards and sharing experiences."

Gagan Banjara, HIV/AIDS focal point for UNAMA said of the workshop, "Coming together is always a beginning, keeping together is a progress and working together is a great success."

Elisabeth Lothe, Associate HIV/AIDS Expert, PBPS UN Department

of Peacekeeping Operations, said: "The workshop gave a real boost to the community of practice who agreed to work towards shared standards across missions and to develop an evidence base for HIV interventions in peacekeeping missions through improved reporting, data collection in the field and information sharing."

Patricia Keayes, facilitator of the conference, commented that the camaraderie and mutual support in the group is part of what makes the meetings so enjoyable, as well as intense. "One specific thing I learned that I value a lot was Andy Seales' insight into what undermines partnership – Ego and Logo – because it can help the HIV/AIDS Community of Practice avoid the things that work against true partnership."

Cyprus is considered a low prevalence country where there is reduced risk of contracting the disease. However, there is no room for complacency, and awareness and prevention strategies are fundamental to protecting ourselves and our families.



DPKO team of HIV/AIDS advisers and focal points – that is UNFICYP's Netha, front right

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**Dr. Megh Gurung,
HIV/AIDS Policy Adviser**

The most important outcome of the workshop was that participants were presented with DPKO's draft policy directive outlining the HIV/AIDS functions in UN peacekeeping operations. This comprehensive document, which is in its final stages of development, will provide clarity on the purposes of the HIV/AIDS functions in missions outlining the framework in which they operate and provides the rationale for integrating HIV/AIDS in peacekeeping operations. It also defines the parameters of work of the HIV/AIDS units and the specific

areas of overlap with medical, training and supply components, defining areas of authority and responsibility as well as parameters for integrating HIV/AIDS concerns in the activities of other sections.

It sets out the two roles of HIV/AIDS units – to provide awareness, prevention and care programmes for peacekeeping personnel and to integrate HIV/AIDS into mission mandates, highlighting specific areas of concern.

The policy provides the framework for action to reduce HIV risk and vulnerability and manage its impact on peacekeeping operations.

The policy was presented to the HIV/AIDS team by Roxaneh Bazergan, who was instrumental in its development.



**Roxaneh Bazergan,
former DPKO HIV/
AIDS Adviser**

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Pilgrimage

Around 120 pilgrims attended the annual service on 27 September at the Ayios Neophytos Monastery. The monastery is situated just outside the village of Troulli, in the UN buffer zone. The vast majority of pilgrims were elderly or very young children.

The three pillars, UNPOL, SCAT and the military in Sector 4, facilitated the congregation's clean-up efforts in preparation for the ceremony, both the day before and on the day of the pilgrimage. Preparation of the monastery's courtyard involved escorting workers and machinery to and from Troulli village. On the day of the event, the track was watered so as to keep the dust at a minimum for the ease and comfort of the pilgrims. Electricity generators, lighting stands, tables, chairs, food and light refreshments were ferried into the pilgrimage site. This work commenced at 1.00 p.m.

From about 5.00 p.m., the pilgrims began to gather in Troulli Village Square. There was an air of sadness about the occasion, as the Mukhtar had buried his mother earlier that day.

Arrangements had been made for the pilgrims to be ferried to the monastery in two coaches. Unfortunately, only one bus turned up. The fact that only one coach arrived at the appointed time caused problems for the three pillars. As delicate negotiations were taking place between the UN personnel on the ground, the Mukhtar of Troulli and other local representatives, the second coach arrived. Most of the pilgrims were accommodated on the second coach. However, 15 vehicles were permitted under UN escort to follow the coach to the monastery.

The religious ceremony took place without incident and all present were invited to partake of some light refreshments. The Mukhtar, in his address to the assembled pilgrims, paid tribute to all involved in the restoration of the monastery. He highlighted the fact that cooperation led to the successful restoration of the



monastery, and that this type of cooperation should be used as an example for future projects. He saw it as a way forward and a model for solving other problems.

The Mukhtar made several presentations on the night including one to the UN. The presentation, a Plaque of Ayios Neophytos, was accepted by Sgt. Gerry Brennan, SCAT Pyla.

Insp. Jerry Coonan

Sector 1 Medal Parade

The Argentine Republic has been represented within UNFICYP since 25 September 1993, when ARGCON took over control of Sector 1 from the Danish Contingent, responsible for the western part of the buffer zone. Since then, over 10,000 Argentinian soldiers have served with UNFICYP.

Officers, NCOs and privates belonging to the Argentinian Armed Forces make up the majority of personnel in Sector 1, which is augmented by Officers and NCOs from the Republics of Chile and Paraguay.

On 31 August, close to the end of the fifth month of service with UNFICYP, ARGCON prepared its Medal Parade at San Martín Camp, when 132 peacekeepers were decorated.

At 7.00 p.m., the ceremony started with the presentation of formed troops to Force Commander Maj. Gen. Rafael José Barni, who inspected and saluted the soldiers.

Argentinian, Chilean and Paraguayan national anthems were played and subsequently Argentinian Contingent Commander Lt. Col. Justo Francisco Treviranus, followed by the Force Commander, addressed the parade.



Force Commander's inspection

Once the ceremony was over, all medal recipients and more than 150 guests enjoyed refreshments. The evening was livened up with a tango demonstration and a popular music show, in this way celebrating the presence of our country in Cyprus.

Capt. Guillermo Larreyna

Aga Khan Prize

In early September 2007, the Aga Khan Foundation awarded its three-yearly prestigious Award for Architecture to UNDP and the Nicosia Master Plan for the "Rehabilitation of the Walled City of Nicosia, an Outstanding Contribution to Architecture for Muslims".

The "Rehabilitation of the Walled City of Nicosia" is one of the nine awarded projects which have been selected among almost 350 projects from around the World.

Under the auspices of the UNDP, the Nicosia Master Plan was initiated in 1979, thanks to the remarkable efforts of the representatives of the Greek Cypriot and Turkish

Cypriot communities of Nicosia.

The Nicosia Master Plan aimed at creating a common development plan for Nicosia and revitalising, protecting the architectural and urban heritage of the walled city of Nicosia.

A large number of projects identified as priority interventions by the Nicosia Master Plan have been implemented through UNDP programmes: the UNDP Bicomunal Development Programme/ACT funded by the USAID and the UNDP Partnership for the Future Programme funded by the European Union.



Young Filmmakers Cinematic Adventure

On 27 October, in celebration of UN Day, UNDP-Action for Cooperation and Trust will hold an outdoor film festival at Ledra Palace. The festival is the highlight of UNDP's Young Film Makers project and an expected audience of 300 guests will have a chance to see the premier of 13 new short films created by young Cypriots. Prizes will be awarded to the top three films, and a Participation Award will also be given to the finalist with the highest level of participation in the project during 2007.

The 13 films are the selected finalists from the Young Filmmakers competition "Shooting Reality", which was launched by UNDP-ACT in December 2006. The island-wide competition called upon young Cypriots between the ages of 18-30 to send in their ideas for a short film about anything that is important to young people including individual or

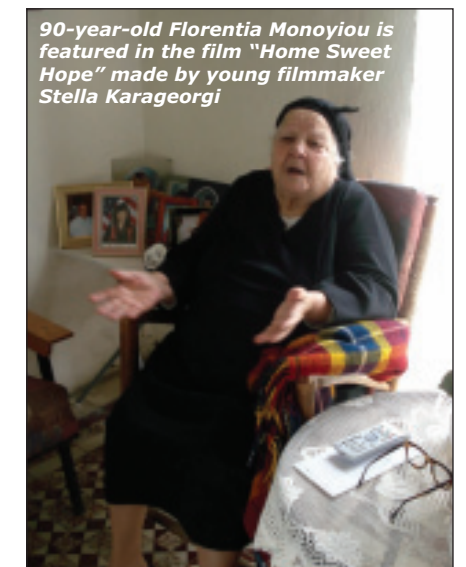
social issues. The selection panel made up of film critics, youth representatives and educators had the challenging task of judging the entries.

A total of 28 young Cypriots completed a training programme covering the following topics: Story Development, Production Management, Lighting, Camera Operating, Sound, Logistics and Editing. Under the guidance of professionals, these successful finalists were provided with equipment and technical support to make their films.

"Entries for the competition were of a very high standard. It was impressive to see so many thought-provoking and intelligent ideas coming from the young people of Cyprus," said Jaco Cilliers, UNDP-ACT Programme Manager. "I'm sure the finalists will do an excellent job of initiating discussion on the issues which affect modern Cypriot youth and society at large. This project

will really give Cypriot youth a voice and empower them to express themselves through film".

For further information, please contact Pembe Mentesh on 22 874 778.



Chile celebrates its National Day in Sector 1

Chile joined UNFICYP in 2003, and since then has been an integral part of Sector 1, responsible mainly for Alfa Coy. It is traditional for all nationalities within Sector 1 to celebrate their national days, and this year was no different. On 18 September, an internal celebration was organised to commemorate the anniversary of Chilean independence.

The day started off at 8.00 a.m. in Roca Camp, with troops lining up to form a parade. Sector 1 CO Lt. Col. Justo Francisco Treviranus started the ceremony with a salute to honour both the raising of the Chilean flag and the Chilean national anthem. Then, 1/Lt. Alexander Vermeheren Parra addressed the parade, outlining the history of Chile's independence.

After the parade, the troops marched off. All present then feasted on a traditional Chilean breakfast.



UNFICYP's very own jockey rides out with the best

This summer I was offered the fabulous opportunity to spend a total of seven weeks riding out for 11 times ex-champion flat race jockey Pat Eddery, who now trains racehorses himself near Thame in the beautiful rolling hills of the Vale of Aylesbury.

The purpose-built training facilities at Pat Eddery Racing Ltd cover over 100 acres, with stabling for over 50 horses and a seven-furlong, state-of-the-art, all-weather gallop.

Three "lots" of up to 15 horses go out for an hour every morning. Pat, his wife Carolyn, herself a successful amateur jockey turned assistant trainer, their two twenty-something daughters and their 13-year-old-son, all ride out alongside Cypriot head lad Savvas Savva and other staff that includes two teenage apprentices – a girl and a boy.

In the early 1980's, Diana Bridger, PA to UNFICYP's Senior Police Adviser, pioneered as Cyprus's first lady jockey, holding a professional licence and riding several winners at the Nicosia Race Course against her male counterparts.

The valuable and excitable thoroughbreds are amazingly well behaved and relaxed, thanks to the perfect equine environment and the careful handling and schooling they receive from Pat and his experienced team.

Pat is very much a "hands on" trainer and one of the first to arrive each morning, checking his charges as they are tacked up for work. As each lot pulls out, he tells the riders what he wants them to do and at what pace. The horses warm up with a good walk, followed by a two-furlong trot and a two-furlong hack before heading all the way down to the bottom of the gallops. They usually set off one behind the other at a nice steady pace. On gallop days, they will work "upsides" each other in pairs to give the horses a feel for the competitiveness of a real race. The hill at the four-furlong marker is fairly steep and makes the racehorses very fit. After all, it is this repetitive training, day after day, that builds up muscle and stamina and hopefully gives each horse the edge over its competitors. After exercise, the horses are walked round and, once they have stopped blowing, are finally allowed to have "a pick" of grass and relax.

Most days, horses head off to races round the country accompanied by the staff member who looks after them. Pat is there as well to saddle up, to give the jockeys their race instructions and to look after the proud owners who are always eager for a winner. Notable owners include Prince Khalid Abdulla and John Magnier. However, quite a few of the horses are syndicated and



Diana (right) on Replicator and Pat on Choiseau

thus have several owners. Syndication allows "mere mortals" the chance to own a part share of a racehorse or two, with all the fun, pride and status that entails. The current crop of two-year-olds and yearlings are an excellent investment and prospective owners are definitely urged to check out the website at www.patedderyracing.com

The Eddery horses in training range from recently bought yearlings and as yet unraced two-year-olds being brought on slowing, to more seasoned two, three and four-year-old winners. Some are bred as sprinters and some are bred to stay and are thus raced accordingly. The best horse in the yard is bay colt Secret Tune, a "Black Type" three-year-old son of 1991 Derby winner Generous. This amazingly clever colt who has won over £200,000 this year "talks" to you as you ride him. He was originally entered for this year's St. Ledger to be run in September but was judged not ready. Other notables include two-year-old diva Galianna and flashy home-bred Ascalon – both by 2001 Derby winner Galileo; the bullet-like Replicator and small but gutsy Cavort, both successful two-year-olds; and the double winning three-year-olds Alfresco and Lawyer's Choice, to name but a few.

I was thrilled that Pat thought I was up to riding his best and most valuable horses. Riding upsides Pat on the gallops at "warp factor" speed was amazing and I learnt much from this equine maestro, his team and his horses. So, if you see me at my desk with a wistful look on my face, you know where I am ... back on Secret Tune, with six-inch stirrup leathers, dashing up those gallops – thankful that there are no UN MPs lurking nearby with radar guns!



Diana (right) on Velocity's Gift on the gallops

Slovaks Dominate Strongman Competition

Eleven contestants entered the UNFICYP Strongman Competition which was held in September. Organised to mirror TV's "World's Strongman Competition", our own version was designed to allow competitors of varying size and weight to compete against one and other. This is why certain events were based on lifting a percentage of total body weight.

First was the Vehicle Push where each competitor had to push a UN L200 vehicle over a distance of 30 metres. It was a surprisingly close-run event, with Mario Sucansky pipping his fellow Slovakian, Peter Polecak, by 0.7 second; Sergio Nuñez, Argentina, finished a respectable 3rd. One competitor, who shall remain nameless, did bring a smile to the faces in the crowd when for all his efforts, it appeared the hand brake had been left on – Pte. Cooper, I can assure you, it was not!

Next up was the Tyre Flip, an event which required the competitors to lift a tractor wheel and flip it over as many times as possible in one minute. The selection of tyre had caused problems, as the original selection would have been suited ideally to the actual world's Strongman Competition, weighing in at a back-breaking 150 kg. A slightly lighter option was chosen, but this presented the problem of bouncing. Technique became the key and Cpl. Stephens "don't let it settle method" won the event with an astonishing 23 flips.

The third event was the much dreaded Crucifix. Competitors had to hold 8 kg weights, at arms length, for as long as possible. Once the weight dropped below shoulder level the clock was stopped. There were some truly arm-shaking performances, resulting in a Slovakian 1, 2, 3 for Krutka, Polecak and Suscansky.

Event four was the bench press and the first to account for body weight. Each competitor had to bench-press their own body weight as many times as possible in one minute. This proved to be a punishing routine and some of the results were super human considering it is widely publicised that only 17% of males can bench press their body weight more than once. Victor Krutka managed an astonishing 39 repetitions, winning the event.

Next the competitors faced the Farmer's Walk, which consisted of carrying two jerry cans full of water, one in each hand, over a course of 100m in the fastest time possible. The pace was more of a sprint than a walk as the competitors gave it their all, each finishing with a

grimace as the lactic acid filled their exhausted legs. Gary (MT), the oldest competitor,

merits special mention for a quick time and the biggest smile for finishing. The event was won by Peter Polecak with Pte. Cooper, UK, achieving his highest position and a podium finish in second.

Without pause, the relentless pace continued with the Shoulder Press. Competitors had to lift 60% of their body weight on a straight bar, standing up above their head and back to their chest as many times as possible in one minute. Again, the event tested to their limit, as muscle fatigue set in. No matter how hard participants tried to lift the bar, it frustratingly would not go up in the desired direction.

Event seven was the Dead Lift requiring each competitor to lift 80% of their body weight off the ground up until their backs were straight before returning it to the ground as many times as their bodies would allow in one painful minute. The event was again won by the dominant Slovakian pairing of Suscansky and Krutka with impressive performances from both Lyndon Bells, Australia, and Capt. J. Zurkan, Argentina. The award for the loudest effort scream of the day was won by Pte. Cooper.

The penultimate event, the dreaded Squats, came as the sun beat down relentlessly upon sunburnt necks. Mine was radiating a striking purple. Competitors had to squat their own body weight as many times as possible in the magic minute. Mario Sucansky achieved an unbeatable looking 33 reps, all the more impressive considering he was the heaviest taking part at 101 kg. However, Krutka would top this with a staggering 40 reps in an accomplished piece of weight-lifting that was fit to grace any strength competition.

And so, with just 10 points separating the top five competitors, it was down to the final event – the notorious Atlas Stones. Five barrels were stood up with a large boulder a few metres in front. The competitors had to lift each stone onto the barrels in succession in the fastest time possible. Somewhat disappointedly the event had to be cancelled after one the Atlas stones split in two and another was greatly reduced in size providing an unfair advantage to those yet to tackle the challenge. It can be deduced that limestone is not the optimum choice for this event; LCpl. Glover i/c of stone selection, take note.

The eventual winners were:

Strongest Overall

- 1st place Mario Sucansky, Slovakia, Sector 4
- 2nd place Victor Krutka, Slovakia, Sector 4
- 3rd place Peter Polecak, Slovakia, UNPA.

And once each event score had been modified to account for body weight,

Strongest body-to-weight ratio

- 1st Victor Krutka
- 2nd Peter Polecak
- 3rd Pte. "Dangerous" Dave Awuku

Thanks go to LCpls. Hall, Liptrott and Glover for their tireless efforts in setting up and running the competition and to the works party for cleaning up once the competition had finished. Also to all of those who took part and for making it a memorable day.



Visitors

Wayne Hayde

Chief of the Regional Conduct and Discipline Unit **Wayne Hayde** met with Chief of Mission Michael Møller during his recent visit to UNFICYP where he conducted induction briefings for new staff members.

Hayde also visited the sectors and reviewed policy issues as well as outstanding Board of Inquiry cases. Hayde, who is based at UNIFIL, will be visiting periodically – at least once a quarter – to meet UNFICYP Conduct and Discipline Focal Point Maria Wilkins and keep abreast of issues that arise, and to conduct training and awareness briefings for new staff.

Hayde is the overseas Conduct and Discipline Officer for UNTSO, UNLB, UNDOF and UNFICYP.



UNFICYP extended the usual courtesies when the Chief of Mission and Force Commander received the following visitors during the month:

5 September:

H.E. Mrs Anna Tureničova, incoming Slovak Ambassador ▶

14 September:

Vice Admiral Sunil K. Damle, Indian Commander in Chief, Southern Command Naval ◀



New Faces

Legal Adviser



Lt. Col. Christian Pöckl joined UNFICYP on 11 September, taking up the newly created post of Legal Adviser. He is responsible for providing legal counsel for any issues which may arise in the mission.

Christian joined the Austrian Armed Forces in 1983 and attended the Military Academy, graduating as an Engineer Officer in 1987. He also gained a Master of Law degree from the University of Salzburg in 1998.

Christian has had several postings as platoon leader and commanding officer of engineer and staff companies. From 2000 to 2002, he served as deputy chief in the

recruitment division at the MoD in Vienna. From 2002 to 2006, he served as a legal adviser with the former land forces command, and in 2006 was posted to the Austrian Joint Armed Forces Command.

This is not Christian's first tour with UNFICYP. He served as an Engineer Officer in Sector 4 from 1990-1991 (one year). He also served in Kosovo as a legal adviser during 2005.

Christian is married to Elisabeth and they have four sons, Alexander (22), Anton (19), Benjamin (16) and Michael (3). His hobbies include fishing, skiing and all kinds of sport.

Force Engineer



Maj. Kamil Bilek arrived in Cyprus on 20 September to take up the post of Force Engineer.

Born in Hodonin in the Czech Republic in 1968, Kamil joined the military in 1986 and graduated as a lieutenant from the Military Technical Academy in Brno as a geographical officer in 1991. Since then, he has continued his professional studies in various courses at the Defence Mapping

School (USA), GDTA (Toulouse, France) and the NATO School (Oberammergau, Germany).

This is Kamil's second tour with UNFICYP, having first served as SO2 Coord at HQ for eight months in 2006.

Kamil and his partner Lenka have two children, Kristina (13) and Adam (8). Kamil enjoys sport, mainly football, and music.

Farewell

8 Transport Regiment Officially Says Goodbye



8 Transport Regiment RLC officially said goodbye to recently made friends and colleagues on 13 September when they held their farewell party in the grounds of the Ledra Palace Hotel.

Guests included the CM and UNFICYP COS, as well as various ambassadors and dignitaries from around the island. The evening afforded the Regiment the opportunity to say a thank you to all invited before returning to Catterick, in North Yorkshire, England, after their six-month tour.

The highlight of the evening was without doubt the Beating Retreat, as performed by the RLC Corps Band, all 32 of them kindly on loan from the UK for the occasion.

The Beating Retreat is a reproduction of the music used at the end of a day's battle in times gone by, and thus it seemed a fitting moment for the Regiment to say farewell to UNFICYP and Cyprus as they begin preparations to handover to the next Sector 2 soldiers, the Queen's Own Gurkha Logistic Regiment, on 1 October.



Seven Year Hitch

It's been seven years since Jerry Ashcroft joined UNFICYP Transport Unit in October 2000 to take charge of repairs and maintenance of UN vehicles, trucks and plant equipment.

It just seems a lot longer.

Well, seven years proved too much for the man, so he's leaving on that midnight plane to Haiti. It just seems a bit extreme when we would have been quite happy if he'd just retired quietly to his village, Spilia, to put his tractor back together again. (No, that's true).

But for those of us who have come to know Jerry, we didn't really expect anything else from our little man of action.

Jerry has seen his job evolve and develop over the years and he has maintained, repaired and inspected UNFICYP vehicles as if they were his own. He's been responsible for organising some very tricky recoveries of various UN vehicles and trucks found hanging precariously over the sides of mountains or upside down in ditches or even landing in minefields.

For a few years, he found himself in charge of the Mission's generators, keeping the soldiers supplied with power in the various isolated OPs scattered around the island.

The Transport Unit has become famous for our constant wicked sense of humour (nobody gets away with anything) but we are also a highly motivated team of people running a smooth operation. This is largely due to Jerry's dedication, enthusiasm and the time he freely gives to pass on his technical knowledge and experience, streamlining our operation helping to instill a sense of pride in our Unit.

Certain people, however, may consider his greatest

achievement the founding of the UNFICYP Biker Gang: a group of fearless adventurers who have followed Jerry in blind adoration on many memorable trips around the island and we didn't get lost once. Well, we always ended up somewhere, and the Harley usually managed to keep up with the Honda (biker gang humour).

So, Jerry, you've decided to leave us – a bit older, a bit greyer and, possibly, a bit shorter – but nevertheless all your friends and colleagues wish you the very best in your new adventures in Tahiti, or should that be Haiti – they say it's very nice over there! So have fun. Keep safe and keep in touch.

Bike ride on your next trip home?

Christine Iacovou





International
Peace Day Vigil